First Hospitality for Educability:
An Ethical, Epistemological and Political Symbiotic Relationship

by

François Mifsud

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Department of Social Justice Education OISE
University of Toronto

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Department of Social Justice Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

The major aim of the thesis is to inquire into the human problem of the exclusion and marginalization of the other from a philosophical and historical perspective. The problem arises from a modern conceptual paradigm in which the other is not engaged with. The modern paradigm was influenced by the rise of nationalism, imperialism and colonialism, as well as neo-Cartesian philosophy in which the self constructs his or her thinking on a non-relational process with the other since the emphasis is on the self.

Traditionally in philosophy, the notion of first philosophy was based on metaphysics (as in the case of Aristotle), or epistemology (as in the case of Descartes). The thesis argues that the problem of exclusion is intrinsically linked to the lack of a first philosophy that is based on a symbiotic relationship between ethics, epistemology and politics. Utilizing and building on the work of Hannah Arendt, Emanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, and Zygmunt Bauman the thesis develops an original argument for the centrality of the engagement with the other, a conception of first philosophy based on ethics, epistemology and politics, and the formulation of first hospitality for educability.
To concretize the development of the philosophical argument developed in the thesis, the historical happening of the Holocaust is utilized as a hermeneutic for modernity through which the construct of *first hospitality* emerges as an educable response to the problem of exclusion.

The thesis ends with concrete and practical implications for education based on the argument of the thesis as well as the critique of the popular discourse in education on inclusion. From a practical perspective, the thesis offers the notion of *welcoming education* that is based on *the other* as agent, as a democratic alternative to inclusion.
To “Tal-Barrani”, the road that led me to Hospitality.
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I am also grateful to the Dominican Community of Toronto for their warm welcome. In the initial stages of my PhD program, when I was new in a foreign country, they made me feel at home. To St Albert the Great College a school that leads by example for how hospitality educates, and to its Principle Mario Mallia, a leader in *welcoming education*.

My deepest gratitude goes to my parents John and Mary Mifsud, who have always believed in me and supported me despite my difficult early schooling experience. Thanks also to my siblings Antonella, Marica and Jean-Pierre; in times of sorrow and of joy, we were there for each other.

Looking back, the spirit of my thesis began to emerge for me within two settings from my childhood: my family’s restaurant, and “Tal-Barrani” Road, the street where my family home is located, and whose name translates as “of the stranger.” The turbulent history of “tal-Barrani” road, for Malta generally, and for me personally, inspired my efforts for my thesis.

I would like to thank my partner and companion Rafael, together with whom I apply and explore hospitality in daily life. Lastly, I thank all those I encountered and I will be encountering in the journey of my life, whose presence make me wonder about my ‘responsibility for the other.’
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Chapter 1. Introduction

My research interest, in exploring the encounter with the other as an educable experience, is motivated by my personal experiences and history. My own early schooling experiences of exclusion have helped me to understand being the other due to the struggles I had with teachers and the schooling system itself because of my severe learning disability (dyslexia). Given the very rigid mainstream notions of reading and writing in the schools I attended, as well as the rampant deficit mentality, my different learning style and my “uncommon” way of reading and writing, were perceived as unacceptable. I was also labeled as “lazy,” “unengaged,” and “unwilling to perform” and therefore at risk of educational failure. Moreover, at times, the educators resorted to punishments as a way of trying to make me engage with mainstream learning.

Notwithstanding the good intentions that the educators might have had, the approach taken by them led to the othering of myself from the rest of the class and, at times, even from the school community. When I was 12 years old my parents, on the advice of the school, took me to a school psychologist. Based on school reports and the consultation the psychologist came to the conclusion that my academic performance will always be limited, and there was no solution to this low academic performance. When my mother asked her whether I will be able to complete schooling, the psychologist commented, in my presence, that my parents should not have high hopes for my academic success and predicted that I will learn to read and write sufficiently to be able to become a postman. This traumatic experience amounted to the systemic and systematic exclusion and creating of non-agency on my part as a student. Ironically, the experience with the psychologist created more formal isolation. Thus, the experience of being within a schooling system that did not engage with my learning style, but instead kept othering me as a student who could not perform, and at a high risk of dropping out, has given me an impetus for the focus of this study.

Moreover, being born and raised in Malta, a country that was ruled by a colonial
power until 1964, has helped me to understand “the hostility towards and the exclusion of the other” as being created systematically by an ideology that perceived the self as superior over the other. Postcolonial independent Malta generated high hopes but also a situation of political instability and governmental crises, which subsequently triggered conflict and violence between the inhabitants. This experience of violence, to which I was exposed at a very young age, has made me reflect critically on the construction of the identity of the other, in particular when and how the other can be perceived as a threat or even as an enemy to the self.

In the last 20 years, given its centrality in the Mediterranean, Malta has become the destination for thousands of migrants and refugees from the African continent. This immigrant wave has exposed me to another kind of experience of encountering the other who is different in faith, race and ethnicity, language and culture. The experience of non-Maltese sharing ‘my’ same space that I call ‘my country’ has made me perceive the limitation, and sometimes even the failure, of the nation state ideology to engage and welcome the other. My encounter with migrants and refugees within the context and history of Malta has made me seriously question the understanding of a nation state built on a national identity that almost intrinsically excludes the other.

In the last 10 years I have also had the opportunity to study abroad in Italy, England and Canada. Living in ‘other countries’ where I was considered a migrant and/or a guest has made me realize that a guest is not an exclusive passive receiver of welcoming – a guest has also a welcome to give. Thus, when welcome is motivated by hospitality and not merely by acts of entertaining, a guest becomes a contributor with possibility to expand the host’s perceptions. The guest and migrant experience has been a reflective time for me to consider how hospitality has the potential of offering a safe dialogical space (sanctuary), where the act of welcoming alternates between the guest and the host.

When I was accepted into the doctoral program my intent was to do a thesis exploring the concept of care from the perspective of diversity and inclusivity. However, an experience I encountered as a guest to a friend’s house for a Shabbat meal made me change my mind about the focus of the thesis. The topic around the table was about educational camps for Jewish children where they would be given an intense kibbutz experience. Care was the central
 educational topic that the students where invited to explore through discussions and the praxis of sharing. Unexpectedly, the discussion around the table took a bad turn when one of the guests pointed out the Arabic origin of my last name, Mifsud. This observation sparked a barrage of negative and prejudicial comments about Arabs by those who invited me for the meal. Although I was a guest suddenly the tone of the conversation made me feel uncomfortable and unwelcome. The discourse of hostility eclipsed the discourse of care. Suddenly, it dawned on me that, although care could be a motivation to reach out for the other, it could also be limited by traditions and ideologies that can exclude the praxis of care for the us/we, while dismissing the other from being an object of care. This experience revealed to me the limitation of care, and at the same time made me long for a praxis where ‘relating with the other’ is an intrinsic operation of it.

This change of mind about a thesis topic left me academically stranded. It took me a whole year to find an adequate focus that would put me back on track in engaging with diversity in a meaningful and effective way. My adviser, Professor John P. Portelli, suggested that I attend Professor Roger Simon’s last class before his retirement (which ended up being his last class before he passed away) with the hope of offering me some inspiration regarding my thesis topic. In Simon’s course, very often the discussions revolved around the concept of hospitality which immediately seized my attention. At first I struggled with the idea of exploring an ancient and traditional topic as a contemporary and future solution for the question of relationality with the other. After a time of reflection and exploration, I concluded that the ancient tradition of hospitality contained an innovative dynamism and diversity of praxes, through which hospitality could engage with different time and space settings to create a relational space for the self/other encounter.

The focus of this research is to explore a theoretical framework and a praxis through which the encounter between the self\(^1\) and the other\(^2\) is induced to develop into a dialogical and

\(^1\) The self when written in italics refers to both the collective and the individual. In the collective self there is a

\(^2\) The other when written in italics refers to both the collective and the individual other who is different from the self.
educable\textsuperscript{3} relationality. This quest arises from the many different historical\textsuperscript{4} situations where the tension that emerges from the encounter between the \textit{self} and the \textit{other} has resulted in the hostility towards the \textit{other}. The kind of hostility toward the \textit{other} that is the focus of this research, as we shall see, is hostility that arises when the \textit{self} perceives the diversity (\textit{otherness}) of the \textit{other} as a threat for her/himself and for what the \textit{self} stands for. Thus, hostility is expressed in many different ways. Some prototypical\textsuperscript{5} expressions of hostility toward the \textit{other} I am categorizing in four prototypes: oppression, alienation assimilation and elimination.

Oppression, within my approach and framework, is when the \textit{self} limits and controls the expressions and actions of the \textit{other} to the \textit{self}'s own desires, needs and wants. Alienation is when the \textit{other} is not engaged \textit{with} as other, but either set apart and ignored, or assimilated. Assimilation of the \textit{other} into the \textit{self} is when the \textit{other} is imposed upon an identity and operation that is not of her/his own. Elimination is when the physical and cultural presence of the \textit{other} is rendered invisible from the \textit{self}, either through physical and cultural extermination or through other forms in which the \textit{other} is separated from the \textit{self}.

Since my objective is to merge the historical analysis with a critical philosophical response, the writing method that I adopted throughout the thesis is based manly on a continental style of philosophical writing. The continental philosophy has, as its main interest, the engagement with the \textit{self}/\textit{other} relationality as phenomenon. Thus, since my thesis research aims to generate a dialogical space for the emergence of the \textit{self}/\textit{other} relationality, I opted for the philosophical continental writing method. To be more precise the writing method that I

\textsuperscript{3} In this thesis the notion of educable/educability will be used to identify the educational potential that the \textit{self}/\textit{other} relationality generates for both the \textit{self} and the \textit{other}. In other words, the \textit{self}/\textit{other} relation is perceived as a habitat in which the educational experience develops. Thus, the notion of educability highlights the educational potential that the \textit{self}/\textit{other} relationality offers, and which potential necessitate to be furthered with the agentic engagement of the subject in order to develop into educational experience.

\textsuperscript{4} Although there are innumerable historical cases where the \textit{other} was systematically excluded, this research will be focusing on the Holocaust as a historical example that manifests why and how an ideology can systematically exclude the \textit{other}.

\textsuperscript{5} The term prototypical refers to notions that are representative of other notions and happenings and that other notions and happenings are modeled on the prototypical notions.

\textsuperscript{6} For the thesis to maintain the flow of the philosophical reflection will explain the key terms either in the text or through footnotes as they come.
adopted has a spiral effect: that is, I introduce my arguments by first presenting a problem, and which problem will lead me into reflection. The spiral effect may give the impression that the argument is circular and repetitive, since during the reflective process I go back and forth to the problem. The reason for this back and forth is to engage with every possible aspect of the problem, and to create a reflective space for myself, as an author, and for the reader. Thus, though the reflective process may in times sound repetitive, in actual fact every time I go back to the problem I am generating a new reflection. By comparing and contrasting the arguments generated in this combination of the whole reflections will generate a new insight as a solution for the initial problem.

Human history features countless times where the self/other relationality has deteriorated into a tragic hostility towards the other. To analyze this hostility towards the other in a way that can shed light on conflicts of today, in this thesis I have chosen to focus on a historical instance of hostility toward the other that: (1) is generated by an ideology and (2) has modernity as its context and is the result of modernity itself. Furthermore this thesis examined why modernity fails to relate with the other as other, generating instead a situation where the other is either eliminated, or exploited by the self for its own ends. This thesis associates the rise of modernity with the rise of many ideologies (“-isms”), for instance nationalism, imperialism, colonialism, all of which have as their main objective the ascent of the self – identified as ‘Western modern self’ – and the exclusion or limitation of the other’s agency. The modern ideological construct of race is a prime example of a tool through which the other’s agency is limited and/or excluded. As this thesis shows, the modern construct of race was promoted to justify the rise of nationalism and imperialistic ideologies. Focusing on the Holocaust as a case study, this thesis embarked on a hermeneutic analysis of modernity in relation to the other. That is, the Holocaust is used solely as an example to concretely analyze how ideologies associated with modernity excluded the other by overemphasizing the self and as a result marginalizing the other to an extent that the other becomes invisible or almost non-existent, or to be more graphic “a vermin.”
One main reason for focusing on the Holocaust is because the Holocaust itself arose from and within the context of modernity. In other words, I wanted to use a case that was created by modernity itself as Arendt, Baumann, Levinas and others have argued. It is crucial in my view to select a case that arose from and within modernity itself because such a case can enlighten today’s situation regarding the engagement and relationality with the other. The contemporary setting is still reflecting a modern way of thinking and being. The case investigated in the thesis can give insights of other modern situations of hostility towards the other.

My interest to explore the Holocaust as a hermeneutic reflective tool to analyze modernity does not restrict its interest and focus only to the Holocaust. The primary object of my analysis is modernity itself and to show how hostility towards the other is intrinsically embedded within the historical development of modernity. Thus, my perception of the Holocaust as a tool (window) through which I am critically gazing at modernity positions my research in a collaborative mode with other hermeneutics of modernity that emerge from other situations of hostility towards the other within a modern context.

Accordingly, the central argument of the thesis regarding the understanding, justification and implications of the conception of hospitality defended in this thesis, provides the basis for a post-Holocaust reflection that, in association with other critical reflections on other situations of hostility, can offer further insights to the philosophical and social justice analyses of modernity. In other words, the argument of this thesis can be utilized in conjunction with a variety of hermeneutics, including postcolonial literature, peace education, theology of liberation, feminist standpoint theory, critical race theory, queer literature, and any other philosophical and social justice stances that emerge from, and engage with situations of oppression and hostility towards the other.

My selection of the Holocaust over other possible cases that one could have possibly used, arises from the fact that I wanted to analyze a situation of a genocide that has been already
analyzed extensively not only by historians but also by philosophers and other theorists. The conceptual/philosophical crises that will be addressed in this research revolve around the question of what allowed the Holocaust to be conceived, since that is eventually what lead to the horrific execution of the Holocaust, which lead to the extermination of countless human lives. The research uses the term ‘post-Holocaust reflection’ for the reflection that emerges from the Holocaust’s historical happening, and that has as its objective the analysis of both the concepts and the praxes that support – explicitly or implicitly – the Holocaust ideals. Since the context of the Holocaust is modernity, different modern ideological constructs and praxes will be identified by post-Holocaust reflection as the possibility that gave rise to both the conceptualization and the execution of Holocaust.

The historical analysis of the Holocaust, which serves as a hermeneutic reflection of modernity, makes use mainly of the historical and philosophical thought of Hannah Arendt, Theodor W. Adorno and Zigmond Bauman. Hence, Arendt’s notions and understanding of totalitarianism, introspection, propaganda and masses, will be essential for the identification of the pre-Holocaust context that made it possible for the Holocaust to happen. Adorno’s reflection on the notion of progress will identify how the modern interpretation of progress and the positioning of the other as a hindrance to progress – within some trends of modernity – became instrumental for the exclusion and elimination of the other. Bauman’s metaphor of the Holocaust as a window explains the hermeneutic role of the Holocaust through which the relationship between the Holocaust and modernity is analyzed. These three authors offer the thesis both a historical analysis of the relationship between the Holocaust and modernity, and an understanding of the Holocaust as a hermeneutic tool to analyze contemporary conceptions and praxes concerning the self/other relationality.

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7 The term ‘post-Holocaust reflection’ refers to a critical reflection that makes use of the Holocaust historical study as a hermeneutic tool to analyze modern and present historical happenings.

8 The term ‘philosophical’ refers to any reflective operation that can be based on concrete events or speculations, and which reflections stimulate thoughts and actions that informs praxes.
The crisis that this thesis will address is a philosophical one – which is identified with thinking that does not engage with the other or excludes the other a priori – that generates a praxis crisis; thus, praxis has to be included in both the crisis analysis and the crisis response. Since the philosophical crisis and the resolution that this research explores concern the self/other relationality, both the crisis and the solution cannot be focused exclusively on abstract theoretical reflection. Instead it needs essentially to include a concrete practical situation. Hence, this research considers the Holocaust as the humanitarian crisis that reveals a philosophical crisis, and which crisis awaits a response that is philosophical but with a concrete praxis objective. The Holocaust reflection, and the response that this research offers, are based on post-Holocaust literature, that has as its objective the analysis of the Holocaust from its ‘thought origin’ perspectives and the construction of thoughts and ideals that would both identify and resist any forms of other Holocaust possibilities. The post-Holocaust reflection presents the Holocaust as the tip of an iceberg that stands on a modern system of thought and praxis that permitted – and sometimes supported – the Holocaust ideology and execution.

The Holocaust hermeneutics – as employed by the post-Holocaust reflection – provides this thesis with an evaluation of the fallacies present within modern ideals, conceptions and praxes that made it possible for the Holocaust to be conceived and executed. A key philosophical fallacy that this research highlights is that within modernity it is possible to generate a thought construct that is exclusively built on the self’s conceptions and ideology, without necessitating the self/other dialogical engagement. This exclusion of the self/other engagement can lead to different forms of frame of thoughts that precludes the self from expanding her/his frame of thought, and instead it isolate the self into her/his own thought construct. The basis of the self/other non-dialogical engagement possibility is that modernity does not have a first philosophy that induces the self to engage dialogically with the other. The importance of first philosophy is that in the history of Western philosophy, first philosophy has a paradigmatic

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9 The term essential highlights that the inclusion of praxis is not accidental but it is an organic inclusion, which means that praxis in this research will be regarded as an integral aspect with the theoretical thinking.

10 The ‘thought origin of the Holocaust’ refers to the thinking and conceptual process that led to the conceptual development of the Holocaust first, and to execution of it later.

11 The term permitted refers also to the implicit or unwilling contribution to the execution of the Holocaust.
authority\textsuperscript{12} over the rest of the philosophical and other reflective constructs. Thus, the positioning of the \textit{self} and the \textit{other} dialogical engagement within the first philosophy debate offers alternative standards and ideals through which the engagement with the \textit{other} becomes central within thought constructs and praxes. This is in contrast to a modern predominant first philosophy\textsuperscript{13} based on an exclusive inward looking that is centered on the \textit{self}'s reflection and constructs – which the thesis will identify with introspection.\textsuperscript{14}

The research will explore first the Aristotelian and the Cartesian first philosophy to explain the role and function of first philosophy. Both first philosophies will show how first philosophy has a regulative role through which other philosophies and praxes will measure their operations and outcomes. The research identifies the reasons why both the Aristotelian and the Cartesian first philosophy are not adequate to respond to the crisis generated by modernity, which is identified as the possibility of having a thought construct that does not necessitate the dialogical engagement between the \textit{self} and the \textit{other}. A central aspect of the discussion is the different understanding of the \textit{other} that both first philosophies assume, and that different understandings generate different praxes of relationality between the \textit{self} and the \textit{other}. Accordingly, in the Aristotelian first philosophy, the \textit{other} is conceived as an abstract entity that transcends the human \textit{self} not only by being other to the \textit{self} but also by being non-human – identified by Aristotle as first mover\textsuperscript{15} – while the Cartesian first philosophy through its introspection construct of first philosophy, perceives the \textit{other} – identified as not the \textit{self} (cogito) – as an epistemological hindrance for the \textit{self}.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{12}Paradigmatic authority is when a frame of thought, happening or concept becomes a reference point for similar or other operations.

\textsuperscript{13}This modern predominant first philosophy the thesis associates with the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy. See Chap. 4. Sec. 7.

\textsuperscript{14}Introspection is the philosophical reflection through which René Descartes operates and formulates his first philosophy. Thus, introspection detaches the person from the world around her/him and, instead, focuses on the self’s speculative process.


Although Descartes has been attributed with a paradigmatic role in modern philosophy, the tendency of modern thought and praxes of excluding the other is not to be interpreted as consequential exclusively to the Cartesian first philosophy. Instead, the exclusion of the other in modernity is attributed to modern ideologies that have, in their vested interest, the non-dialogical engagement between the self and the other. The utilization of the Cartesian first philosophy constructs and conceptions by these modern ideologies is perceived as a philosophical justification for their ideological exclusivist (of the other) stance. The thesis explores how the notion of the self as identified by modern ideologies is distinct from the Cartesian self, since modern ideologies tend to interpret the self as a collective self that holds on a common ideological belief. What facilitates the holding together of the collective self is the modern phenomenon of coming together of individuals who are disengaged from their cultural and social context, and which phenomenon is identified by Hannah Arendt as masses.17

The thesis looks closely at what appears to be the congruency between modernist thought and the Cartesian thinking that is the suspicion of the other as a potential epistemological obstacle. It will show that the suspicion and eventually the exclusion of the other in modernist thought is not based on epistemological motives, as in the case of Descartes,18 instead, modernity is suspicious of the other rising because the other is positioned as the obstacle to the modern (ideological) understanding of progress.19 The post-Holocaust reflection will identify totalitarianism as the embodiment of the radical modern ideology that excludes the other by perceiving the other as nemesis to progress. Furthermore, though the post-Holocaust reflection I will identify the totalitarian perception of the other as nemesis to progress, as one of the Holocaust propaganda strategies to ‘justify’ the implementation of the Holocaust. Hence, my reflection on totalitarianism identifies, on the one hand, the consequences that the non-dialogical

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17 Arendt’s notion of masses refers to a coming together of people who are disengaged from one another and from any other social or cultural context. See, Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, New York: A Harvest Book, 1994. 159.


19 The modern propagandistic self-attribution of the notion of progress transforms the notion of progress into a synonym for modern values, ideals and practices. The synonymic interpretation of modernity with progress is supported by the propaganda discourse of merging modern ideological claims into scientific claims, which Arendt identifies with the notion of scientificality. See, Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 345.
engagement with the other can generate to both the self and the other, and on the other hand, the need for a first philosophy that is based on the engagement with the other, and that serves as a paradigm for both the philosophical reflection and for the praxis operations.

The construct of a first philosophy that is used in the thesis will be based on Emmanuel Levinas’ conception of ethics as first philosophy.20 Levinas breaks with the conception of ethics as a prescriptive and regulative ideal based on a universalistic law, and instead he perceives ethics as synonym for relationality with the other.21 Thus, Levinas’ ethics as relationality focuses on the instances and uniqueness (particularity) of the self/other relationship, which uniqueness includes the uniqueness of the event (time and space) in which the relationship is taking place, and the uniqueness of both the other and the self.

My manner of approaching the [ethics] question is, in effect, different. It takes off from the idea that ethics arises in the relation to the other and not straightaway by a reference to the universality of the law. The “relation” to the other man as unique – and in this way, precisely, as absolute other – would be, here, the first significance of the meaningful.22

Because Levinas perceives ethics as a quality of relationality through which the encounter with the other becomes an encounter that generates first meaning: “The encounter with the other offers us the first meaning, and in the extension of this encounter, we discover all the others.”23 Furthermore, meaning is expressed through the educational relational operations of teaching and learning. “To have meaning is to teach or to be taught, to speak or to be able to be stated.”24


21 Levinas’ conception of ethics is explained by the encounter with the other that develops into relationality. Thus, ethics is responsible for both the development of the encounter into relationality but also for the maintaining of the relationality. See Levinas, E. ed. Robbins, J. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. 48-50.


23 Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 160.

Thus, in Levinasian thought, the *self/other* encounter is perceived as *first meaning* that is situated in a *pre-philosophy*\(^{25}\) experience, which means that the *self/other* encounter is the source that generates other and many meanings and that no conceptual reflection and philosophy constructs can ever contain.

The Levinasian conception of ethics as a synonym for relationality makes ethics the best candidate for *first philosophy*, since the reflection with which ethics engages with are contiguous\(^{26}\) to the *pre-philosophy* experience of *the self/other* encounter. Moreover, the encounter with *the other* brings a new (diverse) experience to *the self* through which new philosophical reflections and praxes are developed and through which *the self* is motivated to act ethically – which in Levinas terms would mean to act relationally. Hence, the outcome that the encounter with *the other* generates is an educational experience for *the self*, which in turn generates more relationality with *the other*.

The key role that *first philosophy* holds in Western philosophical tradition, and the urgency for a dialogical engagement between *the self* and *the other*, motivate this thesis to advocate for *ethics as first philosophy*. Therefore, in this thesis, following Levinas, I will put forth ethics as first philosophy as a philosophy in a post-Holocaust setting that has the potential to develop two complimentary praxes: relational praxes between *the self* and *the other* and educational praxes that emerges from the encounter with diversity and the *newness*\(^{27}\) of *the other*. Levinas’ *ethics as first philosophy* reflection and the key concept that emerges from – as for instance *the face of the other, relation, election and responsibility for the other* – identifies the possibility of a *first philosophy* that centres on *the self/other* relationality. Furthermore *ethics as first philosophy* is

\(^{25}\) See Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 160.

\(^{26}\) The term contiguous denotes both distinctiveness and immediacy between ethics (as intended by Levinas) and *the self/other* encounter. Thus, although there is closeness between *the self/other* encounter and ethics (as relationality), it is not obvious that the former will evolve into the latter.

\(^{27}\) Newness is an experience of *the self* when the encountering with *the other* as other and new is not corresponding to her/his pre-encounter conceptual and praxes experiences.
perceived as an empowering force\textsuperscript{28} for defiance against any form of thought that aims to exclude the other.

A challenge that emerges at this point of the research, is that for ethics as first philosophy to engage with the many meanings that emerge from the first meaning (the self/other encounter) it necessitates a habitat\textsuperscript{29} through which the self and the other encounter can develop into a relationality that offers an educational experience for both the self and the other. Pre-Holocaust history\textsuperscript{30} shows that the self/other encounter neither ipso facto\textsuperscript{31} generates a dialogical engagement with the other, nor does it necessarily prevent exclusion of the other. Levinas himself notes that the self/other encounter does not necessarily generate relationality (ethics) since there is the possibility for the self relational (ethics) attitudes to be existentially paralyzed by what he defines as “the primacy of the same.”\textsuperscript{32} Thus “The primacy of the same” is an existential mindset, where the self cannot engage beyond the boundaries of her/himself. When the self is in this mindset, all the self can do is perpetuate her/himself through governmental and education deals and practices. Thus, an education that seeks mainly to perpetuate a domineering ideology becomes indoctrination. Levinas identifies this act of self-perpetuation by generating sameness that is the self divulgation of the self’s own ideals and practices (selfhood), where possible. Therefore, sameness becomes the boundary that keeps the other at bay (excluded) from the self, because “the primacy of the same” mindset perceives the other as a threat to the self’s identity and whatever the self stands for.

\textsuperscript{28} The empowering force that ethics as first philosophy offers is based on the relationality that it seeks with the other; thus, an important operation that ethics as first philosophy performs is to support direct or indirect confrontation with anything that hinders the relationality with the other.

\textsuperscript{29} The notion of habitat in this context refers to a dialogical space that incentivizes, stimulates, and nourishes (supports), the development of the self/other relationality.

\textsuperscript{30} In pre-Holocaust Germany and Poland there is enough historical evidence that Jews lived in a peaceful convivial situation with the rest of the German and Polish population. Despite the fact of this pre-Holocaust conviviality, the systematic Holocaust project of excluding the other from the self through dehumanizing, marginalizing and annihilating the presence of the other was implemented. See Geras, N. The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political Philosophy After the Holocaust, (New York: Verso, 1998), 3-4.

\textsuperscript{31} Ipso facto the Latin term for direct consequence or effect of.

\textsuperscript{32} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
As the thesis shows, modernity incubate in it the Holocaust possibility,\(^{33}\) which is based on a form of thinking – mentioned earlier – where the other is not engaged with and in some cases excluded a priori, and which is supported by a spiritualized first philosophy and an understanding of the self as first cause. Thus, modernity becomes the ideal habitat for the rise of “the primacy of the same,” and which consequently jeopardizes the development of the self/other encounter into relationality. Subsequently the jeopardy of the development of the self/other relationality generates a learning paralysis because all the self can do in “the primacy of the same,” situation is to make education a propaganda operation, with the intention of promoting the self own thoughts and ideals, thus, excluding education from engaging with novelty and newness that emerges from the encounter with the other.

Therefore, the thesis will argue, without a habitat that has both the ability to counteract Holocaust possibility and to engage with the other as other, the latent potential of the self/other encounter will not emerge as first meaning, and will not generate the meaningful experiences expected by ethics as first philosophy. This habitat is instrumental, on the one hand, to break with the vicious circle of sameness, and, on the other, to innovate dialogical conceptions and praxes for more engagement and relationality with the other. A main premise of this research is to identify the ideal habitat – that functions also as a precursor\(^ {34}\) – for ethics as first philosophy, and which habitat is identified as first hospitality.

The philosophical and praxis reflection make use of Derrida’s philosophical concepts around the praxis of hospitality. Thus, Derrida’s notions of sanctuary, unconditional and conditional hospitality, hospitality as ethics and hospitality as culture will be utilized in the reflection on first hospitality. The objective of first hospitality is to support the emergence of the self and the other relationality (ethics), which lies latent within the self/other encounter. The support that first hospitality offers for the development of the self/other relationality functions as an

\(^{33}\) See. Chap. 3. Sec. 6.

\(^{34}\) The notion of precursor in this context is to identify that one of the essential roles of first hospitality is to set the mindset for relationality.
infrastructure through which the operation of ethics as first philosophy is developed to its full potential, to becoming educable grounds for both the self and the other. Therefore, first hospitality offers a dialogical habitat through which the meaningful experience that is generated during the encounter between the self and the other is developed into an educable experience. Since the self/other encounter is situated in a pre-philosophical experience, for the self/other encounter to evolve into relationality, first hospitality has to offer a habitat that motivates and supports the self to engage with meanings that are new and other (diverse) to the self, which might also conflict with the self's own ideals and conceptions.

Four important features (qualities) will be identified within first hospitality that makes first hospitality the ideal habitat to motivate and support the development of the self/other encounter into the self/other relationality. Subsequently, this relationality will also offer educable experience for both the self and the other. The first feature is that first hospitality is a practice that resonates with the ontological nature of the human being. The ontology of first hospitality follows the ontological tradition of perceiving the human being as a relational being – as for instance the Aristotelian ontology – but it also further its understanding of relationality by adding a quality of relationality; the relationality with the other.

The research will show how the praxis of first hospitality is one that emerges from elementary developmental needs of the human person to engage with the other, that is other (different) from the self, and without which the self's development is stunted. First hospitality brings to light this relational ontological quality of the human being. The second feature is that first hospitality operates on two diverging but complimentary ideals of hospitality, defined by Derrida as

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35 The etymology of infrastructure that is to be a foundation/base for the emerging structure explains the operation of first hospitality as a foundation/base for the development of the self/other relationality.

36 The use of numbering is not used to mark sequential and/or hierarchical differences but as an identification mark of different first hospitality features.

37 The ontology of first hospitality follows the ontological tradition of perceiving the human being as a relational being – as for instance the Aristotelian ontology – but it also further its understanding of relationality by adding a quality of relationality; the relationality with the other.

38 Diverging implies the different objectives that unconditional and conational hospitality. Although the diverging of objectives creates a tension during the hospitality operation, this divergence does not imply opposition of objectives.
unconditional and conditional hospitality.\textsuperscript{39} Unconditional and conditional hospitality generate two different objectives within the operation of hospitality. The former is motivated by a futuristic ideal of hospitality practices, while the latter is motivated by the accommodation of the present hospitality situation. Thus, these two objectives motivate the praxes within first hospitality to engage and to accommodate in the present, the newness and otherness of the other, which in turn generates future relational possibilities between the self and the other.

A third and equally significant feature of first hospitality in the development of the self/other encounter into relationality, is that first hospitality is initiated by the agency of the other, which agency will be defined using Levinas’ notion of chosenness.\textsuperscript{40} The chosenness of the self by the other – through which the other requests to be hosted by the self – when welcomed by the self, becomes a form of recognition of the other as agent. Thus the recognition of the other as agent by the self sets the tone for the self/other relationality, which relationality is built on the self/other agentic recognition. The chosenness of the self by the other initiates on important fourth feature: the alternation of the subject and the object within first hospitality. Thus, in first hospitality the roles of host and guest are not fixed but alternate. What will be identified as the cause for the host/guest alternation is the alternation of welcome between the self and the other.

This thesis argues that the self/other encounter, when developed within a first hospitality experience, becomes not only a relationship but also an educable\textsuperscript{41} occasion – that is founded on dialogical relationality. The educable qualities of first hospitality emerge from the symbiotic relation between the ethics, epistemology and politics that first hospitality generates when welcoming the other. The ‘welcome of the other as guest’ in first hospitality moves ethics, epistemology and politics into a symbiotic relationality, thus, distinguishing itself from different modern philosophical trends, where ethics, epistemology and politics are perceived as non-relational, or even conflicting operations. This thesis will highlight how first hospitality when implementing its first – identified as ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – generates a situation


\textsuperscript{40} See Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 65-6.

\textsuperscript{41} In this context educable refers to the learning and teaching potential/occasion within a happening.
where ethics, epistemology and politics operate in symbiotic relationality, and which in turn generate an educable experience through which the self and the other alternate teaching and learning roles.

The first hospitality educability creates the right habitat through which education is experienced as a dialogical event. The development of education as a dialogical event materializes in first hospitality due to the proximity that both the self and the other experience with each other in first hospitality. The experience of each other’s proximity triggers, in both the self and the other, an awareness of each other’s otherness (diversity); subsequently, the awareness of otherness induces the self and the other into a state of wonder – which is also identified as an aspect of the aporia experience. The experience of aporia (aporetic) is instrumental in inducing the subject to question her/his certainties, and thus, allowing for a dialogical relationality, characterized by willingness for learning – between the self and the other – to develop. The willingness for learning that aporetic experience generates when the subject is confronted with the other’s otherness in first hospitality is motivated through the awareness of one’s own unfinishedness.

The Greek term aporia refers to a state of being associated with perplexity and wonder, which induces the subject into a reflective mode.

In relation to this context I view ‘certainties’ as constructs that appear objective and obvious for the person that abides by them. Although these certainty constructs reside mainly as a conceptual ideal they always impact the praxis.

In my view ‘willingness for learning’ denotes openness for learning from the diversity of the other. Thus, learning becomes an activity formulated on two intertwined operations, passive observation (looking at) and active exploration (looking for).

The other’s otherness in this context refers to the mutual otherness that both the self and the other experience when relating with one another.

For Freire unfinishedness is a condition of every living creature. The distinction between human beings and other living creatures is that human beings have the potential of becoming aware of their own unfinishedness. When awareness of unfinishedness happens, the potential for education (educability) takes place. See Freire, P. Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civil Courage, New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC, 2001. 54-5.
Education does not make us educable. It is our awareness of being unfinished that makes us educable. And the same awareness in which we are inserted as eternal seekers.  

The interest that first hospitality generates in the self to keep relating with the other – and thus, keeping the teaching/learning relationality with the other – is mainly based on the ethical responsibility for the other, that the self experiences when facing the other within a first hospitality context. The interest that first hospitality generates in the other can be better explained through its etymology that is ‘being in between.’ Therefore first hospitality generates an existential situation where the host is motivated to transcend her/his self needs and situation to welcome the other, by engaging with the other’s needs and situation. The ethical responsibility for the other that is triggered in the self in first hospitality is attributed to ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ that first hospitality generates.

‘The epistemology of the other as alterity (different)’ won’t be enough to motivate ethical responsibility in the self, since it might trigger other feelings contrary to ethical responsibility, for instance, hostility. Therefore, ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ combined, is what instigates the ethical responsibility for the other which expressed through the political act of sanctuary. Sanctuary is a safe space that hospitality, in some cases, offers when the guest is under threat for being other (diverse). In the context of this research, sanctuary will be identified with the political action that first hospitality generates to preserve the other as other. Thus, sanctuary is a key concept that explains how first hospitality generates a dialogical space through which both the self and the other can express their otherness without being a threat to each other and without being threatened by others – as third party. Sanctuary is the political operation motivated by ‘ethical responsibility for the other’ – which in turn is motivated by ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’. Through sanctuary, a safe dialogical space is created where both the self and the other can freely communicate their


48 Teaching and learning in first hospitality is always present in a mutual operational form; that is the roles are not fixed but alternate.
otherness to each other – and which communications of otherness take place through teaching/learning operations.

A major conclusion of the thesis is that the implications generated by first hospitality educability have infrastructural qualities that can support the realization of robust democratic ideals and praxes. Robust democracy is when a democracy is not only a governing system but also a way of life that includes every relational and social aspect of the human life. Thus robust democracy is based on values of equity, social justice, agonism, public interest and common good, rather than equality of opportunity, multiculturalism, antagonism and excessive individual interests. A key quality through which first hospitality offers an infrastructural support for the establishment of a robust democracy is that ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – as intended and practiced by first hospitality – is based on a dialogical relationality with the other, who is considered an agent. Hence, first hospitality by being a habitat for the self/other relationality, both questions, and offers an alternative for, ideologies and/or governing systems, where their objective is the exclusion of the other – as in the case of totalitarian regimes or other modern isms. Furthermore, first hospitality, by generating a relationality with and a perception of the other as agent, also confronts and exposes implicit exclusion operations of the other ideals and practices that appear benevolent, such as inclusive education49.

The arguments and reflections of this research are based on different authors that have contributed mainly to the fields of humanities and social sciences. The main structure of this research is held on reflection and analysis of authors considered to be primary sources and is supported by a number of secondary source authors, which function as commentators for the primary sources literature. Primary sources are works of literature that are considered original to the authors reflection, while secondary sources or commentators are mainly based on reflections and analysis of other authors that are considered as primary source. Both the primary and secondary source literature serve as a catalyst through which the research argumentation and analysis is constructed. The main collection of authors used will be identified as post-Holocaust

49 Since inclusion, as perceived by educational context (inclusive education), is initiated by the educational institutions there are chances that it does not prioritize the engage with the other as agent, therefore it has the potential of perpetuating ideals and praxes that excludes the other.
thinkers; that is, those authors whose reflections are linked to or motivated by the historical tragedy of the Holocaust. The post-Holocaust thinkers will especially support the analysis of the relationship between modernity and the Holocaust, which reveals how modernity has the potential of constructing its thoughts and praxes on a premise that excludes the other. The response that this research gives to the exclusion of the other is the development of a notion that functions as a niche through which the self/other encounter becomes relationality. The philosophies of Arendt, Derrida, and Levinas provide this research with concepts and thought constructs through which first hospitality is formulated. First hospitality objective positions the hospitality act of ‘the welcome of the other’ into a first cause that generates other causes, which causes are characterized by their relational and educable qualities.

The significance of this thesis merges with the significance of the theoretic construct of first hospitality – which construct originates from this thesis. Although first hospitality is a theoretical construct, its significance is not exclusively conceptual, because its significance is integrated with the praxes operation of hospitality. Thus, the thesis offers first hospitality, on the one hand, as a thinking paradigm through which thinking and concepts are constructed on the relationship and engagement with the other, and on the other hand, it is also offered as a praxis habitat that motivates and sustains the development of the self/other encounter into relationality. By being a thinking paradigm of and a habitat for the self/other relationality, first hospitality generates a dialogical space where the self relates with the other as agent.

The dialogical space of first hospitality is also identified in the thesis with the educable operation that first hospitality generates, where first hospitality educable significance is in developing the encounter with the other into an educational occasion. The final objective of the thesis will show how the educational occasion that is generated through first hospitality educability has, as implications, the support and the implementation of a robust democratic ideal and praxis, which will be identified with ‘education for democracy.’ Furthermore first hospitality focus on ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ generates a unique situation where ethics, epistemology and politics operate on a symbiotic relationality. This symbiotic

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50 Thinking paradigm refers to the operation of first hospitality in being a thinking model/prototype for different thinking constructs and operations, which includes philosophy ones.
relationality is unique because its operation has the faculty of identifying, confronting, and neutralizing any form of *Holocaust possibility*. Finally, the thesis gives us a glimpse of the influence and significance of *first hospitality* when its educable operation is contrasted with *inclusive education* ideals and praxes. Hence, *inclusive education* comes out not only as inadequate to relate with *the other* but also as harboring within it its operation traces of *Holocaust possibility*. What this thesis will propose at the end is the ideal and praxis of *welcoming education* which operates on *the self’s* perception of and relationality with *the other* as agent.
1.1 Outline of Chapter Development

Chapter II \(^{51}\) is titled *A Historiography of First Philosophy: From Primacy of First Cause to Absolute Supremacy of the Self*\(^ {52}\) serves as a historical background for the philosophical argument of the thesis. The focus of this chapter is to introduce the notion of *first philosophy* through its Western historical development. Thus this chapter will present a short historical account of the Aristotelian development of *first philosophy*, starting from Aristotle’s teleological understanding of *first cause* to the medieval neo-Aristotelian theological interpretation of *first cause*. Furthermore the notion of wonder will also be introduced as a motivator of the human intellect to transcend *the self*, and to engage with *the other* as *first cause*. The chapter furthers the historical development of *first philosophy* into modern context, starting from the humanistic philosophical climate that functioned as a setting for modernity. Humanism is the momentum that encouraged the scientific world to break loose from a subservient position to external authorities – for instance religious authorities – and to start assuming a more autonomous operation. At the heart of this break-away is the Copernican revolution.

René Descartes noticed that since Classical and Medieval philosophy was constructed on an epistemological construct that complimented the science of the time, the Copernican revolution required a new *first philosophy* reflection based on a new epistemological quest. An important highlight of this chapter is the development of *the self* as the Cartesian exclusive epistemological agent that has generated a new philosophical paradigm shift; from the anthropocentrism of the humanism to the Cartesian self-centrism – which will be associated with modernity. The reflection of Descartes influence on modernity is based on Arendt’s reflection; where accordingly, the Cartesian thought has introduced in modernity a new philosophical operation, which she identifies with the notion of *introspection*.\(^ {53}\) *Introspection*, according to Arendt, starts to associate *first cause* with *the self*, consequently, disengaging *the self* from a dialogical relationality with *the other*.

\(^{51}\) It is second chapter because the first chapter in the thesis is the current one: introduction

\(^{52}\) For distinguishing purposes chapter titles are bold while sections and subsections are within single quote marks.

Using Arendt is reflection on modernity this chapter will also show how the use of introspection in modernity generates a form of thinking that omits wonder for a more active form of thinking, thus transforming the self’s thinking into both the subject and the object of the thinking operation. Introspection will be held responsible for generated a situation in modernity where science is utilized as thinking standard (measurement) through which the other’s newness (otherness) is controlled and regulated. The chapter will conclude by reflecting on Arendt’s thoughts on how the Cartesian self offers the right climate to exclude the agency of the other because of the Cartesian shifting of the Archimedean point from the other, external to the self. Furthermore it will attribute to modern science a central role in sustaining a conception of the self that is Archimedean point, through which the self is entitled to categorize, assimilate and utilize the other for the enhancement of the self exclusive agency.

The third chapter The Holocaust Problematizing Modernity starts by furthering the previous chapter argument on the use of science in modernity to control and regulate thinking, through which thinking is measured with a standard: is the scientific method. The notion of progress is perceived as responsible for implementing science as control and regulator for thinking within modernity; thus, the notion of progress is perceived as a label through which forms of thinking are either included or excluded. The concept of science ergo progress in modernity and its impact will be reflected upon using Theodor W. Adorno’s and Arendt’s thoughts. Modern use of the notion of progress is perceived as both as a self-branding operation – to identify its adherents – and as a labeling act through which individuals and groups are included in or excluded from the modern/progressive category. For Adorno, the notion of progress is ideological because it has a philosophical construct with the intent of generating social influence.

Given that modernity is a movement that does not have a domineering system, structure or ideology and it is able to fluctuate according to the different contexts – which Bauman identifies as “liquid” or “fluid modernity”54 – it becomes hard to identify ideology within modern trends. An apparatus that will be considered as a means through which ideology will be identified is history, this consideration is based on Arendt, understanding of ideology, as always having a historical intent. Bauman’s identification of the origin of modern history (modernity) with the

54 See Bauman, Z. Liquid Modernity, 2.
rapture (dichotomy) of time and space, and with time assuming a leading agency over space – through the speed that modern technology generates – will be the key tool to trace the historical intent and subsequently the ideology behind it. In short whoever holds agency over the use of speed and the way speed is operated will indicate the ideology in power; the ideology that is the ruling and practiced ideology.

A colonizing ideology that will be identified in this chapter is nationalism, where nationalism will be perceived as an ideology embedded with what Arendt identifies as race thinking. The problem that emerges from nationalism that generated the rise of racism – identified as modern phenomena – is who to identify as citizen; that is, who to include or exclude from citizenship rights and privileges. Though nationalism attributes citizenship to ‘sameness’ based on shared common territory, language, culture – sometimes religion – because of the fluidity of movement that technology has generated, modernity started to associate citizenship with another form of ‘sameness’ – that of race. The final objective of this chapter is to identify the Holocaust as the ideal diagnostic instrument to analyze the influence of modernity on the self/other relationality, engaging with Bauman’s use of the “window”55 metaphor and his question of “what the Holocaust has to say about us]?56 will be the tools that will help to unravel the Holocaust as a diagnostic tool to interpret modernity. The Holocaust will especially expose the inadequacy of modern ethics and epistemology for the development of a dialogical relationality between the self and the other. In conclusion, the Holocaust will be used as a “sociological laboratory”57 to explore the Holocaust possibility (still) present within modernity.

The fourth chapter Looking Through the Holocaust “Window”: Tracing the Holocaust Possibility within Modernity starts by showing the relationship between the holocaust possibility and indifference. This chapter will use Bauman association of modernity with time/space dichotomy to analyze the relevance of Holocaust possibility within contemporary social settings, since the time/space dichotomy is even more pertinent in contemporary society.

56 Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, 5.
57 See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, 12.
Thus, contemporary society will be perceived as a full participant in the Holocaust possibility. Bauman’s recommendation for Holocaust vigilance \(^{58}\) is perceived as imperative and as an ongoing operation, where the historical Holocaust \(^{59}\) is employed as a compass for vigilance. Historically, the origin of the Holocaust is rooted in the rise of totalitarian movements in Germany (Nazism) and Italy (Fascism). National Socialist (Nazi) and Fascist totalitarian movements were the ideal and the means through which Holocaust thinking could be implemented into a horrific historical reality. Thus, the analysis of the rise of totalitarian movements in Chapter four will be crucial for the study of the historical Holocaust and the Holocaust possibility, this analysis will be using mainly Arendt’s literature.

What will be perceived as the ideal setting for totalitarian movements to emerge is what Arendt identifies as the modern phenomena of masses, which masses, according to Arendt, constitute “atomized and isolated individuals,”\(^{60}\) thus, making the individual more susceptible to totalitarian movement influence. The possibility of creating an imaginary world is that totalitarian ideology presents itself as having the key of history where everything is explainable through their ideology. Consequently, the imaginary world for totalitarian movements, become the solution that they imposed on history. Imperialism and nationalism will be also perceived as other modern ideologies that have traces of totalitarianism in their ideology and operation. A common operation that modern ideologies of imperialism, nationalism and totalitarianism have in common is the exploitation of speed to the advantage of their rise of their ideology and rule, which includes implementation of race thinking ideology – which eventually will develop into racism.

Chapter Four explores how totalitarian movements utilize first philosophy’s notion of first cause but its understanding and use is distinct from the first philosophy. The notion of first cause utilized in totalitarian movements is adopted from the modern scientific and technological

\(^{58}\) See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, 242.

\(^{59}\) The historical Holocaust refers to the Holocaust happenings within Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and within the Nazi occupied territories. It also refers to the historical events that lead to the rise of the Holocaust ideology, which subsequently paved the way for the historical Holocaust.

\(^{60}\) Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 323.
understanding of cause, where the relation of cause and effect is immediate, direct and with a specific (singular) possibility. Thus, the reflection around the use of first cause in totalitarian movements will be perceived as a specimen to analyze the use and understanding of first cause and first philosophy within modernity. The three notions of otherness, desirability and aporia are central in the formulation of first philosophy’s first cause – which will be also termed as three conceptual gears – but are absent in totalitarian movements concept of first cause. Chapter Four’s final objective is to show how the engagement or exclusion of physicality in first philosophy has influenced the rise and/or fall of isms ideology within modernity. The end of Chapter four highlighting how Descartes introspective is based on the avoidance and the exclusion of interaction with physicality has also generated a new first philosophy identified as spiritualized first philosophy. Thus, since modern isms- including totalitarianism – are based on a purely speculative ideal of how the world is and how it should be, this chapter will conclude by arguing that the Cartesian spiritual first philosophy offers the right philosophical climate in modernity for isms to emerge, which include totalitarianism.

The fifth chapter, The Post-Holocaust Quest: A First Philosophy for the Other is the beginning of the thesis formulation of a post-Holocaust response to the crisis caused by the modernity utilization of the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy as a support for isms. The Holocaust – as a consequence of idealism without physicality engagement – calls for a post-Holocaust response where the engagement with physicality becomes a priority. The history of Holocaust will indicate the praxis of ‘welcome of the other as guest’ as a response that jeopardizes the Holocaust possibility, because hospitality engages with the human being as a complex and whole being. This chapter will introduce the reflections of Emanuel Levinas on the significance of the ‘welcome of the other’ in a post-Holocaust situation through his understanding of ethics as first philosophy. The ‘welcome of the other’ in Levinas’ thought is crucial because it has the faculty of transcending any form of dichotomized thought, and instead engages with the other as a whole – where the wholeness of the other in Levinas’ thought is identified with the face.

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61 Physicality means the information that is perceived through the sensorial experience and observation.

62 Isms refers to ideologies and ideological thinking.
The chapter explains the other’s function (role) as first (cause) for the self by expanding on Levinas’ notions of before, election and totality. Furthermore, Chapter Five recognizes a continuity in Aristotle, Descartes and Levinas’ understanding of first cause, in that the three philosophers perceive first cause as other from the self, while at the same time still relational to the self. The distinction that will emerge between Levinas understanding of first cause and that of Aristotle’s and Descartes’ is that for Aristotle and Descartes first cause is an abstract (non-human) entity while for Levinas first cause is the encounter with the face of the other that is fully human. In perceiving the encounter with the face of the other as first cause, Levinas’ first philosophy breaks with both the Aristotelian metaphysical abstraction operation and with the Cartesian epistemological introspection operation. Hence, Levinas places first philosophy operation within a new setting, which he identifies with ethics: ethics as first philosophy. In Levinas thought ethics is a synonym for relationality, therefore first philosophy for Levinas becomes the context in which relationality between the self and the other happens.

An important role that Levinas attributes to ethics as first philosophy is its relation with pre-philosophy. Pre-philosophy over-used is the self’s meaningful experience that emerges from the self/other encounter, and which meaningful experience is so intense and complex that cannot be articulated textually and/or conceptually. Levinas understanding of ethics as a synonym for relationality positions ethics as first philosophy in an advantageous situation – from other first philosophies – because it has the aptitude of engaging with the pre-philosophy experience that emerges from the self/other encounter. “The encounter with the other” in Levinas is the key – the first meaning – through which the self engages with the meanings that emerge from pre-philosophy experience. The challenge that the self/other encounter generates for the self through an encounter with new meanings is perceived as educational. Hence, for Levinas the contrary (non-educational) is when the self cannot relate with the other and is stuck in perpetuating her/his own meanings – what Levinas identifies as a state of “primacy of the same.”

63 Meaningful stands for an experience that is full of meaning, thus imparting a plurality of meanings within a singular instance.
64 Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 160.
65 Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
This chapter will also introduce the reflection on hospitality through Levinas’ use of the metaphor of the home to explain the paradigmatic shift of when the other is welcomed by the self. Thus, the home goes from being a space where the self’s identity and agency are asserted and protected, during the act of welcome – which Levinas will identify as hospitality – becomes a space where the other’s identity and agency are asserted and protected. According to Levinas the act of hospitality is so influential that it induces the self into recollection, where recollection motivates the self to separate her/himself from the other to understand better her/his responsibility for the other as a host. The reflection on recollection will proceed with a contrast with Descartes understanding of seclusion, where seclusion will be understood as an act of isolation of the self from the other. Unlike Descartes’ seclusion, the Levinasian recollection is a temporary separation from the other for a more effective engaging operation (responsibility) with the other.

This chapter through the Levinasian understanding of the encounter with the face of the other as first and the understanding of ethics (as relationality) as first philosophy will offer a conceptual leverage on which the theoretic construct of first hospitality can be built. The leverage will be also perceived as the problem of bridging the self/other encounter into relationality – as intended in Levinas ethics as first philosophy – and which the thesis will confront in offering first hospitality as the response for the problem. An important concept and operation that is introduced in this chapter, and will be accompanying the rest of the thesis, is that hospitality, in Levinas’ thought, is perceived as initiated by the agency of the other through the act of chosenness of the self to welcome the other. In brief, the rest of the thesis will expand on how the self, when confronted with the chosenness (agency) and otherness (uniqueness) of the other, is motivated to be responsible for the other, and to respond effectively to the other’s chosenness by welcoming the other as guest – and which welcome has educable qualities.

The sixth chapter **First Hospitality: A Prologue for Educability** formulates the theoretic construct of first hospitality, which includes the explanation of how first hospitality operates, and how it functions as educability. The objective of this chapter has a threefold response. First, it shows how first hospitality is the response to the problematic of not having a habitat that

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guarantees the development of the self/other encounter into the self/other relationality – as intended in the Levinasian ethics as first philosophy. Secondly, it offers first hospitality as post-Holocaust response that has the power of neutralizing hospitality possibility. Finally, this chapter will show how first hospitality through its first cause – ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – generates a unique symbiotic relationality between ethics, epistemology and politics. Subsequently this symbiotic relationality generates a unique educable setting, identified with first hospitality as educability.

First hospitality will be perceived as an activity that emerges from the other’s agentic act of chosenness of the self and from the self’s response of responsibility for the other. This chapter will introduce Derrida’s thoughts on hospitality, where he resonates Levinas in the use of the home metaphor to explain hospitality; however, he inverts the usage of the metaphor in that he perceives hospitality as a paradigm for home, instead of the home being a paradigm of hospitality. Derrida presents hospitality as an ethical ideal that is intrinsic to the human makeup (ontology). Hence he perceives hospitality as a hermeneutic tool through which human ideals and actions are valued and interpreted. A distinction is drawn between Derrida’s and Immanuel Kant’s ideal of hospitality. Derrida’s concept of hospitality opposes the Kantian one since for him hospitality cannot be legally binding, instead Derrida perceives a legal contingent to the hospitality operation, and not the other way round. For Derrida the primacy of hospitality over law is based on its immediacy to the context of the self/other encounter, in other words immediate to the now and the instance of the historical happening of the self/other encounter. While law, for Derrida, is an expression of past experiences and historical events, it does not necessarily take in consideration the present history of the self/other encounter.

Chapter Six will further how hospitality operates using Derrida’s notions of conditional and unconditional hospitality. The possibility for hospitality to be present in the now of the self/other encounter is motivated by what Derrida identifies as unconditional hospitality. Thus, unconditional hospitality motivates the self to engage with the present (history) and resisting any form of prejudiced caused by past history. Derrida is also aware that hospitality cannot reside in an ideal but it has to concretize in a time and space (history) situation (context) for hospitality to be effective. Therefore, hospitality needs to engage with conditions and limitations that the self/other encounter is subject to; he identifies the concretization of hospitality with the
notion of *conditional* hospitality. Thus, for Derrida, hospitality operation emerges from the *aporetic* tension created by the *unconditional* and *conditional* features of hospitality.

The second section ‘From Ethics to Hospitality’ broadens the operation of *unconditional* and *conditional* hospitality by explaining how the pragmatic and empirical *conditional* hospitality, and the idealistic and *meta unconditional* hospitality come together through an *aporetic* relationship in a hospitality practice. In the Derridarian literature, hospitality is the subject of another merging, that of ethics and ontology; the former explores the ‘how to be’ question while the later explores the ‘what is being’ question. In Derrida’s thought, both questions merge because both ethics and ontology are based on an understanding of a human being that is relational. Derrida identifies the notion of relationality with hospitality, thus his understanding of ethics as relationality is furthered with his bold statement “ethics is hospitality.”67 This section will further its reflection by identifying three Derridarian concepts that explains *how* and *why* “ethics is hospitality,” while the rest of the section is segmented in three subsections, where each subsection will explore a concept.

The third section of Chapter Six ‘Hospitality as First’ is pivotal in this thesis because it explores what kind (concept) of hospitality practice is needed for hospitality to be the grounds on which (ethics) relationality is developed between the *self* and the *other*. The section will identify this form of hospitality as *first hospitality*. Therefore, *first hospitality* will be identified as the hospitality that engages with the meanings that emerge from the *self/other* encounter (*pre-philosophy*), and subsequently this engagement becomes an educational experience for the *self*. Thus engagement with *pre-philosophy* is the distinguishing feature of *first hospitality* from *first philosophy*. This section will also argue that the association of *first cause* in *first hospitality* with ‘the welcome of the *other* as guest,’ generates a distinct epistemology and ethics relationality, which will be identified as symbiotic relationality. The section will be divided in two subsections in which *first hospitality* will be explored as a *means operation* and as a *first* for symbiotic epistemology and ethics; both *means operation* and *first* are two different aspects of the same *first hospitality* operation.

What will be considered as the motivator of the engagement of the other that educates in *first hospitality* is a unique ‘epistemology of the other’ present in *first hospitality* experience, which will be identified as ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability.’ Paulo Freire’s notion of *unfinishedness* will be utilized to explain the operation that transforms ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ in *first hospitality* educability. Both alterity and vulnerability discloses the *unfinishedness* of both the other and the self; alterity making the self aware of her/his own *unfinishedness*, while vulnerability demonstrates the other as in need of the self. In short *unfinishedness* positions both the self and the other in a relational and engaging situation, which subsequently exposes them to the *newness* and *otherness* that each bring into the relation.

The final objective of Chapter Six is to show how *first hospitality*’s *first*, ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ generates a symbiotic relationality between epistemology, ethics and politics. A special focus will be given at the end of the chapter to the notion and operation of politics in *first hospitality* emerges from the symbiotic relationship of ethics and epistemology, while politics in *first hospitality* will be conceptualized utilizing the traditional hospitality concept of *sanctuary*. The objective of *sanctuary* (politics) in *first hospitality* is the preservation the other as other, and subsequently the preservation of the self/other relationality. Sanctuary – as *first hospitality* politics – is to preserve the other from the third party\(^\text{68}\) influence – that run the risk of annihilating the *otherness* of the other by imposing sameness. The political act of preservation of the other through *sanctuary* in *first hospitality* is not only beneficial for the other and the self/other relationality, but eventually it has benefits for third party (social and political benefits). Conclusively the political response (sanctuary) in *first hospitality* has as its objective the creation of options and possibilities for the preservation of the other as other and for the protection and emergence of the self/other relationality.

The main focus of the seventh chapter *First Hospitality Implications: Education for Democracy* is to give a small sample of the concrete implications that emerges from *first hospitality* operations. Since *first hospitality* implications emerge from its *first cause* operation

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\(^\text{68}\) Third party can be identified with a group/community, society in general or an individual that is indirectly involved in the self/other relationality but is not the self neither the other.
that is ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ the implications are themselves perceived as causes that themselves generate other causes. The implications that this chapter will focus on merges the notions of education with democracy, where both notions in this thesis are perceived as being causes for other causes. Thus, education, which is approached in this thesis as a dialogical event that operates on the alternating operation of teaching and learning between the self and the other, is a cause for other causes by offering learning occasions through which diverse people can engage with one another to generate possibilities in form of creative and critical praxes. While democracy is a cause for other causes by offering divers dialogically participatory spaces for its citizens, through which governing possibilities are generated in form of polices and sharing of resources.

Both education and democracy are perceived as generators of possibilities, but for democracy to generate its possibilities - which are based on citizens being both informed and to engage dialogically – to execute ideals that are of common interest and good, democracy necessitates an education that can support its ideals and praxes. This chapter focuses on how first hospitality educability offers the educational space that support democracy; thus, the term ‘education for democracy.’ Chapter Seven starts by showing how first hospitality, through its focus (first) of its operation on ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ can nourish (what is perceived in this thesis as) the democracy infrastructure, that is freedom of expression. Furthermore this chapter shows how schools, when assuming first hospitality’s first as their mission statement, they can create educational spaces where teaching and learning alternates between the students and the teachers. Thus, the school contribution extends beyond the school’s wall by being participant in and at the service of a democratic community/society.

Chapter Seven will also show how first hospitality generates an education for democracy because it generates educational implications that go beyond the school walls. Hence, since first hospitality generates educational ideals and praxes that are constructed on ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ education becomes a habitat (educability) that generates a habitat of converting the encounter with the other into an educational occasion. The conclusive section of this chapter, offers a critique to the notion of inclusive education, by showing that the lack of

69 The mission statement of a school is the basis and the motivation of the schools educational operations.
relationality/engagement with *the other* as agent makes of *inclusive education* as the education that is not ‘for democracy.’ At the sometime, Chapter Seven proposes *welcoming education* as the ideal and praxis of education that is generated by *first hospitality* and where *the other* is engaged with as other and as agent. Conclusively, *welcoming education* germinates educational operations and institutions where *the other* is related with as both learner and teacher; consequently, *the other*’s otherness and agency becomes sustenance for democratic ideals and praxes.

Chapter Eight, **Conclusion** has a two-fold objective: on the one hand, it gives a short summary of the significance and the uniqueness of the thesis, and on the other hand, it gives direction to motivate further research in the thesis topic. The significance and uniqueness of the thesis, merges with the significance and uniqueness of the thesis theoretic construct that is *first hospitality*. Thus, Chapter Eight identifies the significance and uniqueness under four themes, or in other words four *first hospitality* operations. First it offers *first hospitality* as a thinking paradigm, where thinking is produced and is processed through *the self/other* relationality. Secondly *first hospitality* is proposed as a habitat that sustains and induces the development of *the self/other* encounter into relationality – as the Levinasian *ethics as first philosophy* intends. Thirdly it identifies *first hospitality* as educability for democracy through which the encounter with *the other* is perceived and related with as an educational occasion. The final and conclusive section of this thesis shows how this thesis can be offered as a compass through which researchers, policy makers, educational practitioners and others, can identify both the object and the method through which they can explore (and engage with) diversity. The last section of Chapter Eight reflects on ‘work in progress’ and shows how *first hospitality* is a ‘call for more’ research, study, reflection and praxes and how this ‘call for more’ is also an intrinsic significance and quality of *first hospitality.*
Chapter 2. A Historiography of *First Philosophy*: From Primacy of First Cause to Absolute Supremacy of the Self

The term *first philosophy* has been re-merging, contested and reconsidered in the history of Western Philosophy since Aristotle first developed it. The major Western philosophical paradigm shifts, from a classical and medieval to a Modern one, has been marked by a *first philosophy* paradigm shift. Both classical and medieval philosophy maintained an Aristotelian conception of metaphysics as *first philosophy*; while modern philosophy shifted its understanding of *first philosophy*, through René Descartes’ reconstruction of *first philosophy* as epistemology.\(^{70}\) Though the divorce of modern *first philosophy* from the classical/medieval one has deeply affected contemporary understanding of *first philosophy*, a return back to Aristotle’s *first philosophy* is necessary for the understanding of *first philosophy*’s influence on modern and contemporary conceptions of *self/other* relationality.

The main objective of this chapter is to show how *absolute supremacy of the self* has generated ethical and political consequences that have altered *the self/other* relational dynamics within modernity. The final section will discuss how *the other*’s agency within a Cartesian *first philosophy* framework is annihilated by *the self*’s exclusive epistemological agency. Accordingly, the Cartesian conception of *first philosophy* as epistemology is interpreted as a habitat for the *a-relational self*, which *a-relationality* is expressed through the limitation or exclusion of *the other*’s agency. Finally, both the rise of the modern Cartesian *a-relational self* and the annihilation of *the other*’s agency will be read as a historiography for modern history.

### 2.1: First *First Philosophy*

Aristotle claimed that *first philosophy* has both the function of being the beginning on which philosophical and scientific reflection is established but also the end function: as the objective

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\(^{70}\) See Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy*, First Meditation: AT VII 17.
for which philosophical reflection aims. Aristotle’s book, *The Metaphysics*, reflects upon the beginning and end of beings through the exploration of their *cause*. In this context beginning is interpreted as motivator and end is interpreted as goal. *Cause* in Aristotle is not only the reason for which something *is* but it is also the animating force behind the actions and the changes of the being. *The Metaphysics* develops a mechanism that works on three different but complimentary reflections, which aims to explore the *cause*. The first reflection is a scientific one that explores *how* things are and *how* things behave and act. The second reflection is ontological, where the objective is to explore *what* things are, which leads to the third reflection, the metaphysical reflection, through which Aristotle explores the *why* of their being and their actions. Though Aristotle is very hierarchical both in the method – in which he places metaphysical reflection as the apex of philosophical reflection – and in his ontology – there are beings that are superior to others – his hierarchical structure is based on an intricate organic relationality.71 That is, for Aristotle, beings exist (be) due to their relationality with one another.

The organic relationality in Aristotle is expressed in a language of value and necessity of every entity within the cosmological structure/order. Thus Aristotle’s reason of attributing a primacy for metaphysical reflection (as *first philosophy*) is related to his understanding of metaphysics as the tool through which *cause* is explored. In Aristotle thought, *cause* is the reason through which cosmological entities keep their unity and relationality with one another. In exploring the *cause*, Aristotle the philosopher acquires a cognitional and hermeneutical sensitivity through which the cosmos is understood and thus, related with.

And understanding and knowledge pursued for their own sake are found most in the knowledge of that which is most knowable; for he who chooses to know for the sake of knowing will choose most readily that which is most truly knowledge, and such is knowledge of that which is most knowable; and the first principles and the causes are most knowable; for by reason of these, and from these, all other things are known, but these are not known by means of things subordinate to them. And the science which knows to what end each thing must be done is the most authoritative of science, and more authoritative than any ancillary science; and this end is the good in each class, and in general the supreme good in the whole of nature. Judged by all the tests we

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71 Aristotle’s hierarchical language is situated within a mechanical structure where every being and action has its importance and value for the benefit of the all. What places a being or an action at the top of Aristotle’s hierarchical structure is the complexity of its being and actions. Hence Aristotle’s hierarchical language in *The Metaphysics* is primarily based on an ontological structure and not on political power relationality.
have mentioned, then, the name in question falls to the same science; this must be a
cience that investigates the first principles and causes; for the good, i.e. that for the
sake of which, is one of the causes. 72

In The Metaphysics, Aristotle speaks of the objective of first philosophy as to explore being as
being. In some translations the as in “being as being” is translated into the Latin word qua i.e.
being qua being. With the concept as being Aristotle distances himself from a Platonic
metaphysical interpretation, which is based on a dualistic and binary opposing world of matter
and forms. In Plato, the human being is called to abandon a less important materialistic world
for the contemplation of a more ‘important’ spiritual one. 73 Here, it is worth noting that the
superiority of the spiritual world over the physical one in Plato is based on his distinction of
reality and appearance; where the formal is associated with reality and the latter with
appearance. Contrary to Plato’s dualistic metaphysics, Aristotle’s metaphysical objective is to
understand and relate with the everything of the being. Hence the term as being – also translated
using the Latin term qua being – for Aristotle includes everything that is both intrinsic
(constituent) and relational to the being. Thus, as being denotes both the is of the being – which
includes the being’s physicality – and the being in relation with both the being’s immediate
surroundings and with the cosmic whole. Aristotelic philosophy bestows a complimentary
activity between the individuality of the being and the everything of the being. Accordingly,
Aristotle’s first philosophy aims to reflect on the question of being as being by viewing being
both as distinct (other/different) from other beings but also as in relation with other beings. As
he put it:

There is a science which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to
this in virtue of its own nature. Now this is not the same as any of the so-called special
science; for none of these others deals generally with being as being. They cut off a
part of being and investigate the attributes of this part – this is what the mathematical
science for instance do. Now since we are seeking the first principle and the highest
causes, clearly there must be some thing to which these belong in virtue of its own
nature. If then our predecessors who sought the elements of existing things were seeing
these same principles, it is necessary that the elements must be elements of being not


Aristotle’s first philosophy (metaphysics) is clearly conceptualized as first because its objective is the exploration of primary causes. Primary causes include both the what that generates the being of a being and the objective towards which beings move towards. Accordingly, Aristotle’s first philosophy considers primary causes both as beginning and as end (as objective) of beings. In his first philosophy Aristotle transforms the ontological (being) reflection into catalysis through which he explores the teleology of beings. In other words, Aristotle in his first philosophy develops a teleology that explores the end (as objective) of being through the exploration of the beginning of being. Hence, metaphysics is first philosophy for Aristotle, because through metaphysics the human intellect explores the telos of beings. Through the deduction process, Aristotle’s metaphysical reflection reaches its teleological apex with the notion of unmoved mover as absolute first; thus the primary cause of all other causes.

Although Aristotle regards the quest for first philosophy as the summit of human intellectual activity – because of its closeness to first principle – it does not exclude the importance of other causes.


intellectual and inter-relational activities. On the contrary, *first philosophy* not only values, but also necessitates, a relational and organic context on which *first philosophy* is developed. The relational and organic context of the Aristotelic *first philosophy* is based on two equally important premises. The first premise is the inter-disciplinary dependence of *first philosophy*. *First philosophy* – as metaphysics in Aristotle – depends on other scientific and disciplinary fields. Furthermore *first philosophy* could be attained as a final stage of the academic quest. Before one has to be fluent in other scientific and academic disciplines to access *first philosophy*. Aristotle perceives the role of other sciences, for instance mathematics, logic and geometry, as precursors and propaedeutic to *first philosophy*. Though Aristotle recognizes a superiority and primacy of *first philosophy* over other disciplines, nevertheless he also acknowledges that *first philosophy* is dependent on and complementarity with other scientific fields.

We must state whether it belongs to one or to different sciences to inquire into the truths which are in mathematics called axioms, and into substance. Evidently the inquiry into these also belongs to one science, and that the science of the philosopher; for these truths hold good for everything that is, and not for some special genus apart from others. And all men use them, for they are true of being *qua* being, and each genus has being. But men use them just so far as to satisfy their purposes; that is, as far as the genus, whose attributes they are proving, extends. Therefore since these truths clearly hold good for all things *qua* being (for this is what is common to them), he who studies being *qua* being will inquire into them too. And for this reason no one who is conducting a special inquiry tries to say anything about their truth or falsehood, neither the geometry nor the arithmetician. Some natural philosophers indeed have done so, and their procedure was intelligible enough, for they thought that they alone were inquiring about the whole of nature and of being. But since there is one kind of thinker who is even above the natural philosopher (for nature is only one particular genus of being), the discussion of these truths also will belong to him whose inquiry is universal and deals with primary substance. Natural science also is a kind of wisdom, but it is not the first kind. – And the attempts of some who discuss the terms on which truth should be accepted, are due to a want of training in logic; for they should know these things already when they come to a special study, and not be inquiring into them while they are pursuing it. Evidently then the philosopher, who is studying the nature of all substance, must inquire also into the principles of deduction.\(^{76}\)

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\(^{76}\) Aristotle, *The Metaphysics*, Γ.3, 1005a-b. 19-8
The second premise that situates *first philosophy* within an organic and relational framework is that the *first* in *first philosophy* transcends the *self* as individual. The self-transcending action in Aristotle’s *first philosophy* has two important properties. The first property (a) is the collective or the social on which the quest for *first philosophy* subsists. Aristotle associates this social inter-dependency with necessity of teaching, which becomes the noble skill through which knowledge is shared and processed from one person to the other. Hence, teaching for Aristotle reaches its ultimate goal in the wisdom sharing of *first philosophy*. The necessity of teaching and learning for the attaining of *first philosophy* is in concordance with Aristotle’s book *The Politics*, where he defines and describes the human being as a “political animal.” Aristotle’s definition of “political animal” is based on his organic anthropological understanding of the human being; where his perception of the human being becomes inseparable from the human social context. Emphatically, for Aristotle, the human being is intrinsically a co-dependent being that necessitates a community and a social life. “The proof that the state is a creation of nature and prior to the individual is that the individual, when isolated, is not self sufficient; and therefore he is a part in relation to the whole.” Aristotle’s emphasis on the teaching and learning of *first philosophy* is intrinsic to his understanding of the human being as a “political animal.” Accordingly, the pursuit of *first philosophy*, for Aristotle, cannot be a solitary and individual activity; instead, it necessitates a social and relational setting.

The second self-transcending property (b) of *first philosophy* is situated in the way Aristotle conceived the function of the human mind and intellect. Cognition and perception, for Aristotle, is initiated and instigated by a happening that is external to the *self*. The Aristotelian conception of human mind as *tabula rasa* (blank slate or writing tablet) makes the human intellect dependent on an *external other* – that can be either an object or an event – which triggers human intellectual activity. “What it thinks must be in it just as characters may be said to be on a writing-tablet on which as yet nothing actually stands written: this is exactly what happens with

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thought.” In *The Metaphysics*, Aristotle notes that in the encounter of the human intellect with the *external other* – as for instance natural phenomenon – *the self* goes through an experience of “wonder.” For Aristotle – as for Plato – “wonder” becomes both the first reaction in *the self* when encountering the *external other* \(^79\), but also the initiator that moves human intellectual activity.

For this is an experience which is characteristic of a philosopher, this wondering: this is where philosophy begins and nowhere else. \(^81\)

That it is not a science of production is clear even from the history of the earliest philosophers. For it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophize; they wondered originally at the obvious difficulties, then advanced little by little and stated difficulties about the greater matters, e.g. about the phenomena of the moon and those of the sun and the stars, and about the genesis of the universe. \(^82\)

The pursuit of *first philosophy* – that is founded on the two premise of self-transcendence and interdisciplinary dependence – is linked to the Aristotelic anthropology, which perceives the human being as an organically relational being. Thus, the human being is perceived as codependent on objects that are external to *the self* (subject). Therefore, *first philosophy*, for Aristotle, can only be actualized within a codependence and social framework since it presupposes a relational conception of human beings. The *telos* function of *first philosophy* creates an ecological situation where academic disciplines are appreciated in their different functions, and which functionality is valued in a relational context. For Aristotle, *first philosophy* is somewhat present in the initial *wonder* that motivates any human intellectual activity and reaches its full realization in *first philosophy*. Conclusively *first philosophy* for

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80 *The other* that is not self defined also as *other other*.


Aristotle becomes the organic grounds on which human inter-relational and interdisciplinary activities are motivated and actualized.

Aristotle’s *first philosophy* attributes a primacy\(^{83}\) to *first cause*. The notion of primacy assumes a quality that is unique to the subject that holds primacy but it also assumes relationality with *the others* that have no primacy. The use of primacy in this context is to explain both the unique role that *first cause* has and to highlight the unity and relationality that *first cause* generates between causes, within an Aristotelic framework. Furthermore, the notion of primacy highlights the role of *first cause* as originator of other causes, but it also assumes a continuous dynamic relationality between *first cause* and other causes. The Aristotelic use of inductive process – where observation starts from immediate (secondary) causes and progresses to the *first cause* – demonstrates the particular role of *first cause* within an organic relational mechanism of causes. Aristotle’s bottom-up *first philosophy* observation is based on causality observation: while appreciating the diversity of causes and elements Aristotle always perceives the causes and the elements within an organic relationality of causes. Aristotle, in attributing a primacy to *first cause*, also denotes a functional and particular role of *first cause* within the cosmic order. Yet, Aristotle’s primacy of *first cause* also assumes a necessity of all the other elements and causes. Therefore, the Aristotelic primacy of *first cause* implies an organic relation and inclusive conception of causes, which find their significance in the *first cause*. Conclusively, the first of *first cause* assumes and necessitates a second of a *second cause* and *vice versa*.

The introduction of Aristotelic philosophy in medieval Europe – due to the influence of Islamic philosophical texts – had generated a Judeo-Christian way of reading and of applying *first philosophy*. Aristotle’s *first philosophy* teleological language started to be interpreted in a more theological language. The reason for this change was the new medieval Judeo-Christian context that read and interpreted Aristotle’s philosophy through the Judeo-Christian categories. Consequently, Aristotle’s *first philosophy* was merged within a revelatory and theological

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\(^{83}\) The notion of primacy assumes a quality that is unique to the subject that holds primacy but it also assumes relationality with *the others* that have no primacy. The use of primacy in this context is to explain both the unique role that *first cause* has and to highlight the unity and relationality that *first cause* generates between causes, within an Aristotelic framework.
language. The medieval theological reading of Aristotle’s first philosophy identified the Aristotelic primary cause with God. Thus, the Aristotelic unmoved mover telos within the medieval schools is explicitly identified with God who is creator, sustainer and end (object) of creation. Thomas Aquinas is one of the leading medieval Christian scholars who promoted this Aristotelic merging with theology. In his Summa Theologica, Aquinas’ theological claims are based on Aristotle’s first philosophy conceptions and argumentations. Aristotle’s first philosophy is clearly noticeable in Aquinas’ first section of the Summa Theologica where he debates the existence of God.

Since nature works for a determinate end under the direction of a higher agent, whatever is done by nature must be traced back to God, as to its first cause. So also whatever is done voluntarily must also be traced back to some higher cause other than human reason or will, since these can change and fail; for all things that are changeable and capable of defect must be traced back to an immovable and self-necessary first principle…

With the axiom philosophia ancilla theologiae – philosophy as the handmaiden of theology – Christian medieval thought shifted from the Aristotelic positioning of philosophy as served by science to philosophy as a servant of theology: This is because philosophy started to assume a new mediating role for theology and science. Thus, where, for Aristotle, the thought hierarchy was structured on two disciplines – philosophy (as first) and sciences (as second) – the medieval Christian thinkers structured their thought on three disciplines: theology (first), regarded as the apex of human thought, and, philosophy (second) started to be considered as mediator between sciences (third) and theology. Although the European medieval schools welcomed the Aristotelic first philosophy principles and arguments, they shifted its context from philosophy to theology. This shift was associated with the medieval perception of theology as the science that is most immediate to first cause. Hence, though the medieval way of reading and interpreting first cause has caused some significant alterations in the conception of first philosophy – as for

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instance the association of *first cause* with the Judeo-Christian God – the organic and relational framework of *first philosophy* remained a point of continuity with its Aristotelic origin.

### 2.2: Modern First Philosophy

The introduction of Aristotelic literature in medieval Europe had many different effects in the European academic climate even though, at first, Aristotle’s works were absorbed and utilized by theological schools. Ironically, it was the same introduction of Aristotelic literature that motivated the European academic world to distance philosophy from theology. This new humanistic movement flourished through the establishments of universities. Universities offered a new and more autonomous setting – free from the medieval overwhelming religious rule – for the reading of Aristotle’s works. Consequently, humanism was responsible for shifting Western philosophy from the classical and medieval *Theo-cosmological* approach to a more *anthropocentric* one. This new philosophical climate initiated a movement that led philosophy to distance itself more and more from any religious authority. Consequently philosophy started to conceptualize its methods and theories distinctively from theological statements.

That shift was sparked in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with the West’s rediscovery of a large corpus of Aristotle’s writings, preserved by the Moslems and Byzantines and now translated into Latin. With these texts, which included the *Metaphysics*, the *Physics*, and *De Anima* (On the Soul), came not only learned Arabic commentaries, but also other works of Greek science, notable those of Ptolemy. Medieval Europe’s sudden encounter with a sophisticated scientific cosmology, encyclopaedic in breadth and intricately coherent, was dazzling to a culture that had been largely ignorant of these writings and ideas for centuries... His [Aristotle] masterly summation of scientific knowledge, his codification of the rules for logical discourse, and his confidence in the power of the human intelligence were all exactly concordant with the new tendency of rationalism and naturalism growing in the Medieval West...

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85 A Theo-cosmological approach is a frame of thought that establishes its concepts and ideals on a beyond (the human being) notion. It also perceives of humanity both as having a unique role and value within the cosmos, but also of being another creature in relation to other creatures.


87 Tarnas, R. *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the ideas that have shaped our world view*, 176.
This new humanistic movement was empowered through ‘epistemological certainty’ that regarded human sensorial experience as certain and reliable source of information. This ‘humanistic confidence’ was expressed by the different Renaissance ambitious artistic, scientific and philosophical accomplishments, which were marked by a triumphalist discourse around human nature. An expression of this new humanistic movement is manifested in the innovative artistic expressions of the Renaissance, which was inspired and motivated by the philosophic objective of humanism. Renaissance art moved away from the sole religious objective of medieval art to an art that centered its objective on the exultation of human nature. For instance, the representation of the human body in Renaissance art becomes a means to exult and to emphasize human nature.

The humanistic promotion of ‘epistemological certainty’ was crucial for the scientific breakthrough led by Nicolaus Copernicus in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It was within this Copernican scientific revolution that the humanistic ‘epistemological certainty’ became a contradiction. On the one hand, Copernicus was moved to explore the cosmos because he was a firm believer in the scientific method generated by the humanistic ‘epistemological certainty’. On the other hand, it was his scientific discovery that challenged the ‘epistemological certainty’ and introduced a new paradigm of ‘epistemological doubt’.88

The Copernican paradox was later philosophically embodied by René Descartes’ reflections. Descartes’ philosophy intensifies this new epistemological climate by creating a philosophical reflection founded on and initiated by doubt and suspicion. His epistemological discussion is led by an overwhelming emphasis on ‘epistemological illusion’. His objective was to find a sure answer for his epistemological doubts and suspicion; thus he initiates his epistemological quest by comparing the deceptive epistemological state of mind with dreaming. Dreaming, for Descartes, becomes a metaphor of what the mind experience when it is epistemologically deceived.

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88 Tarnas, R. *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the ideas that have shaped our world view*, 248-54.
How often my sleep at night has convinced me of all these familiar things – that I was here, wrapped in my gown, sitting by the fire – when in fact I was lying naked under the bedclothes. – All the same, I am now perceiving this paper with eyes that are certainly awake; the head I am nodding is not drowsy; I stretch out my hand and feel it knowingly and deliberately; a sleeper would not have these experiences so distinctly. – But have I then forgotten those other occasions on which I have been deceived by similar thoughts in my dreams? When I think this over more carefully I see so clearly that waking can never be distinguished from sleep by any conclusive indications that I am stupefied; and this very stupor comes close to persuading me that I am asleep after all. 89

For Descartes, doubt becomes essential for epistemology because, according to him, it is doubt that triggers epistemological reflection, which he perceives as the ‘presiding operation’ in philosophy. When referring to epistemology as a ‘presiding operation’ in the Cartesian thought it means that epistemology is considered as both an introductory and a foundation for other human activity. Epistemology is introductory because only when epistemological reflection is acquired can a human being engage in other activities, and it is foundation because other human activities are dependent on the outcomes of epistemological reflection. Descartes indicates this presiding operational aspect of epistemology in the introduction of his First Meditation.

It is some years now since I realized how many false opinions I had accepted as true from childhood onwards, and that, whatever I had since built on such shaky foundations, could only be highly doubtful. Hence I saw that at some stage in my life the whole structure would have to be utterly demolished, and that I should have to begin again from the bottom up if I wished to construct something lasting and unshakeable in the sciences. 90

Descartes’ philosophy has an element of continuity with the humanistic thought. His philosophical quest has, at its core, an anthropological interest and centricity that is present in humanism. Accordingly, Descartes’ groundbreaking statement of “cogito ergo sum” is situated

89 Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, First Meditation: AT VII 19.
90 Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, First Meditation: AT VII 17.
in the human operation of thinking.\textsuperscript{91} However, his innovation is in shifting his philosophical quest from humanity in general (as human nature) to the self as individual, thus shifting the axis of his thought from anthropocentrism to self-centrism. A good image of this new individualistic shift is when Descartes claims, in the First Meditation, that for him to construct his epistemological reflection, he had to ‘withdraw’ from society and go into ‘seclusion’.

\begin{quote}
The moment has come, and so today I have discharged my mind from all its cares, and have carved out a space of untroubled leisure. I have withdrawn into seclusion and shall at last be able to devote myself seriously and without encumbrance to the task of destroying all my former opinions.\textsuperscript{92}
\end{quote}

The embodiment of the Copernican paradox in Descartes is especially perceived in his new way of writing philosophy. Bertrand Russell explains: “Descartes writes not as a teacher, but as a discoverer and explorer, anxious to communicate what he has found.”\textsuperscript{93} Descartes’ new way of writing philosophy influenced by the scientific climate of his time transforms philosophy into a paradoxical space where knowledge and doubt coexist both as a tension and as complimentary. In Cartesian philosophy, the knowledge and doubt tension becomes the habitat for epistemology. Descartes attributes to the self the exclusive agency that has the potentiality of processing this knowledge and doubt tension into epistemology. The Cartesian attribution to the self of the exclusive epistemological agency is complimentary to Descartes’ conception of thinking/doubting self as the only attestable existential certainty. For Descartes, the existence of the thinking or doubting self is impossible to contradict or to deny since doubt justifies its own existence. Ultimately for Descartes the existence of the doubting self becomes a self-evident truth, since the mere fact that the self doubts, the self has to exist.

\textsuperscript{91} “Thinking is used by Descartes in a very wide sense. A thing that thinks, he says, is one that doubts, understands, conceives, affirms, denies, wills, imagines, and feels – for feeling, as it occurs in dreams, is a form of thinking. Since thought is the essence of mind, the mind must always think, even during deep sleep.” Russel, B. \textit{History of Western Philosophy}, 517.

\textsuperscript{92} Descartes, R. \textit{Meditations on First Philosophy}, First Meditation: AT VII 18.

\textsuperscript{93} Russel, B. \textit{History of Western Philosophy}, 511.
But I convinced myself that there was nothing at all in the world, no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. Did I therefore not also convince myself that I did not exist either? No: certainly I did exist, if I convinced myself of something. – But there is some deceiver or other, supremely powerful and cunning, who is deliberately deceiving me all the time. – Beyond doubt then, I also exist, if he is deceiving me; and he can deceive me all he likes, but he will never bring it about that I should be nothing as long as I think I am something. So that, having weighed all these considerations sufficiently and more than sufficiently, I can finally decide that this proposition, ‘I am, I exist,’ whenever it is uttered by me, or conceived in the mind, is necessarily true.94

Descartes’ first philosophy is different from the Aristotelic first philosophy in both method and outcome. The first and more noticeable distinction is that Descartes’ epistemological quest becomes the sole focus of his first philosophy. While Aristotle’s first philosophy does include an epistemological reflection, this reflection is based on the cognitional method through which human intellect perceives and relates with the first cause. Therefore, for Aristotle, epistemology is the subject through which the object of first philosophy is attained. Descartes, by transforming his first philosophy into an epistemological treatise, merges both the subject and the object of first philosophy and thus transforms first philosophy into epistemology. Thus, first philosophy and epistemological reflection in Descartes becomes an identical operation.

Descartes’ first philosophy epistemological focus causes a change in the relation of first philosophy with other academic disciplines. For Aristotle, first philosophy has a function of knowing the first cause – the cause of all the other beginnings – consequently Aristotle places first philosophy (the knowing of first cause) at the end of the academic intellectual quest. Descartes breaks with this Aristotelic tradition of positioning first philosophy as the end (goal) of the intellectual quest; instead, Descartes positions first philosophy as the first activity. Ultimately Descartes conceptualized his first philosophy as a preliminary and introductory function for any other academic, scientific and educational activities.

Even though modernity is marked with a deep desire for exploration and discovery – which has generated many groundbreaking scientific developments – Descartes ironically swayed modern philosophy into a more inward looking and introverted propensity. Russell claims that

94 Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, Second Meditation: AT VII 25.
Descartes’ primacy of *thoughts* has created a new way of doing philosophy which led to the development of modern philosophy: “The decision, however, to regard thoughts rather than external object as the prime empirical certainties was very important, and had a profound effect on all subsequent philosophy.”\(^95\) According to Russell, Descartes’ philosophy brought back to modern philosophy, a Platonic dualism that managed to endure in the West through a particular Christian interpretation and practice,\(^96\) notwithstanding that this is contested by a more Aristotelic interpretation of Christianity, as for instance, by Aquinas. Descartes picks on this Platonic dualistic tradition and transforms it into a habitat for his philosophical reflection. Descartes’ dualism initiated a new modern philosophical movement that acknowledged the possibility of doing philosophy by considering the outer world just as a mere springboard that instigates a more speculative and self-referential conception of philosophical practice.\(^97\)

The philosophy of Descartes… brought to completion, or very nearly to completion, the dualism of mind and matter which began with Plato and was developed, largely for religious reasons, by Christian philosophy. Ignoring the curious transactions in the pineal gland, which were dropped by the followers of Descartes, the Cartesian system presents two parallel but independent worlds, that of mind and that of matter, each of which can be studied without reference to the other.\(^98\)

The different philosophical methodology that Aristotle and Descartes use to construct their *first philosophy* reflection is very telling in regard to the quality of relationality they have with the outer world. For Aristotle *first philosophy* is processed through abstraction from data, which different disciplines provide to the philosophical reflection; thus, the Aristotelic process of abstraction is constructed on a *trust* and *certainty* assumption with regards to the human

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95 Russel, B. *History of Western Philosophy*, 519.
96 One of the most important theologians and writers who have merged Platonic philosophy with Christian faith is St Augustine, who is also considered in the West as the Father of Western Christianity. Augustinianism and its Platonic reading of Christian faith have influenced many mainstream theological and philosophical schools within Western tradition. See Russel, B. *History of Western Philosophy*, 518-9.
97 As for instance rationalism, where philosophy is constructed on theoretical and mathematical self-evident truths. See Tarnas, R. *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the ideas that have shaped our world view*. 276-8.
98 Russel, B. *History of Western Philosophy*, 519.
sensorial experience through which data is both possible and assuring. On the contrary, Descartes’ *first philosophy* is initiated on a suspicion and doubt assumption in regard to human senses. Thus, for Aristotle the object – *first cause* – of *first philosophy* is external to the human self and distinct from the human self, while in Descartes’ philosophy the object of *first philosophy* is internalized in the self’s epistemological reflection.

Descartes inaugurates a new *first philosophical* trend that is *self-centered*: hence the doubting self becomes the starting point and the axis on and through which philosophical reflection is formulated. Descartes’ reflection on God in the meditations is very telling about his new *self-centered* way of *first philosophy*. While maintaining a Judeo-Christian concept of God as an originator and destiny of creation (including humanity), Descartes, in the *Meditations*, assumes a new starting point on which his reflection about God is constructed: the self. “[W]e must necessarily conclude that, from the bare fact that I exist, and that in me there is an idea of a supremely perfect being, that is God, it is proved beyond question that God also exists.”

Hence Descartes’ reflection on the existence of God breaks with the medieval outward gaze – as for instance creation or revelation – and instead he considers the existence of God by associating it with the self’s own existence. Thus, Descartes abandons a revelatory starting point – where the Other (God) initiates a process of revelation, to reveal God’s *Own Otherness* to the human being – and instead, embraces an internalized understanding of revelation that is associated with the self own existence.

Descartes’ *self-centered first philosophy* has shifted not only from the medieval *Theocosmological* discourse, but also from the humanistic *anthropocentric* discourse. Descartes writes the *Meditations* in a vortex structure, where he creates a conceptual funnel that absorbs everything into the self. In this vortex structure, Descartes includes everything that his mind can possibly doubt: the world around him, God, his own body and his own existence. This vortex structure is empowered and driven by doubt, whereas its epicenter is the *doubting doubter*, that is the self. Descartes’ vortex structure transforms the self into the sole hermeneutical source for

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99 *Self-centered* is not intended as a metaphor for egoism, but as a philosophy that initiates and constructs its thought around the self as individual.

100 Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Third Meditation: AT VII 51.
every other being, including the being of the *self*. Hence, the human is no longer celebrated and held high as it once had been in humanistic thought but rather hurled into the *Cartesian doubting self* vortex.

First, since I know that whatever I clearly and distinctly understand can be produced by God such as I understand it to be, then if I can clearly and distinctly understand one thing without another, this is sufficient for me to be certain that the one is distinct from the other, since they can at least be produced separately by God. By what power this separation comes about makes no difference to the judgment that the things are distinct. Next, from the very fact that I know I exist, and that for the moment I am aware of nothing else at all as belonging to my nature or essence, apart from the single fact that I am a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence consists in this alone, that I am a thinking thing. And although perhaps (or rather certainly, as I shall shortly claim) I have a body, which is very closely conjoined to me, yet because, on the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am a thinking and not an extended thing, and, on the other, a distinct idea of the body, in so far as it is only an extended and not a thinking thing, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body, and can exist without it.  

Aristotle’s and Descartes’ *first philosophy* diverge not only in content and objective but also the modality through which they construct their *first philosophy*. Aristotle’s method is always inclusive, thus, he is always looking for commonalities between the beings and their causes. Hence, Aristotle constructs his *first philosophy* on a process of clustering and gathering beings – including human beings – into groups. For instance, he introduces his book, Alpha of Metaphysics, by claiming that “all men by nature desire to know” and later he describes animals as possessing senses, making a distinction between those that posses the faculty of memory and those that do not. “By nature animals are born with faculties of sensation, and from sensation memory is produced in some of them, though not in others.” Aristotle’s conclusion of *first cause* is formulated on an assimilation of a common element that he observes in all beings, that is movement, which can also be interpreted as change. Thus, the *unmoved mover* for

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101 Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Sixth Meditation: AT VII 78.
102 Aristotle, *The Metaphysics*, A.1. 980a.25
103 Aristotle, *The Metaphysics*, A.1. 980a.25
Aristotle, is not only identified as initiator of all causes but it is also the common cause, which includes and brings together all other causes.

Unlike Aristotle’s, Descartes’ first philosophy is constructed on a successive process of exclusion and elimination, motivated as always by doubt. Thus, Descartes’ earlier statement that he is “distinct from his body, and can exist without it”\textsuperscript{104} can only be explained within his reasoning of exclusion and elimination.\textsuperscript{105} Doubt compels Descartes’ speculation to atomize and dissect every preconceived concept that he had, until he reaches the limit of his atomizing in the self. Descartes introduces his First Meditation by questioning his own perception, and thus, dichotomizes and distances himself from the world around him. He ends his last and Sixth Meditation by intensifying his atomizing reach; he concludes with a dramatic dichotomization of himself from his own body. The mind/body dichotomy leads Descartes to the conclusion – since the mind (identified as the self) is the sole entity that he could not dichotomize – that the mind is superior over all other worldly creatures and entities.

Now, first of all, I observe here that there is a great difference between the mind and the body, in this respect, that the body of its nature is endlessly divisible, but the mind completely indivisible: for certainly, when I consider the mind, or myself in so far as I am purely a thinking thing, I can distinguish no parts in myself but understand myself to be a thing that is entirely one and complete. And although the whole mind appears to be united with the whole body, I know that nothing is therefore subtracted from the mind. Nor can the faculties of willing, perceiving by the senses, understanding, and so forth be said to be parts of the mind, since it is one and the same mind that wills, that senses, and that understands. On the other hand, however, no bodily or extended thing can be thought by me that I cannot mentally divide into parts, without any difficult; and I therefore understand it is divisible. This point alone would suffice to show me that the mind is altogether distinct from the body, if I did not yet sufficiently know this for other reasons.\textsuperscript{106}

\textsuperscript{104} Descartes, R. \textit{Meditations on First Philosophy}, Sixth Meditation: AT VII 78.

\textsuperscript{105} The exclusion and elimination process of the physicality – sensorial experience – is only conceptual, that is Descartes pushes himself to create a thought construct that is self evident and does not necessitate the physical/sensorial evidence.

\textsuperscript{106} Descartes, R. \textit{Meditations on First Philosophy}, Sixth Meditation: AT VII 86.
Conclusively Descartes transforms *first philosophy* into an epistemological quest and constructs his philosophy around *the self as first cause*; the concept of primacy as used earlier for the Aristotelian *first cause* cannot be applicable for the Cartesian *first cause*. Aristotle’s *first philosophy* is not only a search for a *first cause*; he creates his *first philosophy* to show the relevance and relationality of *first cause* to other causes and entities. Thus Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* become somewhat of a linear and symbiotic relational process between causes: retaining *first cause* as the heart of this process. Aristotle’s *first philosophy* is based on a relational causality, which assumes that every cause has an important inter-referential role. Descartes’ *first philosophy*, contrary to Aristotle’s, positions *the self* as the sole referential point for every human and non-human activity. In this way, he transforms *the self* into the exclusive reference that gives meaning to any other being perceivable by *the self*. Though *the self* assumes the function of a *first cause*, in actual fact, *the self* becomes the *only cause*. Thus, *the self* in the *Meditations* becomes both the center through which *first philosophy* orbits its operation around.

2.3: From Exclusivity To Absolute Supremacy of *The Self*

Descartes initiated a first philosophy paradigm shift that became the *psyche*\(^{107}\) for modern philosophy. Hannah Arendt interprets this Modern Cartesian paradigm shift as a shift from the Greek sentiment of *wonder* – which presupposes an outward observation – to the Cartesian *doubt*. Arendt notices a similarity in the role that *wonder* played in Greek philosophy and culture with the role of the Cartesian *doubt* in Modern philosophy and culture. Although the outcome of *wonder* and *doubt* is different, for Arendt both notions have an animating and creative force that penetrates the life and activity of the two cultures. Thus, by comparing the omnipresence of *doubt* in Modern society and culture with the omnipresence of *wonder* in Greek society and culture, Arendt highlights the paradigmatic role of *doubt* in Modern philosophy and culture.

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\(^{107}\) The term *psyche* is used here to describe Descartes’ influence on modernity as philosophical construct for Modern thought and reflection.
Modern philosophy began with Descartes’ *de omnibus dubitandum est*, with doubt, but with doubt not as an inherent control of the human mind to guard against deceptions of thought and illusions of sense, not as skepticism against the morals and prejudices of men and times, not even as critical method in scientific inquiry and philosophic speculation. Cartesian doubt is much more far-reaching in scope and too fundamental in intent to be determined by such concrete contents. In modern philosophy and thought, doubt occupies much the same central position as that occupied for all the centuries before by the Greek *thaumazein*, the wonder at every thing that is as it is. Descartes was the first to conceptualize this modern doubting, which after him became the self-evident, inaudible motor which has moved all thought, the invisible axis around which all thinking has been centered. Just as from Plato and Aristotle to the modern age conceptual philosophy, in its greatest and most authentic representatives, had been the articulation of wonder, so modern philosophy since Descartes has consisted in the articulation and ramifications of doubting.108

*Wonder* and *doubt*, for Arendt, offer opposing directions and objectives for the philosophical quest. The philosophical paradigm of *wonder* assumes an external objective for the subject – the *self*. *Wonder* is the initial reaction of the *self* when encountering *newness*. *Newness* is an experience that goes beyond the immediate conceptual reach of the subject that is experiencing the *newness* of *otherness*. Accordingly, the notion of *wonder* situates philosophy in a relational and dependency state of *the other* – that is both different and new for *the self*. Hence, in a Greek paradigm of *wonder*, philosophy necessitates the encounter of *the self* with an external agency; that is *other* to *the self*. For Socrates, Plato and Aristotle the experience of *wonder* was so essential that they could not perceive a possibility of doing philosophy without *wonder*.109

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle shared the conviction that philosophy begins in wonder and reflects our needs and capacity to ask insightful questions about fundamental matters. Failure to make our feelings of wonder the occasions for inquiry, they thought, dooms us to ignorance and folly.109

According to Arendt, the moment Descartes’ philosophical reflection replaces *wonder* with a new paradigm of *doubt*, philosophy changes its focus and its way of relating with *the other*.


Arendt, while commenting on the Cartesian maxim *cogito ergo sum*, describes this modern Cartesian philosophical focus as *introspection*. *Introspection* becomes a modern way of thinking and doing philosophy that focuses on the thinking and doing (of philosophy) itself. Consequently, the subject of the Cartesian philosophy becomes the very same process and method of doing philosophy.

The famous *cogito ergo sum* (“I think, hence I am”) did not spring for Descartes from any self-certainty of thought as such – in which case, indeed thought would have acquired a new dignity and significance for man – but was a mere generalization of a *dubito ergo sum*. In other words, from the mere logical certainty that in doubting something I remain aware of a process of doubting in my consciousness, Descartes concluded that those processes which go on in the mind of man himself have a certainty of their own, that they can become the object of investigation in introspection.\(^{110}\)

Arendt’s description of Cartesian philosophy as *introspection* shows how the Cartesian philosophy is mainly focused on a method through which *first philosophy* and *first cause* are merged into the self’s epistemology. Thus, *introspection* positions the self as the exclusive philosophical agent, which means that the doing of philosophy is all dependent of the cogito – as conceived by Descartes – operation. Therefore, the maxim “*cogito ergo sum*” infers to the cogito (the thinking self) both a subjective and an objective operation within the Cartesian epistemological debate.\(^{111}\) The Cartesian maxim “*cogito ergo sum*” generates a conceptual situation where the self (cogito) and ontology (sum) are perceived as separate but furthermore, it places ontology in a subordinate and dependent situation to the cogito’s epistemology. Consequently, with the self’s sum (being) subordination to the self’s cogito, any other forms of sum (being) becomes included in the subordination to the cogito’s epistemology. As Russell observed, the Cartesian duality of mind and body had the function of subordinating the bodily to the cogito’s epistemology, in which subordination Descartes included his own existence (being).


\(^{111}\) Descartes inferring to the thinking self both subjective and objective operations means that the thinking self for the Cartesian philosophy is both the philosophical means (subjectivity) through which philosophical reflection is formulated on and the object (objectivity) toward which philosophical reflection is aimed to.
Descartes argues that the existence of sensible objects might be uncertain, because it would be possible for a deceitful demon to mislead us. We should substitute for a deceitful demon a cinema in technicolour. It is, of course, also possible that we may be dreaming. But he regards the existence of our thoughts as wholly unquestionable. When he says “I think, therefore I am,” the primitive certainties at which he may be supposed to have arrived are particular “thoughts,” in the large sense in which he uses the term. His own existence is an inference from his thoughts... In the context, what appears certain to him is that there is doubting...

The introspective mechanism of Cartesian philosophy operates through the premise that denotes an exclusive existential certainty to the self. Such premise allows doubt to question anything and everything except the doubting self (cogito), thus, allocating to the self an exclusive and privileged position. This Cartesian exclusivity and privileged dimension of the self is expressed in two different but complimentary modes. The first modality describes the arelational quality that the Cartesian self assumes, while the second modality explains the objective of the self’s relationality – that is the other – and the objectifying of the object by the subject – that is the self.

In his critical radicalism René Descartes did not hesitate to go beyond all common sense. Attempting to distinguish between knowledge and mere opinion – “mere” however commonsensical – he proposed to doubt whatever it was possible to doubt. In carrying out this proposal he did not shrink from doubting sense knowledge as such and in principle, thus committing himself (if but temporary) to an absurd – i.e., wholly non-commonsensical – solipsism. He then proceeded to doubt all rational knowledge, thus committing himself (if again but temporary) to what may well appear to be, for a thinker of any kind an absolute and absurd impasse. (How can one think the thought that calls into question the validity of all thought?) Yet this very radicalism rewarded Descartes with an insight that escapes the empiricist. The one thing that the philosopher could not doubt in his all-doubting solitariness was his own all-doubting activity itself, i.e., the existence of his doubting self. Never before or after in the

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112 Russell, B. Human Knowledge (London: Routledge, 1992), 188.

113 The metaphor the two sides of the same coin explains both the diversity and the complimentary of modalities through which the Cartesian exclusivity and privileged self is expressed.

114 The other includes everything that is not the Cartesian self, which comprises both the world, other human beings but also one’s own body.
The solitary experience is a physiological experience\textsuperscript{115} – which is also described as a feeling – of lowliness or aloneness. Thus, this solitary state of being fits the Cartesian exclusivity of the self, because the solitary experience transcends any physicality. Accordingly, there is an intrinsic distinction between a solitary state and a situation of isolation. Isolation is a physical situation of being excluded from the collective and the social dynamics, and can be either self-inflicted or socially inflicted. The experience of isolation is best explained through the notion of situation, since it denotes the subjective physical immediacy – situatedness – within a particular time and space. Hence isolation does not necessarily entail the solitary experience. The physiological dimension of the solitary experience has a pervasive reach and influence, which influence can be paradoxical. Thus, solitary experience can create a feeling and experience of homelessness within one’s own home and family, i.e. an outcast feeling within one’s own cast. Accordingly, solitary experience is an arelational experience within the dynamics of relati

The second exclusive modality of the self associates the arelational relational paradox with the Cartesian positioning of the self in a different existential dimension\textsuperscript{116} from the other. The self/other existential difference in Descartes is not based on an ontological argument but on an epistemological one, where the Cartesian epistemology recognizes exclusively the self as agency. Thus, the epistemological argument in Descartes overtakes any other philosophical arguments. The arelational situation of the self/other relation is articulated by a one-way

\textsuperscript{115} Fackenheim, E.L. To Mend the World: Foundations for Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought, (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1994), 156.

\textsuperscript{116} The use of the term physiological experience is to highlight that physicality is not necessary for the solitary experience.

\textsuperscript{117} The different existential dimension of the self is based on Descartes’ positioning of the self as the sole entity which existence is considered certain; thus undoubted.
relational agency, which agency is exclusively motivated and initiated by the self. Subsequently, since the solitary confinement of the self is confined through an epistemological (agency) argument, solitary does not signify a distancing of the self from the other, instead it means that the self is a sole agent. The solitary agency of the self gives to the self the entitlement of invading or taking over the relational space between the other and the self. Hence the self/other relationality is debilitated in its possibility of being mutual and reciprocal. Instead, the self/other relationality introduces the assumption of a rigid hierarchical structure with the self’s agency permanently at the helm.

The encounter with the other in a Cartesian framework cannot be read, as an encounter with the other’s self, since the only self that the self recognizes is the proper self. Therefore the encounter with the other can only be read as an encounter with the not self, and as any other not self the not self, of the other is situated in an inferior relational category to the self. Thus, the exclusivity that Descartes vested the self with, and the subordination of the I am to the I think, leads to the assumption of another subordination: that of the other’s I am. The two Cartesian exclusive modalities of the self – stated as the a-relationality of the self and the self/other existential difference – create the necessary condition for the self to enact its privileges and entitlements at the expense of the other’s agency. Given that the Cartesian exclusivity of the self implies a totality of the self’s agency and submission of the other’s agency, the notion of primacy would not suffice to explain the Cartesian self’s role and function. Hence, the notion of absolute supremacy would better explain the role and function that the Cartesian self self-assumes in relation to the other.

The Cartesian self is absolute because the self’s agency, in Descartes’ Meditation, is in total control; thus, the only possible way for the other to express his or her agency is through the agency of the self. The self is also supreme because the self is always the ultimate for any other causalities; which means that the self self-assumes a measuring and hermeneutic function for any other entity and activity that is uncontested. Thus, in Descartes conception the self becomes the self-referent self through which significance and meaning is developed. Arendt’s association of the Cartesian exclusive existential certainty of the self with introspection sheds light on how the absolute supremacy of the self has exercised its authority throughout modernity. For Arendt,
*introspection* has had an instrumental role in enforcing the Cartesian self’s total and ultimate influence over modern philosophy.

Introspection, as a matter of fact, not the reflection of man’s mind of the state of his soul or body but the sheer cognitive concern of consciousness with its own content (and this is the essence of the Cartesian *cogitatio*, where *cogito* always means *cogito me cogitare*) must yield certainty, because here nothing is involved except what the mind has produced itself; nobody is interfering but the producer of the product, man is confronted with nothing and nobody but himself. Long before the natural physical sciences began to wonder if man is capable of encountering, knowing, and comprehending anything except himself, modern philosophy had made sure in introspection that man concerns himself only with himself. Descartes believed that the certainty yielded by his new method of introspection is the certainty of the I-am. Man, in other words carries his certainty, the certainty of his existence, within himself; the sheer function of consciousness, though it cannot possibly assure a worldly reality given to the senses and to reason, confirms beyond doubt the reality of sensations and of reasoning, that is, the reality of processes which go on in the mind.\(^{118}\)

### 2.4: Wonderless Thinking

The self-absorbing and self-centered nature of *introspection* built on the Cartesian exclusive certainty of the self generates an inevitable paradox. The concept of *introspection* as defined by Arendt: “man concerns himself only with himself”\(^{119}\) is based on an exclusive interest that is both of and for the self. This self-exclusivity interest would make *introspection* incommunicable and would contradict the tremendous influence of *introspection* on modernity. Thus the incommunicability of introspection is based on a logical contradiction: if it is all about the self how can the self go beyond the all that is the self. The incommunicability of introspection also holds a moral paradox which questions the moral necessity of communicating to the other, when in the end, what matters is the self.

Arendt, who is well aware of the introspection paradoxes, notices that Cartesian *introspection* has managed historically to overcome its incommunicability and influence on modern age

\(^{118}\) Arendt, H. *The Human Condition*, 280. Emphasis added.

\(^{119}\) Arendt, H. *The Human Condition*, 280.
through two conceptual outlets. The first conceptual outlet, according to Arendt, is the Cartesian non-reality attribution to the world, triggered by the Cartesian recognition of certainty that is given exclusively to the self. Consequently the non-reality attribution to the world has subjected everything to the self – as the only interpretive agent of reality. The second conceptual outlet is the modern perception of physical sciences as the exclusive means through which certainty can be guaranteed.

The very ingenuity of Cartesian introspection, and hence the reason why this philosophy became so all important to the spiritual and intellectual development of the modern age, lies first in that it had used the nightmare of non-reality as a means of submerging all worldly objects into the stream of consciousness and its processes. The “seen tree” found in consciousness through introspection is no longer the tree given in sight and touch, an entity in itself with an unalterable identical shape of its own. By being processed into an object of consciousness on the same level with a merely remembered or entirely imaginary thing, it becomes part and parcel of this process itself, of that consciousness, that is, which one knows only as an ever-moving stream. Nothing perhaps could prepare our minds better for the eventual dissolution of matter into energy, of objects into a whirl of atomic occurrences, than this dissolution of objective reality into subjective states of mind or, rather, into subjective mental processes. Second, and this was of even greater relevance to the initial stages of the modern age, the Cartesian method of securing certainty against universal doubt corresponded most precisely to the most obvious conclusion to be drawn from the new physical science: though one cannot know truth as something given and disclosed, man can at least know what he makes himself. This, indeed, became the most general and most generally accepted attitude of the modern age, and it is this conviction, rather than the doubt underlying it, that propelled one generation after another for more than three hundred years into an ever-quickening pace of discovery and development.120

The two conceptual outlets through which the Cartesian introspection has infiltrated modernity, according to Arendt, appear to be in polar opposition of each other. This is because, on the one hand, the attribution of non-reality to the world is based on a Cartesian notion of reality that is accessible to the individual perception,121 while on the other hand physical science has a more collective perceivablity122 of reality. This conflicting understanding of reality leads to the

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120 Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 282.

121 In Cartesian thought ‘reality’ is perceivable exclusively by the self.

122 Physical science assumes a collective group of scientists engaged in collecting and analyzing data (real) from the world.
second opposition, which is based on the scientific recognition of reality that transcends the self. Therefore, unlike the non-reality claim, science presupposes a reality in the world (out there) accessible to scientific analyses, thus the self in the modern scientific sense becomes a collective self, associated with the modern scientific world.

The possibility of symbiosis between the first and the second conceptual outlets is suggested in Arendt’s observation on modernity in the book The Life of the Mind. Arendt observes that there is a radical difference between the Greek (which includes what Arendt calls Christian time) thinking and modern age thinking. In Greek Classical philosophy and in the Christian time the highest form of knowledge was attainable through meditation and contemplation. According to Arendt, the classical and Christian philosophers considered the possibility of attaining knowledge in a passive and recipient way, that is knowledge is presented as revelation. This passive attainability of knowledge explains why Arendt considers wonder as the paradigm for the classical and Christian time. Thus thinking in the Classical and Christian culture becomes an a posteriori activity that seeks to process knowledge that has been presented (revealed) to the human mind during the experience of wonder.

For, as we said, all men began to philosophize from wonder whether it is really so, as with spontaneous natural wonders, such as those of the changes of the sun or the incommensurability of the diameter (for everybody thinks that this is amazing, if something cannot be measured exactly).

A posteriori knowledge in this context has a wider interpretation than the traditional Kantian interpretation, where a posteriori is interpreted as a knowledge that proceeds from the empirical experience. The use of the concept a posteriori to explain pre-modern epistemologies does not

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123 Arendt, to define the modern age concept of knowledge and its attainability, draws a comparison between modern age, and Greek time and Christian time.

124 Arendt defines Christian time “when philosophy becomes the handmaid of theology.” Thus from the first century up to Modernity Christian theologians (also known as Church Fathers) introduced the use of philosophical categories to explain revelation. For Arendt, Modernity is introduced when the Christian handmaiden formula is altered with the Modern handmaiden formula of “thinking handmaid of science.”

125 The concept of revelation in this context does not necessarily mean a religious experience; instead revelation includes any encounter of the human mind with the newness of any knowledge.

only mean knowledge that derives from the materiality of the empirical experience, but also includes any cognitional experience that instigates wonder in the human being, which wonder will lead the human mind into thinking. This broader interpretation of a posteriori is related to the conception of thinking that both the Greek and Christian philosophers adhered to. Greek and Christian philosophers perceived of thinking as a passive meditative process. The objective of this passive meditative practice (thinking) was both to enhance the experience of wonder – sensitize the mind to be more receptive to knowledge – and to reflect upon the knowledge that was perceived in this meditative state. The passive meditative thinking does not mean ‘not thinking’ but it is a modality of thinking based on participation and observation at the same instance. Thus, in the passive meditative thinking the subject is letting her/himself be captivated by the newness of the event and does the thinking process while she/he is experiencing it and not before the newness event.  

Modernity – contrary to the classical and Christian philosophy – starts to opt for a form of thinking that is based on active process through which the self develops knowledge and understanding. Thus, modernity opts for thinking that is based on an exclusive self-made and self-initiated process through which hypotheses initiate a process of data collection and which data is later compared with the hypotheses through observation. The necessity of having a thinking process that is self-contained and controlled, motivated modern philosophy to identify in science a prototype of thinking that assures the exclusive protagonist of the self. The modern understanding of thinking (to attain knowledge) is based on the scientific process and method, thus transforming science into the exclusive assured method that provided the self with knowledge. Since ‘pre-modern’ ways of thinking engage with both the active and passive forms of thinking, modernity starts looking at ‘pre-modern’ form of thinking with suspicion and, in some cases, modernity rejected a priori ‘pre-modern’ ways of thinking as non-scientific.

…the notion that contemplation is the highest state of the mind is as old as Western philosophy. The thinking activity – according to Plato, the soundless dialogue we carry on with ourselves – serves only to open the eyes of the mind, and even the Aristotelian

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127 Passive or active thinking in this context regards the attitude by which a subject confronts the experience/events around her/him. An active form of thinking is lead by hypotheses, while the empirical experience becomes a claimer or disclaimer of the hypotheses. A passive contemplative form of thinking is lead by the newness of the experience/event and thinking is formulated while undergoing the experience/event itself.
nous is an organ for seeing and beholding the truth. In other words, thinking aims at and ends in contemplation, and contemplation is not an activity but a passivity; it is the point where mental activity comes to rest. According to traditions of Christian time, when philosophy had become the handmaiden of theology, thinking became meditation, and meditation again ended in contemplation, a kind of blessed state of the soul where the mind was no longer stretching out to know the truth but, in anticipation of a future state, received it temporarily in intuition… With the rise of the modern age, thinking became chiefly the handmaiden of science, of organized knowledge; and even though thinking then grew extremely active, following modernity’s crucial conviction that I can know only what I myself make, it was Mathematics, the non-empirical science par excellence, wherein the mind appears to play only with itself, that turned out to be the Science of sciences, delivering the key to those laws of nature and the universe that are concealed by appearances. 

Arendt’s use of the Christian time handmaiden formula to define modern age relation between thinking and science, on the one hand shows continuity with the Western tradition of placing thought activity within a hierarchical structure, while on the other hand, also underlines a discontinuity between the modern from the pre-modern way of conceptualizing the thinking operation. A hierarchical thought structure refers to the reinforcement and the reproduction of a priori conventional ideals and policies, to govern and control any forms of thought activity. Placing thinking within a hierarchy signifies that a particular discipline has a higher value than others; thus transforming the higher valued discipline into a reference for other disciplines considered to be inferior.

The referential role of theology in the Christian time and of science in modernity is based on the exclusive power of standard arbitration. Standard arbitration is when a procedure or system becomes both the prototype and the enforcer that overlooks and values other procedures and systems according to its own prototypal modality. Standard arbitration is not only when a procedure or system becomes a prototype for others, but also includes the enforcing of the standard by the very same standard, through a complex process of rulings by the standard thought on other thought (considered inferior by the standard): hence arbitration. Arendt, in reformulating the Christian handmaiden formula for Modern age, notices that thinking assumes a handmaiden role to science. Thus,

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science became the modern standard arbitration on which any form of thinking operation had to model itself.

The comparison that Arendt draws between theology as a paradigmatic discipline in Christian time and science as the paradigmatic discipline for modern age is based on conceptual commonality between the two. This commonality explains the why of the standard and referential role that both disciplines play in their historical context. Theology and science have in common a complex conceptual mechanism that operates through a system that is based on a priori statements. In theology, these a priori statements are articulated in a dogmatic and revelational\textsuperscript{129} language. According to Arendt, science articulates and organizes its a priori statements on mathematical formulas. While commenting on the relation between science and mathematics, she defines mathematics as “non-empirical science par excellence”\textsuperscript{130} furthering her argument by describing mathematics as a game that “the mind appears to play only with itself.”\textsuperscript{131}

Arendt’s definition and description of mathematics resonates with Descartes’ pronouncements on mathematical statements in the Meditations. Descartes included mathematical statements with the non-doubting (certain) categories. Mathematical statements for Descartes – as for the existence of God and of the cogito (thinking self) – partake in the non-doubting and certain experience of the self. For Descartes, what categorizes mathematical statements as a non-doubtable and certain is their immediacy to the self and their non-empirical dependence. Thus for Descartes the independence from the empirical context of mathematical statements assures the Cartesian mind of a mathematical knowledge that is conceptually constant. Since mathematical formulas are not empirically based but conceptually conceived, mathematical formulas are not subject to the fluidity and change of the empirical world.

From all this, perhaps, we may safely conclude that physics, astronomy, medicine, and all the other disciplines which involve the study of composite things are indeed

\textsuperscript{129} The truthfulness of revelatory statements is established on the authority of the subject that pronounces the statements.

\textsuperscript{130} Arendt, H. The Life of the Mind, 7.

\textsuperscript{131} Arendt, H. The Life of the Mind, 7.
doubtful; but that arithmetic, geometry, and other disciplines of the same kind, which
deal only with the very simplest and most general things, and care little whether they
exist in nature or not, contain something certain and indubitable. For whether I am
waking or sleeping, two plus three equals five, and a square has no more than four
sides; nor does it seem possible that such obvious truths could be affected by any
suspicion that they are false.  

A Cartesian understanding of mathematics as beyond and independent from their empirical
situations corresponds to the role of revelation in theology. Both dogmatic 133 (in theology) and
mathematic (in science) pronouncements are perceived as sound, irrespective of their empirical
contextual situation. The ‘beyond the empirical’ gives theology and science a conceptual
constancy or permanence through which the challenges of alterations and changes that different
contexts instigate can be resisted. Hence theology in Christian time and science in modern age
became the status quo symbol through which newness and change could be resisted, controlled
and sometimes prevented. The status quo mechanism in theology is identified with the argument
for tradition 134. In science the status quo mechanism is what science has established as valid
methodology. Thus, both tradition in theology and methodology in science has the potential of
being instrumental in establishing and maintaining the status quo.

Both tradition and method share the same objective, that of validating data and practices
according to the standards set by orthodoxy. Orthodoxy perceived as the right or good thinking
(etiologically) exercises an important influence within a community because it creates a
common language around which community/society is united. It is also through orthodoxy that
orthopraxy – the right and good actions – are perceived as possible, this is because orthodoxy
becomes the conventional acceptable instructive structure on which conventional actions and
practices are promoted. The ideal of ortho (as right or good) shared by the orthodox theological

133 Dogmatic pronouncements are a set of principles taken to be true, because of the authority through which they
were pronounced.
134 Tradition in a religious context is the passing on of dogmatic beliefs from one generation or context to another.
Since tradition involves a conveying of beliefs or ritual that predates the present in many instances it generate
tension between the present situation and what it is expected from tradition.
and scientific community has a dual and symbiotic function. The first (symbiotic) function is in integrating the *a priori* ideals and beliefs (*doxa*) with the practices and applicability of these ideals and beliefs (*praxis*). The second (symbiosis) function that orthodoxy generates is in the creation of a community and a bond between those that adhere to the same *orthodox* principles. The falling out of orthodoxy results in an automatic exclusion of the system and the community.

In applying the Christian time handmaiden formula to modern categories – by altering theology to science and philosophy to thinking – Arendt is also demonstrating a fundamental rupture between the Christian time and modern age. Thus, while in Christian time only philosophy was a “handmaiden of,” in modern age, *thinking* (all thought processes) becomes a “handmaiden of.” In generalizing the modern age handmaiden concept to *thinking*, Arendt is also implying that through science the *modern self* exercises a broader and more pervasive control over any form of *thinking*. Hence the unlimited hegemonic influence of science results in a limited and controlling *thinking* activity.

### 2.5: *The Self* referring Self

A fundamental distinction between science and theology is that theology recognizes an external point of reference that is *not self*, identified in a revelational discourse with God. Therefore, the recognition of a *not self* as a reference, moves *the self* to acknowledge a *primacy* that is external to *the self*, where *the self* is also acknowledging the *self’s* own limitation. The notion of *limitation* in theology is not interpreted as a negative (missing or lacking) experience. In the Judeo-Christian tradition the awareness of *self-limitation* is intrinsic to a *created* self-understanding; the human being as a creature (created) is in a dependent state of relationality.

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135 When Christian theology perceives philosophy as handmaiden of it only classifies a particular form of thinking that has been recognized as philosophy as dependent to theological thought, thus, allowing for other forms of thinking to develop autonomously and independently from theology. Modernity by positioning all forms of thinking as handmaiden of science positions all forms of thought development and discipline as dependent to the standards and categories established by science.

136 Antonio Gramsci’s notion of hegemony highlights an indirect domination of a power through cultural symbolisms and language. Hegemony explains best the influence of science over *thinking* because it denotes a pervasive influence of modernity through science. Thus its pervasiveness is so overwhelming that it is very difficult to identify its influence.
towered an exclusive creator (oneness of God) that has created all other creatures. The created/creator hermeneutic in theology is what generates in the self a perception of interdependence. Thus the interdependent-self in theology envisages the self within a necessary and constant relationality with the other.\textsuperscript{137}

Science differs from theology, not only in not recognizing a beyond the self, but further than that, in not recognizing that the self is limited: self-limitation. The non-recognition of self-limitation in science does not move science to the opposing notion of the self as unlimited, instead science appropriates the Cartesian notion of the self as the limit. The notion of the self as the limit situates the self as both the subject and object of science. It is the self that is the originator of scientific endeavors and it is the self that is the arbiter that judges and interprets the outcome. The scientific positioning of the self as the limit, is founded on the Cartesian association of epistemological agency exclusively with the self, where the self’s epistemology is perceived as total and ultimate. The Cartesian positioning of the self as total and ultimate, for Arendt, is rooted in Descartes’ claim of taking upon himself the Archimedean quest for an observational point through which he would be able to see totally and objectively, thus attaining epistemological certainty.

Yet I will struggle on, and I will try the same path again as the one I set out on yesterday, that is to say, eliminating everything in which there is the smallest element of doubt, exactly as if I had found it to be false through and through; and I shall pursue my way until I discover something certain; or, failing that, discover that it is certain only that nothing is certain. Archimedes claims, that if only he had a point that was firm and immovable, he would move the whole earth; and great things are likewise to be hoped, if I can find just one little thing that is certain and unshakeable.\textsuperscript{138}

Descartes, in bestowing the thinking self (\textit{cogito}) with the “firm and immovable” epistemological certainty, did not cause the whole earth to move as Archimedes claims, but instead he caused another move: that of the Archimedean point. Arendt observes that the self’s

\textsuperscript{137} The theological awareness of interdependency of human beings is augmented within mystical literature. For instance, Catherine of Siena, a fourteenth century Christian mystic, wrote in her mystical journal \textit{The Dialogue} that God has created human beings in a state of constant “need of one another” (D.VII).

\textsuperscript{138} Descartes, R. \textit{Meditations on First Philosophy}, First Meditation: AT VII 24.
totality and ultimate epistemological and hermeneutic role in modern science is based on
Descartes’ shift of the Archimedean point. According to Arendt, when the Cartesian
introspection shifted the Archimedean point from the external other to the self, the self acquired
a new role – a role that antiquity and the Medieval times reserved exclusively for the deity – that
of the “ultimate point of reference”\textsuperscript{139}.

The perplexity inherent in the discovery of the Archimedean point was and still is that
the point outside the earth was found by an earth-bound creature, who found that he
himself lived not only in a different but in a topsy-turvy world the moment he tried to
apply his universal world view to his actual surroundings. The Cartesian solution of
this perplexity was to move the Archimedean point into man himself, to choose as
ultimate point of reference the pattern of the human mind itself, which assures itself of
reality and certainty within framework of mathematical formulas which are its own
products. Here the famous reduction scientiae ad mathematicam permits replacement
of what is sensuously given by a system of mathematical equations where all real
relationships are dissolved into logical relations between man-made symbols. It is this
replacement which permits modern science to fulfill its “task of producing” the
phenomena and objects it wishes to observe. And the assumption is that neither God
nor an evil spirit can change the fact that two and two equal four.\textsuperscript{140}

According to Arendt, Cartesian introspection went further than just relocating the Archimedean
point in the self. Introspection identifies the Archimedean point with the self to the extent of
perceiving the self as the Archimedean point. Hence, by demythologizing science from its
exclusive scientific function, Arendt enables a more critical reading of science discourse.
Arendt’s research on the philosophical and political quality of science and their impact on
modernity is carried out through a semiotic reading of science. Thus, Arendt’s semiotic reading
of science perceives science as a dialogical space of interaction, between signs and significance;
the outcome of which has both a political and philosophical impact. This semiotic reading of
science breaks with the predominant positivistic\textsuperscript{141} understanding of science.

\textsuperscript{139} Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 284.
\textsuperscript{140} Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 284.
\textsuperscript{141} A positivistic concept of science in this context is based on a logical positivistic understanding (interpretation)
of science; where science is lead by the verification principle through which scientific observations and operations
are evident and valid only if and when it is empirically measurable. See Moser, P.K. & Vander Nat, A. Human
The positivistic conception of science is centered on the association of science with the exclusive function (for) of pursuing ‘objective knowledge.’ This exclusivity of the for of science with ‘objective knowledge’ is maintained by disassociating science from any other interests (fors). The singularity of the scientific interest (for) associated with objective knowledge in science is supported by another association, that of objectivity with neutrality. Thus, a more positivistic conception of science claims that neutrality – which is understood as the detachment of the self from the self’s own interests and emotions (fors) – provides the self with clarity to pursue objectivity. In some scientific discourses the association of scientific neutrality with ‘objective knowledge’ is so strong that neutrality and objectivity are perceived as synonyms.

Arendt challenges the neutrality of science (discourse) by claiming a Cartesian self-serving objective in scientific practice. Hence in Arendt’s thought, science becomes itself a ‘handmaiden’ for the self. This ‘handmaiden’ situation of science exists because science falls within the modern paradigm of introspection, which means that any scientific action implies the self both as the initiator and the arbiter of the outcome. Thus, the scientific pursuit of ‘objective knowledge,’ as any other scientific endeavor, is subject to an a priori hypothesis that initiates the empirical observation; namely the self is both the initiator and the arbiter of the outcome, which, observation becomes, then, an a posteriori verification of the hypothesis. Therefore, both the a priori hypothesis and the a posteriori verification of ‘objective knowledge’ has the self’s interest as object and the self as subject of the activity. Arendt, in de-neutralizing science by recognizing a self-serving identity, leads her reader to reread science from an ethical and political perspective – a perspective that is not necessarily benevolent. Furthermore, Arendt breaks with the modern scientific myth by which science is perceived as practical knowledge that has its objective the betterment (improvement) of human life. Instead, as in the case of theological and philosophical development, Arendt perceives the development of science as primarily motivated by a speculative operation – which has the potential of generating practical knowledge and technology.

[It is first of all necessary to rid ourselves of the current prejudice which ascribes the development of modern science, because of its applicability, to a pragmatic desire to improve conditions and better human life on earth. It is a matter of historical record that modern technology has its origins not in the evolution of those tools man had always devised for the twofold purpose of easing his labors and erecting the human artifice, but exclusively in an altogether non-practical search for useless knowledge.}
Thus, the watch, one of the first modern instruments, was not invented for purposes of practical life, but exclusively for the highly “theoretical” purpose of conducting certain experiments with nature.  

In Arendt’s reflection there is a parallel effect and influence of science on Descartes’ thinking and science on the Modern thinking. Thus, while following the philosophical tradition of perceiving the origin of the Cartesian introspection and self-centered philosophy as a reactive effect of the Copernican scientific discoveries, she furthers her thought by noticing a parallel effect of modern science on modernity. Therefore, an analogous Cartesian introspection and self-centeredness is also experienced within modernity. Both the Cartesian introspection and the self-centeredness become two key philosophical operations that gave rise to the absolute supremacy of the self.

Science within a modern context becomes instrumental in preserving the exclusive agency of the Cartesian self and the annihilation of the other’s agency – since agency is exclusive to the self. Thus, the self’s hypothesis becomes the prime motivator of scientific endeavors. Subsequently, in the scientific process the other is exclusively supposed as a passive object for observation; thus the other is altered into an epistemological object to be measured and categorized. The measuring and categorizing process is always accredited by the self’s a priori regulations, through which a research process is considered valid. Accordingly, the encounter with ‘the other’ in a ‘modern scientific’ setting is never casual and spontaneous, instead it is controlled and set a priori by the self’s hypothesis, through which the other’s agentic expression is limited and dependent on the self’s agency.

In placing the non-reality notion as first and science as second, Arendt is highlighting the order of efficacy through which the Cartesian introspection has influenced and molded modernity. Although the claim of non-reality looks totally different from scientific claims, science, for Arendt, has the same non-reality effect—that is of “submerging all worldly objects

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142 Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 289.
143 Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 282.
into the stream of consciousness and its processes.”\textsuperscript{144} Thus science becomes another tool in the hands of introspection to assimilate the other into the self. The self’s assimilation process of the other through introspection is enabled through the modern formulation of the self/other relati

\textsuperscript{144} Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 282.
Chapter 3. The Holocaust Problematizing Modernity

The first chapter gave a historical introduction of the origin and development of first philosophy starting from Aristotle going into Descartes. The historical introduction shows the paradigmatic influence of first philosophy to the Western philosophical and thought development. Thus, the development of first philosophy by Aristotle will motivate the self (subject) to explore and engage with a first cause that is external to the self (the other). A paradigm shift in the formulation of first philosophy will emerge with the development of the Cartesian first philosophy, where first philosophy is formulated on an introspective operation. The Cartesian introspective operation motivates the construction of a first philosophy that limits the engagement with the other and instead it focuses the first philosophy operation on the reflective action that emerges from the cogito (I think). This Cartesian introspective operation of first philosophy generated a new paradigm of the self/other relationality, where the self will start assuming an absolute supremacy role over the other. Utilizing Arendt’s reflection on the Cartesian introspection and on the relationship between science and modernity, modernity will be identified as the niche through which the self’s role of absolute supremacy over the other will thrive, and which will also cause the limitation or elimination of the other’s agentic role.

This chapter will identify the Holocaust as a systematic orchestration of an ideology that is symptomatic of the modern perception of absolute supremacy of the self over the other. Thus, this chapter will develop a parallel operation concerning the Holocaust: on the one hand it analyzes the historical happening of the Holocaust in relation to the modern rise of the absolute supremacy of the self over the other, while on the other hand it analyzes modernity through the lens of the historical happing of the Holocaust. Therefore, the Holocaust serves as a hermeneutic tool and a vigilant observer of modernity, and through which a critique of modernity is formulated. A key analysis that is developed here is that the Holocaust reveals the debilitating epistemology of modernity through which the other is no longer perceivable; the non-

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145 See Chap. 1. Sec. 3.
perceptibility of the other limits – and in some situations eliminates altogether – the possibility for relationality between the self and the other.

The analysis of science as a means to establish the absolute supremacy of the self started in the first chapter is furthered in this chapter through the analysis of the modern formula ‘science ergo progress.’ This chapter closely scrutinizes the modern formula ‘science ergo progress’ through the Holocaust lens – which will be identified as the Holocaust ethical epistemology. Thus, the Holocaust ethical epistemology shows how the connecting ergo has a propagandistic origin within modernity that served to establish the absolute supremacy (rule) of the self’s ideology and the limitation and/or the elimination of the other’s agency. The exploration of aspects that constitutes the rise of modernity through the Holocaust ethical epistemology aims to decipher both the what and the why of the ‘moral sleeping pills’ that led to the extermination of the other through the Holocaust.

The technical-administrative success of the Holocaust was due in part to the skills of ‘moral sleeping pills’ made available by modern bureaucracy and modern technology. The natural invisibility of causal connections in a complex system of interactions, and the ‘distancing’ of the unsightly or morally repelling outcomes of action to the point of rendering them invisible to the actor, were most prominent among them. Yet the Nazis particularly excelled in… making invisible the very humanity of the victims.  

The first section offers a historical excursus of the Modern development of the association of science and progress, which association will be defined with the Latin notion of ergo. This section shows how the modern ‘science ergo progress’ became a category of distinction in pre-modern philosophy and ideals. Theodor W. Adorno highlights how modernity presents progress as “redemption after redemption,” where modernity, through the use of pre-modern categories, contrasts itself with pre-modern categories for a superseding effect. A core aspect of this section is the Cartesian alteration of the conception of evil; Descartes’ philosophy alters the ethical pre-Cartesian conception of evil into an epistemological conception of evil. This shift

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changes the operation of redemption from a relational to an introspective action; where the self is both the subject and the object of redemption. The alteration of the conception of evil offers a setting for modernity ‘science ergo progress’ ideal, which will also lead to a contrast between Descartes’ and modernity’s use of scientific method. The contrast will highlight how the use of scientific method by modernity – unlike Descartes’ use of scientific method – has an explicit political and social objective, which contrasts with its introspective origins.

The concept of progress according to Adorno is formulated on a relational tension between the social context, and the philosophical, and the political ideology is conveyed within this relational tension. The identification of ideology is blurred by what the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman labels as the “fluid” and “liquid” like systems and structures of modernity.¹⁴⁸ This fluidity and liquidity of modernity does not allow for concepts to be identified as political ideologies. The solution for this dilemma is history, as explored in the second section of this chapter: history will be considered as means, through which the fluidity and liquidity of modernity can be identified, to allow for an ideological inquiry. An important notion on which the process of ideology identification and inquiry is formulated is the time/space relational change, which modernity brought about, where time is held as the prevailing agent over space.

The third section shows how the modern association with time manipulation through speed became instrumental in the development of Modern colonization. A characteristic of colonization that will be explored is the constant invasion action of modern colonization generated by what Arendt defines as “race-thinking”. The reflection on colonization will lead into the identification of colonization with both nationalism and racism. This section ultimately focuses on the historical complimentary relationship of modernity and nationalism. Furthermore, this complimentary relationship is perceived as responsible for interpreting the egalitarian ideal of equality as sameness.

The notion of sameness and how it is expressed through obvious discourses introduces the fourth section. Sameness is identified as the notion that formulated the universalistic statement that has especially affected ethical reflection and historical analysis. Contextual history will be

¹⁴⁸ See Bauman, Z. Liquid Modernity, 2.
identified as the possibility through which a critique for sameness assumptions and universalistic statements can be constructed. An important distinction between contextual history and universalistic history leads into the recognition of the Holocaust as the contextual history that challenges the modern assumption of Archimedean point. This section demonstrates how the Holocaust’s paradoxes and incomprehensibility confers to the Holocaust an ethical epistemology role, through which philosophy and any other form of thinking is valued within its ethical consequences. Bauman’s window\textsuperscript{149} metaphor for the Holocaust becomes the key concept that offers an explanation of how the Holocaust ethical epistemological operates. Thus, though the Holocaust happened within a particular time and space, its own historical context motivates post-Holocaust history to perceive the consequence of the Holocaust within a broader meta-historical context.

The fifth section, through the reconfiguration of the Holocaust within its original modern context, shows how and eventually why modernity becomes a possibility for the Holocaust. The possibility for the Holocaust is rooted within modern time manipulation based on the alteration of time/space relationality, and which is identified as the psyche of modernity, with the possibility of becoming psychosis. The Holocaust demonstrates how the modern formula ‘science ergo progress’ positions science not only as an instrument to facilitate the realization of the Holocaust, but through eugenics, science starts assuming an arbiter function. Thus, it was through the judging function of eugenics that a categorization of people was created with the intention of dehumanizing those that ideologically where considered a threat. The Holocaust offers the possibility of separating the notion of progress and science, where the ergo that attaches the two notions will be identified with modernity. This separation identifies the notion of progress as the modern ideological exploitation of science. In this section the final consideration is focused on how modernity, through atomization and decontextualization of individual human beings, created the possibility for development of totalitarian movements. Totalitarian movements, in perceiving human being as masses to be lead and deployed – but never to be perceived as political agents – offered the ideal bedrock for the creation of the Holocaust.

\textsuperscript{149} See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, viii.
Arendt notes that *indifference* is the attitude that led to the rise of totalitarian movements. The final section will focus on the notion of *indifference* and how it operates, but most of all why *indifference* is possible. The section shows how *indifference* debilitates the human person from perceiving and relating with diversity, which perception and relational debilitation will be conceptualized as epistemological debilitation. An important point that will be developed is that modernity struggles with the notion of diversity, to the extent of seeing diversity as a threat. Conclusively, the Holocaust *ethical epistemology* will be perceived as the occasion through which modernity can perceive its own deficits, and thus the Holocaust becomes a call for new philosophical understanding and inclusion of diversity, where *the other* is to be engaged as agent.

### 3.1: Science *ergo* Progress Consequences

As discussed in the first chapter, Arendt shows the importance of science for the modern philosophical construct by shifting the medieval handmaiden formula to a modern handmaiden formula, where *thinking*\(^{150}\) becomes the modern “handmaiden of science”\(^{151}\). For Arendt science in modernity acquires a justifying and mediating role, through which forms of *thinking* are approved and sanctioned, while others get marginalized and excluded. In the first chapter, the mediating role of science is explained with the notion of *standard arbitration*. Thus, *standard arbitration* transforms science into a *thinking* directive instrument, through which *thinking* is sifted through modern science’s standards and expectations. Science as *standard arbitration* acquires a unique authority through which forms of *thinking* are either included or excluded within modernity. Consequently the term modern started to be used as a label that denotes progress, while the label pre-modern (or non-modern) started to denote regress, highlighting an obsolete or outdated state.

\(^{150}\) Arendt adopts a Socratic dialectic conception of thinking, where thinking becomes a “dialogue between I and myself”. See Arendt, H. *The Life of the Mind*, 187-9.

\(^{151}\) See Arendt, H. *The Life of the Mind*, 6-7.
The philosophical and sociological assumption of science as a standard arbitration denotes a new historical beginning: that of modernity. This historical drive of making science into a standard arbitration was motivated by a modern assumption of science with progress. Hence science started to be interpreted as a guarantee for both progress and modernity. Science (as standard arbitration) functioned as a historical point of conversion that marked the historical divorce of modernity from whatever was associated with pre-modernity. Modernity presented its progressive agenda as a new historical movement that emancipates any pre-modern structures and thoughts. These pre-modern structures and thoughts were accused by modernity of limiting the self’s potentiality and realization, by keeping the human mind occupied and restrained from engaging in the ‘liberating activity of modern science’. In this ‘emancipatory’ activity of modernity religion was identified as an archetype that represented pre-modern ideals. Consequently religion started to be interpreted by modernity as a stumbling block that opposes the emancipatory modern progressive movement. Thus in some modern contexts, religious belief denoted a syllogism of ergos, religious belief ergo, not scientific ergo, not emancipated ergo, not Modern. These ergos were the beginning of the tense and suspicious relationship between religion and modernity that has characterized modern history.

Although the replacement of theology with science as standard arbitration by modernity has generated a situation of mutual disapproval between religious belief and modernity, modernity has not completely abandoned the pre-modern religious constructs and conceptions. Instead, modernity has utilized religious constructs and conceptions to promote its progressive ideals.

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152 The concept of Modernity in this context refers to a post-Medieval cultural and thought activity that no longer sees as its point of reference religious beliefs and dogmas but scientific quests.

153 Ergo in Latin is stronger than the word therefore because it is an identification of two notions with each other; which leads to one notion assuming the other.

154 Modern progressive ideals associated the advances of science with improvement in human condition.

155 There were modern movements that were more tolerant and lenient with religious beliefs. In late modernity there were religious movements that tried to merge Modern ideals with their religious belief, as for instance the Modernist movement in the Catholic Church; which was later declared by the Catholic Church to be a heretic movement.
Accordingly, modernity has vested its progressive ideals with the pseudo-Judeo/Christian\textsuperscript{156} constructs of redemption. Thus, the notion of redemption, though charged with religious significance, was adopted and used by modernity to explain and promote modern emancipatory ideals.

Within such enlightenment… which first of all puts progress toward humanity in people’s own hand and thereby concretizes the idea of progress as one to be realized, lurks the conformist confirmation of what merely exists. It receives the aura of redemption after redemption has failed to appear and evil has persisted undiminished.\textsuperscript{157}

Adorno, in explaining modern conception of progress as “redemption after redemption”, highlights two aspects of progress. On the one hand, Adorno highlights how modernity offers a conception of redemption that supersedes any other pre-modern conception of redemption while, on the other, he highlights how modernity necessitates a pre-modern religious semantics of redemption to communicate its progressive ideals. Adorno, by using the religious metaphor of redemption to denote the ideals and actions of modern progress, identifies in the progressive operation an essential contrast quality through which the better (progressive) now and this has to stand out against a bad and evil other\textsuperscript{158}. Thus for a comparison to take place a continuity of semantics is needed to identify the difference between the two. For continuity reasons, the notion of redemption as used by modernity is in continuity with the pre-modern religious understanding of redemption, as a freeing act from an evil/bad condition/state.

What distinguishes the pre-modern from the modern understanding of redemption is the conception of evil, which conception alters the redemptive operation. The Judeo-Christian tradition, in facing the question of evil, had to establish a conception of evil that does not contradict the Judeo-Christian understanding of God as One, Benevolent, and sole Creator.

\textsuperscript{156} Pseudo denotes a non-genuine or non-authentic use of a concept, but in this case the term pseudo refers to the change of significance when a concept is shifted from its original context.


\textsuperscript{158} Other in this context denotes both the past Pre-Modern other but also the present other considered by Modernity also a Pre-Modern, as for instance religious beliefs systems.
Accordingly for the pre-modernity – influenced by the Judeo-Christian categories – evil is primarily an ethical and moral disorder that is manifested as a privation of a good that affects both the relationship between humans and the Divine and the relationships amongst fellow human beings. Thus, for instance, the medieval philosopher Aquinas aware that a conception of a positive entity (being) of evil would contradict the core Judeo-Christian understanding of God – as One, Benevolent and (sole) Creator – defines evil as privation of relationality – which he terms as participation. “No being is called evil by participation, but by privation of participation.” Aquinas furthers his argument for a creation that is intrinsically good and that evil is not intrinsic to creation by claiming that, “evil can only have an accidental cause”. Thus the agency and the realization of redemption becomes a response to the conception of evil, from which creation is to be redeemed.

Since, in the Judeo-Christian tradition the concept, of evil is perceived primarily as an ethical and moral disorder that disrupts relationality (participation) – which includes both the relation with God and the relation between fellow human beings. Hence, redemption has to have as its objective the mending of relationally, which imply that the pre-modern Judeo-Christian conception of evil as a relational distortion awaits a redemption that is relational.

Consequently, redemption is actualized within an encounter (happening) between the self – both as individual and collective – and the other (that is both God and fellow human beings). Such an encounter generates rules and regulation in a form of a covenant (contract) which both

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159 That pericope more popularly thought of as the ‘ten commandments’ is better understood as the Decalogue or ‘ten words’ as, not only this is the terminology which the Hebrew Bible itself uses (aseret haddebarim; the ten words) at the close of the covenant renewal (Ex 34,28) and repeated twice in Deuteronomy (4,13; 10,4) but also due to the play on the Hebraic root DBR since God spoke (dibber) these words (dabarim) in the wilderness (midbar) – wherein the author specifically emphasizes the relational context between God and humanity of this foundational text. It stands to reason then, that, this text offers a solution for the ethical and moral disorder by regulating both relationships. Thus, the first four commandments are concerned primarily with the relationship between God and humans, while the other six refer primarily to the relationships among human beings.


161 Aquinas, T. Summa Theologica, ST I Q. 49. Art. 3. ad. 5.

162 This awaiting is also referred to in both the Jewish and the Christian tradition as the Messianic awaiting. The difference is that in Christianity it is assumed that this awaiting has been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, while in Judaism this awaiting is yet to come. In Judaism the Messianic coming does not imply a coming of a person. In both Faiths the Messianic coming has a similar objective that is the mending of relationships.
self and the other abides by, to mend the disruptive relationality. While modernity adheres to the notion of redemption, its meaning and understanding is completely changed, where the notion of redemption becomes like an old frame with a new painting. Arendt uses very dramatic words to describe how modernity, through Descartes’ epistemological quest, has rendered the religious understanding of salvation\textsuperscript{163} “absurd”.

Surly, Cartesian doubt has proved its efficiency nowhere more disastrously and irretrievable than in the realm of religious belief… For what undermined the Christian faith was not the atheism of the eighteenth century or the materialism of the nineteenth – their arguments are frequently vulgar and, for the most part, easily refutable by traditional theology – but rather the doubting concern with salvation of genuinely religious men, in which eyes the traditional Christian content and promise had become “absurd.”\textsuperscript{164}

The “absurd” ruling of modernity over the pre-modern conception of redemption has made way for the modern conception of redemption that is based on a conception of evil that subsists primarily in an epistemological understanding of evil. The Cartesian demon (deceiver), unlike the demon in the Genesis, does not deceive ethically – understanding of good and evil\textsuperscript{165} – but instead the demon deceives epistemologically. Descartes, in his conflict with this epistemological deceiver, claims that his objective was to neutralize this demon through the epistemological quest. “…I will take care not to give my assent to anything false, or to allow this deceiver, however powerful and cunning he may be, to impose upon me in any way.”\textsuperscript{166}

Thus, modernity, swayed by the Cartesian epistemological quest, conceptualizes evil primarily as an epistemological distortion that leads to false knowledge. Hence, the Cartesian conception of redemption from evil is no longer perceived within a relational context (as in pre-modernity), but instead it is perceived within the self’s epistemological quests, which Arendt later defines as

\textsuperscript{163} Salvation is the term that refers to the effects of redemption.

\textsuperscript{164} Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 319.

\textsuperscript{165} See Gen 3: 1-7

\textsuperscript{166} Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, First Meditation: AT VII 23.
Consequently since evil is relocating within the introspective setting of the self, redemption assumes also an introspective context. Cartesian epistemological quest shifts the agency of redemption from the other (God) into an introspective action, where the self as the redemptive agent becomes both the subject and the object of redemption.

The modern redemptive ideal of progress is offered as an epistemological response to the epistemological crisis as identified and initiated by Descartes. Thus, modernity reinterprets progress as a redemptive response that guarantees epistemological certainty, while the modern association of science with progress is constructed on the Cartesian association of the scientific method as a means for epistemological certainty. One can find corresponding scientific functions in both Descartes’ epistemological quests and in the modern notion of progress, two of which corresponding functions highlight the complimentary aspects of both Descartes’ epistemology and modern progress. The first corresponding function is that both Descartes and modernity perceive science to be instrumental in instigating awareness of epistemological deficit in the subject. The second corresponding function is that both Descartes and modernity base their scientific opinion on *a priori* statements and assumptions about science as means for epistemological certainty.

While admitting that the association of science with progress in modernity traces its origins to the Cartesian epistemological quest, there are also very important distinctive philosophical features between Descartes and modernity that make the two conceptions of science and its use distinct in both systems of thought. The identification of the distinctive conception and use of scientific method by Descartes and modernity will also identify modernity as a unique historical movement that has generated unique historical events. In the book *History of Western Philosophy*, Russell observes how unique and distinct Descartes’ application of scientific method is. To highlight the uniqueness and novelty, which Descartes includes in his philosophical reflection the new scientific method, Russell attributes to Descartes’ philosophy

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168 Descartes uses a deductive conception of science where one could use logic to verify the validity of a scientific quest. His scientific method was based on *a priori* conceptions that had to be true by necessity, as for instance mathematical concepts.
the Latin expression *de novo*. Two of these salient features that define Descartes’ innovative philosophical construct, according to Russell are based on the “endeavours” and “inconsistent” application of the scientific method combined with other methodologies.

He (Descartes) is the first man of high philosophic capacity whose outlook is profoundly affected by the new physics and astronomy. While it is true that he retains much of scholasticism, he does not accept foundations laid by predecessors, but *endeavours* to construct a complete philosophic edifice *de novo*. This has not happened since Aristotle, and is a sign of a new self-confidence that resulted from the progress of science. There is a freshness about his work that is not to be found in any eminent previous philosopher since Plato.

The phrase *endeavours* refers to the positive but at the same time critical attitude by which Descartes applies the scientific method to his philosophy. Though Descartes use of scientific method is constructed on *a priori* premises, unlike modernity, he does not initiate the use of the scientific method based on an *a priori* premise. What initiates the use of scientific method in Descartes’ philosophy is his epistemological quest. Thus the main interest in Descartes’ philosophy is not the method, but the search for an epistemological solution that would satisfy his *doubting self*’s quest. Russell observes that the *endeavours* nature in Aristotle’s and Plato’s philosophy is also present in Descartes’ philosophy. For Russell, science motivates Descartes to challenge and question in an *endeavours* manner any philosophical premise which poses for Descartes epistemological concerns.

Russell describes another important feature that characterizes Descartes’ philosophy as inconsistent. Though the concept of inconsistent may sound negative or pejorative, Russell’s description of inconsistent for Descartes’ philosophy is in actual fact very affirmative and constructive. Descartes philosophical objective was not to dismantle prior philosophical statements and assumptions to propose a new philosophy – though at the end a new philosophy has emerged. Instead, he wanted to reconsider and reevaluate prior philosophical statements by including and taking into consideration the new scientific method. Thus, Descartes in his

169 Referring to the novelty and freshness of Descartes methodology within the academia of his time.

philosophy makes use of both the prior medieval and scholastic methodology and the new scientific method. Therefore, unlike modernity – where only the scientific method is considered a valid method – Descartes does not hesitate to venture into using diverse philosophical methodologies, thus making space for diverse and eclectic thought. As Russell has noted, Descartes’ philosophy – though in some instances inconsistent – is richer because it engages with both the (Descartes’) contemporary and the preceding systems of thought. Accordingly, the phrase inconsistent, as used by Russell, refers to the creative and diverse way Descartes’ philosophy attempts to respond to his own epistemological quest.

There is in Descartes an unresolved dualism between what he learnt from contemporary science and the scholasticism that he had been taught at La Flèche. This led him into inconsistencies, but it also made him more rich in fruitful ideas than any completely logical philosopher could have been. Consistency might have made him merely the founder of a new scholasticism, whereas inconsistency made him the source of two important but divergent schools of philosophy.  

Russell identifies a complementarity between endeavours and inconsistent in Descartes’ philosophy. For Russell, inconsistencies in Descartes’ philosophy is the byproduct of Descartes’ endeavours and explorative attitude, which motivates him to make use of different methodologies as long as he is content with the epistemological outcome. The other aspect of Descartes’ philosophy that allows for inconsistencies, is that Descartes’ philosophical concern is epistemological and not methodological. Descartes’ epistemological question is not related to the how (method) knowledge is attained but he is asking a more radical and endeavours question: that is, if knowledge is attainable. Thus the radicality and the extensive nature of the if epistemological question in Descartes’ thought compensates for any inconsistencies. Accordingly, the endeavours cogito question in Descartes does not allow for positioning a method as absolute, but instead it creatively combines different methods.


172 The two methodologies that Descartes uses in his philosophical reflection are mainly based on scholastic and scientific constructs.
The Cartesian complimentary relation of the notions endeavours and inconsistent distinguishes Descartes’ use and understanding of scientific method from the modern one. This distinction is even more evident in the modern association of the scientific method with progress. Descartes’ use of scientific method was not motivated by progressive ideals or interest; Descartes’ interest is one identified with the cogito’s epistemology. Since cogito’s epistemology is the sole interest, and concern for it generated a situation, which lacked in both the social and the relational component. These components are the vital habitat for any form of political ideal and discourse. Thus, the non-political interest and expression in Descartes’ reflection, by default, does not allow for a progressive understanding and use of the scientific method.

The two Cartesian characteristic uses of the scientific method (endeavours and inconsistent as described by Russell) are no longer present in the modern use of the scientific method. Instead, modernity adopts a more consistent understanding and use of science. The modern understanding and use of science as consistent offered a stable ground on which modernity started to affirm its ‘progressive vision’. Science became imperative for the implementation of the modern ideals because of the science consistency of method. The Modern consistent perception and use of science is in direct contrast with the Cartesian endeavours and inconsistent practice of scientific method, not only for its methodology but also for its objective. Hence, while Descartes had as his objective the epistemological quest of cogito, modernity, through its association of science with progress, extends its objective onto the collective and the social sphere. Thus, science ergo progress does not only distance modernity from its Cartesian introspective origin, but it also assigns to science an explicit political function.

3.2: Contextual History for the Identification of Ideology in Modernity

The Modern raison d’être for a consistent the scientific method is situated in the notion of progress, where the term progress denotes a social and a collective context, because it offers identification – for both the collective and individual – with an ideal presented as a trend. Hence one cannot be progressive on her/his own, but instead progressiveness necessitates a social and collective recognition and association. Though the social and the collective is an imperative
aspect of progress – because it objectifies the notion of progress – the notion of progress also necessitates an abstract and conceptual idealization. Adorno identifies the abstract and conceptual aspect of progress as the ‘philosophical’ aspect of progress. He furthers his reflection on progress by stating that the notion of progress stands right in the threshold of the social and the philosophical. According to Adorno while progress is expressed and identified within the social and collective experience, he maintains that it is within the philosophical reflection that progressive ideals are formulated.

According to conventional thought, the moment in which the concept of progress has its life are partly philosophical and partly societal. Without society the notion of progress would be completely empty; all its elements are abstracted from society. If society had not passed from a hunting and gathering horde to agriculture, from slavery to the formal freedom of subjects, from the fear of demons to reason, from deprivation to provisions against epidemics and famine and to the overall improvement of living conditions, if one thus sought more philosophico to keep the idea of progress pure, say, to spin it out of the essence of time, then it would not have any content at all. But once the meaning of a concept necessitates moving to facticity, this movement cannot be stopped arbitrarily. The idea of reconciliation itself – the transcendent telos of all progress, measured by finite criteria – cannot be broken loose from the immanent process of enlightenment that removes fear and, by erecting the human being as an answer to human beings’ questions, wins the concept of humanitarianism that alone rises above the immanence of the world. Nonetheless, progress is not tantamount to society, is not identical with it; indeed like society, progress is at themes its own opposite. Philosophy in general, as long as it was at all useful, was also a doctrine of society, except that ever since it consigned itself without demur to societal power, philosophy has professedly had to isolate itself from society; the purity into which philosophy regressed is the bad conscience of its impurity, its complicity with the world. The concept of progress is philosophical in that it articulates the movement of society while contradicting it. Having arisen societally, the concept of progress requires critical confrontation with real society.173

Adorno formulates the notion of progress on two characteristics: conflict and complementarity. The complimentary effect of the social and the philosophical – as the two aspects of progress – is not interpreted as harmony according to Adorno. He notes that the contribution of the social and the philosophical for the formulation of a notion of progress is founded, instead, on a conflicting situation that is caused by the opposing interest of the two. The conflicting makeup of progress

situates the concept of progress at the heart of the political debate. Thus, progress is political not accidentally but intrinsically; progress is political because the significance of it is dependent to a political context and operation. Therefore, “the social and the philosophical” conflicting makeup of progress makes of progress a political conception. Jacques Derrida, endorsing Carl Schmitt’s political thought, affirms that there is an intrinsic relationality between politics and conflict: expressed as “contradiction” or “opposition”.

The stronger a contradiction or oppositional negativity, the more its intensity tends towards a limit, the more political it is. Example: ‘Political antagonism (der politische Gegensatz) is the most intense (intensiviste) and extreme (äusserste) antagonism, and every concrete antagonism (Gegensätzlichkeit) becomes that much more political the closer it approaches the most extreme point (sich dem äussersten Punke… näher), that of the friend-enemy grouping.’

The social/philosophical conflicting makeup of progress situates progress within a non-neutral context identified with political ideology, which makes of the modern formula ‘science ergo progress’ an ideological construct. The political nature of progress justifies and explains the forsaking of the Cartesian endeavours and inconsistent practice of the scientific method for a more consistent understanding and use of the scientific method. However, when it comes to analyzing the political ideology behind the concept of modern progress a challenging factor occurs: that is, though modernity was the inspiration for many different political ideologies and ideals, modernity has never presented itself as a unifying institution or ideology. Instead, modernity presented itself as a habitat that nourished and motivated the many different ideologies and political aspirations within modernity. Bauman uses the metaphors of liquid and fluidity to describe modern movements that influence society through the shaping of ideals and conceptions within modernity. Thus, Bauman uses the metaphor of liquid as identification


175 *The concept movement explains how Modernity operates, that is, through an indirect influence and infiltration of ideals. These Modern ideals will offer a conceptual construct on which different Modern political ideologies are formulated.*
of what distinguishes modernity historically, which he associates with the faster and rapid ways and means of communication.

Fluids travel easily. They ‘flow’, ‘spill’, ‘run out’, ‘splash’, ‘pour over’, ‘leak’, ‘flood’, ‘spray’, ‘drip’, ‘seep’, ‘ooze’; unlike solids, they are not easily stopped – they pass around some obstacles, dissolve some others and bore or soak their way though others still. From the meeting with solids they emerge unscathed, while the solids they have met, if they stay solid, are changed – get moist or drenched. The extraordinary mobility of fluids is what associates them with the idea of ‘lightness’. There are liquids which, cubic inch for cubic inch, are heavier than many solids, but we are inclined nonetheless to visualize them all as lighter, less ‘weighty’ than everything solid. We associate ‘lightness’ or ‘weightlessness’ with mobility and inconstancy: we know from practice that the lighter we travel the easier and faster we move.

These are reasons to consider ‘fluidity’ or ‘liquidity’ as fitting metaphors when we wish to grasp the nature of the present, in many ways novel, phase in the history of modernity.  

Bauman considers this liquid and fluid quality of modernity as responsible for “remoteness and unreachability” of “systematic structure” within modernity. Both liquid and fluidity metaphors show how modernity offers a structured system but unlike other structures or systems, as for instance religion – where the ideology and the system are combined within a structure – one cannot single out modernity within individual systems or structures. The plurality and concurrent ways in which modern systems and structures operate reduces the possibility for the identification of them. Accordingly, for Bauman, modernity constantly produces concepts with the attempt of grasping modern system or structure, but these concepts quickly become passé. To highlight the failing conceptualization of modernity, Bauman uses the imagery of zombies for modernity, that is creatures that cannot be identified neither with death nor with life.

It would be imprudent to deny, or even to play down, the profound change which the advent of ‘fluid modernity’ has brought to the human condition. The remoteness and unreachability of systematic structure, coupled with the unstructured, fluid state of the immediate setting of life-politics, change that condition in a radical way and call for a rethinking of old concepts that used to frame its narratives. Like zombies, such concepts are today simultaneously dead and alive. 

176 Bauman, Z. Liquid Modernity, 2.

177 Bauman, Z. Liquid Modernity, 8.
The failure of conceptualizing modernity because of its fluidity makes it difficult to frame and identify modern conceptions to expose their ideology. Accordingly, since the ideal behind ‘science ergo progress’ resides in the fluidity of modern categories and shielded by the neutral claim of scientific practices, the causes and effects of ‘science ergo progress’ cannot be abstracted within conceptual discourse alone to demonstrate the motivating ideology. The exploration of ideology within a modern “liquid” and “fluid” context demands primarily an understanding of the consistency that holds together both the cause and the effect of any ideology. Thus, though different ideologies can vary in professed ideals, values, and visions; they all hold in common an interest to establish their ideals, values and vision within a space and time context, i.e. a historical intent. For Arendt, historical intent is what distinguishes an ideology from a mere opinion. “For an ideology differs from a simple opinion in that it claims to possess either the key to history, or the solution for all the riddles of the universe, or the intimate knowledge of the hidden universal laws which are supposed to rule nature and man.”\(^{178}\)

The historical intent of ideology merges the “partly philosophical and partly sociological”\(^ {179}\) of progress into a vision with which a society or community is urged to comply. Although historical events never happen in a vacuum but in relation to other previous and contemporary events, each event, has its unique identity, which displays both the sociological situation and the philosophical ideal behind the event. Thus, in admitting that modernity displays fluid and liquid like properties, does not imply that there is no possibility for containing the implications of modern ideologies through which both the implications and the ideology behind them can be analyzed. Ideological implications are contained within the historical permanence of space and time of events and happenings. Thus, history becomes the boundary through which the fluidity of modern ideologies can be contained for analyses and reflection. Bauman, while admitting that the fluidity of modernity is manifested through a disjunction of hermeneutics, he also perceives Modernity to be specific and unifying in the alteration of space/time relationality.

\(^{178}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 159.

Modernity means many things, and its arrival and progress can be traced using many and different markers. One feature of modern life and its modern setting stands out, however, as perhaps that ‘difference which make[s] the difference’; as the crucial attribute from which all other characteristics follow. That attribute is the changing relationship between space and time.

Bauman identifies the beginning of Modernity with a distinct (modern) conception of space and time, i.e., a dichotomizing conception of space and time. For Bauman the dichotomy was initiated when time started to assume a proper, independent and determining role within the historical development, which later was associated with modern history. The dichotomy of space and time makes time into a leading agency role, which determines both the conception and relationality of modernity with space. The agency of time is especially noticeable throughout modern history in the prominence (cult like) that modernity gives to speed, where speed started to be perceived as the determining factor behind political, military and economical power. Accordingly, the development of modern history started to be associated with the development of speed determining, especially, the space expansion – both physical and subsequently cyber space.

Modernity starts when space and time are separated from living practice and from each other and so become ready to be theorized as distinct and mutually independent categories of strategy and action, when they cease to be, as they used to be in long pre-modern centuries, the intertwined and so barely distinguishable aspects of living experience, looking in a stable and apparently invulnerable one-to-one correspondence. In modernity, time has history, it has history because of the perpetually expanding ‘carrying capacity’ of time – the lengthening of the stretches of space which unites of time allow to ‘pass’, ‘cross’ – or conquer. Time acquires history once the speed of movement through space (unlike the eminently inflexible space, which cannot be stretched and would not shrink) becomes a matter of human ingenuity, imagination and resourcefulness.

Bauman will further his analysis in which he claims scientific and technological developments were the determining factors behind the development of modernity; through the possibility of

180 Bauman, Z. Liquid Modernity, 8.
time acceleration, science has created the context for a new (modern) historical paradigm. According to Bauman, this new modern historical paradigm has shifted human dependence from (pre-modern) time dependency to technological dependence. In the pre-modern condition, human beings had to collaborate with time to fulfill their needs and aspirations, hence the development of time measuring apparatuses for agricultural, traveling and other purposes. Through this scientific and technological development, human beings started to assume a more manipulative and less collaborative relationality. “Once the distance passed in a unit of time came to be dependent on technology, on artificial means of transportation, all extant, inherited limits to the speed of movement could be in principle transgressed.”

The Modern change of time function and relationality – that is from an end that had to be respected and followed (pre-Modern) to a means that can be tampered, and thus exploited – prompts a rather obvious question regarding the objective or purpose (why) of time exploitation. The exploration of the why for time exploitation/manipulation question can take different directions; as for instance a more hypothetical and scientific exploration can provide with many different hypothetical reasons for why time exploitation can be utilized. As Bauman stated, a more hypothetical and scientific time exploration offers no limitations for human fantasy. “Only the sky (or, as it transpired later, the speed of light) was now the limit, and modernity was one continuous, unstoppable and fast accelerating effort to reach it.” Thus since the exploitation of the why depends on the what that is being explored, and since the interest here is the identification of the political ideal and ideology, a historical analysis becomes a necessary means for the ideal and ideological identification. Also, in line with Arendt’s thought of identifying ideologies’ interest with history, an analysis of the historical context will offer a better picture of the political ideal and ideology motivations.

184 See Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 159.
3.3: Modernity and Nationalism: a History of Complementarity

Throughout modernity, though the scientific and technological advancements provide time with an exclusive agency role over space, the notion of time is never separated from space; history becomes the point of merging between time and space. The unbalanced time/space relation generated by the weighing on time a more dominant role by modernity, had deep historical impact: Bauman observed that in the modern time/space relation, time assumes a more active (aggressive) colonizing influence while space became the passive colonized objective. Bauman come to the conclusion that in a modern setting, access to speed is what determines who dominates and colonizes and who is to be dominated and colonized. Consequently, in modernity speed is what grants the power for domination and colonization.

Thanks to its newly acquired flexibility and expansiveness, modern time has become, first and foremost, the weapon in the conquest of space. In the modern struggle between time and space, space was the solid and stolid, unwieldy and inert side, capable to the resilient advances of time. Time was the active and dynamic side in the battle, the side always on the offensive: the invading, conquering and colonizing force. Velocity of movement and access to faster means of mobility steadily rose in modern time to the position of the principal tool of power and domination.¹⁸⁵

Though colonization as an act of invasion and rule over the other’s land or territory is not new to the history of humanity, modernity has brought the notion of colonization to another level. The modern combination of time and science/technology has transformed colonization from a one-time act of invasion – which effected mainly the government of a colonized territory – into a constant ongoing act of invasion. Thus, modernity colonial invasion is not a one-time happening but a constant ongoing happening, which will be identified with the term constant invasion. In modern colonization, through the act of constant invasion, the distance between colonizer and colonized is shortened, therefore the colonizer has a more immediate access to the colonized people and territories. Hence, the faster modernity spins the wheel of time –through scientific and technological development – the more intense and effective the colonial act of constant invasion becomes.

For colonization to be effective, it had to rely not only on economic and military power, but also on ideological ideals through which colonization and imperialism were to be justified and legitimized. Robert J.C. Young, by adapting Gramsci’s hegemonic cultural analyses, interprets imperialism and colonialism\textsuperscript{186} as a mindset that conditions the relations within societies and communities. These relationships that colonialism and imperialism generate are articulated in elaborate political structures of exclusion and assimilation. To articulate both the distinction and the use of exclusion and assimilation in the imperialistic and colonizing campaigns, Young draws a comparison between the French and the British imperialistic and colonizing practices. According to Young, the French imperialistic ideals opted for an assimilation model of colonization where “the French model had the least respect and sympathy for the culture, language and institutions of the people being colonized – it saw difference, and sought to make it the same – what might be called the paradox of ethnocentric egalitarianism.”\textsuperscript{187} While the British model, through an ideology of racial superiority, created a system of colonizing rule where the colonized other is excluded as inferior.

The idea of imperialism, and the notion of civilizing mission, presupposed racial superiority, for the fundamental difference between civilization and savagery that justifies and required the civilizing mission assumed a basic differentiation between white and non-white races, and this was made in increasingly absolute and derogative terms signaled by the increasing use of the term ‘nigger’ for any non-European colonial subject. The British system of relative non-interference with local cultures, which today appears more liberal in spirit, was in fact also based on the racist assumption that the native was incapable of education up to the level of the European – and therefore by implication required perpetual colonial rule.\textsuperscript{188}

Despite the fact that exclusion and assimilation are motivated by different ideological beliefs, both practices have in common an attitude of superiority and entitlement of a group of people over others that are considered inferior by the former. The imperialistic and colonizing self-
perception of racial superiority gave the imperial and colonizing powers an entitlement to expand and dominate at the expense of others’ lives, cultures and territory. There is an intrinsic relation between racism and the modern colonial act of *constant invasion*, which can be identified in Young’s conception of “perpetual colonial rule”¹⁸⁹. Since, according to the colonial perspective, “the native was incapable of education up to the level of the European,”¹⁹⁰ this incapability gave the colonizer an ethical justification for colonization.

The notion of *constant invasion* explains how the colonial ideal of “perpetual colonial rule”¹⁹¹ is implied and inferred on colonized people. Thus the notion of *perpetual* in colonization does not only imply a stretch of time but it also implies a constancy and consistency – in the *now* – of the act of colonization. Accordingly, the act of *constant invasion* is what maintains colonial rule as perpetual rule. Young also shows how both the French and British colonial models¹⁹² hold in common a moral and ethical benevolent justification. Thus, while the assimilation model of colonization is morally and ethically justified through a mission ideal supported both by cultural and religious notions of superiority¹⁹³, the racial superiority model is even more problematic since it is presented as ethically and morally self-referential, i.e. the colonial racial superiority model uses a race argument to ‘ethically’ justify racism. Young attributes racism and racial superiority ideals exclusively to the British model of colonization. For Young, the French colonial model of expansion by assimilation was motivated by nationalistic sentiment and not by racist ideology.

¹⁸⁹ Young, R. J. C. Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction, 33.
¹⁹⁰ Young, R. J. C. Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction, 33.
¹⁹¹ Young, R. J. C. Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction, 33.
¹⁹² Young notice that French colonizing ideology is based on assimilation, while the British colonizing ideology is based on racial superiority.
¹⁹³ In the beginning of the twentieth century France started to merge its colonizing movement with the French Catholic Church missions; thus conferring to the colonizing ideals a Missionary sentiments.
The problem thickens when Arendt, unlike Young, conceives of nationalism as an expression of “race-thinking”. For Arendt, the imperialistic and nationalistic roots that historically have infiltrated throughout Europe are nourished in “race-thinking”. “The fact that racism is the main ideological weapon of imperialistic politics is so obvious that it seems as though many students prefer to avoid the beaten track of truism.” Arendt, without disclaiming the devastating effect of classism and its relationship with imperialistic expressions, still holds that the prime nationalistic motivator – which includes colonialism and imperialism as an expression of nationalist ideology – is “race-thinking”.

For the truth is that race-thinking entered the scene of active politics the moment the European peoples had prepared, and to a certain extent realized, the new body politic of the nation. From the very beginning, racism deliberately cut across all national boundaries, where defined by geographical, linguistic, traditional, or any other standards, and denied national-political existence as such. **Race-thinking, rather than class-thinking, was the ever-present shadow accompanying the development of the comity of European nations, until it finally grew to be the powerful weapon for the destruction of those nations.** Historically speaking, racists have a worse record of patriotism than the representatives of all other international ideologies together, and they were the only ones who consistently denied the great principle upon which national organizations of peoples are built, the principle of equality and solidarity of all peoples guaranteed by the idea of mankind.

Historically, there is codependent relationality between modernity and nationalism; it is not a coincidence that the advent of modernity coincides with the historical rise of nationalism. Modernity acquires a more rapid momentum of expansion through the establishment of the first Nation States, especially with the unification of many European countries into one nation. The symbiotic and codependent relationship is expressed through a mutual support that determines each other’s rise. Thus, modernity provides nationalism with the necessarily ideals and vision on which a Nation State can be structured, while nationalism offers the political and social

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194 According to Arendt the rise of “race-thinking” is founded and promoted by Nationalism, where Nationalism took the earlier (pre-Nationalism) aristocratic model of superiority and universalized it based on racial profiling. The Nationalistic shift of aristocratic hierarchy into race hierarchy is termed by Arendt “race-aristocracy” and formulates the structure for “race-thinking”. See Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 173-4.


structures for the implementation of modern ideals. Historical events like that of the American War of Independence (1775-1783) and the French Revolution (1789) became important nationalist myths, through which peoples where inspired to follow toward a more modern and egalitarian way of life. The nationalism egalitarian program was based on the notion of citizenship, which inferred political agency for the people recognized as citizens. The notion of citizens as intended by nationalism jeopardized older political and social structures, where political agency was attributed exclusively to people with privileged lineage (aristocracy).

The notion of nation state citizenship created a double-edged sword situation. On the one hand, citizenship was the system that aimed to implement the egalitarian ideals of equality and meritocracy; the vision behind national citizenship was to create a system of shared governance, and social and political participation was based on merit and not on privilege. On the other hand, nation state citizenship created a limiting situation, where only a defined population associated with a common ‘culture, language and territory’ were to be regarded as citizens, thus sharing in the citizenship duties and privileges. Hence, intrinsic to the notion of nation state citizenship – and supported by nationalistic symbolism – is the assumption of the self/other dichotomy; where the other is not an enemy by necessity but by potentiality. As Benedict Anderson highlighted in his book Imagined Communities, the imagination of a nation is always accompanied by imagery of boundaries, where some are in and others are out.

The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself conterminous with mankind. The most messianic nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation in the way that it was possible, in certain epochs, for, say, Christians to dream of a wholly Christian planet.

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197 The use of the term myth in reference to the American War of Independence and the 1789 French Revolution is to show that in a nationalistic context their symbolic significance transcends their historical happening.

198 The rise of nation states where marked by campaigns where claiming commonality of ‘culture (which included religion), language and territory.’ In many cases these claims had no historical bases whatsoever, and did not match the actual situation of the territories, which were typically marked with linguistic and cultural diversity.

The *limiting* of nationalism does not only subsist in physical borders that define a nation state from another, but further than that its effects create *mobile cognitional*\(^{200}\) borders that dichotomize relationship into *the self/other* dichotomy. Thus, the mobile cognitional borders have the objective of bracing relationality between citizens that share in the same national identity at the expense of alienation and exclusion of *the other*. The *limiting* effect of nationalistic ideology is in creating a perception of equality and meritocracy that are shared exclusively by members of a nation state i.e., the egalitarian ideals of citizenship are to be *limited* within the citizenship borders created by nationalistic ideology. Since the egalitarian ideals are associated with citizenship, the non-citizen by deficit becomes excluded from the egalitarian benefits. What determines the exclusion from citizenship – and thus from citizenship egalitarian benefits – is a *de facto*\(^{201}\) conception of citizenship that is based on the notion of *sameness*. The interpretation of equality as *sameness* by nationalism was formulated not only on ‘cultural, linguistic and territorial’ commonality but further than that, on the conception of race. Consequently racial ideals became the basis on which *sameness* profiling was constructed and through which citizenship and citizenship rights were distributed or withheld. It is the conditioning of citizenship and citizenship rights to race profiling that constitutes the foundation for racist ideology, which ideology has deeply influenced the historical development of modernity.

Since, however, race-thinking did exist, it proved to be a powerful help to racism. The very existence of an opinion which could boast of a certain tradition served to hide the destructive forces of the new doctrine which, without this appearance of national respectability or the seeming sanctions of tradition, might have disclosed its utter incompatibility with all Western political and moral standards of the past, even before it was allowed to destroy the comity of European nations.\(^{202}\)

\(^{200}\) Mobile cognitional borders are conceptual borders through which people condition their relations by categorizing their encounters with *the other in us/them* categories. Since these borders reside in the cognitional faculties they are not limited to a physical territory: thus mobile.

\(^{201}\) *De facto*: A Latin juridical term that identifies a happening form a conceptual situation. Thus *de facto* implies a historical happening in a particular time and space.

\(^{202}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 184.
3.4: The Holocaust Confronting Modern Historiography

The association of science with (ergo) progress and egalitarianism with citizenship (as interpreted by nationalism) is disseminated by modernity through the use of obvious discourses. Obvious discourses assume their authority through an ahistorical presumption, where value statements are presented as objective and intrinsically universally valid, without allocating a historical beginning, continuity and context. Though obvious discourses may appear to be ethically and politically correct and animated by benevolent intentionality, they can lead to the opposite effect given that obvious discourses are founded on a sameness assumption and understandings. Thus, the moment diversity emerges, a possibility for an inhospitable and exclusive situation is generated, which might lead to devastating measures. The philosopher, Hilary Putnam, observes that the way to the Holocaust was paved with these universalistic obvious discourses statements. According to Putnam the devastating effect of obvious discourses is that they generate simplistic universalistic ethics motivated by and founded on sameness assumptions and not by a dialogical encounter with the other; that is different from the self:

Yet to most people there seems to be an obvious ‘because’. If you ask someone ‘Why should we act so that we could will the maxims of our actions as universal laws?’ or ‘Why should we treat the humanity in others always as an end and never as a mere means?’ or ‘Why should we attempt to relieve the suffering of others?’, ninety-nine times out of a hundred the answer you will be given is ‘Because the other is fundamentally the same as you’. The thought – or rather the cliché – is that if I realized how much the other was like me I would automatically feel a desire to help. But the limitations of such a ‘grounding’ of ethics only have to be mentioned to become obvious.

The danger in grounding ethics in the idea that we are all ‘fundamentally the same’ is that a door is open for a holocaust. One only has to believe that some people are not ‘really’ the same to destroy all the force of such a grounding. Nor is there only the danger of a denial of our common humanity (the Nazis claim that Jews were vermin in superficially human form).²⁰³

Diversity as an expression of a contextual history\textsuperscript{204} manifests the discrepancy between the universalistic obvious ethical statements and the subjective situation (context). Contextual history, through the narrative expression of the subjective and contextual experience, confronts universalistic ethics by revealing sameness assumptions on which universalistic ethics are formulated. Accordingly, contextual history becomes instrumental in revealing the culpability of universalistic ethics in perpetrating structures founded on ideals that generate inequalities and exclusion; such structures and ideals were behind the many modern historical tragic events that led to a systematic annihilation of human lives. The exposure of culpability of universalistic ethics through history comprises a social and ideological diagnosis, where alienation and exclusion of diversity is seen as a symptom of the limiting dialogical aptitude (capability) that the sameness assumption generates in a society. The contextual history operation de-absolutizes and demythologizes any universalistic pronouncements, which pronouncements cage (limit and restrict) critical reflection within a conceptual restriction, whose bars are made of absolute statements. In exposing a diverse possibility of both being and conceptualizing, contextual history generates dialogical space, in which the universalistic ethical statements and political ideologies are critically scrutinized.

The emphasis on history as a means through which diversity can narrate itself and confront the absolutism of sameness assumptions and obvious discourses can lead to the contradiction of absolutizing history; where history risks being presented as a neutral expression of facts. When the writing of history expresses an ideological ideal invested with the tautology of sameness assumptions, history becomes an ideal ally for the deficient of sameness. Thus, instead of emancipating, by expressing the diverse contextual and subjective experience, history becomes an oppressive instrument that enhances exclusion and inequality. Further than that, (as Arendt states) history holds the possibility of becoming a moral justification in support of universalistic statements and actions. Arendt, in her criticism of Arthur de Gobineau’s historical analysis, illustrates the responsibility of history in relation to “race-thinking”, and how history was

\textsuperscript{204} The notion of contextual history is different from a general conception of history, because it is not a historical expression of an established grand narrative. Instead, contextual history is the historical narrative expression – in making – of a particular community within a specific context.
instrumental in promoting and paving the way for the development of the modern racist ideologies.

In 1853, Count Arthur de Gobineau published his *Essai sur l’Inégalité des Races Humaines*, which, only some fifty years later, at the turn of the century, was to become a kind of standard work for race theories in history. The first sentence of the four-volume work – “The fall of civilization is the most striking and, at the same time, the most obscure of all phenomena of history” – indicates clearly the essential new and modern interest of its author, the new pessimistic mood which pervades his work and which is the ideological force that was capable of uniting all previous factors and conflicting opinions. True, from time immemorial, mankind has wanted to know as much as possible about past cultures, fallen empires, extinct peoples; but nobody before Gobineau thought of finding one single reason, one single force according to which civilization always and everywhere rises and falls. Doctrines of decay seem to have some very intimate connection with race-thinking.\(^{205}\)

Arendt notices a unique element in Gobineau’s historical inquiry that transforms his historical analysis into propaganda for “race-thinking”. According to Arendt, the original conclusion of Gobineau was not that he blamed race for the decay of civilization but that he only blames race as the “one single reason”\(^{206}\) for the “decay” of civilization. Therefore, the singularity of reason in Gobineau’s historical analysis becomes the ideal propaganda incentive for racist ideologies. Ultimately it is the singularity of reason that demarcates between a contextual history, that narrates the contextual and subjective divertive experiences, and a universalistic history, which perpetuates an ideal of sameness and a universalistic ideology. A fundamental distinction between contextual and universalistic historic narration is this: contextual history highlights the complexity and plurality of causes and effects, while a universalistic history maintains a simple and singular cause and effect stance.

Ironically, the strength of contextual history is simultaneously the problematic aspect of it, in that the complexity and plurality of causes and effects of contextual history generate an unavoidable paradoxical situation. The paradoxical situation of contextual history is made of two (paradoxical) components, an internal one and an external one. The internal paradox is that

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\(^{205}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 170-1. Emphasis added.

\(^{206}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 171.
contextual history gives plurality of reasons for the causes and effects that can contradict each other. This internal paradox subsequently generates an external paradox: a communication crisis. The communication crisis is due to the historical awareness of the complexity of causes – generated by the plurality of causes and effects – which does not allow for the simple operation of singling out of the problem or the issue. Thus contextual history bears with an incommunicability paradox caused by an awareness of plurality of causes and effects. Unlike non-communicability, incommunicability is not a denial of the possibility of communicating and engaging with the historical event and historical context. Instead, the incommunicability of historical context is based on the awareness of limitation in fully comprehending, and thus, narrating historical event and context. The awareness of more to know and to comprehend motivates the contextual historical analysis, while at the same time it does not hold back in voicing the inadequate means of history in narrating the context.

The contextual history awareness of more and inadequacy disputes modern active thinking\textsuperscript{207} obsession,\textsuperscript{208} which aims for total comprehension and explainablity. This obsessions originate and are maintained by the modern ideology of ‘science ergo progress.’ Further more, this active thinking obsession has intensified its influence on modern thought and reflection in late modernity, through the emergence of a preference for positivistic scientific\textsuperscript{209} paradigm, where scientific validation was constrained to measurability of the scientific observation. Thus, modern historical reflection in appropriating these modern scientific ideals started to perpetuate the modern obsession of a complete comprehension and explainability of historical events and happenings, leaving little space for diversity of causes and effects, and even less space for paradoxes. Therefore, a contextual historical reflection, through its historical narration that comprises the tensions of diversity, paradoxes and incommunicability, directly confronts the modern obsession of active thinking.

\textsuperscript{207} See Chap. 2. Sec. 4.  
\textsuperscript{208} The term obsession is used to identify an attitude that is focused on an operation at the cost of excluding other operations or situations. Thus, the use of the term obsession in this context is to highlight the exclusive focus of active thinking operation by modernity, and the exclusion of other forms of thinking as for instance the passive meditative thinking. See Chap. 2. Sec. 4. 
\textsuperscript{209} Starting in Vienna the positivistic scientific paradigm rapidly spread its influence on modern thought throughout the 20\textsuperscript{th} and 21\textsuperscript{st} century.
The effectiveness of *contextual history* is not in presenting a clean theoretical abstraction of the historical event and happenings but in presenting an ongoing historical narration, which comprises the paradoxes and contradictions of a *historical context*. *Contextual history*, brings an awareness of *more* and *inadequacy* of comprehending and representing any *historical context*, which awareness prevents a historical narration from becoming the exclusive narration and representation of a *historical context*. Thus, *contextual history* is attentive to the diversity of experiences and situations within a *historical context*, and by presenting a historical narration, as an ongoing activity, is not finite; it does not settle for a grand or a perfect narration. *Contextual history* is accompanied, on the one hand, by the awareness of *more* to know and comprehend, and, on the other hand, by the awareness of *inadequacy* of the knowledge and data acquired. Furthermore, *contextual history* frustrates historians by exposing the absurdities of the events and happenings, which absurdity makes historians aware of the limitations of their historical epistemology and hermeneutics. Thus, a *contextual history* exposes the absurdity of events and happenings by exposing the ambiguities and paradoxes.

Ironically what empowers *contextual history* to question and confront *obvious discourses* is *incommunicability*, this because *incommunicability* identifies the absurdities and contradictions of *obvious discourses*. Accordingly, the *incommunicability* of *contextual history* reveals the deep philosophical and historical contradictions of modern *obvious discourses*. Modernity, though associating itself with the ideal of progress based on the scientific *obvious discourse* of *communicability* – thereby abandoning the religious apophatic discourse of mystery – has (modernity) itself produced historical contextual instances of *incommunicability*. The Holocaust is a historical happening that reveals the *incommunicability* of a *contextual history* presented within modernity and produced through modern categories. Therefore, the Holocaust – a paradigm of *incommunicable contextual history* – exposed a significant modern contradiction, through which the means for *active thinking* and *communicability* – identified with modern scientific and technological operations – became the means through which human thoughts, voices and lives were silenced.

Auschwitz, the symbol of the Holocaust, has been called another planet. But it was also a mundane extension of the modern factory system. Rather than producing goods, the raw material was human beings and the end-product was death, so many units per day marked carefully on the manager's production charts. The chimneys, the very symbol of the modern factory system, poured forth acrid smoke produced by burning human
flesh. The brilliantly organized railroad grid of modern Europe carried a new kind of raw material to the factories. It did so in the same manner as with other cargo. In the gas chambers, the victims inhaled noxious gas generated by prussic acid pellets, which were produced by the advanced chemical industry of Germany. Engineers designed the crematoria; managers designed the system of bureaucracy that worked with a zest and efficiency more backward nations would envy. Even the overall plan itself was a reflection of the modern scientific spirit gone awry. What we witnessed was nothing less than a massive scheme of social engineering, of "redoing" society on the basis of "scientific" racial eugenics. That was not true of the murders of the Armenians, the Ibos, the Burundians, the Indonesians, the Cambodians, the Kulaks, and the many other groups who have been victims of massive barbarity.

3.5: The Holocaust’s Ethical Epistemology Agency

Modern obvious discourse of ‘science ergo progress’ reaches a dead end when the Holocaust presents itself not only as a historical happening, but also as an incommunicable paradox that confuses the obvious discourses claims. The incommunicable paradoxes of the Holocaust calls for the modern active thinking\textsuperscript{211} (defined by Arendt as “I can know only what I myself make to…”\textsuperscript{212}) to include a more pre-modern contemplative and passive like thinking,\textsuperscript{213} which Arendt defines using the Greek concept of “thaumazein, the wonder at everything that is as it is.”\textsuperscript{214} Emile L. Fackenheim, while recognizing the contribution of Arendt’s philosophy in reflecting on the paradoxes of the Holocaust, states that Arendt, in her attempt to understand Eichmann’s thought behind his horrifying actions, succumbs to the modern active thinking, in which (according to Fackenheim) she attempts to attain a total comprehension and explainability of Eichmann’s actions.


\textsuperscript{211} See Chap. 2. Sec. 4.


\textsuperscript{213} See Chap. 2. Sec. 4.

All writing about the Holocaust is in the grip of a paradox the event must be communicated, yet is incommunicable. And the writer must accept this paradox and endure.

That this paradox has a special dimension for the philosophical writer was illustrated by Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. The philosopher must grasp a phenomenon as a whole. Attempting to grasp this phenomenon as a whole, Arendt adopted an “objective” stance of “clinical” detachment – and lapsed into irony. But for thought to detach itself from this phenomenon is already to distort it; and to lapse into irony is inadmissible.215

As stated by Fackenheim, the challenge that the Holocaust brings to the modern mind is the challenge for “endurance”; thus challenging the modern mind’s habit of transcending the context. The Holocaust contests modernity’s urge for active thinking and understanding of the world around us, which motivates the self to transcend the context, by formulating ‘all encompassing’ theoretic formulas and constructs. Thus, the complexity of the context through modern active thinking becomes rationalized into theoretic formulas, presented as whole and complete. The contestation of the Holocaust is expressed by the memory of the Holocaust that operates as a constant call for bearing with the context (in this case the Holocaust) even when the context is enigmatic – because it is paradox and has diverse meanings. Thus, the Holocaust becomes a conceptual weight that pushes back into the context the modern mind, which is always tempted to find a semantic escape216 route – by transcending context – and which semantic escape diverts thinking from its historical context.

On our part, in contrast, we confront in the Holocaust world a whole of horror. We cannot comprehend it but only comprehend its incomprehensibility. We cannot transcend it but only be struck by the brutal truth that it cannot be transcended. Here the very attempt to see a meaning, or do a placing-in-perspective, would already constitute a dissipation, not only blasphemous but also untruthful and hence unphilosophical, of either the whole of horror – the fact it was not random, piecemeal, accidental, but rather integrated into a world – or else of the horror of the whole – the fact that the whole


216 Semantic escape means to find meaning in a happening, and to interpret and to reduce the whole happening according to that meaning. It is an escape because it offers avoidance from bearing with the enigmas and paradoxes of the happening.
possessed no rational, let alone redeeming purpose subserved by the horror, but that the horror was starkly ultimate.\textsuperscript{217}

Presenting the Holocaust as \textit{incomprehensible} sounds like a non-dialogical stance for the modern all comprehensive mindset – \textit{active thinking}. Instead, the Holocaust offers a \textit{historical context} dialogical experience by situating the \textit{self} into a \textit{passive thinking} mode through which the \textit{self} can let her/him be absorbed into a state of wonder and reflection. Thus, the Holocaust \textit{incomprehensible} historical context disrupts the modern \textit{active thinking} impulse of objectifying \textit{historical context}, which makes of history an object for observation. Furthermore, the Holocaust breaks with modernity \textit{active thinking} – that is of situating history in a passive observational state – by becoming itself an interpellant agent through which modernity can be observed and scrutinized. Bauman, when referring to the memory of the Holocaust, opts for the “window” metaphor – instead of “the picture” metaphor. In comparing the Holocaust with a window, Bauman shows how the Holocaust challenges a memorial conception of history, where the \textit{looking at} the past happening becomes an act of disassociation from the past tragedy. Hence the use of the window explains how \textbf{the memory of Holocaust is not only a past happening, but its past happening becomes instrumental in seeking a better understanding of the present.}

The evidence amassed by the historians was overwhelming in volume and content. Their analyses were cogent and profound. They showed beyond reasonable doubt that the Holocaust was a window, rather than a picture on the wall. Looking through that window, one can catch a rare glimpse of many things otherwise invisible. And the things one can see are of the utmost importance not just for the perpetrators, victims and witnesses of the crime, but for all those who are alive today and hope to be alive tomorrow. What I saw through this widow I did not find at all pleasing. The more depressing the view, however, the more I was convinced that if one refused to look through the window, it would be at one’s peril.\textsuperscript{218}

Bauman realizes that when dealing with the Holocaust as a sociologist he cannot just analyze the Holocaust as another historical and sociological phenomenon. The Holocaust is charged

\textsuperscript{217} Fackenheim, E.L. \textit{To Mend the World: Foundations of Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought}, 238. Emphasis added.

\textsuperscript{218} Bauman, Z. \textit{Modernity and the Holocaust}, viii.
with too many horrors, paradoxes, enigmas and emotions to be scrutinized from an observer
stance. Bauman, mindful of the inadequacy of the self to comprehend and, at the same time be
aware of need for more to understand the paradoxes of the Holocaust, realizes that, as a
sociologist, the question “What can we, the sociologist, say about the Holocaust?”\(^{219}\) has to be
radically altered into “What has the Holocaust to say about us, the sociologist, and our
practice?”\(^{220}\) The inadequacy of the self is shown in two ways: epistemologically and ethically.
The epistemological inadequacy is related to the inadequacy of the self in comprehending the
causes and effects of Holocaust, while the ethical inadequacy is in realization that the self’s
ethical standards, values and principles are not enough to prevent and to judge\(^{221}\) the horrors of
the Holocaust. The Holocaust problematizes the conception of the self as Archimedean point\(^{222}\)
– as conceived by Descartes’ and sustained by Modernity – because, if the self maintains an
observing Archimedean point when facing the horrors of the Holocaust, the self becomes
her/himself a perpetrator in the horrors of the victims.

We all accept as fact that “behavior” is disoriented “in extremity,” and that in order to
understand it we must adopt a standpoint other than that of the disoriented person.
Surely this applies – applies especially – to the Holocaust. A normal extremity (such as
the death of a father) disorients a person but does not rob him of a reorienting mother,
brother, friend. The Holocaust, in contrast, was a world of extremity, a disorienting
universe, as though designed (indeed, actually designed) to leave its victim with no
reorienting – as it were, Archimedean-point outside it. Surely this victim is totally
disoriented; and we must detach ourselves wholly from him and his world – as it were,
adopt an Archimedean standpoint of our own – if we wish to understand behavior in
this extremity! With the disoriented son or daughter we can seek at least a partial
personal identification, for he or she has a reorienting mother, brother, friend. Can we
identify with the disoriented victim of the Holocaust? If not, then whereas the
traumatized orphan remains at least partly a subject for the psychologist analyzing his
behavior, the traumatized Holocaust victim is an object and nothing else.\(^{223}\)

\(^{219}\) Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, 5.

\(^{220}\) Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, 5.

\(^{221}\) No judgment can ever fully do justice to the victims of the Holocaust.

\(^{222}\) See Chap. 2. Sec. 5.

\(^{223}\) Fackenheim, E.L. To Mend the World: Foundations of Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought, 226.
The “disorientation” caused by the memory of the Holocaust questions the modern role of the self as the all-observing Archimedean point. The memory of the Holocaust shows how “the exclusive all observing modern self” has missed – and to a certain extent still misses – the implications of ideologies and philosophes that led to the Holocaust. Consequently, a neglect in observation by the modern self disassociates completely the self from the Archimedean point. While challenging the Modern association of the self with the Archimedean point, the Holocaust does not attribute to itself an Archimedean point, instead, the Holocaust assumes an ethical epistemology role, through which ideologies and philosophies that claim an Archimedean point, are confronted with their missed (deficit) ethical and political observations. The Holocaust ethical epistemology is when through the Holocaust reflection the self (as individual and collective) is sensitized to identify the ethical and political influence of ideologies and philosophies. Therefore, the Holocaust ethical epistemology not only reattaches the Machiavellian dichotomy of ethics and politics – by perceiving an organic relation between the two – but further than that, it gives an ethical and political value and implication to any thinking process and outcome.

Bauman’s “window” metaphor is ideal to explain not only the ethical epistemological role of the Holocaust but also how this role functions. As with all other windows, the Holocaust connects the solitary Modern self with the outside world, and its historical context. This connection becomes a determining factor for the self in perceiving the ethical and political implications of ideologies and philosophies confessed by the self. The ethical epistemological agency of the Holocaust depletes the past historical happenings of the Holocaust to analyze present conceptual and thought formulations. Since in the Holocaust, history (the events that led to the Holocaust) and philosophy (the thought that has led and formulated the events of the Holocaust) intersect, the Holocaust becomes an ideal hermeneutic source of engagement with the present. It is the search for the why of the Holocaust that constructs an ethical epistemology.

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224 Niccolò Machiavelli is considered the founder of Modern Political thought. He detached himself from the Medieval Platonic and Aristotelic organic understanding of politics, ethics, epistemology and metaphysics by transforming political philosophy into a separate discipline. Some of Machiavelli’s political statements are even in contrast with the ethics and moral principles of the time.

that goes beyond the boundaries of the historical happenings; thus *meta-historical*.\(^{226}\) Hence it is the *meta-historical* nature of the Holocaust that makes it possible for the formulation of an *ethical epistemology* that implies the present. Accordingly, the memory of the Holocaust becomes a critical epistemological and ethical *sifter* through which ideologies and philosophies are scrutinized and confronted.

The Holocaust *meta-historical ethical epistemology* is not initiated on an abstract and speculative conceptual ideal that transcends the happening. Instead, the Holocaust *ethical epistemology* is formulated on a *contextual historical* happening that can be localized in space and time. While admitting that the Holocaust remains a unique saga in the Jewish and German history, for post-Holocaust reflection, the implications and consequences of the Holocaust have wider borders than that of an ethnic, racial and religious community or a nation state. Therefore, since the Holocaust *ethical epistemology* is rooted in the *historical context* of the Holocaust, and because the *contextual historicity* of the Holocaust has also *meta* time and space consequences\(^{227}\), the Holocaust *ethical epistemological* agency (correspondingly) goes beyond the time and space of the Holocaust happening.

It is through the understanding of the Holocaust implications and consequences –both within a historical context and *meta* (beyond) time/space context – that the Holocaust *ethical epistemology* is formulated. Unlike the Modern conception of transcendence where transcendence undermines *contextual history*, the *meta* time/space effect of the Holocaust is both *generated and required* by the *contextual historicity* of the Holocaust. Confining the causes and effects of the Holocaust violence and horrors within the borders of the happenings (time and space) would perpetuate the violence and horrors the Holocaust, since it transforms violence into a historical incident, thus undermining the ethical and political implications, and the philosophical construct of the Holocaust and consequently endangering the world by

\(^{226}\) The notion of *meta-historical* is used to identify the beyond the historical happening implications of the Holocaust. In other words the implications of the horrors generated by the Holocaust goes beyond the time and space of the Holocaust happening.

\(^{227}\) The Holocaust generated direct victims who were tortured and killed during the Holocaust by the Nazis, but there were also other indirect victims who, in one way or other, are still carrying the scars of the Holocaust, as for instance the many people who lost their families, relatives and friends in the Holocaust.
increasing the risks of generating other Holocaust’s horrors. Bauman, while maintaining that the Holocaust is a unique tragic event in the history of humanity that had as its main objective the extermination of Jews, also insists that the effects and responsibility of the Holocaust go beyond its historicity.

One way is to present the Holocaust as something that happened to the Jews; as an event in Jewish history. This makes the Holocaust unique, comfortably uncharacteristic and sociological inconsequential. The most common example of such a way is the presentation of the Holocaust as the culmination point of European-Christian antisemitism – in itself a unique phenomenon with nothing to compare it with in the large and sense inventory of ethnic or religious prejudices and aggressions. Among all other cases of collective antagonisms, antisemitism stand alone for its unprecedented systematicity, for its ideological intensity, for its supra-national and supra-territorial spread, for its unique mix of local and economical sources and tributaries. In so far as it is defined as, so to speak, the continuation of antisemitism through other means, the Holocaust appears to be a ‘one item set’, a one-off episode, which perhaps sheds some light on the pathology of the society in which it occurred, but hardly adds anything to our understanding of this society’s normal state. Less still does it call for any significant revision of the orthodox understanding of the historical tendency of modernity, of the civilizing process, of the constitutive topics of sociobiological inquiry.  

The Holocaust ethical epistemology perceives the Holocaust as the point of contact between the philosophical ideals and theories and their ethical and political implications. This connectivity that the Holocaust generates between philosophy (and any other form of thinking) and its (ethical and political) implications comes from attributing to the Holocaust a philosophical and ideological intentionality, which intentionality excludes any historical accidental attribution to the Holocaust. Thus, the fact that the Holocaust was thought through before being perpetuated, the Holocaust has to include any form of thought/thinking under the scrutiny of its ethical epistemology. Further than that, the Holocaust was constructed on a preliminary ‘philosophical’ and ‘scientific’\footnote{Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, 1-2.} construct through which the Holocaust victims where stripped of their humanity, and thus dehumanized. This dehumanization facilitated the Holocaust execution, 

\footnote{Pseudo-scientific is more accurate to describe the scientific discourse used by the Nazis to dehumanize Jews, Roma, Gays, disabled and others.}
through which the mechanical extermination of human beings could be accomplished. Hence the Holocaust is not only the historical factual instance that first marginalized and then exterminated human lives, but it is also the ‘philosophy’ and the ‘science’ that led to the extermination. The Holocaust *ethical epistemology* attains its *meta-historical* ethical agency from the justice paradoxical nature of the Holocaust: where on the one hand the Holocaust becomes a constant call for justice, on the other hand the carnage is too big for history to satiate the Holocaust call for justice.

### 3.6: Modernity as Holocaust Possibility

The Holocaust *ethical epistemology* transforms the Holocaust into a measurement through which ideological and philosophical statements are ethically assessed. Thus, the task of the Holocaust *ethical epistemology* is to bring every modern thought and activity under the ethical scrutiny of the Holocaust. The Holocaust *ethical epistemology* operates its ethical scrutiny by reconfiguring the Holocaust with its modern philosophical and social context. The reconfiguration of the Holocaust becomes like a mirror that reflects back on modernity revealing the paradoxes, incongruities and fallacies that led to the Holocaust. The objective for the reconfiguration of the Holocaust within a modern social context is not to reduce the responsibilities of the individual’s criminal actions; it is to expose the incongruities of modernity that supplied individuals with sinister *possibilities* through which their horrific crimes of the Holocaust were objectified. The analyses modernity through the “window” that is the Holocaust (as identified by Bauman) gives the epistemological possibility to perceive while critically engaging with both the *psyche* and the *psychoses* of modernity. In Bauman’s

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230 A historical objective of the Holocaust was to keep both the victims of the Holocaust and the Holocaust itself hidden from the rest of the Modern world. Thus, the objective of the Holocaust reconfiguration is to show the Holocaust within its Modern context.

231 It is the critical engagement that gives an ethical dimension to epistemology; hence *ethical epistemology*.

232 *Psyche* in this context refers to the aspirations that motivate and animate modernity.

233 *Psychosis* refers to the pathological state of modernity in which modern imagination generated a loss of contact with the historical context.
terms, the Holocaust becomes a “sociological laboratory” through which the unobserved aspects of modernity are rendered available for observation and critically engagement.

One posthumous service the Holocaust can render is to provide an insight into the otherwise unnoticed ‘other aspects’ of the society principles enshrined by modern history. I propose that the experience of the Holocaust, now thoroughly researched by the historians, should be looked upon as, so to speak, a sociological ‘laboratory’. The Holocaust has exposed and examined such attributes of our society as are not revealed, and hence are not empirically accessible, in ‘non-laboratory’ conditions. In other words, I propose to treat the Holocaust as a rare, yet significant and reliable, test of the hidden possibilities of modern society.  

When the Holocaust “window” opens over modernity, time instantaneously emerges as a paradox. Thus, the identification of the establishment of modernity, both with the separation of time and space, and with time assuming a leading agency role over space – where time according to Bauman becomes “the weapon in the conquest of space”[235] – is boldly contrasted by the Holocaust. The modern psyche (motivating ideals) always looks for ways through which time manipulation could make the far near and the unreachable reachable, the Holocaust will show how this psyche has evolved into psychoses. The Holocaust shows another side and function of modernity ‘time manipulation’ (through speed technology), which contradicts the modernity psyche that motivates for connectivity and immediateness. For the Nazis, science and technology becomes an essential instrument through which their racist ideology could to be actualized into genocide. Therefore, the time manipulation within the Holocaust context becomes a means for creating distance and invisibility between human beings.

Science is not only used as a killing machine by the Holocaust but it also assumes the arbiter role that judges whose life to kill and whose life to spare. Therefore, the death attained through the technological instruments of gas chambers and other death machines in the Holocaust, was

considered a ‘scientific device’ that was supporting the ‘scientific arbitrations’\textsuperscript{236} of eugenics. Arendt noted that Nazi Germany justified the use of eugenics as a means to facilitate the Darwinian natural selection\textsuperscript{237}, which selectivity is perceived as instrumental for progress. Thus, eugenics became the Nazi’s criteria that determined the destiny of countless human lives. The elimination of those who were considered an ‘obstacle to progress’ – as in the case of the Jews – started to be considered an ‘emancipatory act’ that favors progress. According to Arendt, the Nazi propaganda justified eugenics through apocalyptic imageries of social decline – as that of Oswald Spengler – and by connecting social decline with race theories.

Eugenics promised to overcome the troublesome uncertainties of the survival doctrine according to which it was impossible either to predict who would turn out to be the fittest or to provide the means for nations to develop everlasting fitness. This possible consequence of applied eugenics was stressed in Germany in the twenties as a reaction to Spengler’s decline of the West. The process of selection has only to be changed from a natural necessity which worked behind the backs of men into an “artificial,” consciously applied physical tool.\textsuperscript{238}

The use of science by the Holocaust both as an arbitration, upon which the destiny of human lives depended, and as a means to torture and extermination of human beings, places into the abyss of crisis the modern formula ‘science \textit{ergo} progress’. This is because the Holocaust introduces a new skeptical understanding of science, where scientific practice is not necessarily perceived as inherently benevolent and beneficial; and thus, progressive. Moreover, the Holocaust radically challenges the notion of progress that modernity has assumed, by divorcing the notion of progress from science. The Holocaust highlights a peculiarity within the notion of progress that sways scientific conceptions and practices into its control. Arendt admits that modern progress and science share a common origin, where at the end progress becomes autonomous movement, in which science was absorbed.

\textsuperscript{236} The eugenics notion of idyllic human race became a measurement through which people could be either included or excluded; within the Nazi ideology exclusion meant no right to live.

\textsuperscript{237} Modern racist theorist including the Nazi movement made used of Darwinian conception of natural selection as a support for their race differentiation and race supremacy ideology.

\textsuperscript{238} Arendt, H. \textit{The Origins of Totalitarianism}, 178-9.
Unquestionably the notion of progress was born as the result of the tremendous advances of scientific knowledge, a veritable avalanche of discovery, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and I think it quite possible that it was the relentlessness inherent in sheer thinking, whose need can never be assuaged, that, once it has invaded the science, drove the scientist to ever-new discoveries, each one giving rise to new theory, so that those caught in the movement were subject to the illusion of a never-ending process – the process of progress.  

In identifying the notion of progress with the rise of movements, Arendt (as with Adorno) perceives progress as a distinct activity from science or other human activities, which activity can be better defined as a philosophical and ideological activity. The modern identification of science with progress is the outcome of forceful and/or aggressive attitude by which modern progress implements its progressive ideals. Accordingly, the “never-ending process” of progress in modernity becomes an ideological and philosophical whirlwind that engulfs in it all other human activity. For Arendt, modernity utilizes science as a rhetorical propagandist means for “persuasion”. Consequently, science becomes an instrument through which modernity seeks to socially root its ideals and to justify its exclusive policies towards what or whom is perceived as a threat for modern progressive ideals. Arendt, while highlighting the use by modernity of science in justifying “race-thinking” and race supremacy ideologies, does not hold science directly responsible. Instead, she holds responsible individual scientists for transforming their scientific practices into a propaganda machine. Arendt maintains that for these propaganda scientists their objective was not scientific exploration and discoveries but instead their sole objective was propaganda – which she identifies with the term persuasion – for their nationalistic cause.

The tremendous power of persuasion inherent in the main ideologies of our time is not accidental. Persuasion is not possible without appeal to either experiences or desires, in other words to immediate political needs. Plausibility in these matters comes neither from scientific facts, as the various brands of Darwinists would like us to believe, not from historical laws, as the historians pretend, in their efforts to discover the law according to which civilizations rise and fall. Every full-fledged ideology has been created, continued and improved as a political weapon and not as a theoretical doctrine.

239 Arendt, H. The Life of the Mind, 55.
240 Arendt, H. The Life of the Mind, 55.
It is true that sometimes – and such is the case with racism – an ideology has changed its original political sense, but without immediate contact with political life none of them could be imagined. Their scientific aspect is secondary and arises first from the desire to provide watertight arguments, and second because their persuasive power also got hold of scientists, who no longer were interested in the result of their research but left their laboratories and hurried off to preach to the multitude their new interpretations of life and world. We owe it to these “scientist” preachers rather than to any scientific findings that today no single science is left into whose categorical system race-thinking has not deeply penetrated. This again has made historians, some of whom have been tempted to hold science responsible for race-thinking, mistake certain either philological or biological research results for causes instead of consequence of race-thinking. The opposite would have come closer to the truth. As a matter of fact, the doctrine that Might is Right needed several centuries (from the seventeenth to the nineteenth) to conquer natural science and produce the “law” of the survival of the fittest.\[241\]

Arendt boldly maintains that what motivates the ‘scientific endeavors’ of these propaganda scientists is that their political intent that was formulated on what she identifies as race-thinking ideology. The question is how would progressive philosophy compliment and support the race-thinking agenda within modernity and nationalism as identified by Arendt. Adorno maintains that the notion of progress is deceitful because it presents itself as beyond dogma\[242\] but in reality it promulgates an identity-thinking agenda, generated by a dogmatic argumentation for inclusion (us) and exclusion (them). “Philosophical progress is deceitful because the tighter it connects arguments, the more airtight and unassailable its propositions become, the more it becomes identity-thinking”\[243\]. Adorno identifies the dogmatic nature of progress with the separation of the notion of progress –identified as philosophical and ideological concept – from science. “Philosophy lives in symbiosis with science and cannot break from it without turning into dogmatism and ultimately relapsing into mythology.”\[244\]

\[242\] In this context dogma denotes both ideology and other belief system that identify with a community or a group of people.
\[244\] Adorno, T.W. ed. Tiedemann, R. Can One Live after Auschwitz? 142.
The modern formula ‘science ergo progress’ in light of the Arendt and Adorno understanding of progress leads into the identification of ergo with the modern philosophy and ideology. 

**Modernity as ergo does not only act as an adverb between two conceptions but it becomes the subject and the object for both conceptions.** Modernity as subject and object created a discrepancy with its Cartesian origin, especially in regards the understanding of the self and the introspection epistemological operation of the self in Descartes. The modern self eventually started to lose an individual self-identification and instead, started to assume a more collective self-identification. This collective self-identification within modernity gave rise to new forms of self-identification and social relationality identified as modern movements, which movements in some extreme (but not rare) situations have assumed a totalitarian ideology and practice. The ways totalitarian movements operate are symptomatic of the modern collective self-identification, where the conception of the self as individual is annihilating for a self that is identified with a movement. According to Arendt totalitarian movements operate this absorption of the individual self into the collective self by centering their governmental and ideological structures on a leadership figure, with the expectation of absolute loyalty to the leader by individual members.

**Totalitarian movements are mass organizations of atomized and isolated individuals.** Compared with all other parties and movements, their most conspicuous external characteristic is their demand for total, unrestricted, unconditional, and unalterable loyalty of the individual member. This demand is made by the leaders of totalitarian movements even before they size power. It usually precedes the total organization of the country under their actual rule and it follows from the claim of their ideologies that their organization will encompass, in due course, the entire human race. Where however, totalitarian rule has not been prepared by a totalitarian movement (and this, in contradistinction to Nazi Germany, was the case in Russia), the movement has to be organized afterward and the conditions for its growth have artificially to be created in order to make total loyalty – the psychological basis for total domination – at all possible. Such loyalty can be expected only from completely isolated human beings who, without any other social ties to family, friends, comrades, or even mere acquaintance, derives his sense of having a place in the world only from his belonging to a movement, his membership in the party.\(^{245}\)

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Though the Cartesian self is abandoned for a collective self within the modern movement as Arendt has specified the totalitarian movements assumes a conception of the self that is a collectivity of selves that are “atomized and isolated individuals” without the intermediary presence of any subsidiarity.\textsuperscript{246} These “atomized and isolated individuals” are not the Cartesian self because they do not express a cogito (thinking) expression, it is neither a cogitamus – collective thinking or thinking together – expression because there is no space for a dialogical discussion. Instead Arendt identifies this collective expression of totalitarian movements as a mass expression. Masses, according to Arendt, are the expression of extreme isolation of the individual self (solitary state), through which the self loses her/his aptitude for thinking, consequently letting her/himself to be led as a mob.

Two important characteristics are present within a mass expression, first characteristic is that masses thrive on the isolated state of individuals. “The chief characteristic of the mass man is not brutality and backwardness, but his isolation and lack of normal social relationship.”\textsuperscript{247} The second characteristic is that masses cannot provide a leadership for themselves; they have to be led by established internal leaders. “It should be remembered that the leaders of totalitarian movements and their sympathizers are, so to speak, older than the masses which they organize so that chronologically speaking the masses do not have to wait helplessly for the rise of their own leaders in the midst of a decaying class society, of which they are the most outstanding product.”\textsuperscript{248} Thus, both the extreme social isolation experience and the ready-made leadership structure within totalitarian movements subsist on a conception of a self that is not a cogito (the thinking self).

Therefore since the self is not perceived as cogito the coming together of selves within a totalitarian movement does not produce a cogitamus experience. Instead the coming together within totalitarian movements has the function of conforming the masses to dogmatic statements

\textsuperscript{246} Subsidiarity is when small communities or groups (including families) assume autonomy from a centralized governmental body to respond to their immediate needs and to develop their own policies and governmental structures. An example of subsidiarity is that of religious communities, where though they maintain proper regulations and policies, they are still participants within a broader Nation State society.

\textsuperscript{247} Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 317.

\textsuperscript{248} Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 326.
presented as a rhetorical monologue and memorized as slogans. Since thinking (as cogito) subsists in an investigative attitude that questions, consequently the act of thinking – both collectively (cogitamus) and individuality (cogito) – does not fit within a totalitarian movement. Though totalitarian movements claim a political ideology, according to Arendt they do not allocate space for politically thinking\textsuperscript{249} because they lack “common interest”. From an Arendtian perspective, they become an ideology and a “political organization” without the political\textsuperscript{250} dimension. According to Arendt, what makes totalitarian movements possible are the masses, and what characterizes and constitute masses is indifference.

Totalitarian movements are possible wherever there are masses who for one reason or another have acquired the appetite for political organization. Masses are not held together by a consciousness of common interest and they lack that specific class articulateness which is expressed in determined, limited, and obtainable goals. The term masses applies only where we deal with people who either because of sheer numbers, or indifference, or a combination of both, cannot be integrated into any organization based on common interest, into political parties or municipal governments or professional organization or trade unions. Potentially, they exist in every country and form the majority of those large numbers of neutral, politically indifferent people who never join a party and hardly ever go to the polls.\textsuperscript{251}

3.7: The Holocaust Unveiling the Modern Debilitating Epistemology

The constitution of masses as identified by Arendt as sheer numbers with an indifference attitude offers the ideal situation through which people can easily be manipulated to comply with the ideology and regulations of totalitarian movements. Both the notions of sheer numbers and indifference demonstrate a lack of historical identity and contextual belonging, thus making it easier for the totalitarian movement to impose on the self a new identity and belonging. The etymological explanation of indifference – as not making any difference – hints at how totalitarian movements operate and why it was within a totalitarian movement (National

\textsuperscript{249} Political thinking refers to the making of policies and political ideals through political debates and reflection.

\textsuperscript{250} The political as used in this context refers to the articulation of common interest into policies.

\textsuperscript{251} Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 311. Emphasis added.
Socialism) that the Holocaust took place. The historian Ian Kershaw explicitly states, “The road to Auschwitz was built by hate, but paved with indifference.”

The distinction of hate and indifference suggest that the Holocaust subsist on complimentary but different negative ethical stances that is the unethical and the non-ethical. On the one hand, the unethical refers to the horrors of the Holocaust as an expression of an evil and distructive thinking and deliberation, which hate is identified with. On the other hand, the non-ethical – which indifference is an expression of – is related to the incapacity (debilitating) situation of a human being to think ethically and to bridge her/his ethical thinking into action. Hence, since a non-ethical is an ethical void it is profoudnly debilitating because it totally eradicates the possibility for ethical thinking and action. Arendt’s use of the concept of neutrality as an expression of indifference, highlights the passive and non-engaging qualities of indifference, but also the loss of political agency that indifference generates, therefore making it easier for the totalitarian movement to subjugate people into its ideology and to implement its own ideology. The Holocaust account is shocking not only for the horrors that were inflicted on people but also for the lack of horror that people expressed in witnessing the Holocaust horrors – which in some cases made it possible for the horrors to be inflicted. Norman Geras in his book The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political Philosophy after the Holocaust, gives some example of the horrors of indifference, which includes a citation of two Holocaust witnesses accounts concerning the contrasting scenes in Warsaw within and outside the Warsaw ghetto walls.

Writing of… the period of the first great deportation from the Warsaw ghetto in the summer of 1942, Adina Szwaiger, a woman who worked in the children’s hospital there, recalls a scene: ‘They kept going past and it was a sweltering day… On the balcony of the house on Zelzna Street – there, on the other side [of the ghetto wall] – a woman in a flowered housecoat was watering plants in window boxes. She must have seen the procession below, but she carried on watering her flowers.’

This was July 1942. The next spring, in April 1943, the Warsaw ghetto uprising began. The Germans set fire to the ghetto, the remnant of its already doomed population trapped within. Szwaiger remembers that on a square nearby the ghetto wall there was a merry-go-round. ‘There were children sitting on this merry-go-round, while it went round and round, and I could hear the music playing. Maybe I imagined it? The children were laughing and the people going by were smiling. And on the other side of the walls you could hear shooting.’ One Aaron Landau put on record at the time:

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I, who write these words I state, as an eye-witness that all the theatres, movie theatres, show-places, and all sorts of casinos and other places of amusement were open and operating according to their daily routines, at the time when up above, in the Warsaw skies, were rising coils of smoke from the burning ghetto, and inside burning alive tens of thousands of souls.

The two Warsaw ghetto accounts highlight how *indifference* lacks not only ethical action but also epistemology. The people outside the ghetto were aware of the unusual (extraordinary) happening inside the ghetto but they kept an ordinary (mundane) attitude. The use of the term epistemology is indicative of how in one way or another the two accounts highlight a cognitive experience of *the other* but that cognitive experience fails to be processed into action. Thus, the epistemological aspect of indifference refers to the failed cognitive process that motivates the human being to perceive and identify an extraordinary happening and to respond extraordinarily – not in a mundane way. Therefore, *indifference* becomes an expression of a debilitating epistemology that fails to perceive and process differences and diversity (*the other*), and which actions reflect the deficit of perception and processing of differences and diversity. Bauman attributes to modernity the responsibility for the loss of aptitude of seeing and relating with diversity, which loss of aptitude becomes the grounds on which the Holocaust ideology could be executed in the form of genocide. “Modernity brought the levelling of difference – at least of their outward appearances, of the very stuff of which symbolic distances between segregated groups are made.”254 The notion of *levelling* is associated with a facilitation of communication through the elimination of diversity perceived as divergence. Thus, *levelling* becomes the modern action through which the ‘idyllic end’ – perceived as a ‘perfect society’ – justifies the means even if this means is genocide.

Stalin’s and Hitler’s victims were not killed in order to capture and colonize the territory they occupied. Often they were killed in a dull, mechanical fashion with no human emotions – hatred included – to enliven it. They were killed because they did not fit, for one reason or another, the scheme of a perfect society. Their killing was not the work ‘of destruction, but creation. They were eliminated, so that an objectively better human world – more efficient, more moral, more beautiful – could be


established. A Communist world. Or a racially pure, Aryan world. In both cases, a harmonious world, conflict-free, docile in the hands of their rulers, orderly, controlled. People tainted with ineradicable blight of their past or origin could not be fitted into such unblemished, healthy and shining world. Like weeds, their nature could not be changed. They could not be improved or re-educated. They had to be eliminated for reasons of genetic or ideational heredity – of a natural mechanism, resilient and immune to cultural processing.

The genocidal argument that the other is to be eliminated because she/he is an imperfection that contaminates the ‘perfect society,’ places the Holocaust apart from World War II. The elimination of the other in genocide is not the outcome of a binary conflicting opposition between to different (diverse) conflicting powers. A war – as an outcome of a conflicting relationality between two antagonizing others – subsists primarily in a mutual recognition of the other as other, which makes the relation ‘worth of’ the conflict. Chantal Mouffe explains this in her description of antagonism as an intrinsic aspect in an assertion of a proper identity, “When we accept that every identity is relational and that the condition of existence of every identity is the affirmation of a difference, the determination of an ‘other’ that is going to play the role of a ‘constitutive outside’, it is possible to understand how antagonisms arise.” Genocide killing is different from a war and other conflict killing because it entails a total epistemological alienation of the other. Therefore the ‘genocide rational’ goes beyond the antagonism because it is constructed on an identity of the self that does not epistemologically perceive the other, making it impossible to include or interact with the other. To sum up, the elimination of the other in genocide is presided with the epistemological elimination of the other, while in a war the elimination of the other is presided with the epistemological recognition of the other.

The Nazi propaganda capitalized from the two modern associations, that of equality and sameness and progress and science, to realize their Holocaust ideology. In their propaganda, ‘scientific data’ was used to present the other as not same (as not us), which was sufficient to trigger a whole chain reaction that lead to the justification and the realization of the Holocaust.

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Though the Holocaust ideology was realized in very different ways and through different means by the Nazis – as for instance the expulsion of the Jews from educational institutions, the building of ghettos and concentration camps – one central notion that is found in all the Holocaust expressions is the act of distancing the Holocaust victims from social relationality. Thus, they rendered the Holocaust victims invisible from the rest of the world. The syllogism behind rendering invisible the faces of the Holocaust victims is that the less the face of the other is accessible and visible the less the other is one of us. The Nazis well knew that fiscal invisibility is limited: one cannot hide a whole population from the rest of the world. It was only through exploitation of what Bauman defines as the “moral sleeping pills”\textsuperscript{257} that were already available in Modern society, that the Nazis could eliminate the face of the other even if the face is facing the self.

The Holocaust ethical epistemology in rendering visible the modern epistemological debilitation – where diversity cannot be perceived and thus related with – demonstrates that this debilitates and paralyses relationally.\textsuperscript{258} The conception of relation necessitates diversity, because for relation to be a relation it necessitates the other that is not I, thus different to relate with. Hence, excluding diversity entails the exclusion of the possibility of relationship. The non-ethical nature of indifference between the self (as a subject of indifference) and the other (as an object of indifference) both paralyses the communication and annihilates the possibility of relationality. Though the Holocaust does not offer a solution for non-relationality within modernity, it definitely shows the devastating effects of non-relationality. The Holocaust in its ethical epistemology offers philosophical diagnostic instruments through which post-Holocaust philosophies can perceive their own defects and contradictions. But further than that, the memory of the Holocaust becomes a distressing reminder for post-Holocaust philosophy that the notion of progress has to be reconsidered within the dynamics of the encounter between the self and the other.

\textsuperscript{257} See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, 26.

\textsuperscript{258} The conception of relation necessitates diversity because for relation to be a relation it necessitates the other that is not I, thus different to relate with. The consequence of excluding diversity is the exclusion of the possibility of relationality.
Chapter 4. Looking Through the Holocaust “Window”: Tracing the Holocaust Possibility within Modernity

Modernity as a system of thought and praxes that operate in fluid and liquid like\textsuperscript{259} consistency (as identified by Bauman) has made it difficult for researchers to put their finger on what generates an ideology and a praxis of exclusion of the other within modernity. Chapter two responds to this dilemma by proposing the Holocaust as a hermeneutic and analyzing tool through which the motives behind the exclusion of the other within modernity can be scrutinized. Thus, since ideology has a historical intent, initiating the analyses from the historical happening of the Holocaust will trace back the ideological, conceptual and praxis origins that seek to exclude and eliminate the other within modernity. The Holocaust discloses a modern debilitating epistemology,\textsuperscript{260} which symptom is manifested in the lack/absence of aptitude in perceiving and engaging with the other as other (different). The rise of absolute supremacy of the self and the limiting or exclusion of the other’s agency in chapter two is regarded as the sources that lead to the Holocaust.

Chapter two showed how the Holocaust provides modernity with an ethical epistemology through which modern ideals and philosophes could be analyzed according to their ethical and political implications. Thus, the Holocaust shows how modernity’s use of the Cartesian introspection and the obvious discourse of ‘science ergo progress’ has contributed in creating a conceptual setting that eroded the self/other relationality and created a setting for the Holocaust ideology to be executed into a genocide. Two key modern historical happenings that have offered a systematic structure for the rise of the exclusion of the other through racist ideology within modernity, are the manipulation of time through the development of modern technology and the rise of nationalism, sustained by the nationalistic myth of common culture, religion and language.

\textsuperscript{259} See Bauman, Z. Liquid Modernity, 2.

\textsuperscript{260} See Chap. 3. Sec. 7.
The perception of the Holocaust as a window\textsuperscript{261} that overlooks modernity, as discussed in Chapter Two, is furthered in this chapter by revealing what the memory of the Holocaust reveals about modernity. A key revelation is that modernity is perceived as a habitat that incubates within it Holocaust possibility. The claim that modernity is a habitat for Holocaust possibility is explored through three different but relatable questions: how modernity is a habitat for Holocaust possibility, what constitute Holocaust possibility, and why people who share in the habitat of Holocaust possibility (that is the sociocultural context of modernity) do not share in the execution of this possibility. The exploration of Holocaust possibility identifies a relation within modernity with another possibility: totalitarian possibility.

This chapter will claim that for modernity to conceive of totalitarian possibility it has the support of modern understanding (interpretation) of first cause and first philosophy. Thus, first cause in modernity is no longer understood as the external other as it is traditionally understood in first philosophy, but instead first cause starts to be associated with the self – that is the totalitarian movement itself. Whereas, first philosophy modernity opts for the Cartesian introspection, spiritualized first philosophy does not necessitate the engagement with physicality. The assuming of a spiritualized first philosophy by modernity paved the way for the conception of modern isms that are fully constructed on abstract conceptions and ideals, and without having any interest or engagement with physicality. Hence, physicality becomes a means through which isms ideologies are historically implemented.

What follows is brief explanation of the content of each section within the chapter. The first section of this chapter explores the relation of Holocaust possibility with Bauman’s conception of modernity that is based on time and space dichotomy generated by modern science and technology. The second section shows how the historical Holocaust can identify the symptom of Holocaust possibility. An important historical element that is being analyzed in this section is the relation between the rise of totalitarian movements and ideology, and the Holocaust. In this section the concept of totalitarian possibility will be explored as the basis for Holocaust possibility. The third section will give a historical analysis of totalitarian possibility by tracing its presence and its operation within modernity. Nationalism and imperialism will be two of the

\textsuperscript{261} See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, viii
modern ideologies that will be considers as ideologies that are motivated by totalitarian possibility. At the end of this section a comparison will be drawn to analyze the difference of totalitarian possibility operation in nationalism and imperialism, and in totalitarian movements. This comparison will help to identify the relationship between totalitarianism and other modern ideologies but also to identify the uniqueness of the way totalitarianism actualizes totalitarian possibility through the Holocaust possibility.

The fourth section will analyze the association of the totalitarianism with the modern adaptation of first cause, and how this association facilitates the realization of totalitarian possibility. In this section, a comparison will be developed between the traditional philosophical conception of first cause and the totalitarian conception of first cause that is based on scientific causality. This comparison will be based on the three concepts – which I will be identifying as the three conceptual gears – of otherness, desirability and aporia present within the traditional philosophical concept of first cause, but absent within the totalitarian movements conception of first cause. The fifth and final section will focus on the emergence of the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy, and how this concept of first philosophy, based on a spiritualized and introspective operation became the conceptual basis for the modern isms; including totalitarianism. This section will be narrating the historical shift of first philosophy with regard to physicality, that is, how Aristotle formulates his first philosophy on physicality and how, as a response to modern scientific revolution, Descartes marginalized physicality, and instead opts to formulate his first philosophy on a spiritualized construct. In conclusion, this section will hold on to the idea that Descartes’ spiritualized first philosophy historically has offered the conceptual grounds for the emergence of the modern isms – including totalitarianism.

4.1: Modernity for Holocaust Possibility

The Holocaust discloses not only the horrors that have been generated through the Nazi and Fascist antagonism and violence towards the other that is different, but further than that, the

\[262\] The traditional philosophy of first cause as intended in this context refers mainly to the Aristotelic and the Cartesian first cause reflection.
Holocaust reveals the responsibility of indifference in producing a context through which these horrors where permitted. The understanding of indifference as symptomatic of modern debilitating epistemology, through which indifference becomes responsible for generating the epistemological paradoxical stance of seeing and not seeing at the same time, i.e., seeing the other but at the same time not perceiving the other’s needs, cries and, most of all, the other’s human face. The social inertia that indifference generates is expressed with both collective and individual option for bystander. Geras in identifying bystander as the “background” for the horrors of the Holocaust envisions as an environment that both “pursues” and “enables” the Holocaust ideology.

This was a world populated not by monsters and brutes – or not only by monsters and brutes, for in some necessary and still usable moral meaning there were more than enough of these – but by beings who were precisely human beings, with characteristics that are all too recognizable, human vices and weaknesses amongst them, common faults and frailties.

Most easily recognizable in that regard are the bystanders: those who, not directly active in the process of mass murder, did noting to try to stop it either. These are the people who affect not to know, or who do not care to know and so do not find out; or who are afraid, for themselves or for others, or who feel powerless; or who are weighed down, distracted or just occupied (as most of us) in pursuing the aims of their own lives. Such people formed the background to the tragedy of the European Jews and they continue everywhere to provide an enabling condition for other tragedies large and small, and for great but avoidable suffering. The ubiquity of the bystander surely testifies to a remarkable capacity in members of our species to live comfortably with the enormous sufferings of others.

Geras while allowing for the pretext of a human abnormality and malfunction to be attributed to some of those “directly involved” in the horrors of the Holocaust and other human tragedies, is less lenient with the bystanders. Attributing a human normality to the bystanders is another way of recognizing a commonality with the rest of humanity, which attribution creates the complex situation of recognizing a commonality between the victim, the bystander and the

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263 Not seeing the other human face, or in another words not seeing the other as human, refers to the Nazi propaganda of dehumanizing the Jews and others who where perceived as obstacle for the rise of Nazi Germany. The dehumanizing Nazi propaganda had as its objective to facilitate the implementation of the Holocaust ideology.

264 Geras, N. The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political Philosophy After the Holocaust, 96.
resisters\textsuperscript{265} of the Holocaust. Thus, the attribution of human normality to the bystanders disclose\hspace{1pt} the ethical or unethical potentiality within every individual human being, which potentiality is manifested either by including or excluding (marginalizing) \textit{the other} in need. Another important consideration is that these three categories of people share a cultural and social context that is common: modernity, and thus, the walls surrounding the Jewish ghettos could not prevent the intrusion of modern categories, culture and paradigms. Many of the Holocaust victims not only shared in the sociocultural paradigms of modernity but where themselves promoters of such modern ideals. The simple fact was that within the modern society and culture there was a concurrent situation of Holocaust perpetrators and bystanders, but also of resisters – who in many different ways resisted and opposed the Holocaust ideology. Therefore, this plurality of actions around the Holocaust, questions and calls for further analysis of what sometimes looks like an easy connection between the Holocaust and modernity, which includes Bauman’s understanding of Holocaust as possibility\textsuperscript{266} that develops from the modern ideals and ideology.

By deducing the statement of modernity as \textit{Holocaust possibility} into a basic logical syllogism – where in although all\textsuperscript{267} shared in the Holocaust possibility of modernity, not all acted upon this possibility – calls for an exploration of the what that connects, or disconnects, the possibility with the action. Thus, the crucial question, that deserves further exploration, is what turns a possibility into an action and what prevents a possibility from becoming an action. The plurality of actions hints of other possibilities that coexist in modernity with the Holocaust possibility, and which possibilities conflict with the Holocaust possibility and generate different actions. Therefore, although an individual person might be fully immersed within the Modern societal and cultural paradigms and context – which exposes her/him to the Holocaust possibility – in opting for a different ideal and action that contradict the Holocaust possibility, clearly shows the presence of other possibilities that were perceived by some but not by others.

\textsuperscript{265}The notion of Holocaust resisters includes people who perceived the Holocaust as evil and anyone and dared to contest the injustice of the Holocaust in a many different ways.

\textsuperscript{266}See Bauman, Z. \textit{Modernity and the Holocaust}, 12.

\textsuperscript{267}The \textit{all} include not only the victim, the bystander and the heroes of the Holocaust but anyone who in one way or another was influenced and involved by the Holocaust propaganda and happening.
This diversity of actions within the Holocaust context becomes an incentive for further exploration of how and why some individuals that shared the same social and cultural context of the Holocaust perpetrators and bystanders, were able to resist, and courageously confront and contest the Holocaust horrors.

The notion of Holocaust possibility is paradoxical; on the one hand the notion of possibility is associated with the vague future that is not yet, which happening is still questionable (might or might not happen), while, on the other hand, the Holocaust recalls a specific historical happening. The merging of the historical happening (the Holocaust) and future not yet (possibility) in Holocaust possibility becomes both a reminder of a future accountability within the present, and a reminder that the Holocaust is not over yet. Thus, as long as there is Holocaust possibility, present and future historical context are still at risk of a holocaust happening. However, in associating the Holocaust possibility within modernity, as Bauman does, the equivalent logical deduction is that if modernity ceases to exist, the Holocaust possibility also ceases. Therefore if contemporary sociocultural constructs and paradigms would no longer associate themselves with modernity, the question of Holocaust possibility becomes redundant for contemporary society. Bauman’s response to this dilemma lies within his explanation and description of modernity.

For Bauman, modernity is not founded exclusively on abstract philosophical theories or ideals but it is also founded on concrete historical event. An important event that Bauman identifies as the demarcation of modernity from pre-modernity, is the dichotomy of space and time, which according to Bauman was historically triggered by the development of modern science and technology. He attributes dichotomy of space and time with the manipulation of speed by modern science and technology. Thus, the manipulation of speed generates a unique historical situation, which he identifies with the metaphors of “liquid” and “fluidity”268. The progress in information technology and social media has intensified the speed of the circulation of information and transportation, consequential intensifying the “fluidity” and “liquidity” experience of modernity. In other words, according to Bauman’s conception of modernity, contemporary society is always in the process of becoming more modern.

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According to Bauman’s reflection, because modernity holds in it the Holocaust possibility it follows that the more modern a contemporary culture and society is the more intense is the Holocaust possibility. Meanwhile, for Bauman, since for Bauman contemporary society is not “Holocaust-proof,” contemporary society has the moral responsibility of keeping a constant vigilant eye on any Holocaust traces and threats within contemporary culture. Bauman’s main concern is that the Holocaust possibility is so embedded within Modernity that it is hard to predict its sources and its outbursts. For Bauman, the attitude of vigilance is not enough; he also suggests a ‘vigilance of vigilance’ that is not to allow ourselves to be taken by what looks life Holocaust threats. He urges us to keep looking for Holocaust possibilities within modern notions, ideals and practices that look innocuous.

All that has been said thus far does not intend to imply that warnings about the possibility of another holocaust are totally unfounded, that the world we live in now differs from the world of the Holocaust to an extent that makes the present-day world completely Holocaust-proof. But it does mean that the threat of such holocausts as may yet come is all too often sniffed out and searched for in the wrong places; the scrutiny is diverted from the ground in which genuine threats are rooted. A sinister trait of the one-dimensional worldview is that, while concentrating our attention in one direction, we close our eyes to the manifold nature of the real dangers.

4.2: Totalitarian Possibility at the Origin of the Holocaust

In light of the Holocaust possibility paradox, the study of the historical Holocaust becomes imperative for the identification of how and why the Holocaust possibility can develop into a terrifying reality. Hence, the understanding of the historical Holocaust becomes like a

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270 The us refers to any human being who shares in the modern sociocultural constructs.
272 The Holocaust possibility paradox refers the merging of possibility as not yet and the Holocaust as a historical happening.
273 Though the Holocaust impact and effect is not limited to the time and space of the historical happening, the study of the Holocaust as a historical happening is important for the identification of the Holocaust impact and effect.
compass that gives direction to the *vigilant eye* i.e. the historical Holocaust becomes the *vigilance* of the vigilance. Arendt, in her book *the Origins of Totalitarianism*, associates the development of the historical Holocaust with the Modern rise of totalitarianism. For Arendt, the rise of totalitarianism and totalitarian ideology becomes a clear signal for a Holocaust possibility. In her book, Arendt highlights that totalitarianism is the operational system through which the *Holocaust possibility* is implemented into a horrific historical happening. For Arendt, totalitarianism is an expression of the human mind inebriated with power and thus motivated to do things – which she defines as “absolute evil”\(^{274}\) – which the human mind can never fully comprehend.\(^{275}\) For Arendt, any form of totalitarianism is an indicative sign that leads to Holocaust possibility.

The totalitarian attempt at global conquest and total domination has been the destructive way out of all impasses. Its victory may coincide with the destruction of humanity; wherever it has ruled, it has begun to destroy the essence of man. Yet to turn our backs on the destructive forces of the century is of little avail.\(^{276}\)

Arendt identifies totalitarian movements as the catalyst for the rise of totalitarian ideology and regimes within Modern history. According to Arendt, totalitarian movements offered the support and structure through which totalitarian ideology could be promoted and developed into a ruling system. Accordingly, totalitarian movements are perceived as the space through which totalitarian ideals could be fully implemented, with no reservations. Historically, totalitarian movements projected themselves within Modern society as a prototype to demonstrate the ‘advantages’ and the ‘benefit’\(^{277}\) of assuming their totalitarian ideology and governing system. According to Arendt propaganda was the key operation through which

\(^{274}\) See Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, viii-ix.

\(^{275}\) The lack of comprehension is not a reason for Arendt to give up her critical historical reflection. Thus confronted with the destructive force of totalitarianism Arendt, opts for a more pragmatic solution of seeing more benefit in doing something rather than doing noting.

\(^{276}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, viii.

\(^{277}\) Totalitarian movements as part of their propaganda presented themselves as a sample of virtues people that govern efficiently and justly, in contrast to their surrounding society, perceived by them as decadent in cultural expression and run by corrupt governance.
totalitarian movements projected themselves in society as a prototype, with the intention of enrolling new members within the movement, and to divulge their ideological doctrine.\textsuperscript{278} Since totalitarian movements exist in a world which itself is nontotalitarian, they are forces to resort to what we commonly regard as propaganda. But such propaganda always makes its appeal to an external sphere – be it the nontotalitarian strata of the population at home or the nontotalitarian countries abroad.\textsuperscript{279}

For Arendt, totalitarian propaganda was not just an alternative to threats and violence – through which people were forced to adhere to the totalitarian ideals and systems – it had the ulterior function of presenting totalitarian ideology as an exclusive possibility. Accordingly, propaganda was instrumental in both preventing people from procuring other alternative possibilities and in presenting totalitarian doctrine as the exclusive possibility. To promote itself as an exclusive possibility totalitarian propaganda does not engage in competitive discussions with other ideals or ideologies as political parties would do. Instead, propaganda, through the use of distinctive conceptions, discourse and imagery, presents totalitarian ideology as an aloof system,\textsuperscript{280} which does not allow other political opponents or oppositions to engage with. Historically the moment a totalitarian movement rose into power, they systematically started to implement new legislative structures in support of a one-system government under a one ideology – the totalitarian one. Thus, Germany under the Nazi regime becomes Nazi Germany and Italy under the Fascist regime becomes Fascist Italy. A key operation that sustains both aloofness and exclusive possibility of totalitarianism in totalitarian propaganda is the utilization of scientific discourse, which Arendt labels as “scientificality”\textsuperscript{281}. Thus the use of scientific

\begin{quotation}
\textsuperscript{278} The term doctrine in this context denotes ideals that are not based on empirical proves or evidence but instead they are based on ideological and beliefs systems.
\textsuperscript{279} Arendt, H. \textit{The Origins of Totalitarianism}, 342.
\textsuperscript{280} Totalitarian rise to power does not depend on political engagement within a political system; on the contrary its rise to power depends on disengagement with pre-existing political ideologies and systems. Once in power totalitarian regimes always act as if they are “reinventing the wheel” i.e. they always present themselves and their system as a totally new reality that no other political system has ever envisaged before.
\textsuperscript{281} “The strong emphasis of totalitarian propaganda on the “scientific” nature of its assertions has been compared to certain advertising techniques which also address themselves to masses. And it is true that the advertising columns of every newspaper show this “scientificality,” by which a manufacturer proves with facts and figures and
discourse by totalitarian propaganda has the function of presenting totalitarian ideology, not as an option but as a necessity. Through the necessity, science discourse totalitarian ideology is elevated (kept aloof) from the arena of politics and political debates – which is based on the compare and contrast of policies and ideals – and instead it is presented as a non-optional and non-alternative ideal. This aloofness of totalitarian ideology shows that totalitarian movements do not function as a political party but as an absolute system, and which ideology had to be adhered to not as an option, but as a fatalistic necessity.

Totalitarian movements, by situating their totalitarian ideology as a necessity – thus non-optional – are both excluding a plurality of possibilities and also placing their ideology and system as an absolute and exclusive possibility – which will be referred to as totalitarian possibility. Thus, individuals when adhering to the totalitarian possibility of their movement, have to renounce the exercise of their ethical and political agency. To facilitate the adherence of individuals to the totalitarian possibility, totalitarian movements opt primarily to enroll people that have no other ties with groups and communities, preferably this include no ties with ones own families. Arendt identifies this quality of the people with the term masses.282

For Arendt masses are not just a congregation of people but it is a quality of a congregation, since – contrary to other groups, organizations or communities – what unites and congregates masses is not a common interest but sheer indifference.283 Given that, indifference vacates the human mind from interests, it creates cognitive inclination – state of mind – that is easily convinced and drowns into the totalitarian possibility discourse. Therefore, the

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282 See Chap. 3. Sec. 6.

283 See Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 311.
congregating of “atomized and isolated individuals” \(^{284}\) – with or little or no ties outside the movement – facilitates the expectation of absolute loyalty \(^{285}\) from individuals to the totalitarian movement. Absolute loyalty adheres members to the totalitarian movements’ ideology, practices and more importantly, to the totalitarian movements leaders’ aspirations and expectations. \(^{286}\) Consequently, absolute loyalty is the attitude through which the individual becomes more docile – thus more available – to fulfill the totalitarian movement’s expectations. In Arendt’s view, totalitarian movements’ absolute loyalty \(^{287}\) is possible when people are eradicated from their “concrete content” \(^{288}\) since the “concrete content” can offer alternative possibilities that contradict the totalitarian possibility, which could trigger “changes of mind”.

Total loyalty is possible only when fidelity is emptied of all concrete content, from which changes of mind might naturally arise. The totalitarian movements, each in its own way, have done their utmost to get rid of the party programs which specified concrete content and which they inherited form earlier, nontotalitarian stages of development. No matter how radically they might have been phrased, every definite political goal which does not simply assert or circumscribe the claim to world rule, every political program which deals with issues more specific than “ideological questions of importance for centuries” is an obstruction to totalitarianism. \(^{289}\)

4.3: Totalitarianism Disabling Politics

Arendt’s association of “concrete content” with “party programs” is better comprehended when considered with her understanding of the way political ideals are formed in

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\(^{284}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 323.

\(^{285}\) Another term that describes the expected absolute loyalty by totalitarian movement of their members is unconditional loyalty.

\(^{286}\) According to Arendt totalitarian movements leaders presented themselves as infallible; which infallibility gave assurance to totalitarian movements members that their leaders are worthy of their absolute loyalty. See. Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 349.

\(^{287}\) Arendt also uses the term totally loyalty, which has the same significance as absolute loyalty.

\(^{288}\) In Arendt thought a “concrete content” refers to the relation of the individual person with the community and location of origin. Another notion that explains the concept of “concrete content” in Arendt is the notion of historical context for individual person.

\(^{289}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 324.
the human mind. For Arendt, the way political ideals are formulated is related to the understanding of the self (both as an individual and as a group) in relation to her/his “specific” historical context. The self when grounded within her/his own historical context is stimulated to perceive and create possibilities, and which possibilities are later articulated into ideals and policies by political parties.\(^\text{290}\) Arendt furthers her explanation of how the “concrete” historical context stimulates the awareness within the self (self-awareness), through which possibilities are sought and created. Thus, she describes self-awareness as consciousness that is the cognitive structure through which thinking operates.

Consciousness is not the same as thinking; acts of consciousness have in common with sense experience the fact that they are “intentional” and therefore cognitive acts, whereas the thinking ego does not think something but about something, and this act is dialectic: it proceeds in the form of a silent dialogue. Without consciousness in the sense of self-awareness, thinking would not be possible. What thinking actualizes in its unending process is difference, given as a mere raw fact (factum brutum) in consciousness; only in this humanized form does consciousness then become the outstanding characteristic of somebody who is a man and neither a god nor an animal. As the metaphor bridges the gap between the world of appearances and the mental activities going on within it, so the Socratic two-in-one heals the solitariness of thought; its inherent duality points to the infinite plurality which is the law of the earth.\(^\text{291}\)

Arendt perceives consciousness (as self-awareness) as the operation that stimulate the self into thinking; subsequently the thinking operation becomes for the self the “unending process” that generates possibilities – possibilities for Arendt become the source through which “difference” emerges. Thus, totalitarian movements in opting for members that are disattached from their historical context and in preventing their members from being attached to anything beyond the totalitarian movement, has as an objective the prevention of individuals from thinking, and formulating other possibilities, which possibilities contradict the singularity and exclusiveness of totalitarian possibility. Consequently, totalitarian movements expectation of detachment of its members of detachment from their historical context becomes the grounds on

\(^{290}\) Arendt regards political parties as an important aspect of a democratic structure because, unlike totalitarian movements, political parties articulate their policies on the needs that rise from their historical context.

which absolute loyalty is founded. Totalitarian movements are constructed on a systematic process through which totalitarian movements’ members are induced into a process that narrows their possibilities, until they reach the stage where they can only perceive the one possibility (totalitarian possibility) that is professed by the movement. Usually, those that reach this one (totalitarian) possibility stage end up assuming a leadership role within the movement. The notion of totalitarian possibility compliments Arendt’s notion of totalitarian as an imaginary world that incorporates everything within it and presents everything as complete and within reach. According to Arendt, totalitarianism offers a ‘safe’ and ‘ordered’ world that separates its members from the unpredictable outside reality. In this totalitarian imaginary world everything finds its solution and completion within the totalitarian ideology that manifests itself as totalitarian possibility.

Before they seize power and establish a world according to their doctrines, totalitarian movements conjure up a lying world of consistency which is more adequate to the needs of the human mind than reality itself; in which, through sheer imagination, uprooted masses can feel at home and are spared the never-ending shocks which real life and real experiences deal to human beings and their expectations. The force possessed by totalitarian propaganda – before the movements have the power to drop iron curtains to prevent anyone’s disturbing, by the slightest reality, the gruesome quiet of an entirely imaginary world – lies in its ability to shut the masses off from the real world.

The moment an individual within the totalitarian movement would step out, and seek other possibilities she/he would jeopardize the entire orderly world of totalitarianism. The imaginary world of totalitarianism not only contains the solutions for the present situation, but also for the future, since for totalitarianism there is no such a thing as unknown future. For totalitarian movements’ members everything is explainable – which includes the future – within the totalitarian ideology. The explainability of the future within a totalitarian ideology demarcates the boundaries that hold within them the totalitarian possibility. Trespassing the

292 The singularity of possibility (totalitarian possibility) of totalitarian movements has contributed to dramatic and devastating reaction within its totalitarian movements members when their totalitarian movement ended in crises. As in the case of the fall of Nazism, some Nazi members, lead by absolute despair and hopelessness in seeing their only possibility falling apart, succumb to suicidal measures.

293 Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 353.
totalitarian possibility boundaries means first and foremost perceiving a future possibility that is beyond the one that is forced by totalitarian ideology.

Totalitarian movements’ survival depends on the process of alternating the self’s consciousness into absolute loyalty. In this process, consciousness is replaced by the totalitarian movements’ imagination – which includes the totalitarian imaginary world. Accordingly, in totalitarianism the operation of absolute loyalty and totalitarian possibility are mutually complimentary and approving. On the one hand, because of the totalitarian possibility perception – thus, not allowing for the perception of other possibility – members are drawn fatally into no other option but absolute loyal. While on the other hand, the propaganda of totalitarian possibility is effective because of the absolute loyalty of totalitarian movements’ members. For both absolute loyalty and totalitarian possibility to be effective, they necessitate the moving away of the self from the “concrete content” and the “more specific” of the historical context, to make space for an ideology of a “world rule”.

4.4: Other Forms of Totalitarian Possibilities in Modernity

Admitting that totalitarian possibility is deeply associated with totalitarian movements does not exclude totalitarian possibility to totalitarian movement ideology and practices. Totalitarian movements are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the totalitarian possibility influence. The development of totalitarian possibility goes beyond the emergence of totalitarian movements, its history blends in with the historical development of modernity. The tracing operation of totalitarian possibility within the history of modernity is imperative for the ‘vigilance of vigilance’ operation of tracking and confronting any forms of Holocaust possibility. An important trace that is indicative of totalitarian possibility within the historical development of modernity, is the imaginary world that totalitarian possibility creates: that is, the creation of an imaginary world that has as its objective the detachment of the self from her/his historical context.

294 See Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 324.
Imperialism and nationalism are two of the late modern movements which, further existence, depended primarily on an ideal of imaginary world. The imaginary world that imperialism and nationalism promoted have priority over – and in some instances disregards – the self’s historical context. Imperialism is an ideal that motivates the colonial praxis. Thus, imperialism and colonialism operates differently – one as an ideal and the other as praxis – but also complimentarily. Imperialism is not limited to the governing and ruling act of other countries and their populations by a foreign, more powerful nation; It’s ultimate objective is the colonization of the imagination of both the colonized and the colonizer. Accordingly, colonization imposes a frame of thought, which the postcolonial social theorist Ashis Nandy identifies as “physiological category.” “Physiological category” is a conceptual mirror through which the self perceives her/himself and others through an imaginary world dictated by colonizer. Nandy observes, that colonialism aims to alter “cultural priorities,” and thus produce an imaginary world, which he identifies as “modern West.” According to Nandy the

295. The term ‘empire’ has been widely used for many centuries without, however, necessarily signifying ‘imperialism’. Here a basic difference emerges between an empire that was bureaucratically controlled by a government from the centre, and which was developed for ideological as well as financial reasons, a structure that can be called imperialism, and an empire that was developed for settlement by individual communities or for commercial purposes by trading company, a structure that can be called colonial. Colonization was pragmatic and until the nineteenth century generally developed locally in a haphazard way (for example, the occupation of islands in the West Indies), while imperialism was typically driven by ideology from the metropolitan centre and concerned with typically driven by ideology from the metropolitan centre and concerned with the assertion and expansion of state power (for example, the French invasion of Algeria). Colonialism function as an activity of the periphery, economically driven; from the home government’s perspective, it was at times hard to control. Imperialism on the other hand, operated from the centre as a policy of state, driven by the grandiose projects of power. Thus while imperialism is susceptible for analyses as a concept (which is not to say that there were not different concepts of imperialism), colonialism needs to be analysed primarily as a practice: hence the difficulty of generalizations about it.” Young, R.J.C. Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction, 16-7.

296. Thus, in this context the use of the term imperialism also implies colonialism.

297. In the history of colonization power is mainly associated with financial, technological and military power.


300. Nandi, A. Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism, xi

301. Nandi, A. Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism, xi
This (Modern) colonialism colonizes the minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within the colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once for all. In the process, it helps generalize the concept of modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and in minds.\textsuperscript{305}

As in the case of colonialism, nationalism operates through the creation of dichotomies in the \textit{imaginary world}\textsuperscript{306} through which people are identified as \textit{us}\textsuperscript{307} and as \textit{them}.\textsuperscript{308} Nationalism aims to create an imaginary bondage between peoples that do not necessarily share an immediate physical space or historical context. Anderson illustrates how nationalism targets the imagination to create an imaginary “communion” that surpasses the lack of immediate relationality. “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”\textsuperscript{309} As in the case of totalitarian movements, both imperialism and nationalism project this \textit{imaginary world} that transcends the context of the local (as city, town or village) for a universalistic or nationalistic \textit{imaginary world}. Thus, though the ideal of

\begin{itemize}
  \item[302] Nandi, A. \textit{Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism}, xi
  \item[303] Nandi, A. \textit{Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism}, xi
  \item[304] Nandi, A. \textit{Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism}, xi
  \item[305] Nandi, A. \textit{Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism}, xi.
  \item[306] Dichotomies \textit{imaginary world} is the imagination generated by a nation to create division and distinguish between the \textit{us} (members of a nation) and \textit{the them} (non-members of a nation). Thus, though nationalism main objective is the \textit{us}, for the creation of the \textit{imaginary us} nationalism necessitate an \textit{imaginary world} in which the \textit{us} prevails.
  \item[307] The use of the term \textit{us} is to highlight a prescribed collective identity of a group of people.
  \item[308] In this context the use of the term \textit{them} is to highlight the prescribed identity given to \textit{the other} by the \textit{us}; thus \textit{them} are \textit{a them} according to the \textit{us} categories. The intention of creating a \textit{them} category by the \textit{us} is to solidify the identity of the \textit{us} (as not \textit{them}).
  \item[309] Anderson, B. \textit{Imagined Communities}, 6.
\end{itemize}
imaginary world as an expression of a totalitarian possibility has common operational trends in the three modern ideologies: totalitarianism, imperialism and nationalism. There is also an important distinction between the imperialism and nationalism totalitarian possibility operation and the totalitarian movements one. The distinction of the way totalitarian possibility operation within different modern ideological setting is revealing when it comes to identify totalitarian possibilities within contemporary modern context.

Totalitarian movements are more explicit and uncompromising in creating an imaginary world that has the objective of creating the impression of totalitarian possibility. Though imperialism and nationalism do not explicitly promote themselves as a totalitarian possibility they still operate on an understanding of themselves as a totalitarian possibility. The main difference between totalitarian movements and imperialist and nationalist use and understanding of totalitarian possibility is that in imperialism and nationalism totalitarian possibility is disguised as possibility of possibility. Possibility of possibility is when the imperialist and nationalist ideology and institutions presented themselves as first possibility – thus possibility for possibility – for any possibility that emerges from their subjects. Thus, any possibility that emerges from their subjects is regarded by both nationalism and imperialist ideology as a secondary possibility that necessitates the possibility that is offered as first possibility.

Imperialism and nationalism showcase themselves as the first possibility through which their subjects can develop their own particular and subjective possibilities. In other words, it is through (because of) the possibility of a nation or colonizing power – in case of a colonized country – that other possibilities within a nation/colonized country can persist and be generated.

Unlike totalitarian movements, nationalism and colonialism do not exclude the coexistence of other possibilities within their possibility, as long other possibilities are structured within a narrow hierarchy of possibilities – with the imperial and the nationalist possibility always at the helm (first possibility). Thus, both nationalism and imperialism assimilate other possibilities within their territories as possibilities that subsist on their ideology and structures as possibility of possibility. Furthermore both imperialism and nationalism systematically exclude or limit possibilities that contest their role as first possibility. Hence, though imperialist and nationalist totalitarian possibility is expressed as less intensely absolute and exclusive then in totalitarianism, this less does not eradicate the totalitarian possibility.
properties and effects. Imperialist and nationalist totalitarian possibility still implements a tight control on the expression of possibilities that emerge from the contextual living experience – historical context – of individuals. This control aims to restrict the relational space between the self and her/his historical context, since this relational space might generate perceptions of possibilities that can contradict – and subvert – the first possibility.

A distinctive characteristic present in all expressions of totalitarian possibility – which includes totalitarian movements, imperialism and nationalism – is the perception of possibility that emerges, not from the relation of the self with her/his historical context instead, from an external imaginary world ideal. Therefore, within a totalitarian possibility context, the self’s historical context is ether given second-class treatment or totally annihilated – as in the case of totalitarian movements. Totalitarian possibility operates through a self-referential structure where everything is subject to and dictated by the same totalitarian possibility ideal. It is the self’s relation with her/his historical context that triggers what Arendt calls, “the silent intercourse” through which the self evaluates her/his own experiences and actions and develops an ethical and political agency, which agency is the basis for any creation of perception of possibilities. Therefore, the regulating or the annihilating of the self’s relationship from her/his historical context by totalitarian possibility, through the imposition of an imaginary world, has one objective to alienate the self from her/his ethical and political agency.

A person who does not know the silent intercourse (in which we examine what we say and what we do) will not mind contradicting himself, and this means he will never be either able or willing to account for what he says or does; nor will he mind committing any crime, since he can count on its being forgotten the next moment. Bad people – Aristotle to the contrary notwithstanding – are not “full of regrets.”

4.5: Totalitarian Possibility for Holocaust Possibility

The physical and cultural setting that made it possibility for the imposition of an external totalitarian possibility within modernity is identifiable with Bauman’s conception of the

\[^{310}\text{Arendt, H. The Life of the Mind, 191.}\]
beginning of modernity: that is the dichotomy of the space/time relationality caused by the manipulation of time through the domination of speed, and which was made possible by the modern scientific and technological developments. The domination of speed through the scientific and technological developments generated a situation where time started to assume an exclusive agency over space. Bauman’s conception of modernity – as an outcome of space/time dichotomy – explains the why and how modernity could conceive of totalitarian possibility, which possibility later became the basis for the Holocaust possibility. Accordingly, the rise of modern powers – imperialism, nationalism and later totalitarian regimes – depended on the opportunistic advantage of the space/time dichotomy, through which they could exclude or limit other antagonistic powers.

Imperialistic, nationalistic and totalitarian powers could impose their totalitarian possibility through their privileged access to scientific and technological resources, which, in its turn, gave them privileged access to speed. Thus, speed became a propagandistic tool in the hands of the powers, through which a virtual and imaginary all-encompassing possibility (imaginary world) was imposed over other possibilities. The merging of propaganda with science and technology facilitated a dislocation of the self from her/his historical context, by creating an imaginary (virtual) belonging to the imaginary world that was made up of universalistic or nationalistic community, hence, it rendered the self more susceptible to the acceptance of totalitarian possibility.

In spite the different forms and ways totalitarian possibility has been expressed throughout the history of post space/time dichotomy modernity, its objective has been constant throughout: that is an imposition of an imaginary world that limits or eliminates the relation of the self with her/his historical context. Accordingly, it is this operation of totalitarian possibility of

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311 See Bauman, Z. Liquid Modernity, 8-9.

312 The notion of privilege in the phrase privilege access is identified with the ideology of superiority and supremacy that the West through the ideologies of imperialism and nationalism has bestowed on its self. The entitlement over other population seen as inferior by imperialism and nationalism was motivated by the ideology of racism. Arendt clearly states that though imperialism and nationalism are ideologically distinct, both ideologies rally behind the ideology of racism. “In theory, there is an abyss between nationalism and imperialism; in practice, it can and has been bridged by tribal nationalism and outright racism.” Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 153.
limiting or eliminating the relationship with the self and the historical context that paved the way for the Holocaust possibility. Since it is impossible for the individual’s ethical and political agency to develop if it is not grounded on the self’s relationship with her/his historical context, totalitarian possibility offered the ideal environment for totalitarian regimes to execute their sinister agenda.

The term possibility in totalitarian possibility can be misleading, that’s because totalitarian possibility operates distinctively from any other possibility operation. The very fact that totalitarian possibility is construed on a singular, exclusive and with a clear objective of what it aims for, it contradict the idea of possibility, which operation is based on a projection of an ideal into a future that is not yet realized. Hence, though totalitarian possibility promotes itself as a possibility that has not yet been, realized the operation of totalitarian possibility is based on a fatalistic approach rather then a possibility one. Hence, unlike the possibility discourse, totalitarian possibility discourse starts with a fatalistic understanding of the world and then it projects itself into an idealistic future i.e., because the world is like this human actions have to do and be like this. Unlike the fatalistic discourse, the possibility discourse is initiated by an alternative perception of the is of the world, i.e., though the world is this, it doesn’t have to be the way it is. Geras explains that there is an intrinsic relation between the (fatalistic) conceptualizing of the is of the world, and the ethical and political debilitating agency – which debilitation is a characteristic of totalitarianism.

To accept the world as it (more or less) is, is to help prolong a state of grave danger. This world, accommodating and countenancing too much of what ought not be tolerated – plain, persistent injustice, stark, avoidable human suffering – is a world very receptive to present and future atrocity, a world overpopulated with bystanders. It is one in which the idea is harder and harder to resist that just anything at all may be done to people while others look on; and there be no consequence. As long as the situation lasts, it degrades the moral culture of the planet. It poisons the conscience of humankind.  

This assurance of knowing the is of the world around them is what gives imperialist and nationalist ideology the confidence to pursue their ideals. Thus, the assumption of knowing the

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313 Geras, N. The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political Philosophy After the Holocaust, 120.
is of the world in totalitarian movements – through a propaganda operation defined by Arendt as “scientificality”\(^\text{314}\) – has as its objective the annihilation of any human sentiments, that might have resisted the horrors of the Holocaust. Arendt describes “scientificality” as the use of scientific discourse by totalitarian movements for the purpose of justifying their totalitarian ideology. “Scientificality” is what gives to totalitarian movements the presumption of holding the key that unravels history and historical destiny. Using Alexis de Tocqueville words, Arendt interprets the use of scientific discourse by totalitarian propaganda as a means to establish totalitarian ideology as first cause. According to Arendt propaganda presents totalitarian ideology, as first cause, and it does so by displaying a conception of historical development that is dependent on totalitarian ideology.

The scientificality of totalitarian propaganda is characterized by its almost exclusive insistence on scientific prophecy as distinguished from the more old-fashioned appeal to the past. Nowhere does the ideological origin of socialism in one instance and racism in the other, show more clearly than when their spokesmen pretend that they have discovered the hidden forces that will bring them good fortune in the chain of fatality. There is of course a great appeal to the masses in “absolutist systems which represent all the events of history as depending upon the great first causes linked by the chain of fatality, and which, as it were, suppress men from the history of the human race” (in the words of Tocqueville)\(^\text{315}\).

### 4.6: First Cause Comparison in First Philosophy and Totalitarian Movements

Arendt’s observation of how totalitarianism uses science to present totalitarian ideology as first cause shows a new understanding of first cause which understanding is based on the modern scientific understanding of cause. The modern scientific understanding of first cause breaks away from the traditional philosophical conception of first cause – as envisaged mainly by Aristotelic and the Cartesian first philosophy. The modern scientific understanding of first cause had influences in the understanding of the operation of possibility, which understanding has facilitated the conceptualization of totalitarian possibility. This new understanding of cause

\(^{314}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 345.

\(^{315}\) Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 345.
by modern science is related to the positioning of the notion of *cause* as an immediate and in
direct relation to the *effect*: *cause* (*a*) produces *effect* (*b*).

*Possibility* as conceived by modern science is subject to a merely functional operation
that is determined by the scientific *cause* and *effect* relation. Thus, the functional understanding
of *possibility* by modern science limits *possibility* to the narrow walls of *cause* and *effect*
relationality. For instance the possibility that modern science sees within the *cause* and *effect* of
a car is that the car moves; *where* the car goes, *why* it goes, and *who* the car takes is not within
the interest of modern science *cause* quest. The interest of modern science is exclusively
associated with the functionality of things, which is usually expressed in the *how* question.
Going back to Aristotle – as the paradigm for Western philosophy on the discussion of *cause*
and *first cause* – one can immediately notice a more complex understanding of *cause*, since his
exploration of *cause* has ulterior motivations than that of a functional one. Aristotle states his
motives and intent for the exploration of *cause* in Book 1 of Metaphysics, where he associates
and connects the *how* question with the *why* question.

But yet we think that *knowledge* and *understanding* belong to art rather than to
experience, and we suppose the artist to be wiser than men of experience (which
implies that wisdom depends in all cases rather on knowledge); and this because the
former know the cause, but the latter do not. For men of experience know that the
thing is so, but do not know why, while the other know the ‘why’ and the cause.  

*Totalitarian movements* conception of *first cause* is founded on the modern scientific
conception of *cause*. The utilization of modern conception of cause by totalitarian movements is
(explicitly) visible in the way they use scientific discourse to justify their ideology:
“scientificality.” The reason for totalitarian movement to adopt a modern scientific
conception of *cause* is that it enables them to narrow the perception of possibilities, to a one and
exclusive, *totalitarian possibility*. Thus, totalitarian movements conception and use of *first
cause* generates different outcomes from the Aristotelic and Cartesian conception of *first cause*.

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These outcomes are determined by the presence or absence of three qualities: the conceptual gears\textsuperscript{318} identified as otherness, desirability and aporia. These three qualities are perceived as the basis on which the conception of first cause within the Western philosophical tradition is constructed. The following reflections will focus on each individual quality present in the traditional understanding of first cause, further more it will describe how these qualities are missing from the totalitarian movement understanding and operation of first cause. In short, the following reflection will show how otherness, desirability and aporia operate within traditional first cause and how they are absent from the totalitarian movements understanding of first cause.

Otherness:

A significant difference between Aristotle’s and Descartes’ understanding of first cause is that for Aristotle’s first cause is cosmological, which means that Aristotle includes in his first cause every aspects of the cosmic order. For Descartes first cause is narrowed down to the human cognitive experience, therefore, transforming first cause into an exclusive anthropological matter. Though the Aristotelian and the Cartesian conceptualizations of first cause differ, both schools of thought perceive first cause as other, that is a distinct and distant entity from the human intellect. Accordingly, both Aristotle and Descartes hold on a first cause that transcends the human intellect, and understanding, where they both attribute to first cause autonomy and agency to first cause, which autonomy and agency is expressed in the first cause’s otherness from the human intellect.

Aristotle’s formulation of the concept of first cause as unmove mover, attributes to first cause an explicit otherness from other causes. When Aristotle claims that “…there is a mover, which moves without being moved, being eternal, substance, and actuality”\textsuperscript{319} he is not only placing first cause within a relationality of causes but he is also detaching first cause from other

\textsuperscript{318} The term conceptual gears is to identify otherness, desirability and aporia as conceptual operations, that operate in conjunction with each other, within the traditional philosophical notion of first cause. Thus, the three conceptual gears are so essential for the establishment of the traditional notion of first cause that they become the operations that mark the presence or absence of first cause.

\textsuperscript{319} Aristotle, The Metaphysics, Λ.7. 1072a. 25-6.
causes by attributing features to *first cause* that are unique. For Aristotle the *first cause* functionality and relationality towards other causes can be comprehended when its uniqueness (*otherness*) is taken in consideration. Paradoxically, for Aristotle, *first cause’s otherness* (from other causes) is what motivates its relationality with other causes, since within the cosmic order it is its *otherness* that makes *first cause* necessary for other causes and it is its *otherness* that attracts other causes to.

In focusing *first philosophy* on the epistemological operation of the self – which Arendt identifies as *introspection*\(^\text{320}\) – Descartes runs the risk of reducing *first cause* to the self’s epistemological operation. Thus, by positioning *first cause* as dependent on the self’s epistemological operation would contradicting the same notion of *first cause*. This dependency would imply the loss of *otherness* of *first cause*, which would result in the philosophical fallacy of having a *first cause* for the *first cause*. Well aware of the possibility of running into this philosophical fallacy, Descartes puts his own epistemological introspective activity on hold when he introduces his reflection on God as *first cause*. For Descartes, it is impossible for the human mind to conceive an ideal of *first cause*, because it is impossible for an imperfect reality – as the human being is – to conceive of pure perfection; thus epistemological reflection becomes inadequate when reflecting on *first cause*. Descartes solution is that human mind can only conceive of such perfection, only if the perfect idea of *first cause* (God) is established in the human mind by the very same *first cause* i.e. by a Divine intervention.

And so there remains only the idea of God, in which I must consider whether there is anything that could not derive from myself. By the name ‘God’ I understand an infinite, independent, supremely intelligent, supremely powerful substance, by which I myself and whatever else exists (if anything else does exist) was created. But certainly, all these properties are such that, the more carefully I consider them, the less it seems possible that they can be derived from me alone. And so I must conclude that it necessarily follows from all that has been said up to now that God exists.

For indeed, even if the ideal of substance is in me as a result of the very fact that I am a substance, the idea of an infinite substance would not therefore be in me, since I am finite, unless it derived form some substance that is really infinite.\(^\text{321}\)

\(^{320}\) See Arendt, H. *The Human Condition*, 279-280.

\(^{321}\) Descartes, R. *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Third Meditation: AT VII 45.
Both Aristotle’s and Descartes’ conceptions of *first cause* conflicts radically with the totalitarian movements understanding of *first cause*. The Aristotelian and Cartesian understanding of *first cause* as other from the self – which implies recognition of a separate and autonomies agency for both the self and the first cause – is completely obliterated within the totalitarian movements self-conferring of the first cause. In a totalitarian movement there is no otherness in *first cause*, because the first cause is associated with the movement itself. Once an individual joins a totalitarian movement and adheres completely to the movement’s ideology the self of the individual starts to be associated with the movement as first cause. Thus, there is no longer separation of otherness from the self and the first cause when an individual joins a totalitarian movement; the self (as totalitarian movement member) starts to be perceived as an embodiment of the first cause.

**Desirability:**

Aristotle’s and Descartes’ common understanding of *first cause* as other to the self – where for both philosophers the notion of *first cause* incorporates autonomy of agency from the self – results in a common outcome for both philosophers: a relational possibility between first cause and the self. For both philosophers the possibility of relationality between the self and first cause, is traced back to the self’s perception of otherness in first cause. Thus, the self’s awareness of first cause as other instigates in the self a desire to relate with the first cause. For Aristotle the act of movement while not being moved by the unmove mover (first cause) moves other entities towards. This moving towards the unmove mover is not forced upon other entities or causes but instead, it is a movement of attraction, which Aristotle describes as desire. “And the object of desire and the object of thought move in this way: they move without being moved.” This desirability is generated when the self is being attracted by the goodness of

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322 The term desire denotes both a cognitive interest and want and an affective attraction towards a subject.

323 The unmoved or not being moved by situates the unmove mover in Aristotle’s thought as other and thus different from any other entities; since they are all moved by.

The first cause, which goodness the self does not possess, therefore a goodness that is other and unique to the self. The desirability of the first cause within the self, according to Aristotle, realizes the self because it moves the self’s thought and desire towards the one objective that is the first cause, this movement produces happiness in the self.

As with Aristotle, Descartes also conceptualizes the relationality of the self with God (as first cause) on the principle of otherness. For Descartes the self-realization (awareness) of a perfect God – therefore other to the self – motivates the imperfect self to enter into relationality with the perfect first cause. This motivation, as with Aristotle, is also a motivation of desire, that is not imposed on the self by first cause but instead it is the self that desires it out of her/his own will. Hence, for Descartes when the self becomes aware of the perfection of God (first cause) – that is other to the self since the self is not perfect – it instigate in the self a desirability, this desirability is expressed as contemplation of the first cause by the self. In this contemplative state the self is drawn to the perfect attributes that are not present in the self (thus other) but are only present in God as first cause. In Descartes’ philosophy, the relationality with first cause produces the same outcome in the self as in Aristotle’s: happiness.

...I wish to remain here for some time in the contemplation of God himself, to ponder on his attributes, and to gaze on, wonder at, and worship the beauty of this immense light, as much as the eye of my understanding, shrouded as it is in darkness, is capable of doing. For, just as we believe by faith that the supreme happiness of the other life consists purely in the contemplation of the divine greatness, so we find also by experience that this contemplation, though far less perfect, affords us the greatest pleasure of which we are capable in this life.

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325 In Aristotle the notion of good has an ontological demotion that is a being is good by being what it meant to be. Therefore the goodness of first cause is in being a first cause, thus different from other causes or entities.

326 The term realizes eudemonia that can be translated as flourishing and happiness. Both flourishing and happiness are related in Aristotle’s thought because the realization/flourishing of the self makes the self happy. Thus for Aristotle one is happy by realizing her/his being i.e. by being who she/he is.

327 Contemplation Descartes, is a cognitive state where the self deletes and aspires for God and for God’s attributes.

328 Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, Third Meditation: AT VII 52.
The desirability affect of *first cause* on *the self*, which generates the possibility of relationality between the two, is totally absent from *first cause* conception and operation in totalitarian movements. This absence of the notion of *desirability* in totalitarian movements relationality between *first cause* and *the self* is based on two motives: a conceptual motive and an ethical motive. The conceptual motive is related to the fact that in totalitarian movement the *first cause* is not conceptualized as *other* from *the self*. The absence of *otherness* in the totalitarian movements’ conception of *first cause* generates an absence of desirability because it does not allow *for the self* to perceive the *first cause* as *other* to be desired. The ethical motive is related to the freedom of responding positively or negatively by *the self* to the prompts of desirability, generated by the *otherness* of *first cause*. In totalitarian movements, such freedom of response by *the self* – that is the origin of relationality – is totally absent. The reason for this is that the totalitarian conception of *first cause* does not presuppose freedom of affirmation or refusal. Therefore, since in totalitarian movements there is no conception of ethical freedom, *desirability* becomes irrelevant, and they instead force their *first cause* ideals using propaganda and terror. According to Arendt, propaganda – which she also defines as “psychological warfare” – has, as its objective, the outreach and promotion of totalitarian movements within a “non-totalitarian world”, while terror becomes the system through which members and non-members within a totalitarian system adhere to the totalitarian ideology and structures.

Propaganda is indeed part and parcel of “psychological warfare”; but terror is more. Terror continues to be used by totalitarian regimes even when its psychological aims are achieved: its real horror is that it reigns over a completely subdued population. Where the rule of terror is brought to perfection, as in concentration camps, propaganda disappears entirely; it was even expressly prohibited in Nazi Germany. Propaganda, in other words, is one, and possibly the most important, instrument of totalitarianism for dealing with the nontotalitarian world; terror, on the contrary, is the very essence of its form of government. It existence depends as little on psychological or other subjective factors as the existence of laws in a constitutionally governed country depends upon the number of people who transgress them.  

_Aporia:_

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329 Arendt, H. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 344.
Aristotle and Descartes share a common *aporetic* approach in their understanding and exploration of *first cause*, which approach is not present at all in totalitarian movements’ self-attribution of *first cause*. Aristotle’s *first philosophy* has to be contextualized within a corpus of scientific reflections that have different objectives. For Aristotle, every science has an objective of a truth that is different from the other sciences that he explores. Thus no *true answer* in Aristotle can be regarded as a tautology; instead it is regarded as true within a context and for a particular question. This Aristotelic understanding of truth creates space within Aristotle’s works – particularly his *first philosophy* – for a more *aporetic* engagement with his truths quests, which includes his *first cause* quest.

Jonathan Barnes uses the term *aporetic* for Aristotelian philosophy because he notes that Aristotle’s works offer a variety of truth answers, which are determined by the variety of interests, objectives and approaches (methodology) that Aristotle elaborates on. Plurality of truth answers in Aristotle’s philosophy is not to be considered relativistic. According to Barnes, Aristotle’s philosophy differs from relativism because, in an ambiguous and obscure way, there is a connection and relationality in Aristotle’s truth answers: *aporetic* answers. This *aporetic* approach in Aristotle’s philosophy is especially present within his *first philosophy* works where he operates a diversity of methodologies in order to pursue *first cause* from its different angels. Aristotle is well aware that *first cause* is *so other* that no singular philosophical or scientific method can grasp the whole of it. Thus in Aristotle his *aporetic* operation reflects the *aporetic* state (puzzlement and wonder) that one experiences when pursuing the *otherness* of *first cause*.

In some of his – perhaps most notable in the *Metaphysics* – Aristotle is indeed predominantly *aporetic*. But elsewhere – in the *Prior Analytics*, say, or in the *de Caelo* – the discussion is less puzzlebound and less tentative, and there are straightforward passages of solid doctrine. And in most of his works, he is betwixt and between. On the one hand, it is clear that the surviving works are not concerned to

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330 In both Aristotle and Descartes, the *first cause* is other to the *self* and they both express a sense of wonder and perplexity when reflecting on *first cause* in their first philosophy. The Greek term that has been used in philosophy to define and describe these two feelings of wonder and perplexity when the *self* ponders on anything that is other to her/himself, is *aporia* or *aporetic* (which etiologically means ‘to be at a loss’). Thus in this context the term *aporia* or *aporetic* describes best the state of mind of the *self* when reflecting on *first cause* in both Aristotle and Descartes.

present a perfected system of thought: the corpus is certainly not systematic in this sense. On the other hand, there is some reason to ascribe to Aristotle the conviction that, in principle, the problems with which he was grappling could be solved, the obscurities through which he was stumbling could be illuminated, and the knowledge towards which he – like every natural man – was stretching out his hands could eventually be grasped and organized and contemplated as a totality. **There was a system in posse but not in esse; a virtual but not an actual system.**

What would the system look like? Aristotle did not believe in a single unifies science: the totality of knowledge – of genuinely scientific knowledge – divides into independent disciplines or sciences. Some of these sciences are theoretical, others practical, others productive – according to whether their goal is the discovery of truth, the performance of actions, or the making of objects. Among the productive sciences are poetics and rhetoric. The practical sciences include ethics and politics… The theoretical sciences subdivide into the theological, the mathematical, and the natural… The natural sciences include physics and chemistry and meteorology and biology and zoology and botany… And finally there is ‘theology’, or the science of changeless items, which Aristotle claims as superior to all other studies and to which the essays in his *Metaphysics* are given.

Aristotle does not elaborate these ideas at any length; and there are some obscurities in them. He is far more concerned to insist that the sciences are not unified: there is no single set of truths from which they are derive, no single set of concepts which gives structure to them all, no single method which they all must follow, no single standard of scientific rigour which they all must meet. In all this Aristotle was self-consciously pluralistic – and self-consciously anti-Platonic.  

Though one cannot attribute answers in form of *aporetic* truth within Descartes philosophy as in the case of Aristotle’s philosophy, there is a heavy *aporetic* presence within Descartes’ epistemological quest. Descartes epistemological doubts and suspicion position him in an *aporetic* state, which state motivates him to venture in different methodologies and schools of thought to satiate his epistemological quest. For Descartes, *aporia* becomes the moving force that motivates him to venture within all accessible philosophical and scientific knowledge available for him. His sole objective was to seek an answer for his epistemological perplexity and dilemma. Thus, in Descartes thought, the influence of his *aporetic* experience is visible in the plurality and diversity of methodologies that he adapts for his philosophical reflection. In the

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333 Descartes does not approach his *first philosophy* from a variety of questions as Aristotle does. *His first philosophy* is mainly focused on the epistemology question.
book *History of Western Philosophy*, Russell terms this use of diverse methodological and philosophical schools in Descartes’ works as *inconsistent*. Though the concept of *inconsistent* may sound negative or pejorative, Russell’s description of *inconsistent* for Descartes’ philosophy is in actual fact very affirmative and constructive. Descartes philosophical objective was not to dismantle prior philosophical statements and assumptions to propose a new philosophy, although at the end a new philosophy has emerged. His venturing into ‘prior medieval scholastic methodology’ and the ‘new scientific method’ was primarily motivated by his *aporetic* experience, that was generated by his epistemological questions. Hence, the phrase *inconsistent* as attributed by Russell to Descartes refers to the creative and diverse ways Descartes attempts to respond to his *aporetic* state of mind.

There is in Descartes an unresolved dualism between what he learnt from contemporary science and the scholasticism that he had been taught at La Flèche. This led him into *inconsistencies*, but it also made him more rich in fruitful ideas than any completely logical philosopher could have been. Consistency might have made him merely the founder of a new scholasticism, whereas inconsistency made him the source of two important but divergent schools of philosophy.

Both Aristotelian and Cartesian *first philosophy* cannot be identified as a relativistic philosophy because they both hold onto a philosophical construct that acknowledges and necessitates truth and objective answers. At the same time, both philosophers are well aware that their *first philosophy* quests cannot be quenched with a simple, *one and exclusive* philosophical formula. While not giving in to a relativistic philosophical approach – which would have defeated their original goal of exploring *first cause* – through their *aporetic* understanding of *first philosophy* quest, both Aristotle and Descartes constructed their *first philosophy* on a diversity of thought and method. The space for diversity that *aporia* gives it’s the result of *first*  

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334 See Russell, B. *Human Knowledge*, 520.

335 New scientific method refers to the scientific method that was being developed contemporary to Descartes’ life and works.

philosophy’s aporetic attempt of holding together the otherness of first cause and the possibility of relationality between first cause and the self.

Aristotle’s and Descartes aporetic approach clearly show that first cause transcends the self’s cognitive and intellectual faculties. Consequently, it necessitates a constant open-minded\(^\text{337}\) attitude to include different and new ways of exploration. Diversity, within both Aristotle’s and Descartes’ first philosophy constructs, is clear evidence of an aporetic understanding of a first cause; consequently the absence of diversity becomes a clear sign of the absence of aporetic understanding of first cause. Totalitarian movements exclusion of diversity and obsession of merging everyone and everything within their totalitarian ideology and system of rule,\(^\text{338}\) is a direct consequence of a non-aporetic understanding first cause. The attitude that motivates totalitarian propaganda of asserting themselves as first cause is based on ‘certainty of knowing’. Thus, ‘certainty of knowing’ generate an attitude that positions totalitarian movement in a diametrically opposition to aporia, since aporia generates perplexity and an awareness of ‘lack of knowing.’

In conclusion, though Aristotle’s and Descartes’ first philosophy vary in the philosophical settings that they offer to first philosophy – metaphysics for Aristotle and epistemology for Descartes – their first philosophes comes to a crossroad in their understanding of first philosophy as a mechanism that operates on the three conceptual gears identified as; otherness, desirability and aporia. For Aristotle and Descartes otherness, desirability and aporia become the instruments through which the self explores and relates with first cause. Hence, since first philosophy operates within the three conceptual gears of otherness, desirability and aporia an absence of any of the one of these gears will not only annihilate the other two but it will annihilate the philosophical conception first philosophy as a whole. Accordingly, the harmonizing operation of otherness, desirability and aporia for the exploration

\(^{337}\) In this context open-minded refers to the queries interest and engagement with diversity and otherness.

\(^{338}\) “The struggle for total domination of the total population of the earth, the elimination of every competing nontotalitarian reality, is inherent in the totalitarian regimes themselves; if they do not pursue global rule as their ultimate goal, they are only too likely to lose whatever power they have already seized.” Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 392.
of *first cause* within a philosophical setting – metaphysics in Aristotle and epistemology in Descartes – is what constitute *first philosophy*.

Visualizing *first philosophy* as a philosophical construct that is based on the relationality between the *self* and *first cause*, and which operates on the *conceptual gears* of *otherness*, *desirability* and *aporia*, generates an understanding not only of *first cause* but also of the *self*. This understanding is not static but dynamic; an evidence of this dynamicity is the different constructs of *first philosophies* throughout the historical development of Western philosophy. The diversity of *first philosophies* within the history of Western philosophy is related to the understanding of the relationship between the *first cause* and the *self* within a *historical context*. Thus, *otherness*, *desirability* and *aporia* do not operate in abstract or in an ahistorical ideal; instead they operate fully immersed within a *historical context*.

The operations of *otherness*, *desirability* and *aporia* in relation to the *historical context* generate two simultaneous outcomes, which this research is identifying using the Latin terms of *ad intra* and *ad extra*\(^\text{\textsuperscript{340}}\) outcomes. *Ad intra* outcome is when *otherness*, *desirability* and *aporia* motivate *first philosophy* to contextualize itself to a *historical context*, thus, to adopt new concepts and categories for a further exploration of both *first cause* and the *self*. While *ad extra* outcome is when *first philosophy*, through operation of *otherness*, *desirability* and *aporia*, *the other* (newness) is welcomed. As a consequence of welcoming *the other*, forms of absolutisms present within a *historical context* are contested. The *ad intra* and *ad extra* outcomes become a clear indication of when the *otherness*, *desirability* and *aporia* operations generate a conception of *first philosophy* that is engaging within a *historical context*. The engagement within the *historical context* is because the *ad intra* and *ad extra* outcomes instigate in the *self* the perception of possibilities. To recap, *the self* exploration and relationality of *first cause* within a *historical context* – operating on the conceptual gears of *otherness*, *desirability*

\(^{339}\) Ahistorical ideal is an understanding of concepts, notions and ideals without considering and engaging with their historical development, influence and context.

\(^{340}\) *Ad intra* and *ad extra* are Latin terms that denote the specificity of a human operation. *Ad intra* is when an operation objective is not the exterior other; instead it aims to work on its own categories and ideals. *Ad extra* is when the object of an operation is the exterior other; thus it aims to work for *the other* that is external to *the self*. Both *ad intra* and *ad extra* operations can be performed simultaneously and with complimentary benefits.
and aporia – generate the ad intra and ad extra outcomes, which outcomes instigate the self to perceive and to elaborate possibilities.

4.7: Spiritualized First Philosophy: The Right Climate for “-isms”

Aristotle’s non-Platonic (non-dualistic) understanding of the world around him motivates him to incorporate his understanding of physicality\(^{341}\) within every aspect of his philosophical reflection. Aristotle does not limit his observation and reflection of the physicality exclusively within his scientific books; the entire Aristotelian corpus incorporates an observation and reflection of physicality. In reading Aristotle’s works, one can easily conclude that all Aristotle’s philosophical reflections are founded on observations and reflections around physicality. In other words all Aristotle’s writings – which includes his first philosophy reflection – are an extension of his scientific\(^{342}\) observation and reflection. Thus, Aristotle assigns to his book Metaphysics the objective of searching for totality through which he could understand and engage with the world as a whole. Thus, Aristotle quest for totality distanced him from his teacher Plato, who’s philosophy aimed to contemplate (or present) another idyllic and more perfect world that is more perfect then the physical world, as in the theory of forms. In pursuit of this totality, Aristotle initiates his metaphysical reflection on the how, where he includes in his metaphysical reflection any possible physical observation.

What the metaphysician is after is a comprehensive account of how the world is that is somehow immune to the uncertainties overshadowing all our reflection on the course and content of our experience. The metaphysician wants to understand the world once and for all.\(^{343}\)

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\(^{341}\) Physicality in Aristotle is associated with anything that can be perceived through the senses. Another term that explains the notion of physicality is materiality.

\(^{342}\) Aristotelic science unlike Modern science is perceived as an organic and complimentary reflection to the rest of his philosophical reflections. For Aristotle science is not compartmentalized into a separate discipline with little or not interaction with other disciplines. The separation of disciplines is a Modern phenomenon, which is not present in Aristotle’s works; instead he formulates his reflection on an interaction of disciplines, methodologies and questions.

The understanding of the world in its totality, according to Aristotle’s metaphysics can only be realized starting first and foremost from the sensorial human faculties. According to Aristotle it is through the sensorial faculties that the human intellect engages with the physicality of the world around her/him. Accordingly, Aristotle introduces his *Metaphysics Book A* with a reflection on the importance of human perception and cognition of physicality, through which the sensorial faculties of the human being prompts the human intellect to explore first cause. In Aristotle’s first philosophy, physicality observation becomes a springboard that stimulates the human mind into pursuit of totality. Therefore, the use of the term metaphysics for Aristotle’s first philosophy does not signify an opposition of the physical, but rather, as the name suggest, it is an understanding of physicality that become the basis for first philosophy. Aristotle’s first philosophy merges his physicality/scientific observation with his logical reflection; where the logical reflections become the tool through which Aristotle abstracts from his own physicality/scientific observation his metaphysical (first philosophy) reflection.

What is distinctive of metaphysics is that it is, like science, a rational project. What this means is that the metaphysician purports to give grounds for his large conclusions that are not founded either on the appeal to divine authority [religion] or on claim to experience of a privileged kind [mystic]. The metaphysician aspires, and pretends, to reach his conclusions by logical arguments commencing from assumptions which would be readily accepted by reasonable person.

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344 “Almost everyone who has had much dealing with academic philosophy, and absolutely everyone who has had any dealing with Academic philosophy, will know the celebrated anecdote about how this work [Metaphysics] received its title, which it was then to bequeath to the whole branch of philosophy that it founds, from some chance entry note made for it in a catalogue in an unknown collection or library. The point of the note, the anecdote variously vouchsafes, was either that the work in some sense continues the agenda of the (perhaps more digestible and therefore no doubt more familiar Physics) or, more banally, that a copy simply arrived just after a copy of the Physics in some job lot delivered of manuscripts. The anecdote, we may say, has both a type and a token variant.” Lawson-Tancred, H. *Introduction to The Metaphysics*, xxxix-xi.

345 *Understanding of physicality* in Aristotle comprises on a reflection that is generated through the sensorial activities of observation and engagement.

346 Lawson-Tancred, H. *Introduction to The Metaphysics*, xiii.
The logical reflection that produces the *first philosophy* reflection is necessarily grounded on an *understanding of physicality*. Since Aristotelian *first philosophy* is so intrinsically merged with Aristotle’s scientific (*physicality*) understanding, that a change in the scientific understanding (paradigm) assumes also an alteration of the *first philosophy* reflection. Thus, if *first philosophy* does not adapts its reflection to the *physicality* observation and engagement, *first philosophy* becomes redundant; in which case *first philosophy ad intra* and *ad extra* operations would fail to operate. The intrinsic relationship between Aristotle’s’ *understanding of physicality* (Aristotle’s’ science) and his *first philosophy* conclusions, was an important motivation for Descartes to rethink *first philosophy* within a new scientific paradigm based on the Copernican revolution. Thus Descartes, living at the threshold of the development of modern science felt that metaphysics, as *first philosophy*, was inadequate to satiate the new philosophical dilemmas that modern science was introducing. For Descartes, *first philosophy* has to first face the epistemological doubts and suspicions that modern science was leading philosophy into; the Cartesian *first philosophy* was constructed no longer on metaphysical but on an epistemology construct.

Though Descartes’ *first philosophy* shifts from metaphysics to epistemology, he is in continuity with the Aristotelian understanding of the *self* and *first cause* relationality, which relationality is based on the operation of the three *conceptual guars*: otherness, desirability and aporia. In other words, there is a common understanding between Aristotle and Descartes when it comes to the operation of *meta* through the three *conceptual gears*. The rupture between the two *first philosophes* is primarily on the physical understanding (understanding of *physicality*). Hence, though the Cartesian quest is motivated by a new *physicality* understanding – grounded on the modern scientific paradigm shift – Descartes reacts by formulating a *first philosophy* that is non-*physicality* engaging. The Cartesian formulation of his *first philosophy* on a non-*physicality* engagement leads him to a new philosophical way of formulating *first*

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*347* The *meta* in this context refers to the instance when the self transcends her/himself to engage with the *first cause*. 

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philosophy that is by spiritualizing first philosophy. The Cartesian spiritual first philosophy response derives from his doubtful and suspicious experience of anything that is physical; he elaborates his first philosophy on a process of elimination of anything that according to him is not epistemological reliable. In this process of elimination he categorically eliminates physicality, which includes his own body, thus, concluding that the only reliable source for his first philosophy quest is the thinking self.

Next, from the very fact that I know [sciam] I exist, and that for the moment I am aware of nothing else at all as belonging to my nature or essence, apart from the single fact that I am a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence consists in this alone, that I am a thinking thing. And although perhaps (or rather certainly, as I shall shortly claim) I have a body, which is very closely conjoined to me, yet because, on the one hand, I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in so far as I am a thinking and not an extended thing, and, on the other, a distinct idea of the body, in so far as it is only an extended and not a thinking thing, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body, and can exist without it.

Descartes first philosophy gave rise to a dualistic trend within modernity where the engagement and understanding of physicality was ether regarded as a subservient activity to idealism – thus no longer a primary activity as within the Aristotelian philosophy – or else it was totality excluded from the philosophical reflection. Hence, Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy started to generate the possibility within modernity, of conceiving of an ideal that does not necessitate a physicality engagement and understanding. Another consequence of the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy is the conceptualization of idealism as having a position of priority (primacy) over physicality; therefore, transforming physicality engagement as

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348 The term spiritualizing shows how Descartes first philosophy operates by doubting the human sensorial activity, thus excluding physicality engagement, and instead he opts for a physiological (mental) and cognitive operation, which operation is based exclusively on a cognitive introspective reflection.

349 Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, Sixth Meditation: AT VII 78

350 Idealism is a later development of Cartesian epistemology, which claims that the knowledge and understanding of reality is a physiological construct. The social development of idealism started to give priority of ideals, values and beliefs over the human interaction with the world around them.
subservient to an ideal or ideology. Descartes elaboration of first philosophy, by the introspective approach limits, and at times excludes, physicality engagement. The origin of the Cartesian rift with physicality engagement is found in Descartes’s Meditations on First Philosophy, where he associates the ‘perception of physicality’ with epistemological deceit. A direct consequence of Descartes’ association of the ‘perception of physicality’ with epistemological deceit, is the generation of an attitude of doubt and suspicion towards any forms of physicality engagement.

Doubt and suspicion in Descartes first philosophy acts like a conceptual plank through which he could avoid engaging with physicality, and thus leap directly into the meta argumentation of first philosophy. The Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy – that is based on a philosophical argumentation, and which bypasses physicality by leaping directly into the meta argumentation – altered the dynamics of the ad intra and ad extra first philosophy operation. The alteration is based on the priority of idealism or conceptualization over physicality encounter and engagement. Thus, the contextualization of philosophy within a historical context (ad intra operation) and the critical engagement of philosophy regarding a historical context (ad extra operation) started to be motivated by and subservient to the ideological agenda. This Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy alteration of the ad intra and ad extra dynamics, was influential in the rise of a modern philosophical movement, which formulated its argument primarily – and in some instances exclusively – on ideological and conceptual constructs. In other words, the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy operation becomes the grounds for the Modern spiritualized philosophical construct, which facilitate idealistic and conceptualized thinking, and the sidelines or the excluding of physicality engagement. The Modern spiritualized philosophical construct has eased the way for the rise of Modern ideologies, which including totalitarian ideology, by providing Modern ideological thinking with conceptual tools that sustained the formulation of their ideological agenda.

The provision of conceptual tools for modern ideological thinking, including totalitarian ideology by the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy, does not hold Cartesian first philosophy
as directly responsible for the rise of the isms\textsuperscript{351} in modernity. What is being attributed to the Cartesian \textit{spiritualized first philosophy} is the creation of the ‘right conceptual climate’ that enhances ideological thinking. The significance of ‘right conceptual climate’ is connected to the \textit{direct} and the \textit{indirect possibility} through which the Cartesian \textit{spiritualized first philosophy} opened the way, within modernity, for the rise of isms, leading eventuality to the rise of totalitarianism. The \textit{indirect possibility} is generated by the absorption of Cartesian \textit{first philosophy} into a \textit{spiritualized} argumentation and the sidelining of \textit{physicality}, which sidelining has generated the creation of isms, that is, the possibility of thinking in ideological terms without referring to the impact of these ideologies on \textit{physicality}, especially the \textit{physicality of the other}\textsuperscript{352}. The non-referral to the \textit{physicality} impact of ideology is due to the possibility created by the Cartesian \textit{spiritualized first philosophy} conceptual climate, where ideology is only accountable to itself i.e., ideologically self-referential. Therefore, the ethical assessment of an ideological impact on human life is executed by ideology itself.

The \textit{direct possibility} of the Cartesian \textit{first philosophy} is its paradigm affect on a Modern philosophical trend, which elaboration of ideals and ideology did not evolve through a \textit{physicality} engagement, but through \textit{physicality} exploitation. Thus, modern ideological movements took occasion of the Cartesian \textit{spiritualized first philosophy} to develop an ideology that does not necessitate \textit{physicality} engagement, but instead exploits \textit{physicality} to justify its ideological conclusions. This \textit{physicality} exploitation can be especially visible in the way ideological movements made use of science. Arendt, while describing ideology as a “recent phenomenon,”\textsuperscript{353} perceives ideology as a singular premise – that is made up of a combination of

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\item \textsuperscript{351} Isms are historically associated with the new way politics started to be generated in Modernity. That is the creation of politics started to be distinct from the interest and ideals of a ruler (as for instance a king) and instead politics started to be based on ideological grounds. Though this new way of doing politics gave way for a more democratic participation, the isms highlight the negative side of this new political structure that is when the isms (ideologies) started to dictate politics by alienating and marginalizing people that are not included within the ideology or that are seen as enemies of the ideology. Therefore, in this context, isms highlight a political structure or system that seeks exclusively the implementation of its ideological beliefs.
\item \textsuperscript{352} Physicality of the other refers to the other as seen by the naked eye that is as perceived by the senses of the self before the presence of the other is reflectively processed by the self.
\item \textsuperscript{353} Arendt, H. \textit{The Origins of Totalitarianism}, 468.
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science and philosophy – through which everything\textsuperscript{354} can be explained. Though Arendt does not make use of the term *physicality* exploitation, features of *physicality* exploitation can be perceived in the way Arendt describes the use (exploitation) of science for ideological ends, which she describes with the term *scientificality*\textsuperscript{355}. For Arendt the understanding and use of science by ideological movements, supports the justification and implementation of their ideological ideals. Thus, according to Arendt there is no proper engagement with science in ideological structures, because an engagement would include contestations and problematizing, of which both activities (contestations and problematizing) are not in compliance with ideologically lead movements.

Ideologies-isms which to the satisfaction of their adherents can explain everything and every occurrence by deducing it from a single premise – are a very recent phenomenon and, for many decades, played a negligible role in political life. Only with the wisdom of hindsight can we discover in them certain elements which have made them so disturbingly useful for totalitarian rule. Not before Hitler and Stalin were the great political potentialities of the ideologies discovered.

Ideologies are known for their scientific character: they combine the scientific approach with results of philosophical relevance and pretend to be scientific philosophy. The word “ideology” seems to imply that an idea can become the subject matter of a science just as animal are the subject matter of zoology, and that the suffix –*logy* in ideology, as in zoology, indicates nothing but *logoi*, the scientific statement made on it. If this were true, an ideology would indeed be a pseudo-science and a pseudo-philosophy, transgressing at the same time the limitations of science and the limitations of philosophy.\textsuperscript{356}

Though the non-engagement with *physicality* of the Cartesian and the non-engagement of *physicality* of the isms each stand on a different premise,\textsuperscript{357} the isms feed on the Cartesian *spiritualized first philosophy* for the creation of ideological argumentations based solely on *meta*
The exclusive meta argumentation created a unique understanding of the object of ideology with totalitarianism, which objective becomes exclusively history. Arendt clearly states that totalitarianism is not interested in engaging with the is of the world – which includes physicality. Totalitarian ideology, for Arendt, has an exclusive vested interest that is the creation of a historical situation, as conceived by the totalitarian ideology. Thus, for Arendt, totalitarian ideology does not engage with an understanding of being, because the interest of totalitarian ideology is to create a historical situation that fits within their ideological ideal, even if it entails exclusion or elimination of being. The Holocaust is a clear example of this preference of history over being by totalitarian ideology: for the Nazis the historical implementation of race ideology blindfolded their eyes from seeing the intrinsic value of countless human lives.

An ideology is quite literally what its name indicates: it is the logic of an idea. Its subject matter is history, to which the “idea” is applied; the result of this application is not a body of statements about something that is, but the unfolding of a process which is in constant change. The ideology treats the course of events as though it followed the same “law” as the logical exposition of its “idea.” Ideologies pretend to know the mysteries of the whole historical process – the secrets of the past, the intricacies of the present, the uncertainties of the future – because of the logic inherent in their respective ideas.

Ideologies are never interested in the miracle of being. They are historical, concerned with becoming and perishing, with the rise and fall of cultures, even if they try to explain history by some “law of nature.” The word “race” in racism does not signify any genuine curiosity about the human races as a field for scientific exploration, but is the “idea” by which the movement of history is explained as one consistent process.

The non-physicality first philosophy that becomes a reference to modern ideological thinking offered the ideal grounds on which thought construct could be formulated without necessitating the engagement with the other. The relation with physicality and with the other are relatable; since in both relations the self most immediate sensorial perception is that of physicality. Therefore, what the self perceives when encountering the other is a physical body

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358 Physicality argumentation, presented by totalitarianism as scientific argumentation, has only ideological propagandistic purpose, and thus not to engage with.

359 Arendt, H. The Origins of Totalitarianism, 469.
that is not the self’s own. As in the case of traditional first philosophy when the self perceives – at first the physicality of the other as other – there is the possibility for the conceptual gears of otherness, desirability and aporia to be triggered and to initiate relationality. The spiritualized first philosophy has made it possible for modernity to conceive of political ideas and notions that are exclusively speculative and constructed by the self. Later these ideals will be implemented – in form of ideologies (isms) – disregarding any form of engagement or relationality with the other, thus, making it possible for the Holocaust ideology to develop and to be executed in form of genocide.
Chapter 5. The Post-Holocaust Quest: A First Philosophy for the Other

This chapter will be furthering Chapter Three hermeneutic of modernity by initiating the process of providing a solution that has the ability to confront the Holocaust possibility. Chapter Three, by scrutinizing modernity through the “window” (hermeneutics) of the Holocaust, identifies an alarming revelation: how modernity incubates the Holocaust possibility. The history of the Holocaust will trace back the conceptualization (ideology) and execution (practice) of the Holocaust possibility to totalitarian possibility, which function as a habitat for the Holocaust possibility. Totalitarian possibility in the history of modernity is not exclusively identified with totalitarianism. Traces of totalitarian possibility are present within the isms that function modernity as habitat for modernity as shown in Chapter Three. A characteristic of totalitarian possibility is the narrowing of possibilities to the first cause that is identified by an ism. Two main contributors of modernity were identified as a support for the rise of the isms within modernity: the introspection operation of first philosophy that made it possible to construct thought on spiritualized thinking operation and in excluding the engaging with physicality, and the identifying of first cause with the self instead of an external other – as in the case of Aristotle and Descartes.

This (fourth) chapter, through the Holocaust hermeneutics of modernity, examines and proposes a solution that has the potential of resisting the Holocaust possibility. The main objective in this chapter is to develop a philosophy that has as its core objectives engaging and relating with the other. This chapter will evaluate Levinas’ conception of ethics as first philosophy through which first philosophy becomes a platform for the self/other relationality. The relational nature of ethics as first philosophy is due to its engagement with the physicality of the other, described by Levinas as an encounter with the face of the other. Accordingly, ethics as first philosophy has

360 See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, viii
361 See Chap. 3. Sec. 7.
362 See Chap. 2. Sec. 1.
the potential of creating the philosophical space that allows the encounter with the face of the other to be developed into a reflection and praxis that relates with the other. Subsequently, both the reflection and the praxis that emerge from ethics as first philosophy become a living contestation toward different forms of prejudices\textsuperscript{363} that the isms generates in the self – which prejudices are at the origin of both exclusion and elimination of the other.

The resistance that ethics as first philosophy offers to the Holocaust possibility is based on its understanding and focus of a first cause that is identified with the face of the other. This chapter explores three concepts that Levinas develops to explain how the other operates as first cause, which are before, election and totality. The first cause is not an abstract other, as in the Aristotelic and Cartesian first philosophy, instead it is perceived as carnal\textsuperscript{364} human other. Ethics as first philosophy generates a situation where the physical needs (physicality) of the other are to be considered, and prioritized over any ideological thinking. Consequently, the prioritization of physicality generates despiritualizing operations that challenge and contest any spiritualized frame of thought – which are at the origin for isms – that exclude or marginalize physicality.

Ethics as first philosophy by focusing on the other as first cause generates an educational experience that engages the self with the novelty and the newness that the other offers. Levinas uses the term pre-philosophy experience to explain the meaningful experiences that emerge during the self/other encounter. Levinas’ notion of ethics, that is not based on prescriptive regulations but instead is founded on a dynamic relationality with the other, gives to ethics as first philosophy privileged access to the pre-philosophy experiences. Thus, ethics becomes the tool through which the self can access and engage with the meanings that emerge. This chapter will be concluding by claiming that for ethics as first philosophy to be effective, it necessitates a habitat through which the self can engage with the other ethically, which habitat will be identified with hospitality.

\textsuperscript{363} Prejudice denotes a perception of the other before the encounter with the other but at the same time it influence the encounter with the other.

\textsuperscript{364} Carnal in this context refers to the physicality and the bodily needs of the other who is perceived as first cause in Levinas.
The identification of hospitality as a habitat for ethics as first philosophy is based on the operation of hospitality in preserving the otherness of the other by recognizing the other as agent. Agency is clearly visible in hospitality when the other chooses the self to host her/him; this act of choosing, in Levinas philosophy is explained by the operation of electing the self to be a host (of the other) by the other. Thus, the notion of election recalls that hospitality is initiated by the other’s agency, in return the self responds to the other’s election through the responsible act of ‘welcoming the other’. The other, when electing the self for hospitality, initiates a process in the self – which Levinas identifies as “recollection”\(^{365}\) – through which the self realizes his identity and ethical agency of ‘being responsible for the other.’

5.1: ‘Welcome of The Other’: The Post-Holocaust Response

For first philosophy engaging with physicality is imperative for a more total and inclusive understanding of the world around, but this engagement cannot be based on a simple reintroduction of Aristotelian first philosophy. Aristotle’s first philosophy depends on a scientific structure and understanding, which structure and understanding does not fit within the modern understandings and practices of sciences – modern scientific paradigm. Descartes’ doubts and skepticisms concerning the engagement of physicality in the formulation of a first philosophy is neither extravagant nor unreasonable. His moving away from the Aristotelian first philosophy and the formulation of a spiritual first philosophy is a response to concrete dilemmas and challenges that modern science brought about. The Copernican revolution, through the questioning of the appearance of certainty and solidity of physicality, has set the tone for modern science to bring in a more fluid and subjective\(^{366}\) understanding of physicality. Therefore a modern more fluid and subjective understanding of physicality not only instigated Descartes to bestow doubt and suspicion on the perception of physicality but has also motivated him to search for his first philosophy answers within what appears to him to be a more stable


\(^{366}\) Fluid and subjective understanding of physicality is a symptomatic reaction to the Copernican revolution due to the fact that the Copernican revolution has questioned the certainty and solidity of preceding scientific deliberations.
and reliable solution: the self. Though there is no direct connection between Descartes’ first philosophy and totalitarianism (and other modern isms), totalitarianism exploits the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy to implement a historical vision that focuses exclusively on ideology. Thus, totalitarianism transforms Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy into both direct and indirect possibility that limits or excludes physicality engagement, and which possibilities are the foundation for the Holocaust possibility.

The memory of Holocaust clearly shows that there is no neutral thought or philosophy, since any form of thought has ethical and political consequence. Accordingly, the memory of Holocaust introduces in any thought activity an ethical and a political consideration, and which consideration challenges any modern forms of thoughts, especially those that are formulated exclusively on conceptual and ideological thinking – as in the case of the isms thought construct. A thought or a philosophy that incubates in it the Holocaust possibility is a thought that does not consider the ethical and political consequences on the historical context; instead it seeks to impose a political agenda without any consideration for the context. Post-Holocaust reflection instigates in the philosophical debate the creation of a philosophical thought that would offer critical tools to detect any forms of Holocaust possibility. Furthermore post-Holocaust reflection has to consider any forms of thought that do not consider the ethical and political implication intrinsically exclusive, since it does not seek to engage with the historical context, but only seeks to implement itself within a context.

Though historical context comprises abstract conceptual experiences, its conceptual qualities are established on concrete physicality experiences based on human actions within a physical space and a historical context (time). Thus, the term that explains the intended physicality, which includes in it actions that generate a historical context, is praxis.\textsuperscript{367} For an effective post-Holocaust philosophy, it has to take into consideration the praxis that historically has contested and has generated an opposite outcome to the horrors of the Holocaust. This praxis has to have as its objective and operation, the inclusive engagement with people that were to be excluded by the Holocaust ideology. In this research will be identified with the praxis of ‘the welcome of the

\textsuperscript{367} Praxis is the embodiment or realization of an ideal through a physicality engagement.
other” and which welcome becomes a key reflection for post-Holocaust philosophy. The risky operation of ‘the welcome of the other’ and the contestation and subversion that it instigated against the Holocaust ideology and practices in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and throughout the Nazi occupied territories has since captivated the post-Holocaust philosophical debate. Thus, post-Holocaust philosophy started to explore the ‘welcome of the other’ as a praxis that has the faculty to contest the system and to subvert the status quo for the benefit of the other.

The ‘welcome of the other’ is a praxis that initiates an engaging relation with the other through firstly engaging with the physicality of the other, i.e., the initial act of ‘welcome of the other’ is motivated by a basic human physicality need that comprises sheltering and nourishing. The firstly engaging with the other’s physicality through the praxis of the ‘welcome of the other’ generates a despiritualization situation, that is the act of welcome sidelines any form of spiritualized thought – the basis for any ideological thinking (isms) – by prioritizing the physicality needs of the other. In other words, the praxis of ‘welcome of the other’ by prioritizing the physicality of the other over the isms expectations despiritualizes, which despiritualized practice confronts and subverts the isms that exclude the other.

Although Levinas does not engage with the notions of spiritualization or despiritualization, he does offer an indication for why the praxis of ‘welcome of the other’ despiritualizes. In Levinas’ words: “The term welcome of the Other expresses a simultaneity of activity and passivity which places the relation with the other outside of the dichotomies valid for things: the a priori and the

368 The phrase ‘welcome of the other’ in the context of the post-Holocaust reflection, refers to the daring act of the self of going beyond the ideological constrains of her/his society by extending her/his habitat to the other; even though the other is perceived as different or maybe as an enemy by the self’s society. The importance of the ‘welcome of the other’ in post-Holocaust reflection is related to the Holocaust historical situation when Jews and other persecuted people where welcomed by generous individuals or communities; which welcome has placed these individuals and communities lives at risk but at the same time saved the lives of many people persecuted by the Nazis.

369 The high risk is related to the Holocaust historical fact where people who welcomed Jews or others regarded as ‘enemy of the state’, were running the risk of being condemned to the same punishment of those they welcomed.

370 In this contest the term faculty signifies both power and authority.
a posteriori, activity and passivity.”\textsuperscript{371} The ‘welcome of the other,’ for Levinas, has the potential of transcending any dichotomies\textsuperscript{372} constructs, which dichotomies constructs should be attributed to things and not to human being. Hence, Levinas perceives a limitation in the \emph{spiritualized} dichotomization operation and which limitation is reached during the act of ‘the welcome of the other’. ‘The welcome of the other’ uses other operational categories that prioritizes the \emph{physicality} needs of \textit{the other} that is being welcomed. In other words, the \textit{praxis} of the ‘welcome of the other’ despiritualizes by prioritizing the \textit{physicality} needs (sheltering and nourishing) of \textit{the other}.

Levinas while openly acknowledging the influence of the Holocaust in his philosophy, states that the reflection around the ‘welcome of the other’ in any post-Holocaust philosophical reflection should be regarded as a pivotal and central question. For Levinas, the Holocaust haunts philosophy with questions regarding the impact\textsuperscript{373} that the face of the other brings into philosophical reflection. Therefore, the \textit{praxis} of the ‘welcome of the other’ – since it is a \textit{praxis} that is motivated by this impact – plays a central role in the exploration of these questions. The encounter with the face of the other instigates a responsibility in \textit{the self for the other} which responsibility motivates the \textit{praxis} of the ‘welcome of the other’. Thus, the memory of the Holocaust, according to Levinas, becomes a reflective space that focuses on ethical responsibility of \textit{the self for the other}, and which responsibility has the potential to develop during the self/other encounter.

In starting from the Holocaust, I think about the death of the other man; I think of the other man means. I think of the other man for whom one may already feel – I don’t know why – like a guilty survivor. I have asked myself… what the face of the other man means. I have taken the liberty of saying that there is in the face above all an uprightness and rectitude, a being face forward precisely as if it were exposed to some

\textsuperscript{371} Levinas, E. \textit{Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority}, 89.
\textsuperscript{372} The origin of \emph{spiritualized} conceptualization is Descartes dichotomous understanding of epistemology, where he elaborates his epistemology reflection on a mind/body dichotomy with a preference to the mind introspective activity over the bodily sensorial activity. Thus, any form of \emph{spiritualized} thought subsists on a dichotomous understanding of the world around which sidelines or exclude \emph{physicality}.
\textsuperscript{373} The term impact in this context shows the quality of influential effect of \textit{the face of the other} in any post-Holocaust philosophical reflection, which influential has both an immediate and authoritative effect on post-Holocaust philosophy.
threat at point-blank range, as if it presented itself wholly delivered up to death. I sometimes ask myself whether the idea of the straight line – the shortest distance between two points – is not originally the line according to which the face that I encounter is exposed to death. It is probably the manner in which my death regards and intends me, but I don’t see my own face. The first thing which is evident in the face of the other is this rectitude of exposure and defenselessness. In his face, the human being is most naked, destitution itself. And at the same time, he faces. It is in the manner in which he is completely alone in is facing us that we measure the violence perpetrated in death.\(^{374}\)

Since ‘the welcome of the other’ has to have a central role in a post-Holocaust philosophy and reflection, an important question that emerges is where is the ideal philosophical space to discuss and reflect on ‘the welcome of the other.’ The paradigmatic influence of first philosophy throughout the development of Western philosophy makes first philosophy the ideal philosophical grounds on which ‘the welcome of the other’ reflection can be developed. Thus, first philosophy in the Western philosophical tradition becomes both the exploratory lab for what has the potential to become a paradigm philosophical construct, and at the same time it also functions as a platform that launches new philosophical ideals as paradigms for other philosophical operations. Levinas, himself a disciple of Western philosophical tradition, explicitly stated his bias towards Western philosophy: “At no moment did Western philosophical tradition in my eyes lose its right to the last word; everything must, indeed, be expressed in its tongue…”\(^{376}\) therefore he formulates his philosophical reflection within a Western philosophical construct. Accordingly, seeing that the ‘welcome of the other’ within post-Holocaust philosophy played an important paradigmatic role, Levinas situates the ‘welcome of the other’ reflection within first philosophy context.


\(^{375}\) The significance of paradigmatic influence of first philosophy is that first philosophy has played a leading role in influencing and directing the rest of the philosophical debate in Western philosophy.

5.2: The Other as First for The Self

Since, both the notions of first and totality in the Western philosophical tradition – from Aristotle to Descartes – are explored within a first philosophy context. Levinas by situating the ‘welcome of the other’ within first philosophy he attributes first and totality to the ‘welcome of the other.’ Inline with this Western philosopher tradition Levinas explores the ‘welcome of the other’ using the notions of first and totality, through which, first and totality become conceptual tools for the exploration of the ‘welcome of the other’ as first philosophy. More precisely, Levinas associates the notions of first and totality with the other, while the act of welcome is interpreted as the instance in which the self recognizes the first and the totality of the other. Hence, the term instance in this context refers to the event that is led by the recognition of the other as first and totality.

Levinas never uses directly the term first for the other; instead he uses other notions that signify and position the other as first. The significance of first that Levinas attributes to the other corresponds to traditional first philosophy understanding of first cause, but he adds to it further significance, which compliment his understanding of ethics as first philosophy. Thus, the other is both the first that motivates the self’s reflection and action but also the first as the primary objective, for which the self should direct her/his reflection and action. Levinas develops three important concepts to explain his understanding of the other as first: before, chosenness and totality.

**Before:**

The notion before in Levinas explains the other – when facing the self – as the first that motivates the self to transcend her/himself and start living her/his life for the other. The phrase for the other in Levinas signifies the ethical existential quality of life that the self develops, by being before the other. Levinas explains that the phrase before the other recalls the self that

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377 Levinas avoidance of the term first is related to an ethical understanding of first that Levinas favors. Thus Levinas utilizes other notions that signify the other as first but that also shows the quality of first that he intend.
he/she stands in an “asymmetrical” relation with the other, where the other is at the helm. Furthermore, for Levinas the realization of the “asymmetrical” situation of the self before the other by the self is what distinguishes the human being as a rational being from others non-rational beings – animals. “In this possibility of disinterestedness, in this goodness, the awakening to biblical humanity is produced: to respond to the other, to the priority of the other, the asymmetry between me and the other, him always before me, man as an irrational animal, or rational according to a new reason.”

Hence, for Levinas, the awareness of being before the other gives to the self a new existential quality that is of being an ethical agency. He defines this agency of the self as being “responsible for the other”.

From the depths of natural perseverance in the being of the being of a being who is assured of his right to be, from the heart of the original identity of the I – and against that perseverance, and against that identity – there arises, awakened before the face of the other, a responsibility for the other to whom I was committed before any committing, before being present to myself or coming back to self.

**Chosenness:**

First within first philosophy assumes primarily a first in agency, thus Levinas to explain the other’s first in agency he introduces the biblical notion of chosenness. For Levinas chosenness is not interpreted as an act that segregate or exclude, instead it is an act that calls for a response, i.e., chosenness recalls a mission/cause for the other that the self assumes or is made to assume by the other her/himself. Chosenness is what prevent the self from perceiving her/himself as “master” and dominator of the world, this because chosenness makes the self

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378 Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 120.


380 Another biblical term that function as a synonym for chosenness in Levinas’ philosophy is election.

381 Master is a term used by Levinas to indicate the quality of relationality that the self develops when not aware of being called by the other for the other. See Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 66.
aware of being in a relation with (collaborating with) the other and not beyond (dominating) the other.

To great extent, of course, this makes reference to the chosenness at issue in the Bible. It is thought as the ultimate secret of my subjectivity. I am I, not as master who takes in and dominates the world, but as called, in an indeclinable manner, in the impossible of refusing this chosenness (to refuse it would be to accomplish evil). Freedom is here a necessity, but this necessity is also a freedom. This is how I will respond to your question concerning chosenness. The notion of chosenness as I present it is not an already religious category; it has an ethical origin, of course, and signifies a surplus of obligations.\(^\text{382}\)

Levinas formulation of the other’s first as chosenness is based on his critic of the Heideggerian use and understanding of ontology. According to Levinas, Heidegger promotes a conception of ontology as an ultimate hermeneutic arbiter\(^\text{383}\) of human thoughts and actions. Hence, this hermeneutic arbitration is endowed to ontology because Heidegger transforms ontology into a first philosophy. In Levinas own words Heidegger’s ontology – as first philosophy – has a direct consequence on the self/other relationality because it subordinates this relationality to freedom. Levinas interprets Heidegger conception of freedom as “obedience to Being”\(^\text{384}\), which obedience according to Levinas has absolute control over human thoughts, actions and human life itself. Since the self/other relationality subsists on diversity and otherness, while ontology presupposes sameness, when ontology in the Western philosophical tradition is held as first philosophy, according to Levinas, it puts the self/other relationality in jeopardy.

The primacy of ontology, for Heidegger, does not rest on the truism: “to know an existent it is necessary to have comprehended the Being of existents.” To affirm the priority of Being over existents is to already decide the essence of philosophy; it is to subordinate the relation with someone, who is an existent, (the ethical relation) to a relation with the Being of existents, which, impersonal, permits the apprehension, the domination of existents (a relation of knowing), subordinates justice to freedom. If

\(^{382}\) Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 66.

\(^{383}\) Ontology as an ultimate hermeneutic arbiter means that ontological definitions hold both a final interpretation and a directive influence of human thoughts and actions.

\(^{384}\) Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 45.
freedom denotes the mode of remaining the same in the midst of the other, knowledge, where an existent is given by interposition of impersonal Being, contains the ultimate sense of freedom. It would be opposed to justice, which involves obligation with regard to an existent that refuses to give itself, the Other, who in this sense would be an existent par excellence. In subordinating every relation with existents to the relation with Being the Heideggerian ontology affirms the primacy of freedom over ethics. To be sure, the freedom involved in the essence of truth is not for Heidegger a principle of free will. Freedom comes from an obedience to Being: it is not man who possesses freedom; it is freedom that possesses man. But the dialectic which thus reconciles freedom and obedience in the concept of truth presupposes the primacy of the same, which marks the direction of and defies the whole of Western philosophy. 385

Levinas through his chosenness concept he inverts the order set by Heidegger – that is of subjecting the self/other relationality under ontology – and he instead subjects ontology to the first of the relation with the other. In other words, for Levinas being is not for being’s sake but being is for relational sake; it is not an abstract conception of being that defines the self and dictates her/his actions but instead it is the encounter with the other (the face). Hence, the concept of chosenness – which he also describes as a call – redefines the I am, as the self’s identity, into a response for the other i.e. from I am into “Here I am”.

The face looks at me and calls to me. It lays claim to me. What does it ask? Not to leave it alone. An answer: here I am. My presence vain, perhaps, a gratuitous movement of presence and responsibility for another person. To respond “here I am” is already the encounter with the face. 386

**Totality:**

From its Aristotelian origin first philosophy was always drawn by a desire for totality: 387 the understanding of things (which includes human beings) in their totality of being and

387 In Aristotle the notion of totality is synonym for essence; where essence is defined as the what (is) of an entity in its completeness.
relationality with other beings. Levinas’ aversion towards the conceptualization of ontology as first philosophy – of which he accuses Heidegger as the main promoter – is based on a reduction of totality to being. For Levinas totality can never be conceptualized or grasped within a philosophical definition or formula. The concept of totality for Levinas has to include the alterity and the transcendence of the other – that is beyond the self to define. Totality according to Levinas can only be explored within the self/other relationality, which relation motivates the self to transcendence itself. In Levinas, thought self-transcendence is initiated when “the I take into account what is not itself” that is the other.

For Levinas, the understanding and engaging with totality is only possible when the self is in relation with the other, since the other is the origin and the object of the self’s thought.

“Thought begins with the possibility of conceiving a freedom exterior to my own.” Thus, by situating totality within the relation with the other Levinas is also preserving the self’s identity and agency, this because only when the “I takes into account what is not itself [the other]” that identity of the self can be explored. Since Levinas perceives totality within the self/other relationality – which relationality necessities the preservation of both the self’s and the other’s identity and agency – his conception of totality does not fuse identities or agencies within a totalizing formula, but instead it seeks to enhance it.

The relationship of the individual to the totality, which thought is, in which the I takes into account what is not itself and yet is not dissolved in it, assumes that the totality is manifested not as a milieu brushing against the skin, so to speak, of living being as an element in which it is immersed, but as a face in which being faces me. This relationship of both participation and separation, which marks the advent and the a priori of a thought – in which the bonds between the parts are constituted only by the freedom of the parts – is a society, being who speak, who face one another. Thought begins with the possibility of conceiving a freedom exterior to my own. To think a freedom exterior to my own is first thought. It marks my very presence in the world. The world of perception shows a face; things affect us as possessed by the other person. … Things as things derive their original independence from the fact that they do not belong to me – and they do not belong to me because I am in relation to the men they come from. Hence, the relationship of the I with the totality is a relationship with

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389 Levinas, E. Entre Nous: Thinking-Of-The-Other, 17.
human beings whose face I recognize. Before them, I am guilty or innocent. The condition of thought is a moral consciousness.  

The notion of totality that Levinas assumes is in-line with the Aristotelian conception of totality, since for him totality has to include everything that formulates the human experience; totality has to “grasp at once the whole and its parts,” excluding nothing. Levinas is sympathetic towards some of Descartes first philosophy conceptions; he diverts from the Cartesian first philosophy by conceptualizing the notion of totality that includes and engages with physicality. Though Levinas does not make use of the term physicality, physicality is implied by including in his conception of totality, “the reality in its concretization.” Since an aspect of concretization is physicality, Levinas by including the noun concretization in totality he detaches his understanding of first philosophy from the Cartesian dualistic and spiritualized first philosophy. Thus, by merging concretization – which includes physicality – with the conception of totality, Levinas first philosophy shifts the object of first philosophy in an opposite direction from the Cartesian first philosophy operation. That is, while Descartes’ first philosophy objective is established on an introspective argument – where the self is at the center of the operation – Levinas orbits his first philosophy argument and objective on the self/other relatioanality. Therefore, by including physicality in his understanding of totality, Levinas shifts the first philosophy focus from the Cartesian self-centeredness to the self/other relationality focus.

The dialectical thought of totality allows one to grasp at once the whole and its parts, seen in the light of the whole; the whole being, as in Aristotle, the finality of the parts itself. Total presence of being to itself, or self-consciousness, the whole as the end of

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390 Levinas, E. Entre Nous: Thinking-Of-The-Other, 17.
392 Levinas is influenced by Descartes philosophical reflection on the thinking about God that is God cannot subject (or reduce) to the thinking or reflection about God. Later Levinas will apply Descartes’ reflection on God to the experience that the self/other relationality generates in the self. See Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 159.
393 Levinas, E. Alterity and Transcendence, 48.
394 See Arendt, H. The Human Condition, 279-280.
history is not empty; it is the reality it its concretization and most complete determination.\textsuperscript{395}

The three notions of before, chosenness and totality explain the conception of first that Levinas assumes in his first philosophy; these three notions are an explanation of first that is “the relation to the other,”\textsuperscript{396} which is initiated by the act of ‘welcome of the other.’ In deducing, first philosophy as the Western philosophical space where the first is reflected upon and explored, for Levinas it becomes only logical that the philosophical reflection on “the relation to the other”\textsuperscript{397} as first has to take place within a first philosophy context. Levinas, by stating that: “To think a freedom exterior to my own [the other’s] is first thought.”\textsuperscript{398} He does not only perceive “the relation to the other”\textsuperscript{399} as an objective of the self’s thought but also as an origin that motivates the self’s thought. Thus, by positioning “the relation to the other”\textsuperscript{400} not only as an object of the self’s thinking but also as the origin, he transforms “the relation to the other”\textsuperscript{401} into a first cause. His understanding of “the relation to the other”\textsuperscript{402} as first cause shifts first philosophy from the Aristotelic cosmological context by situating first philosophy into a Cartesian like anthropocentric\textsuperscript{403} context.

\textsuperscript{395} Levinas, E. Alterity and Transcendence, 48.
\textsuperscript{396} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 114.
\textsuperscript{397} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 114.
\textsuperscript{398} Levinas, E. Entre Nous: Thinking-Of-The-Other, 17.
\textsuperscript{399} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 114.
\textsuperscript{400} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 114.
\textsuperscript{401} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 114.
\textsuperscript{402} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 114.
\textsuperscript{403} Descartes, in situating his first philosophy discussion around epistemology automatically abandons the more cosmological understanding of first philosophy of Aristotle for a more anthropocentric one.
5.3: The Post-Holocaust Quest: *Ethics as First Philosophy*

Levinas’ *first philosophy* has elements of continuity with both Aristotle’s and Descartes’ *first philosophy*. As with Aristotle and Descartes, Levinas also bestows *first* to *the other*, where *the other* is perceived as alterity from *the self*: “The Other as Other is not only an alter ego: The Other is what I myself am not.” While both Aristotle and Descartes attribute *first* (cause) to *the other* that is not *the self*, both philosophers’ *first cause other* is vested with non-human attributes and features. The alteration that Levinas’ *first philosophy* brings is in his understanding of *the other* as *first*. Levinas discontinues with the *first philosophy* traditional abstract conception or ideal of *the other* that is *first* – as for instance *unmoved mover* in Aristotle and God in Descartes – instead he brings in an understanding of *the other as first* that is a concrete and carnal relational other, which he identifies with the nudity of a *face*.

The nudity which is a call to me – an appeal but also an imperative – I name face. It is doubtless necessary to insist on the concrete figure in which the notion of alterity acquires its meaning. It should not be confused with that which has only a formal signification. Logically, within all multiplicity, *a* is the other of *b* and *b* is the other of *a*. but each remains what it is in the ensemble formed by the multiplicity of terms which are formally united.

The paradoxical recognition of the *face* – as other (alterity) to *the self* but at the same time as immediate to *the self* – according to Levinas, instigates as a *first* response in *the self* a sense of responsibility; which responsibility he defines as “for-the-other.” With Levinas, the ethical revelation of *the other* that instigate responsibility for *the other in the self*, is perceived as *first*, not only for its intrinsic ethical significance, but also for its physiology and anthropological significance. Given that, the ethical encounter with the *face* is perceived as the beginning and the origin of all other human activities within *the self* – which includes consciousness.

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I begin by asking if, to an ego, the alterity of the other person first signifies a logical alterity. The latter marks each part in a whole vis-à-vis the others, where, in a purely formal way, one, this one, is other to that one, and that one is, by the same token, other to this one. Between the persons included in this reciprocity, language would be only a reciprocal exchange of information or anecdotes, internationally aimed at and gathered together in the enunciation of each partner. Or if, as I am inclined to think, the alterity of the other person to an ego is first – and I dare to say, is “positively” – the face of the other person obligating the ego, which, from the first – without deliberation – is responsive to the Other. From the first, that is, the ego answers “gratuitously,” without worrying about reciprocity. This is the gratuitousness of the for-the-other, the response of responsibility that already lies formant in a salutation, in the hello, and in the goodbye. Such a language is anterior to the enunciation of propositions communicating information and accounts.  

The Aristotelic first philosophy based on metaphysics and Cartesian first philosophy based on epistemology are inadequate for Levinas to accommodate and to explore “the relation to the other” as first, with its full implications. For Levinas, a first philosophy that is based on “the relation to the other” as first has two important priorities: the preservation of the otherness of the other and the creation of a philosophical space (context) for the self/other relationality. For Levinas, the preservation of the otherness of the other safeguards first philosophy from the fallacy of sameness. He is very explicit in his accusation towards a first philosophy that does not question sameness: “…first philosophy which does not call into question the same, [is] a philosophy of injustice.” Since there is no relationality with the other if the otherness of the other is not preserved, the preservation of the otherness of the other has to become a priority for the conception of first philosophy that Levinas develops. Since the Levinasian first philosophy does not emerge from an abstract philosophical formulation, but instead from a concrete experiential reflection based on the self/other relationality, first philosophy should not be

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407 Sameness, in Levinas, perception is problematic because it completely disrupts the self/other relationality since it obscures the otherness from the relation. Thus since ethics as first philosophy subsists on the self/other relationality the disruption of it causes a disruption in the development of ethics as first philosophy.
regarded as a past tense reflection but as a reflection that is based on the immediate context\textsuperscript{409} of the self/other relationality.

For Levinas the only first philosophy context that has the potential of offering a reflective space, based on the immediacy of the relationality, with the face of the other (as first), is ethics. Levinas, in positioning “the relation to the other” as first and in stating, that “[t]he epiphany of the other is ethical”\textsuperscript{410} situates ethics as first philosophy as an anthropological necessity through which the individual person develops into a responsible person. Therefore, for the full self-development of one’s human potentiality in one way or another, one has to live the experience that ethics as first philosophy offers. Levinas understanding of ethics is not conventional, that is he does not perceive ethics as a collection of a priori universalistic rules and regulation that dictate the right conduct for the self. Instead, Levinas perceives ethics as the first and immediate outcome that has the potential to develop during the encounter with the other. Thus, for Levinas, ethics becomes a synonym for the relationship with the other.

My manner of approaching the [ethics] question is, in effect, different. It takes off from the idea that ethics arises in the relation to the other and not straightaway by a reference to the universality of the law. The “relation” to the other man as unique – and in this way, precisely, as absolute other – would be, here, the first significance of the meaningful. Hence the importance of the relation to the other man as the incomparable, as empties of all “social role,” and who thus, in his nudity – his destitution, his morality – straightaway imposes himself upon my responsibility: goodness, mercy, or charity.\textsuperscript{411}

Levinas, by interpreting ethics as first philosophy, discusses cusses two important changes within the Aristotelian and Cartesian conception and operation of first philosophy. Thus, by perceiving ethics as first philosophy he shifts the Aristotelian meta objective and operation of first philosophy to a more carnal and human objective, which he identifies with the face. Instead of the Aristotelian’s meta operation, where philosophy emerge from the physical

\textsuperscript{409} Immediate context refers to the present historical situation of the self/other relationality.

\textsuperscript{410} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 46.

\textsuperscript{411} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 114. Emphasis added.
context, the Levinasian first philosophy operation moves toward an immersion operation into the historical context and physicality experience of the self/other encounter and relationality. In other words, Aristotle’s first philosophy operation is based on conceptual abstraction; that is through the logical pattern analysis of things and of human beings, whereas Levinas formulates his first philosophy on the reflection that emerges from the mundane relational encounter of the self with the other.

The moment Levinas introduces the notion of ethics as first philosophy Descartes’ first philosophy, based on the self’s epistemological objective and the self’s introspective operation, is radically contested. Thus, in placing the relation with the face of the other as objective for ethics as first philosophy a new extrospective operation emerges, i.e., an operation that motivates the self to transcend her/himself to relate with the other as first. Andriaan T. Peperzak sees in Levinas’ ethics as first philosophy a shift that shakes the grounds, not only of first philosophy, but also of the whole Western philosophical tradition. For Peperzak ethics as first philosophy originates a paradigm shift within the Western philosophical tradition by shifting the interest and focus of first philosophy from sophia (wisdom) to philia (love).

Levinas has declared several times over the years that he never wrote on ethics, and this is obvious from the ensemble of his texts if we understand “ethics” as a doctrine about the moral principles, norms, obligations, and interdictions that rule human behavior. The word “ethics” in “ethics as first philosophy” points to something more radical and original: it indicates a “point” where the ethical and the theoretical cannot yet be opposed – or even distinguished – a “point” where the opposition between “is” and “ought” is neither valid not even possible. If “ethics” is the thoughtful consideration (or theory) of the ethical – and primarily of its root or origin – while “first philosophy” is the most “originary” or “radical” dimension of theory – a dimension that, as originary, must precede all other dimensions – then ethics and first philosophy coincide. This is the position of which Levinas’s entire oeuvre is the demonstration. In this he agrees with the basic intention of the great classics from Parmenides and Plato to Hegel and Heidegger, but his argument is different. Instead of seeing theoria as the ultimate level of human perfection, he maintains that good practice – the practice of the good – transcends contemplation, and his proof consists in refined analyses of an undeniable, central but trivial fact: the fact of everybody’s being faced by other humans. The face-to-face reveals my being-for-the-Other and the inexhaustible responsibility contained in this structure. This “being-for” is not merely an ethical principle, however; it also is the “pre-original” or “an-

412 The term extrospective is to highlight the opposite operation of ethics as first philosophy from the Cartesian introspective operation. Exstrospective operation is based on a reflection that is generated by the engagement with the other, while introspective operation is based on the self’s sole reflection.
archical” birthplace of all theoretical relationships. **Responsibility generates and relativizes the autonomy of thematic thought. Philosophy is discovered to be the wisdom of an exhausting philia, rather than the long-standing devotion to the contemplative sophia of Western history.**

The moment ethics as first philosophy positions the relationality with the other as first, it explicitly challenges any modern philosophical or ideological (isms) constructs that position the relation with the other as subservient to its own philosophy or ideology. The challenge that ethics as first philosophy offers is based on what Levinas identifies as the pre-philosophy experience: “My [Levinas] philosophy rests upon a pre-philosophical experience, upon a ground that does not pertain solely to philosophy.”

Pre-philosophy for Levinas, is the recognition that the livening experience of the encounter with the other is so saturated in meaning that no conceptual thought or philosophy can ever fully grasp its meaningfulness. Living the experience of relationality with the other for Levinas is far more meaningful then any text or concept can ever express. Hence, the self’s thinking that happens during the immediate experience of relationality with the other goes beyond any ideals or philosophy held by the self.

To be sure, but to approach the things themselves does not consist in approaching the world such as it is at the moment that I construct, say a ship or a house. Every experience opens up contexts which are not given by the experience of perception. Every experience opens the world of meaningful things, of other men, to one’s relation with the other. **The other is always there, no matter what one’s perception of him might be.** What is meaningful depends upon the lights of the experience of the other, and thinking always contains more than it can effectively obtain. It is here that I part company with a conception of experience that would reduce thinking to a thinking of measurements, to a thinking of equivalences. Idealism has always wanted to interpret experience. In a sense it wanted to think that the real was absolutely equal to consciousness, that there was no overflowing, no deficit, no surplus. However, Descartes shows clearly that the form of God is greater than its psychological meaning. **From the outset, we think more than we can think. For me this is exemplary. The things that we have within our horizon always overflow their content.**

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Ethics as first philosophy for Levinas is not based on an articulation of the aftermath effect that is generated through the encounter with the other. Instead, ethics as first philosophy is based on what Levinas identifies as the pre-philosophy experience, which experience emerges from (and through) the immediate encounter with the other. Thus, the inclusion of pre-philosophical experience in ethics as first philosophy happens when ethics as first philosophy goes beyond the articulated thought, as text or concepts, by including/engaging the immediacy of the self/other relationality. The dependence of ethics as first philosophy on the pre-philosophy experience – generated by the self/other relationality – prevents ethics as first philosophy from being presented as a complete articulated philosophical construct, instead it is presented as a work in-progress\(^{416}\) construct. The work in-progress construct is motivated in ethics as first philosophy, by the constant awareness of newness that the other generates when encountering the self.

The awareness of newness that the presence of the other generates, compels ethics as first philosophy to perceive itself as an incomplete first philosophy, thus open for further reflection that frequently renovates and restores ethics as first philosophy. The renovation and restoration is generated when old constructs or conceptions are challenged by the newness\(^{417}\) of the other. Thus, the newness of the other motivates ethics as first philosophy to restructure and remake itself to accommodate more newness of the other. The work in-progress operation of ethics as first philosophy can be defined with this syllogism: since ethics as first philosophy is formulated on the encounter with the other – and since the other is other because is new\(^{418}\) to the self – the encounter with newness originates an awareness of incompleteness in ethics as first philosophy, and from this awareness of incompleteness the work in-progress operation is generated.

\(^{416}\) Since ethics as first philosophy is based on the self/other relationality, which relationality is not fixed but changeable, the term work in-progress highlights the developing nature of ethics as first philosophy.

\(^{417}\) The notion of newness in this context is associated with the awareness of otherness that the other brings to the self.

\(^{418}\) The other is new for the self because the other has a separate agency from the self, which agency challenges the self’s ideals and practices.
5.4: Urgency for First Meaning

Levinas thought the welcome of the other is essential for ethics as first philosophy because it is an essential aspect of the dynamic experience of pre-philosophy\textsuperscript{419}. Pre-philosophy is the meaningful\textsuperscript{420} that emerges in the instance of the self/other encounter. This meaningful experience transcends\textsuperscript{421} any forms of philosophical concepts or text. According to Levinas’ thinking, the meanings that pre-philosophy generate cannot be contained within conceptions, ideals or formulas. Thus pre-philosophy becomes necessary for the construct of ethics as first philosophy since it generates an ongoing reflective momentum that motivates further first philosophy reflection. Levinas’ conception of pre-philosophy is formulated on his phenomenological understanding of reality, where reality is relational, and thus it cannot be fully explained through human perceptions or epistemological experiences; instead, reality becomes an ongoing discovery of newness for the self. The phenomenological understanding of reality for Levinas opposes, on the one hand, a positivistic understanding of reality, where reality is valued exclusively through measurability; while on the other hand, it opposes idealism where reality is perceived as representation, that is reality is related exclusively through preconceived (representation) notions.

The life world is not a world of measurements. It is a concrete world at the heart of which significations take root. For me [Levinas], the most important thing is that there is less in the objective idea than in the idea when it is relativized with respect to man. Idealism always imagined that reality was representation; phenomenology teaches us that reality constitutes more than what captures our gaze. Reality has weight.\textsuperscript{422}

\textsuperscript{419} See Levinas, E. \textit{Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas}, 159.

\textsuperscript{420} In this context the term meaningful has a literal interpretation that is, an experience that is full of meaning i.e. a plurality of meanings that emerges from an experience.

\textsuperscript{421} The concept of transcends in this context shows how meaning goes beyond the materiality of an object.

\textsuperscript{422} Levinas, E. \textit{Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas}, 159-60.
In claiming “that reality constitutes more than what captures our gaze”\textsuperscript{423} Levinas clearly shows that reality cannot be contained within an epistemological experience since reality is \textit{more} than \textit{the self} can ever perceive. At the same time Levinas also claims that “reality has weight,”\textsuperscript{424} which means that reality is not abstract, but instead it is situated with a time and space context – as any other object that has \textit{weight}. The notions of \textit{more} and \textit{weight} as a description of reality, look like opposing concepts, but instead for Levinas they are understood as complimentary concepts since he situates reality within a relational context. Reality is not ‘something out there,’ instead, reality is someone – \textit{the other} – with whom \textit{the self} relates and engages with. Therefore, for Levinas relation is initiated on the encounter between two realities that are identified as \textit{the self} and \textit{the other}. The complimentary activity between the notions of \textit{more} and \textit{weight} offer an explanation of the relation between \textit{the self} and \textit{the other}.

Consequently, the very fact that \textit{the other} is perceived as holder of \textit{weight} – external to the \textit{weight of the self} – it follows that \textit{the other} is also perceived as \textit{more} for \textit{the self}. Levinas furthers his argument around the relation of \textit{more} and \textit{weight} when he identifies \textit{weight} with the ‘awareness of a context’.

Reality has weight when one discovers its context. This is the phenomenological message. The deduction pertains not only to the analysis of concepts; things are not content to appear, they \textit{are}, rather, within the circumstances that give them the weight of their horizons. And this weight is their richness….\textsuperscript{425}

The understanding of \textit{weight}, for Levinas, signifies that reality is \textit{the other}, because \textit{the other} has \textit{contexts} and \textit{circumstances} that are proper. The moment \textit{the self} ‘discovers’ \textit{the other}’s distinct contexts/circumstances a relational operation emerges between the notion of \textit{weight} and \textit{more}; \textit{the other} becomes \textit{more} for \textit{the self} because \textit{the other} has a \textit{weight} that is different from (other to) \textit{the self’s weight}. Levinas concludes his reflection on \textit{weight} by making

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{423} Levinas, E. \textit{Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas}, 160.
\textsuperscript{424} Levinas, E. \textit{Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas}, 160.
\textsuperscript{425} Levinas, E. \textit{Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas}, 160.
\end{flushright}
a value judgment claiming that “weight is their richness”\(^\text{426}\). The *richness* that he refers to is explained in the previous statement through the metaphor of *horizons*, where the awareness of *weight of the other* offers prospects and possibilities for *the self* that are beyond the known experience of *the self*. In Levinas thinking, both experiences of ‘beyond the known’ and of ‘new *horizons* of prospects and possibilities’ – that the *weight of the other* generates in *the self* – are merged (and explained) within the *pre-philosophy* experience.

The *pre-philosophical* experience that *weight* offers to *the self*, in Levinas thinking is conditioned by the discovery (awareness) of the *contexts* of *the other*. Levinas clearly shows this conditioning when he states that, “Reality has weight when one discovers its contexts”\(^\text{427}\). Thus without *the self*’s discovery of *the other’s contexts* the enriching *pre-philosophical* experience that the *weight of the other* offers is obscured by *the self*’s preconceived ideas of *the other*. Levinas’ bold statement regarding the necessity of *the self* to discover *the other’s contexts*, motivates his readers to reflect around the question of *how the self* can discover *the other’s contexts*. Meanwhile, since the object of *the self*’s discovery is *contexts*, the understanding of *contexts*, in Levinasian thought, becomes the key that opens the way for the exploration of the *how the self* discovers the other’s *contexts*.

Since context in Levinas has to be discovered by *the self* it clearly indicates that context is external to *the self*, i.e., other to *the self*. Therefore, the Levinasian concept of context as other for *the self* can be also explained using the term of diverse. Beyond that, Levinas does not speak of context as a singular concept but instead he uses the plural term of *contexts*, thus, denoting not diversity but diversities. The use of the term *contexts*, for Levinas, cannot be explained exclusively with the term diversities, since the notion of context also denotes a particular time and space setting: history. In Levinas’ thinking the diversities of *contexts* can be described as diversity of histories that *the self* has the potentiality of experiencing when encountering *the other*. The notion of histories (plural) is an attempt to not to leave anything out from what formulates human experiences and from what gives meaning to these experiences,

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\(^{426}\) Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 160.

\(^{427}\) Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 160.
which experiences are identified by the Levinasian term of *pre-philosophy* experience. Levinas’ philosophical concern is to generate a conceptual thinking that engages with the *pre-philosophy* experience – where different forms of practices and understandings, generate different meanings, and which meanings are beyond philosophical conceptualizations\(^\text{428}\) – while that the same time, being well aware that no conceptual thinking will ever capture (conceptualize) the full *pre-philosophy* experience.

There [Judaism] I rediscover the fact that every philosophy experience rests upon a pre-philosophy one. In Jewish thought, I encountered the fact that ethics is not a simple reason of being. The encounter with the other offers us the first meaning, and in the extension of this encounter, we discover all the others. Ethics is a decisive experience.\(^\text{429}\)

Levinas – using his Jewish and philosophical hermeneutics – elaborates on how “the encounter with the other”\(^\text{430}\) becomes a lens through which *pre-philosophy* meanings are discovered. Hence, “the encounter with the other”\(^\text{431}\) is the *first meaning*\(^\text{432}\) – key meaning – through which the discovery of the other *pre-philosophy* meanings are explored. Hence, the instant *the self* discovers *the other’s weight* – where *the other* is perceived as other that has her/his own contexts – *the self’s* first response becomes *ethics*.\(^\text{433}\) The awareness of the weight of *the other* – through the discovery of contexts of *the other* – generates in *the self* a sense of responsibility for *the other*, which responsibility is manifested in an *ethics* response. Hence, *ethics* response motivates *the self* to engage with *the other* as *first meaning* – through which the meanings that emerge from the *pre-philosophy* experience are explored.

\(^{428}\) The ‘beyond philosophical conception’ in Levinas philosophy is perceived in his use of forms of notions that are unconventional for mainstream Western philosophy, as for instance the use of religious narratives and literature, and theology.

\(^{429}\) Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 160.

\(^{430}\) Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 160.

\(^{431}\) Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 160.

\(^{432}\) See Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 160.

\(^{433}\) Ethics in Levinas is always perceived as relationality.
The problem that emerges from Levinas thinking is that although the encounter with the other offers first meaning, the self still needs to engage with the other for the offer to become actualized into meaningful experience. Furthermore that, the engagement with the other in Levinas thinking is not a random engagement: it is a specific engagement identified with ethics (as relational). Accordingly, for the other’s offer of first meaning to be actualized meaningfully within an encounter, it necessitates the ethics engagement of the self with the other. Yet, Levinas claims, “The encounter with the other engages me and that is something from which I cannot flee.”

The problem is that the engagement is not necessarily based on ethics as relationality. John Wild in his introduction of Levinas’ book Totality and Infinity, interprets Levinas though by admitting that in the encounter with the other there is the possibility of an opposite outcome where the self engages with the other un-relational – which in Levinas thinking un-relational becomes a synonym for unethical.

The basic difference is between a mode of thought which tries to gather all things around the mind, or self, of the thinker, and an externally oriented mode which attempts to penetrate into what is radically other than the mind that is thinking it. This difference emerges with peculiar clarity in the case of my meeting with the other person. I may either decide to remain within myself, assimilating the other and trying to make use of him, or I may take the risk of going out of my way and trying to speak and to give him.

Levinas’ bold claim that: “The encounter with the other offers us the first meaning, and in the extension of this encounter, we discover all the others” is based on his understanding of ‘the encounter with the other’ as a teaching event that stimulates the educational development of a human person. For Levinas, education is intrinsically associated with the concept of meaning, this is because meaning, for Levinas, has an existential impact, which he identifies with the educational operation of teaching and learning. “To have meaning is to teach or to be taught, to

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436 Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 160.
speak or to be able to be stated. Levinas identifies the origin of meaning with ‘the encounter with the other’. Therefore, meaning is generated when the self finds new significance in the encounter with the other. The teaching (educational) nature of meaning for Levinas is generated during ‘the encounter with the other’, because the self’s understanding and perception is extended by the novelty and newness (otherness) that the other’s presence conveys.

Meaning is not produced as an ideal essence; it is said and taught by presence, and teaching is not reducible to sensible or intellectual intuition, which is the thought of the same. To give meaning to one’s presence is an event irreducible to evidence. It does not enter into an intuition; it is a presence more direct than visible manifestation, and at the same time a remote presence – that of the other. This presence dominates him who welcomes it, comes from the heights, unforeseen, and consequently teaches its very novelty.

Levinas’ association of ‘the encounter with the other’ with the conveying of meaning to the self, and his understanding of meaning as an educational experience for the self, adds urgency for the other’s offer of first meaning to be actualized into practice. Since, without the other’s offer of first meaning that comes through the (ethics) relationality with the other, the self’s educational development is in peril. The major danger that Levinas perceives is that the self – who does not engage with first meaning – has no capacity of engaging with the meanings that emerges from the pre-philosophy experience, which generates a situation where the self ends up stuck in what Levinas identifies “the primacy of the same.” Furthermore “the primacy of the same” generates an education ideal and experience that is the reproduction of the self’s conceptions and ideals which Levinas identifies with the Socratic teaching method.

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439 See Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 160.
440 Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
441 Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
The Socratic teaching, in Levinas own words, causes “the neutralization of the other”\textsuperscript{442} by reducing the other “to the same.”\textsuperscript{443}

This primacy of the same was Socrates’s teaching: to receive nothing of the Other but what is in me, as though from all eternity I was in possession of what comes to me from the outside – to receive nothing, or to be free. Freedom does not resemble the capricious spontaneity of free will; its ultimate meaning lies in this permanence in the same, which is reason. Cognition is the deployment of this identity; it is freedom. That reason in the last analysis would be the manifestation of a freedom, neutralizing the other and encompassing him, can come at no surprise once it was laid down that sovereign reason knows only itself, that nothing other limits it. The neutralization of the other who becomes a theme or an object – appearing, that is, taking its place in the light – is precisely his reduction to the same.\textsuperscript{444}

“The primacy of the same”\textsuperscript{445} – that is an incapacity of the self to relationally (ethics) engage with the other and to value the other as first meaning – does not only impact the development of the self/other relationality, it has also influenced the development of modern history. The isms within modernity that have generated the exclusion and elimination of the other, as in the case of the Holocaust, can be traced back to a form of expression of “primacy of the same.”\textsuperscript{446} Both Fascism and Nazism professed an ideal of “primacy of the same”\textsuperscript{447} through which people were classified into categories,\textsuperscript{448} and which categories determine relationality. Consequently, the other – that does not fall within the same category – started to be considered a threat to the same system. Accordingly, the other in the “the primacy of the same”\textsuperscript{449} context is considered not as an object of relationality but of exclusion. Levinas, by identifying “the

\textsuperscript{442} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
\textsuperscript{443} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
\textsuperscript{444} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43. Emphasis added.
\textsuperscript{445} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
\textsuperscript{446} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
\textsuperscript{447} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
\textsuperscript{448} One of these categories was race.
\textsuperscript{449} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
neutralization of the other”⁴⁵⁰ as a consequence of “the primacy of the same,”⁴⁵¹ positions “the primacy of the same”⁴⁵² as a motive behind any sinister plot that has “the neutralization of the other,”⁴⁵³ as its objective which includes the Holocaust.

The entitlement over the other’s lives that motivates “the neutralization of the other” for Levinas, is explained by perceiving a complimentary operation between the notions of the same and that of possession. According to Levinas: “Possession is preeminently the form in which the other becomes the same by becoming mine.”⁴⁵⁴ Therefore the inability of the self to relate with the other as other, results in treating the other as possession, where the identity and agency of the other is determent by the self. In considering the other as mine the self disposes of the other according to the self’s identity, ideals and agency. Thus, the operation of the same is generated when the self is unable to recognize the otherness of the other, subsequently the self main action is based on reproducing sameness by projecting her/his identity, ideals and agency on the other.

5.5: The Dialogical Space of Hospitality

In Levinas’ thinking, for the other to be able to offer her/his first meaning is determined by the quality of engagement of the self with the other, which quality Levinas associates with ethics (relational) engagement. Ethics engagement becomes the context that allows for the other to offer first meaning to the self, while first meaning becomes the key to access the meanings that emerge from the pre-philosophy experience. Thus, what ethics engagement does to the self instigate the self to welcome the first meaning that emerges from the encounter with the other. The ethics engagement consists on two ethical responses by the self when encountering the

⁴⁵⁰ Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
⁴⁵¹ Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
⁴⁵² Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
⁴⁵³ Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 43.
other: initial response identified by responsibility for the other, followed by the welcome of the other.

The responsibility response in Levinas thinking originates in the recognition of the self of own guilt. Responsibility for the other tends to be interpreted as responsibility of the present and future situation of the other, whereas guilt, Levinas thought, extends the self’s responsibility for the other to the past history, which has caused the present situation of the other. Levinas cites Dostoevsky on guilt to include in the self’s responsibility, the responsibility “for everything” of the other.455 Thus, for Levinas when the self is responsible “for everything” of the other, it means that the self is responsible for the totality that comprises the other as other.

Levinas describes this totality of the other as other using the term unique. For Levinas, responsibility for the other, first and foremost, means to be responsible for the other as is, that is as unique other, and not as wished to be by the self. In Levinas’ thinking responsibility opposes the notion of the same, while it compliments and supports the notion of unique.

I think that responsibility is the love without concupiscence of which Pascal spoke: to respond to the other, to approach the other as unique, isolated from all multiplicity and outside collective necessities. To approach someone as unique to the world is to love him. Affective warmth, feeling, and goodness constitute the proper mode of this approach to the unique, the thinking of the unique. And doubtless, this thought of the unique is only concrete, and hence original, when it goes from the one to the other, in the guise of a society of two, outside the relations that regulate individuals who belong by appurtenance to the same genus. Individuals who constitute the unity of a genus return in love to their unicity, are disengaged from genus. Responsibility is transcendence from the one to the other, the newness of a rapport going from the unique to the unique. Responsibility in effect is inalienable; the responsible self is no longer the self closest to itself, but the first one called. Unique as elected. No one could replace this self nor absolve it from its responsibility. Transcendence from the unique to the unique, before all community: love for the stranger, hence holier, higher than fraternity. This is the originary place of the identical.456

455 “As concerns the relation with the other, I always come back to my phrase from Dostoevsky. It is a central sentence in The Brother Karamazov: “Each of us is guilty before everyone and for everything, and I more than all the others.” As if I were in the situation of the guilty one in the obligation toward others. The attitude of the other in no way intervenes in my responsibility a priory, in my initial responsibility with respect to the other who regards me. Moreover, without that initial guilt, almost nothing would remain of one’s responsibility, due to a dividing of one’s attentions. One sneaks out of it!” Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 56.

In Levinas thinking responsibility is beneficial for both the other and the self. The benefit for the other is that the other is being related with as is, that is as other (unique) and not as wanted to be by the self. The benefit for the self is the actualization of the offer of first meaning that is generated through the ethics engagement with the other, which actualization offers a learning and emancipatory experience for the self. The learning experience emerges from the engagement of the self with pre-philosophy, which engagement exposes the self to the (novel) meaningful experiences and insights that are generated during the ethics encounter with the other. The emancipatory experience that the other’s first meaning offers is attained through the freeing of the self from the non-learning condition that the “the primacy of the same” generates. Thus, the emancipatory experience that the other’s first meaning offers is in allowing the self to be freed from “the same”, and to allow her/himself to be taught by the other.

The act of responsibility of the self that is a response to guilt in Levinas thinking motivates the self to ‘the welcome of the other,’ and which welcome offers first meaning to the self. “The welcome of the Other is ipso facto the consciousness of my injustice…” Responsibility as intended by Levinas is actualized by the self when the other is welcomed. Therefore the act of welcome, for Levinas, is not a secondary activity that accompanies responsibility; it is intrinsic to (and it actualizes) responsibility for the other. The act of welcome, according to Levinas, inverts the entitlement of possession of the other that is generated by the inability of the self to relate with the other as other – which he identifies with the notion of the same – and thus, the self’s possessions are offered as a service to the other. ‘The welcome of the other’ puts whatever is considered by the self as possession (mine) in a situation of standstill – Levinas describe this standstill of possession as paralysis of possession. This standstill of possession opens the borders that delineate the possession of and creates a free dialogical space for the other, where the other is free to communicate her/himself to the self as is.

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But in order that I be able to free myself from the very possession that the welcome of the Home establishes, in order that I be able to see things in themselves, that is, represent them to myself, refuse both enjoyment and possession, I must know to give what I possess. Only thus could I situate myself absolutely above my engagement in the non-I. But for this I must encounter the indiscreet face of the Other that call me into question. The Other – the absolute other – paralyzes possession, which he contests by his epiphany in the face… I welcome the Other who presents himself in my home by opening my home to him.\(^{460}\)

The metaphor that identifies possession (mine) with the self in Levinas is home. Home, for Levinas, evokes both a sense of comfort and protection for the self to be her/himself: “The primordial function of the home does not consist in orienting being by the architecture of the building and in discovering a site, but in breaking the plenum of the element, in opening in it the utopia in which the “I” recollects itself in dwelling at home with itself.”\(^{461}\) Levinas’ thoughts regarding the responsibility for the other inverts the function of a home from a space where the self’s identity and agency finds his/her comfort and protection, to a space where the other’s identity and agency finds her/his comfort and protection. Thus, the responsibility for the other transforms the home from utopia \(^{462}\) for the self to utopia for the other.

The “vision” of the face as face is a certain mode of sojourning in a home, or – to speak in a less singular fashion – a certain form of economic life. No human or interhuman relationship can be enacted outside of economy; no face can be approached with empty hands and closed home. Recollection in a home open to the Other – hospitality – is the concrete and initial fact of human recollection and separation; it coincided with the Desire for the Other absolute transcendent.\(^{463}\)


\(^{461}\) Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 156.

\(^{462}\) The term utopia refers to an idyllic social setting and community.

\(^{463}\) Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 172.
The term economy as used by Levinas goes back to its etymological significance of household rule/management. The act of responsibility for the other changes the house rule from one that accommodates the self to one that accommodates the other. This change of economy and utopia of a home (as metaphor for the self’s possession) caused by the responsibility for the other by the self in Levinas is associated with the practice of hospitality. Thus, the face of the other generates a “certain mode of sojourning in a [the self’s] home” and which mode is identified with the act of hospitality. The fact that hospitality concerns “the mode of sojourning in a home” in Levinas philosophy clearly shows how hospitality is not a superficial occasional activity, but instead it is an activity that influence the core existential qualities of the self.

The influence of the act of hospitality on the self, according to Levinas, is initiated when the act of ‘welcome of the other’ induces the self into recollection. Thus, for Levinas the encounter with the other has the potential of situating the self in a state of “concrete and initial fact of human recollection and separation.” The concept of recollection for Levinas is the operation through which the self perceives her/his own identity as agent: “Recollection, in the current sense of the term, designates a suspension of the immediate reactions the world solicits in view of a greater attention to oneself, one’s possibilities, and the situation.” Thus, recollection causes a temporary separation of the self from the world around and induces the self into a reflective mood concerning the self’s self-understanding/role regarding the other – which, for Levinas, the notion of self-understanding is always envisaged in relation (role) to the other.

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464 The term economy is a combination of the Greek words oikos (house) nemein (manage): household management.
468 In Levinas thought the self’s identity and agency are merged since he perceives as the existential identity of the self as “being responsible for the other.”
Levinas concept of “separation and recollection”\textsuperscript{470} of the self offers a contrasting philosophy from the Cartesian ideal of “seclusion”\textsuperscript{471} in the Meditation on First Philosophy. Although both Descartes and Levinas (somewhat) converge in perceiving the encounter with the other as origin for a momentary withdrawal from the social engagements of the self with the objective of reflection, both philosophers give a contrasting cause and effect for the self’s momentary withdrawal. For Descartes the encounter with the other causes epistemological distortion and deceit – thus the other is considered as causality of doubt, which casts the self into a state of doubt and suspicion (effect). Therefore, for Descartes the only way remaining for the self to attain epistemological certainty is seclusion, where the self detaches and protects her/himself from any influence of the other to ponder an epistemological solution.

The moment has come, and so today I have discharged my mind from all its cares, and have carved out a space of untroubled leisure. I have withdrawn into seclusion and shall at last be able to devote myself seriously and without encumbrance to the task of destroying all my former opinions.\textsuperscript{472}

Contrary to Descartes, Levinas has an affirmative and constructive understanding of the self/other encounter. He perceives the encounter with the other as a learning cause and effect for the self. Levinas perceives the self’s temporary withdrawal from the world around her/him to ponder and reflect – which pondering and reflection he identifies with the notion of recollection – about the world that s/he is experiencing, as an important moment in a learning process. “Hence the subject contemplating a world presupposes the event of dwelling, the withdrawal from the elements (that is, from immediate enjoyment, already uneasy about the morrow), recollecting in the intimacy of the home.”\textsuperscript{473} Contrary to Descartes ideal of meditation – that is to remove oneself from the world around (the other) and to focus exclusively on the self –

\textsuperscript{470} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 172.

\textsuperscript{471} Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, First Meditation: AT VII 18.

\textsuperscript{472} Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, First Meditation: AT VII 18. Emphasis added.

\textsuperscript{473} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 153.
Recollection in Levinas thinking has an opposite operation: that is to bring in one’s withdrawal the world around (the other), and reflect upon.

The self’s act of withdrawal as a consequence of the encounter with the other, that both Descartes and Levinas perceive, is conceptually explained differently by both philosophers. For Descartes the act of withdrawal has as its objective “seclusion,” (that isolation of the self from the other) whereas, Levinas identifies the objective of withdrawal with “separation.”
Separation, is the self’s awareness and recognition of the other as other from the self. Accordingly, separation is the instance when the self individuates the other as different from her/himself, with different needs, ideals and agency.

The relation with the Other does not nullify separation. It does not arise within a totality nor does it establish a totality, integrating me and the other. Not does the face to face conjuncture presuppose the existence of universal truths into which subjectivity could be absorbed, and which it would be enough to contemplate for me and the other to enter into a relation of communion. Rather, here the converse thesis must be maintained: the relation between me and the other commences in the inequality of terms, transcendent to one anther, where alterity does not determine the other in a formal sense, as where the alterity of B with respect to A results simply from the identity of B, distinct from the identity of A. Here the alterity of the other does not result from its identity, but constitutes it: the other is the Other.

Withdrawal causes separation because, for Levinas, withdrawal is associated with recollection. Using the metaphors of home and dwelling Levinas explains recollection as distinctive reflective operation. In Levinas own words: “To dwell is not the simple fact of the anonymous reality of a being cast into existence as a stone one casts behind oneself; it is a recollection, a coming to oneself, a retreat home with oneself as in a land of refuge, which answers to a hospitality, an expectancy, a home welcome.” The distinctive operation of recollection is that its reflection is motivated by the encounter with the other and has as its

474 See. Descartes, R. Meditations on First Philosophy, First Meditation: AT VII 18.
477 Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 156.
objective the ethical responsibility of the self for the other. Therefore, the metaphors of dwelling and home that Levinas uses to explain the operation of recollection show how recollection offers a cognitive space where the self finds her/himself and his/her own agency through the other and for the other.

The distinction between Levinas’ recollection and the Cartesian meditation\(^{478}\) is that in the Cartesian meditation, the self is situated in isolation with the intention of avoiding relati

When I am responsible for the other I am unique. I am unique inasmuch as I am irreplaceable, inasmuch as I am chosen to answer to him. Responsibility lived as chosenness. The person responsible is able to avoid neither the appeal received nor his role in respect to someone else; ethically, responsible is indeclinable. The responsible I is irreplaceable, noninterchangeable, commanded to uniqueness… I have called this uniqueness of the I in responsibility its chosenness. To a great extent, of course, this makes reference to the chosenness at issue in the Bible. It is thought as the ultimate secret of my subjectivity. I am I, not as master who takes in and dominates the world, but as called, in an indeclinable manner, in the impossibility of refusing this chosenness (to refuse it would be to accomplish evil)\(^{479}\)

What triggers the self into recollection operation – through which the self reflects and understands her/his unique identity as ‘responsible for the other’ – is the encounter with the other, but for this encounter to be affective the other has to be free to exercise her/his agency of

\(^{478}\) As Descartes himself admits his book *Meditations on First Philosophy* is a result of his self-imposing “seclusion” that motivates him to meditate (reflect).

\(^{479}\) Levinas, E. *Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, 66.
chosenness. For Levinas chosenness of the self by the other initiates recollection that leads to a series of learning operations by the self which leads to the existential understanding of the self’s role and identity as ‘responsible for the other’. Thus for the other to exercise her/his chosenness, necessitates a dialogical setting in which the other can exercise her/his agency and reach out to the self freely. The freedom that Levinas intends is the freedom of the other to reach out to the self as other. If the other does not exercise her/his chosenness the educational benefits that emerges from the self/other relationality are at risk.

Levinas himself indicates the kind of dialogical setting that is necessary for the other to exercise chosenness, which chosenness motivates the self into separation (as Levinas intended) and recollection. He identifies this dialogical setting with hospitality: “Recollection in a home open to the Other – hospitality – is the concrete and initial fact of human recollection and separation. . . .” For Levinas hospitality is the dialogical space that allows for the other to practice chosenness. Thus, for chosenness to be affective, according to Levinas, it necessary for the other both to be other to the self and to operate as a free agent from the self. When both otherness and agency are expressed by the other and welcomed by the self – during the self/other encounter – the self responds to chosenness through ‘responsibility for the other.’

Thus, hospitality offers the dialogical space through which, on the one hand, the other is free to practice chosenness while on the other hand, the self is free to explore her/his identity as ‘responsible for the other.’

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480 Levinas explains the concept of chosenness with the Biblical term of election. In the notion of election the self’s identity and agency is dependent on the other’s agency of choosing the self.

481 These educational benefits emerges from the teaching influence of the other on the self – when the other is free to engage with the self as other – and by the learning experience that the self experience – through the engaging with the other as other.

Chapter 6. *First Hospitality: A Prologue for Education*

Chapter Four explained how *ethics as first philosophy* offers an understanding of *first cause* that is *the face of the other*, therefore a carnal human being who has physical needs, desires and aspirations, and not an abstract entity as in the case of the Aristotelic and Cartesian *first philosophy*. *Ethics as first philosophy* understanding of *first cause* offers an ideal philosophical reflection that identifies and opposes *Holocaust possibly*. *Ethics as first philosophy*’s *first*, which is perceived as both *the other* and as human – therefore engaging with *physicality* – opposes on the one hand, a *spiritualized first philosophy* – which does not engage with *physicality* – and on the other hand, the making of *the self* into *first*. Thus, *ethics as first philosophy* opposition is effective because it contrasts modern *isms* – origin for *Holocaust possibility* – and which *isms* are supported by *spiritualized first philosophy* and by the turning *the self* into *first cause*.\footnote{484} Chapter Four does not only perceive of *ethics as first philosophy* as a reactionary operation to the *Holocaust possibility*, furthermore it aims to offer a constructive operation through which *the self/other* encounter develops into relationality – as intended by *ethics as first philosophy*.\footnote{485}

As Chapter Four shows the development from *the self/other* encounter into *the self/other* relationality – as perceived through the *ethics as first philosophy* categories – is not an obvious one. Furthermore, Chapter Four perceives a gap between *the self/other* encounter and *the self/other relationality* and this gap is not necessarily bridged. This possibility of non-bridging situation is supported by historical happenings, where *the self/other* encounter did not develop in relationality, but instead it developed into antagonism between *the self* and *the other* or into annihilation of *the other*\footnote{486}.

\footnote{483} See Chap. 5. Sec. 3.
\footnote{484} See Chap. 4. Sec. 6.
\footnote{485} See Chap. 4. Sec. 2.
\footnote{486} The notion of annihilation of the other as in the case of the Holocaust does not allow for antagonism because *the other* is not perceived as human does not worth to conflict or fight with.
As Chapter Three and Four demonstrate, in recent modern history the Holocaust emerged from a situation where diversity of people lived in proximity of one another – thus, encounters with the other was inevitable – while, at the same time this proximity situation did not prevent the Nazi Germany from systematically exterminating countless human lives. Thus, though modernity develops sophisticated technology that makes communication and mobility easier and faster than in privies eras, the Holocaust “window”\(^{487}\) – through which this research analyzes modernity – also shows how modernity incubates in it the Holocaust possibility. Accordingly, the bridging of the self/other encounter with the ethics as first philosophy – or in other words, for the self/other encounter to develop into relationality – becomes more urgent and immediate within modern context.

The bridge between the self/other encounter with ethics as first philosophy in Chapter Four is identified with hospitality. Thus, this chapter will further the proposal of Chapter Four where hospitality is perceived as habitat\(^{488}\) through which the ethics as first philosophy can be effective in developing the self/other encounter into relationality. Since the notion of hospitality has very different interpretations and understandings, this chapter develops the notion of first hospitality, as a hospitality that hold specific qualities through which it can operate as precursor\(^{489}\) for ethics as first philosophy.

Chapter Five starts by furthering Levinas’ understanding of ethics (as relationality) as first philosophy. What is fundamental for the self/other relationality, according to Levinas, is the ‘the preservation of the other as other.’\(^{490}\) Hence, the Levinasian understanding of ethics as first philosophy has to be presided over by another first through which the other’s otherness is

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\(^{487}\) See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, viii

\(^{488}\) In this context the notion of habitat refers to a setting that is made up of an assembly of specific properties and entities that enables the emergence (and actualization) of a latent possibility. Furthermore the term habitat highlights the physicality space over a more abstract understanding of a context.

\(^{489}\) First hospitality as presiding for ethics as first philosophy refers to the role of hospitality in presiding and introducing ethics as first philosophy reflection and operation. Thus, hospitality in this context is perceived as the activity that motivates and leads to ethics as first philosophy.

\(^{490}\) The phrase ‘preservation of the other as other’ refers to the protection of the other’s otherness from the self’s assimilative attempt of projecting an understanding of the other as same.
preserved and engaged with. Thus first hospitality, in the chapter, will be considered as the first through which the other’s otherness is both preserved and engaged with. This chapter will explore how first hospitality preserves the otherness of the other by recognizing the other as agent. Agency is clearly visible in first hospitality when the other expresses the choice of the self and requesting hospitality, which choice in Levinasian terms, is defined as election. Thus, the notion of election recalls that first hospitality is initiated by the other’s agency, and in return the self responds to the other’s election through the responsible act of ‘welcoming the other’s hospitality.

The successive reflections (sections) within this chapter will be demonstrating how hospitality as first – first hospitality – has the faculty of preserving the other’s otherness to create a dialogical engagement between the self and the other. A central aspect of this chapter is to explain the implications of the notion of first hospitality and how this notion operates. The final objective of this chapter is to construct the notion of first hospitality as both a dialogical space of encounter between the self and the other and as educable space through which the self can potentially learn from the other. Before I engage in the reflective analysis and the formulation of first hospitality a brief explanation of the content of each section within this chapter will be offered.

The first section ‘Hospitality for History in Making’ shows how hospitality through the implementation of sanctuary – and operating on the two tracks, identified by Derrida as unconditional and conditional hospitality – has the power of preserving the other from past historical structures and ideals through which the other is excluded or in some cases eliminated. Thus, this section explains the history in the making of hospitality through the welcoming, of the other in the moment (present), and which welcome offers future possibilities. The following section ‘From Ethics to Hospitality’ will first explore the Levinasian metaphor of sharing one’s (the self’s) home with the stranger’s other as a metaphor for hospitality, followed by the exploration of the relation between the Derridarian notions of unconditional and conditional hospitality, which will be considered as both the motivational and realizational (actualizing) force for hospitality. This section will conclude by identifying the corresponding

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framework of ethics and hospitality through the Derridarian concepts of *forgiveness, invitation* and *other visits*.

The reflection ‘Hospitality as First’ will introduce the notion of *first hospitality* and how *first hospitality* has privilege excess – over other *first philosophy* – to engage with *pre-philosophy* experience. The debate will follow by exploring how *first hospitality* can be both a *means* and an *end* to a symbiotic relation between ethics and epistemology. This section will initiate the debate on *why* and *how* *first hospitality* is educability and *what* are its educational implications. The section entitled ‘Wonder as First Hospitality Distinct Companion’ continues to explore the educability quality of *first hospitality*, with a particular focus that is the relationship between educability and wonder. In this section, *first hospitality* will be considered as an ideal context that generates wonder. As in the case of *first philosophy* – and as reflected upon in previous chapters – the *first hospitality* notion of wonder also operates through the *three conceptual gears of otherness, desirability and aporia*. What distinguishes *first hospitality* wonder from *first philosophy* wonder is the cause of wonder that is ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’. The cause for the distinct relationality between the *self* and the *other*, which subsequently generates a distinct educable operation, will be attributed to this epistemology.

The reflection ‘First Hospitality Educability: Engaging with Newness’ will show how *first hospitality* is educability (because in the context for education that is perceived) as *dialogical event*. The educational affect of *first hospitality* will be compared and contrasted with Paulo Freire’s understanding of education as a space in which teaching and learning alternate between the teacher and the student. This section will conclude by analyzing how ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ functions as foundation for the *first hospitality* educability. An important concept that will emerge as a linking concept between ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ and *first hospitality* educability is the Freirean notion of *unfinishedness*.

The final section, ‘First Hospitality for Symbiotic Ethics, Epistemology, and Politics,’ will show how the encounter between *the self* and *the other* in a *first hospitality* context has political implications. As for educability, the political implication of *first hospitality* emerges
from the *consciousness of unfinishingness* of both the *self* and the *other*. The symbiotic relation of ethics, epistemology and politics generates the actions through which the *other* is perceived, related with and preserved as *other*. The act of preservation of the *other* will be associated with the political act of *sanctuary*, where *sanctuary* is defined as the preservation of the *other* for the *third party* (society).

6.1: Hospitality for History in Making

The recognition of the *other* as other by the *self* is recognized by Levinas as an imperative and a constant operation that accompanies the development of the *self/other* encounter into the *self/other* relationality. Furthermore, Levinas is well aware that the furthering of the *self/other* relationality has to be constantly accompanied by the recognition and awareness of the *other* as other. Thus, since the Levinasian notion of ethics is interpreted as relationality, and since relationality necessitates the recognition of the *other* as other, his conception of ethics as first philosophy has at its core operation the preservation of and the relationality with the *other* as other. Both the preservation of and the relationality with the *other* are founded on the agentic expressiveness of the *other* as other. Thus, for the *other* to express her/his agency it necessitates a recognition on behalf of the *self* of the *other* as the initiator of the *self/other* relationality; Levinas identifies this act of initiation with the act of *chosenness* of the *self* by the *other*. *Chosenness*, for Levinas, is when the *other* approaches the *self* for assistance and which chosenness has the potential to trigger in the *self* a sense of ‘responsibility for the *other*’.\(^{492}\)

*Chosenness* and ‘responsibility for the *other*,’ in Levinas thought, are perceived as the actions on which the conception of ethics as first philosophy is constructed. Levinas ideal of ethics as first philosophy is based on the understanding of ethics as relation between the *self* and

\(^{492}\) See Chap. 5. Sec. 2.

\(^{493}\) In this context assistance is interpreted as hospitality.

the other. Ethics is initiated through the act of chosenness by the other of the self and culminates with the self’s response of being ‘responsible for the other.’ Thus, for the self/other encounter to become an ethics encounter it necessitates a habitat through which the other has the possibility to communicate her/his chosenness to the self and the self has the possibility of expressing her/his ‘responsibility for the other’. Levinas himself identifies this habitat as hospitality; “hospitality – is the concrete and initial fact of human recollection and separation…”495. Both “recollection and separation” in Levinasian ideals are the operations through which the other can exercise chosenness of the self effectively496 and through which the self can consider her/himself as ‘responsible for the other’.

Levinas philosophical reflection acknowledges that hospitality, through “recollection and separation,” becomes a habitat for the other for exercising chosenness and for the self to respond, to the other’s chosenness, by being ‘responsible for the other’. In Levinasian thought both “recollection and separation” are perceived as conditions for ethics relationality; the fact that Levinas perceives hospitality as “the concrete and initial fact of human recollection and separation…”497 he is offering a fresh understanding of hospitality as the pivotal point on which the self/other encounter is transformed into an ethics encounter – which is based on the self realizing her/his role and identity as ‘responsible for the other’. Ethics for Levinas is ultimately expressed by the self’s response to the other’s chosenness (election) by being ‘responsible for the other’. Levinas explains the self’s ‘responsibility for the other’ with the biblical phrase “here I am,”498 where the phrase “here I am” signifies on the one hand the self’s presence and availability for the other, and on the other hand it signifies the self letting her/himself be lead by the other’s agency – chosenness.

496 For the other to exercise chosenness effectively, on the one hand it means that the other is free to be other to the self – other as agent and as identity. While on the other hand it means that the self is induced to respond to chosenness by being ‘responsible for the other’.
498 The phrase “Here I am” is uttered by the profits as a response to the mission that is being given to them by God i.e. “here I am” is the profits response to the call of God.
The face looks at me and calls to me. It lays claim to me. What does it ask? Not to leave it alone. An answer: here I am. My presence vain, perhaps, a gratuitous movement of presence and responsibility for another person. To respond “here I am” is already the encounter with the face.\textsuperscript{499}

For Levinas, hospitality is the dialogical space on which the face of the other comes to – exercises chosenness of – the self, while the self replies by altering her/his presence, that is, from a presence for oneself into a presence for the other. An ethics encounter, in Levinasian thought, develops through the self’s and the other’s mutual presence mindfulness. Hence, according to Levinas the role of hospitality, vis-à-vis ethics, is in rendering the self and the other present to each other – explicating the presence of the self and the other – and where eventuality the to is altered into a for. In other words, hospitality brings to light the presence of the other by offering the space for the other to express her/his chosenness, and the presence of the self, by giving the space for the self, to express her/his “here I am” to the other. Hospitality enhances the presence of both the self and the other because it offers a home (dwelling) for the other. Thus, in giving a home for the other, the self affirms her/his being as being responsible\textsuperscript{500} for the other. In Levinas own words, hospitality is when: “I welcome the Other who presents himself in my home by opening my home to him.”\textsuperscript{501}

The metaphor of a home to explain hospitality originates in the historical and traditional practice of hospitality because home is considered the place where the self welcomes the other.\textsuperscript{502} Levinas adopts the traditional imagery of a home to show that hospitality necessitates a conception of a home to operate as hospitality. The relation between home and hospitality takes a different bend when Jacque Derrida\textsuperscript{503} indicates his reflection from an opposite point of view.

\textsuperscript{499} Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 127.

\textsuperscript{500} Responsibility for Levinas is not only an action that one does but it is a state of being in an ontological sense.

\textsuperscript{501} Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 171.

\textsuperscript{502} In this context the self can also be a collective self, as for instance, a household.

\textsuperscript{503} Derrida had not only acquainted with Levinas’ philosophy, but further than, that he was also a personal friend and admirer of him.
Derrida, instead of viewing the concept of hospitality within the hermeneutics of a home, – that is the notion of hospitality is constructed on the concept of a home – inverted the operation, by perceiving the concept of a home as founded on hospitality. Hence, according to Derrida, for a home to be identified as a home it necessitates the possibility of hospitality, since opening for the outside world (the other) is intrinsic to the construct of a home.

That, once again, is not absolutely new: in order to constitute the space of a habitable house and a home, you also need an opening, a door and windows, you have to give up a passage to the outside world. There is no house or interior without a door or windows. The monad of a home has to be hospitable in order to be ipse, itself at home, habitable at-home in the relation of the self to itself.\(^{504}\)

Hospitality, for Derrida, is not perceived exclusively as an ideal to be followed \textit{a priori}, but instead he identifies in hospitality an ontological origin. When claiming that a home “need[s] an opening,”\(^{505}\) it means that a home intrinsically – to its nature in being a home – offers the possibility for hospitality. Accordingly, for Derrida hospitality is perceived as a human practice on which other human practices and operations are built. He clearly states that the hospitality question has to be grounded on the ontological (being) question: “the question of the foreigner as a question of hospitality is articulated with the question of being.”\(^{506}\) The merging of the hospitality question with the ontological question is because he conceptualizes ontology through the interpretive lens of hospitality. Thus, for Derrida, hospitality becomes the hermeneutic tool through which other philosophical constructs and operations are interpreted.

Since for Derrida, the practice of hospitality is intrinsic to the nature of human being – i.e., intrinsic to the being of being human – the relation of hospitality with ontology is based on an understanding of hospitality as a practice on which other human activities and actions are based. For Derrida, the relation of hospitality with ontology confers to hospitality a \textit{universal primacy}, that is, hospitality is the hermeneutic tool through which other human categories and


operations are interpreted and perceived. This *universal primacy* of hospitality is clearly demonstrated in Derrida’s critique of Immanuel Kant’s concept of hospitality. His divergence with the Kantian understanding of hospitality as a *binding law* is attributed to his disagreement with subjecting hospitality practices to the social conventions and structures of a state, i.e., subjecting what is universal\(^{507}\) (hospitality) to the conventional and the particular that is the state law.

In defining hospitality in all its rigor as a law... Kant assigns to it conditions which make it dependent on state sovereignty, especially when it is a question of the right of residence. Hospitality signifies here the public nature (publicité) of public space, as is always the case for the juridical in the Kantian sense; hospitality, whether public or private, is dependent on and controlled by the law and the state police.\(^{508}\)

For Derrida hospitality has to act independently from any structures and laws. In his book, *Of Hospitality*, Derrida furthers his critique of the Kantian understanding of hospitality by claiming that hospitality has to be free from any *must* structures or systems, so that hospitality would be able to operate as hospitality. The only motivating momentum that Derrida recognizes within hospitality practices is what he identifies as *unconditional hospitality*,\(^{509}\) that is hospitality for hospitality sake.

For to be what it “must” be, hospitality must not pay a debt, or be governed by a duty: it is gracious, and “must” not open itself to the guest [invited or visitor], either “conforming to duty” or even, to use the Kantian distinction again, “out of duty.” This unconditional law of hospitality, if such a thing is thinkable, would then be a law without imperative, without order and without duty. A law without law, in short. For if I practice hospitality “out of duty” [and not only “in conforming with duty”], this hospitality of paying up is no longer as absolute hospitality, it is no longer graciously

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507 It is universal because it is intrinsic to human nature.

508 Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 22.

509 In some instances Derrida refers to unconditional hospitality as absolute hospitality. Both unconditional hospitality and absolute hospitality refers to the same act of hospitality. The notion of unconditional hospitality is used by Derrida to contrast or to compliment what he identifies as conditional hospitality. While the term absolute hospitality is used to refer to the quality of guest that is totally unknown and unfamiliar to the host, which Derrida refers to as the absolute other.
offered beyond debt and economy, offered to the other, a hospitality invented for the singularity of the new arrival, of the unexpected visitor.  

Derrida perceives the relation between law and hospitality as a problematic one, because his understanding of law – which is that of a governing rule that leads human actions and activities according to a conventional interest – contradicts the hospitality interest that is the other (stranger). For Derrida, if a law dictates hospitality operation, it would imply that hospitality is an outcome of an external governing/ruling structure interest. Consequently, hospitality will not operate as free action that emerges from the encounter between the self and the other, and which seeks the interest of the other as first. For Derrida, hospitality requires the temporary cessation of law and legal structures for the implementation of hospitality law. Derrida utilizes the medieval historical concept of sanctuary to explain the necessity of a privileged space that is exempted from restrictive laws that marginalized or restricts strangers’ otherness – expressed in form of actions and presence within a society or community – and that allows for the unconditional law of hospitality to take over within this space. Thus, hospitality sanctuary becomes possible when a society recognizes a superior sovereignty that is higher than its own sovereignty. In Derrida’s thought, hospitality’s universal primacy positions the self or a community that is hosting as sovereign within its own hospitality space, thus, hospitality become free to transcend any legal and state structures to welcome the other.

In the medieval tradition… one can identify a certain sovereignty of the city: the city itself could determine the laws of hospitality, the articles of predetermined law, both plural and restrictive, with which they meant to condition the Great Law of Hospitality – an unconditional Law, both singular and universal, which ordered that the borders be open to each and every one, to every other, to all who might come, without question or without their even having to identify who they are or whence they came. (It would be necessary to study what was called sanctuary, which was provided by the churches so as to secure immunity or survival for refugees, and by virtue of which they risked becoming enclaves; and also auctoritas, which allowed kings or lords to shield their guests ( hôtes) from all those in pursuit; or; what occurred between the warring Italian cities when one became a place of refuge for the exiled, the refugee, and those banished from another city; and we who are reminded of writers in this context can call to mind

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a certain story about Dante, banished from Florence and then welcomed, it would seem, at Ravenna.)

The law-transcending nature of hospitality is based on the emergence of hospitality from the *historical immediacy*, emerging from the now and the instance of *the self/other* encounter, whereas law develops from the past historical practices, events and incidents. In the Derridarian thought, the *historical immediacy* of hospitality emerges from the mutual consciousness of *the self* and *the other*’s presence. This mutual consciousness motivates *the self* to engage with *the other* not as dictated (conditioned) by a past law, but as requested by *the other*’s immediate needs and requests. Hence, consciousness of *the other* becomes the foundation for the giving of hospitality by transcending conditions, – and if needed, subverting – set as laws. Therefore, the *uncoditionality* of *unconditional hospitality* is expressed when *the self*’s act of hospitality transcends and subverts past history – that puts conditions through legal structures or conventionalities – to welcome *the other*.

Derrida relates *unconditional hospitality* to history by describing *unconditional hospitality* as a hospitality operation that does not require the name of the guests. In the Derridarian thought, naming is not only considered as a personal identification, it is also considered as an identification of the individual status and role within a history of a sociocultural context. In other words, naming categorizes people within a present situation by using past historical context. Thus, during the *unconditional hospitality* operation a paradox takes place: the known and secure experience of a home is open for the unknown and

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511 Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 22.
512 *Historical immediacy* refers to history while in making i.e. while happening.
513 The term consciousness refers to an experience of mindfulness and awareness, which in this context refers to mutual mindfulness and awareness of both *the self* and *the other*. Levinas explains consciousness using the biblical phrase “here I am”; thus the “here” refers to the sharing of the time and space with of both *the self* and *the other*.
514 A historical example of a *hospitality* that transcended law by subverting it is when Jews in Nazi Germany received hospitality from people who did not let their actions to be conditioned by historical anti-Semitic laws. Thus these people opted for the immediate history of the encounter with *the other* – by giving hospitality to *the other* in distress – against anti-Semitic laws and conventionalities.
vulnerable experience that is generated during the encounter with the other. Derrida identifies unconditional hospitality with the experience of hosting the absolute other, which he identifies as the other that is totally new and unknown (unfamiliar) to the host. In any act of unconditional hospitality, hospitality becomes a new and innovative experience for the host, since hospitality has to reinvent itself to welcome the absolute other, who cannot be predicted by the hosts.

If we wanted to pause for a moment on this significant fact, we would have to note once again a paradox or a contradiction: this right to hospitality offered to a foreigner “as a family,” represented and protected by his or her family name, is at once what makes hospitality possible, or the hospitality relationship to the foreigner possible, but by the same token what limits and prohibits it. Because hospitality, in this situation, is not offered to an anonymous new arrival and someone who has neither name, nor patronym, nor family, nor social status, and who is therefore treated not as a foreigner but as another barbarian. We have alluded to this: the difference, one of the subtle and sometimes ungraspable difference between the foreigner and the absolute other is that the latter cannot have a name or a family name; the absolute or unconditional hospitality I would like to offer him or her presupposes a break with hospitality in the ordinary sense, with conditional hospitality, with the right to or pact of hospitality. In saying this, once more, we are taking account of an irreducible pervertibility. The law of hospitality, the express law that governs the general concept of hospitality, appears as a paradoxical law, pervertible or perverting. It seems to dictate that absolute hospitality should break with the law of hospitality as right or duty, with the “pact” of hospitality. To put it in different terms, absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner (provided with a family name, with the social status of being a foreigner, etc.), but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I give place to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names. The law of absolute hospitality commands a break with hospitality by right; not that it condemns or is opposed to it, and it can on the contrary set and maintain it in a perpetual progressive movement; but it is as strangely heterogeneous to it as justice is heterogeneous to the law to which it is yet so close, from which in truth it is indissociable.  

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515 It is vulnerable because both the self and the other during unconditional hospitality have to relate with each other as unknown.

The not requesting of name by *unconditional hospitality* is not considered ahistorical; for Derrida hospitality is a now (present) historical act that creates the possibility for future history. The possibility for future history is due to hospitality *uncoditionality* through which conditions that seek to perpetuate a past history are challenged to make way for a new history setting. Derrida is well aware that the frontline situation of hospitality situates hospitality in a non-neutral and non-intrinsically benevolent activity, since hospitality can be instrumental in perpetuating *past history* – *status quo*. Given that hospitality operates as a border/frontier operation, hospitality can be the ideal border control that filters the coming of the *stranger other* from bringing with her/him newness within a hosting community/society. Thus, for Derrida, *unconditional hospitality* is the motivator behind the hospitality practice through which the *stranger (absolute) other* is welcome to cohabitate with the *self*.

Derrida is well aware that for hospitality to open its borders and to welcome within its grounds the *stranger other* – and to be willing to transcend any normative or legal structure – it necessitates a motivating ideal, which Derrida identifies as *unconditional hospitality*. However, he is also cognizant that hospitality cannot be confined in an abstract and unrealized ideal. Hospitality also needs to be actualized on concrete practical operations on which coexistence between the *self* and the *other* can be attained. These practical operations for Derrida are based on conditions and legal structures by which the act of hospitality can be actualized in a time and space. Derrida identifies this aspect of hospitality as *conditional hospitality*, where he perceived *conditional hospitality* as the concrete and practical operation on which the host can welcome the guest and on which the guest can be welcomed by the host.

In Derridarian thought *conditional* and *unconditional hospitality* becomes a complimentary force that generates the practice of hospitality as a welcoming space for the *stranger other*. The law (ideal) of *unconditional hospitality* is perceived as the motivating momentum behind hospitality; where, for Derrida, without the ideal that *unconditional hospitality* offers, hospitality runs the risk of becoming a self-serving practice, consequently losing its true objective of being a welcoming space for the *stranger other*. Derrida also recognize that for *unconditional hospitality* to be actualized as a welcoming space for the

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517 Without historical perspective and context.
stranger other it necessitates practical operation and regulations set by conditional hospitality. The coming together of unconditional and conditional hospitality in a hospitality act is not perceived as a peaceful symbiotic activity, instead he perceives it as an incessant aporetic activity. This aporetic tension is based on the fact that unconditional and conditional hospitality are different in both interest and method; however, for a hospitality event to take place both unconditional and conditional hospitality have to come together, to challenge, and to compliment each other in offering different momentum for different situations within the practice of hospitality.

That is definitely where this aporia is, an antinomy. It is in fact about the law (nomos). This conflict does not oppose a law to a nature or an empirical fact. It marks the collision between two laws, at the frontier between two regimes of law, both of them non-empirical. The antinomy of hospitality irreconcilable opposes The law, in its universal singularity, to a plurality that is not only a dispersal (laws in the plural), but a structured multiplicity, determined by a process of division and differentiation: by a number of laws that distribute their history and their anthropological geography differently.

The tragedy, for it is a tragedy of destiny, is that the two antagonistic terms of this antinomy are not symmetrical. There is a strange hierarchy in this. The law is above the laws. It is thus illegal, transgressive, outside the law, like a lawless law, nomos anomos, law above the laws and law outside the law… But even while keeping itself above the laws of hospitality, the unconditional law of hospitality needs the laws, it requires them. This demand is constitutive. It wouldn’t be effective unconditional, the law, if it didn’t have to become effective, concrete, determined, if that were not its being as having-to-be. It would risk being abstract, utopian, illusory, and so turning over into its opposite. In order to be what it is, the law thus needs the laws, which, however, deny it, or at any rate threaten it, sometimes corrupt or pervert it. And must always be able to do this.

6.2: From Ethics to Hospitality

This aporetic tension between conditional and unconditional hospitality by which the practice of hospitality is established places hospitality on a different level from any other human activity for Derrida. Thus, while hospitality is pragmatic and empirical because it has to act within a time and space condition (conditional hospitality), it is also idealistic and meta by

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aspiring to be more (unconditional hospitality) than hospitality is within the now of a time and a space. In hospitality a peculiar activity happens: the is and the now relate with the more and the to come of future possibility, while at the same time maintaining their binary and distinct identities. Thus, this relationality, between opposing forces: on the one hand the is and now and on the other hand the more and the to come, is (in Derridian terms) aporetic.

Though conditional hospitality has ontological traces, for Derrida conditional hospitality is not limited to ontological categories. Since conditional hospitality in hospitality practices is motivated by the aporetic tension generated in the coming together of conditional and unconditional hospitality. Derrida’s understanding of hospitality is too dynamic to be confined to an ontological category. Thus, for Derrida hospitality engagement with the ontology question – what is question – through ethics, that is from the how perspective, which Derrida identifies as “manner” and “ethos”. The ‘how to be’ and the ‘what is being’ questions, in Derrida’s thoughts inevitably comes at a merging point within the praxis of hospitality. Thus, the ‘how to be’ question has a leading role within the Derridarian thought since it has direct influence on the quality of being, and in some historical instance on the possibility of being itself. The leading factor of the how question (ethos/ethics) over the what question (ontology) in Derrida is based on historical examples, since, for Derrida, the how understanding impacts the quality of being directly, either by including or by excluding – which in some historical cases implies the survival or elimination of human beings.

Hospitality is culture itself and not simple one ethics amongst others. Insofar as it has to do with the ethos, that is, the residence, one’s home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, ethics is hospitality; ethics is so thoroughly coextensive with the experience of hospitality. But for this very reason, and because being at home with oneself (l’être-soi chez soi – l’ipséité meme – the other within oneself) supposes a reception or inclusion of the other which one seeks to appropriate, control, and master according to different modalities of violence, there is a history of hospitality, an always possible perversion of the law of hospitality (which

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519 For Derrida, any human activity has elements of hospitality in it; thus hospitality is an expression of the ontology of being human.

520 A good example of how the ethics influence the being is the Holocaust. During the Holocaust many Jews’ lives were saved because of the ethical ideals of people who hosted or helped in the escape of many Jews at their own risk.
can appear unconditional), and of the laws which come to limit and condition it in its inscription as a law.\textsuperscript{521}

Derrida’s perception on ethics and hospitality as “thoroughly coextensive,”\textsuperscript{522} which motivates him to boldly state, “ethics is hospitality”\textsuperscript{523} is based on a conception of ethics that \textit{subsist}\textsuperscript{524} in hospitality. He both follows and furthers Levinas’ understanding of ethics as relationality. Like Levinas, Derrida understanding of ethics is not that of prescriptive laws and regulations, instead ethics is perceived as a relational activity between the self and the other. Both Levinas and Derrida perceive ethics as emerging from within the instance – within the time and the space – of the encounter between the self and the other and which has the potentiality of developing into relationality; therefore, they do not perceive ethics as \textit{a priori} laws that dictates the actions of individuals. Derrida’s understanding of ethics goes beyond that of Levinas through his \textit{coextensive} positioning of ethics and hospitality. According to Derrida the three concepts that demonstrate the \textit{coextensive} relation of ethics and hospitality are: (1) \textit{forgiveness}, (2) \textit{invitation} and (3) \textit{other visits}.

\textit{(1) Forgiveness:}

Derrida’s claim that “ethics is hospitality”\textsuperscript{525} shows how ethics emerges from a relational experience between the self and the other within a happening (event) that is situated in a particular time and space. Since, for Derrida, ethics is formulated within a relational event that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{521} Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 16-7. Emphasis added.
\item \textsuperscript{522} Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 16-7.
\item \textsuperscript{523} Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 16-7.
\item \textsuperscript{524} The term \textit{subsist} signifies that the occurrence of ethics is not only concurrent to the praxis of hospitality but further than that it is contingent to hospitality.
\item \textsuperscript{525} Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 16-7.
\end{itemize}
challenges both the self and the other, through a mutual act of welcome, the perception of ethics becomes dynamic and a continuously evolving (developing) process. This Derridarian understanding of ethics contests the conception of ethics that is based on formulation of laws and regulations, and instead it opts for an ethics that is understood as relationality. Ethics as relationality, for Derrida, is expressed through the reciprocal welcome between the self and the other, which welcome is never complete but in a process of more welcome. For Derrida no act of hospitality reaches completely its aim of welcoming the other, since there is always more space for welcome. This more space for welcome positions the self in a self-corrective mode for a better welcoming operation. Thus, forgiveness becomes an important operation that both corrects the lack of welcome and positions the self to aspire to be more welcoming.

The understanding of ethics as a process of more welcome, moves ethics from a finite law and regulatory understanding, to a more dynamic and process. What motivates ethics as relationality to perceive itself is the self’s awareness of inadequacy when the self is faced with the strangeness and newness of the other. Furthermore, for Derrida, the practice of hospitality is also marked with the host’s awareness of inadequacy in welcoming and hosting a guest and in responding to the guest needs. Thus, hospitality brings a relentless awareness of the inadequate welcome that a host can give to accommodate a guest. An important concept that emerges from hospitality’s awareness of inadequacy, according to Derrida, is the plea for forgiveness by the host. The plea (or request) for forgiveness generates an understanding of lack and the need to do more by the host, in which case, the understanding of lack and the need to do more are intrinsic to the in the making process of both ethics and hospitality.

But if there is a scene of forgiveness at the heart of hospitality, between hôte and hôte, host and guest, if there is failing, fault, offense, even sin, to be forgiven on the very threshold, if I may say so, of hospitality, it is not only because I must forgive the other in order to welcome him, because the welcome one must forgive the welcomed one. It is also because, inversely and first of all, the welcoming one must ask for forgiveness from the welcome one even prior to the former’s own having to forgive. For one is always failing, lacking hospitality: one never gives enough. Not only because

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526 In hospitality the subject and object of welcome not fixed but instead they alternate. Thus the host welcomes the guest and the guest welcomes the welcome of the host.

527 Hospitality is made of series of welcome from both the host and the guest that happiness within the time and space of hospitality.
welcoming is welcoming the infinite, and therefore welcoming, as Levinas says, beyond my capacity of welcoming (something that results in my always being behind, in arrears, always inadequate to my hôte and to the hospitality I own him), but also because hospitality... does not only consist in welcoming a guest, in welcoming according to the invitation, but rather, following the visitation, according to the surprise of the visitor, unforeseen, unforeseeable, unpredictable, unexpected and unpredictable, unawaited. Hospitality consists in welcoming the other that does not warn me of his coming. In regard of his messianic surprise, in regard of what must thus tear any horizon of expectation, I am always, if I can say so, always and structurally, lacking, at fault, and therefore condemned to be forgiven, or rather to have to ask for forgiveness for my lack of preparation, for an irreducible and constitutive unpreparedness.  

In short Derrida clearly see the need for forgiveness in hospitality because the host is not ready/prepared to welcome the guest as other from the self. Thus, in hospitality the host straggles with the newness that comes to her/him when welcoming the other. Instead of giving up on hospitality what Derrida suggest for the host to position her/himself in a state of perceiving one’s limitation and aims to correct these limitations. Furthermore Derrida thinks that a key operation of hospitality is the constant perception of the inadequacy in welcoming the other and in aiming to welcome better by the host.

(2) Invitation:

For ethics to be considered relationality between the self and the other, the subject and object of ethics has to alternate between the self and the other dialogically. Thus a fixed subject and object would eliminate the possibility for relationality, and instead would generates a hierarchical (or monologue) model of ‘relationality,’ with one side as the sole object and the other as the sole subject; and which situation would eliminate the possibility for the development of ethics as relationality. The alternate subject and the object within relationality is clearly manifested through the alternating agency between the self and the other. Thus, for Derrida in any relationality, agency should not be fixed but alternating between the self and the other. Both the alternating of subject and object and of agency within the self/other relationality is a significant coextensive feature that Derrida perceives between ethics and hospitality. For

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him, hospitality offers a paradigmatic relational expression through which the alternating subject and object is both expressed and deliberated.

Derrida notices that alternating agency in hospitality is expressed in different ways and forms, however, a significant expression of alternating agency in hospitality according to him, is expressed through the act of invitation. Invitation within the hospitality operation is not a prerogative of the host; Derrida sees the act of invitation as an alternating activity between the host and the guest. Consequently, the altering agency of invitation in hospitality, according to Derrida, produces another alternation, that of the guest’s and the host’s roles. Therefore, in hospitality the host and guest are not static, but instead they alternate according to who is doing the invitation; thus the one who does the invitation becomes the host.

Although there is alternation between guest and host in Derrida’s thought, the roles of the two do not overlap but instead they remain distinct from each other i.e., there is always a host that welcomes and a guest who is being welcomed, irrelevant to who was initially the host and the guest. Derrida uses the term “master” to indicate the one who invites during the praxis of hospitality; thus, there are instances in which he calls the host master and others in which he identifies the guest as master. At the end the master is always a host even if it is the guest, in which case he identifies the guest, as “the host’s host” while the host becomes the guest.

So it is indeed the master, the one who invites, the inviting host, who becomes the hostage – and who really always has been. And the guest, the invited hostage, becomes the one who invites the one who invites, the master of the host. The guest becomes the host’s host. The guest (hôte) becomes the host (hôte) of the host (hôte).

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529 Though, in Derrida’s thinking the figures of host and guest alternate their role is distinct. Thus the action of a host is always hosting but it is not always performed by the host, hosting can also be performed by the guest.


(3) Other visits:

An important contribution in the field of ethics as relationality by Derrida is the inclusion of the future within the present and the instance of *the self/other* relationality. According to Derrida ethics relationality is not limited to the *newness* of the now that happens during an encounter between *the self* and *the other*, but it is also an opening for the *newness* that emerges through other future encounters. In a Derridarian construct, an important way of valuing (measuring) the ethicality of *the self/other* encounter is through the possibilities that an encounter offers for future (further) rationalities; since thought for relationality to be considered as *ethics relationality*, it has to offer possibilities for future relationality, i.e., *relationality for future relationality*.

Hospitality, according to Derrida, offers the ideal relational space on which the present and immediate relationality becomes a springboard for future relationality. Hence, Derrida’s phrase “ethics is hospitality”\(^{533}\) highlights how the event of hospitality, while offering the possibility for *the self* and *the other* to engage relationally (ethically) within a present happening, also creates the possibility for future (ethical) relationality. Derrida explains how hospitality creates space for future relationality using the biblical imagery of Abraham welcoming the three strangers where the visitation of the strangers becomes an announcement and origin of future visitation (future relationality) of Abraham’s son, Isaac. Therefore, the future possibility of other encounters/relationality that hospitality offers to the host – through the encounter with the guest – offers a new identity to the host. Derrida uses the biblical narrations of how names of host are changed to denote the change that the guests brings into the life of a host. This change of identity is generated when the guest brings in the life of the host a *newness* that is both unexpected and overwhelming for the host. The change of identity is generated because the guest extends the relational experience of the host from a one that is limited to the immediate and the present, to a one that includes the future.

And during this visitation [the visitation of three strangers to Abraham], Yahweh announces other arrivals, other hôtes, in sum, other visits or visitations. This visitation

\(^{533}\) Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 16-7.
of Yahweh is so radically surprising and over-taking that he who receives does not even receive it himself, in his name. His identity is as if fractured. He receives without being ready to welcome since he is no longer the same between the moment at which God initiates the visit and the moment at which, visiting him, he speaks to him. This is indeed hospitality *par excellence* in which the visitor radically overwhelms the self of the “visited” and the *chez-soi* of the hôte (host). For as you know these visitations and announcements will begin with changes of names, heteronomous changes, unilaterally decided by God who tells Abram that he will no longer be called Abram but Abraham (with wordplay, it seems, on Ab-hamon, “father of the multitudes”), much as later, before Isaac’s birth, he change the name of Sarai to Sarah (“my princess” into “princess”).

This is the moment at which the visitation of the absolute hôte to the stranger that Abraham is not only changes – in a way, or, in any case, affects – the identity and the appellation of the hôte, but does so heteronomously at the moment the father of creation institutes Abraham as father of multitude of nations. 534

6.3: Hospitality as *First*

Levinas, in recognizes hospitality as “the concrete and initial fact of human recollection and separation” 535 and Derrida, in claims that hospitality is coextensive to ethics to the extent in which he coins the notion that “hospitality is culture” 536 and that “ethics is hospitality.” 537 Accordingly, for both philosophers hospitality is not a mere practice of ethical and moral ideals, but instead is perceived as the origin of these ideals and practices. Both philosophers converge in perceiving the encounter between the *self* and the *other* as a potential for ethics relationality, and both agree that for the potential to be realizable a context is needed, which context is identified as hospitality. Accordingly, hospitality becomes the context in which the *self/other* encounter is transformed into relationality; however, this research claims that the only way for hospitality to act as context for the *self/other* encounter to be transformed into relationality is by being perceived as *first* – *first hospitality*.

The use of the notion *first hospitality*, rather than just hospitality, is to identify a notion and practice of hospitality that transforms the encounter between *the self* and *the other* into a learning experience through the meanings that they generate. The distinction of *first hospitality* from *first philosophy* is that *first hospitality* includes the exploration of meanings that emerges from the instants of *the self/other* encounter but cannot be articulated within a philosophical formula/language. Thus, *first hospitality* engages with meanings that are, in Levinasian term, *pre-philosophical.* The experience of *pre-philosophy* is based on the experience of *the self* and *the other* encounter, and which experience can never be contained in a conceptual or philosophical articulation.

In contrast to the *pre-philosophy* experience, *first philosophy* necessitates and presumes the elaboration of a preexistent philosophical reflection and articulation of a philosophical reflection. The articulation of *first hospitality* is based on the merging of the *pre-philosophy* experience with *first philosophy* i.e., *first hospitality* becomes the merging dialogical space of *pre-philosophy* and *first philosophy*. The *pre-philosophy* offers *first hospitality* the engagement with meanings and ideals that are not conceptually or philosophically articulated, while *first philosophy* makes of *first hospitality* a paradigmatic thinking through which different thoughts and actions can be formulated.

In the history of Western philosophical tradition, *first philosophy* has been perceived as a *means operation* through which philosophical reflection is generated to engage with what is perceived as *first* – also perceived as an *end* of the *means operation*. Thus, though the *means operation* and the understanding of *first* (as *end*) varied, there was always a persistent distinction understanding between the two. Only in Descartes do we find a bleary distinction between the two, and the reason for that is that his ultimate *first philosophy* main concern and efforts are all directed in finding the right *means operation*, which he associates with epistemology. In the case of Aristotle and Levinas, the distinction is very clean and clear: the former associate the *means operation* with metaphysics and the *first* with the *unmoved mover*, while the later

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539 *Means operation* refers to the operation of first philosophy in exploring a *first cause*. 

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associates the means operation with ethics and the first with the face of the other. What distinguishes the first from the means operation in first philosophy is the understanding that first is the other that is distinct both as being and as action from the self. Thus, the self relates with the first through a proper action that is the means operation.

Any hospitality operation has as its objective the welcome of a guest, thus, since first hospitality is also a hospitality operation, it also hinges on the operation of welcoming of a guest. The distinct operation of first hospitality is that it perceives the welcome of a guest not only as an operation or activity, but furthermore as a first that causes the operation to happen. To prevent from first hospitality from being interpreted as entertaining hospitality – where the guest is known – the first of first hospitality will be identified with the phrase: ‘the welcome of the other (stranger) as guest.’ Therefore, the first of first hospitality manifests a paradox – the other who is considered a stranger for the self is related with as a guest, which notion assumes acquaintance and familiarity.

Unlike first philosophy’s first, first hospitality’s first identified as ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ is based on two actions: the other’s and the self’s. In the first hospitality’s first, the other comes and elects the self for hospitality, while the self welcomes the other. Though first hospitality’s first is made up of a unity of two actions, the other’s and the self’s, there is a clear distinction between the other’s and the self’s actions, furthermore, by being both the motivator and the object of the self welcoming act, the other assumes a primacy role. Thus, since first hospitality’s first comprises both the self’s and the other’s actions, the first incorporates in it the means operation i.e., the first (within first hospitality) adopts in it the means operation.

540 The act of ‘welcome of the other (stranger) as guest’ allows for the paradox of stranger and guest to coincide within the same hospitality act. Thus, first hospitality generates a dialogical space where the other is related with as both stranger and guest.

541 Though the action of the other is not explicitly articulated in first hospitality’s first, it is assumed, since the welcoming action of the self in first hospitality is motivated by the other who comes and elect the self.

542 The notion of primacy role shows the distinction of the function (role) of the other towards the self, where the other becomes first within the first of first hospitality.
The merging of the *means operation* with the *first* in *first hospitality* generates a distinct reflection and praxis, and which reflection and praxis, is based on the *quality* of relationality between epistemology and ethics that operates within *first hospitality*. Before analyzing the distinct reflection and praxis which *first hospitality* generates – through the merging of means operation with *first* – a reflection on the quality of relationality between ethics and epistemology will be provided. Thus, the following two reflections will show how *first hospitality* through the merging of the means operation with the *first* generates a distinct epistemology and ethics relationality; this distinct relationality is described as symbiotic relationship i.e., symbiotic epistemology and ethics.

*First hospitality* as means operation for symbiotic epistemology and ethics:

*First hospitality as means operation* refers to the introductory role of hospitality for a symbiotic understanding and praxis of epistemology and ethics. Thus, *first hospitality* is to be considered as *pre-epistemology* and *pre-ethics* process, through which symbiotic understanding and operation of epistemology and ethics is formulated. Thus, the introductory role of *first hospitality* holds a leading influence on both the formulation and the operations of symbiotic epistemology and ethics, which influence reconstitutes epistemology and ethics as necessary complimentary activities – hence symbiotic. The following comparison (example) between *first hospitality* and the ideals and practices of hospitality industry – as tourist and entertaining industry will expand the understanding of *first hospitality as means operation* for symbiotic epistemology and ethics.

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543 The introductory role of *first hospitality* can be explained using the notions of precursor or prolog that is an operation that on the one hand is origin for and on the other hand sets the direction (town) for the following operations.

544 In contemporary historical context the term hospitality industry is used as a synonym for tourist and entertainment industry. In this context, by comparing the opposing differences in ideals and practice of hospitality industry with *first hospitality* helps in highlighting the distinctiveness in ideals and in practices of *first hospitality* from other forms of hospitality.
The hospitality industry is focused on the notion of entertaining as charade. Charade is a codified entertaining practice lead by a preconceived and predefined epistemology and ethics, which formulates an understanding of guests. The ethical objective of charade has as its objective the pleasing of the guest. Where pleasing is performed through assumptions that are based on the epistemological preconceptions that defines who the guest is and what are her/his needs. Epistemological preconception of charade claims an acquaintance with the guest’s identity and needs before the actual guest/host encounter happens. Consequently, since the hospitality industry is based on an activity that has as its main objective the pleasing of the guest – where pleasing is founded on preconceived epistemology of the guests – hosting becomes either an occasional activity that demands an occasional planned setup that has as its central objective the pleasing of the guest, or a specialist activity\textsuperscript{545} where only specialist people\textsuperscript{546} with special means (training) can perform as hosts.

Therefore, although epistemology and ethics look like they operate in symbiosis in the entertainment hospitality, in actual fact, ethics is being lead by a preconceived epistemological construct of guest. This epistemological construct dictates and conditions the host/guest ethics (relationality). Thus, in entertainment hospitality the preconceived epistemology of the guest conditions the guest/host relationality (ethics). This conditioning is expressed by the putting up of a charade/entertainment setup by the host, which setup prevents both the host and the guest from communicating their as is\textsuperscript{547} with one another.

An important distinction that contrasts the charade ideals and praxis of the hospitality industry with the ideals and praxis of first hospitality is the absence of charade to make way for spontaneity between the guest/host relationality. Spontaneity in first hospitality subsists in a mutual sharing of the host’s and guest’s as is. Thus, in first hospitality the charade/entertaining screen that is present in the hospitality industry, to disguise the host’s and the guest’s as is, is

\textsuperscript{545}An example of a specialist host/hosting is entertaining and hoteling industry.

\textsuperscript{546}Specific people refers to people who are regarded to having had a ‘hospitality expert training’ does recognized officially (by the hospitality industry) as hosts.

\textsuperscript{547}As is refers to the mundane situation of a person. The hospitality industry creates an eventful setup through which the host and the guest as is is altered for an eventful is.
dropped to make way for a mutual relationality that is based on the sharing of the host and guests of *as is*.

...entertainment involves ‘putting on something for people,’ creating the impression of ‘perfect people in a perfect house.’ Hospitality...puts the focus elsewhere, asking ‘How can I extend myself for you without having all my things put up together first?’... It’s being willing to say, ‘Come in – as we live.’

Considering the fact that there is the possibility for the guest to be unknown as individual by the host, in the hospitality industry – or in different forms of entertainment hospitality – the guest is still not considered to be a stranger. Though the guest is not necessarily known as individual, in entertaining hospitality context the guest identity and needs are defined and present to the host’s epistemology, prior to the host/guest encounter. Contrary to entertaining hospitality, the host/guest relationality in *first hospitality* is lead by expressions of spontaneity where both the host and the guest exchange their *as is*. The spontaneity by which guest/host interacts in *first hospitality* are motivated by two notions that are attributed to the guest: unexpected and stranger. Accordingly, in *first hospitality* the guest arrival is not only unannounced but further than that, the guest is unexpected by the host, and that in her/his arrival the guest is perceived as stranger.

The unexpected arrival of a guest does not give time for the host to create an eventful setting; anything that the host communicate or offer to the guest is expressed through spontaneity. Hence, the unexpected arrival of the guest finds the host unprepared. This awareness of unpreparedness is not limited to the providing of physical needs but it is primarily an ethical unpreparedness, that is *the self* as host knows that the prescribed ethical

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549 In *first hospitality* context a distinction is formulated between the notions of stranger and unknown. Unknown refers to the host perception of the guest as a *new* as an individual person but not new in her/his cultural and social categories; hence the host regards the guest’s cultural and social categories to be common/same. While a *stranger guest* is when the host perceive of the guest and her/his cultural and social categories as new; thus not common/same from the host’s perspective.

550 Ethics is considered primarily, since physical needs are provided for through an ethical ideal and praxis.
code that she/he holds is not sufficient to engage with the guest as stranger. Thus, another understanding and praxis of ethics has to be developed, which is based on the immediate guest/host relationality. Derrida, in a dramatic statement, states that since the guest goes beyond any epistemological expectations and preconceptions in hospitality, the host is taken by surprise. The surprising effect is manifested in the state of unpreparedness of the host to welcome when confronted with the epistemological unexpected and unknown (stranger) guest.

To be hospitable is to let oneself be overtaken [surprendre], to be ready to not be ready, if such is possible, to let oneself be overtaken, to not even let oneself be overtaken, to be surprised, in a fashion almost violent, violated and raped [violée], stolen [vole] (the whole question of violence and violation/rape and of expropriation and de-propriation is waiting for us), precisely where one is not ready to receive – and not only not yet ready but not ready, unprepared in a mode that is not even that of the “not yet.”

In first hospitality both epistemology and ethics share in the same fate of unpreparedness – described by Derrida as “not to be ready.” The Host’s unpreparedness is not only related to the un-expectancy of the guest arrival but it is also related to the perception of the guest as stranger. Since in first hospitality the host perceives the guest as the stranger other, the guest needs cannot be either expected nor provided for by the host in advance. In this situation of unpreparedness both the host and the guest have to rely primarily on the immediate relationality to find creative solution for the needs that arise during the practice of hospitality. The response for these needs are contingent to a new epistemology and ethics that are bound to develop as a result, on the one hand to accommodate newness that emerges from the encounter between the host – who is also a stranger for the guest – and the stranger guest, and on the other hand to the unpreparedness of the host to host the unexpected stranger guest.

The epistemology and ethics that emerge from the first hospitality experience are distinct because first hospitality develops an epistemology and an ethics that are in symbiotic relationality with each other. The symbioses of epistemology and ethics that emerges from a

common challenge that both of them has to face within *first hospitality* experience, that is the welcoming of the guest that is perceived as stranger. Thus, the host, in facing a *stranger guest*, implies that the host faces the guest as the *other* who is other for the *self* (host). Accordingly when the guest is perceived as stranger the guest becomes a novel and a new experience for the host, in which case past epistemological and ethical categories become inadequate to engage with the novelty and *newness* of the guest. Therefore, when facing the *newness* of the *stranger guest* new epistemological and ethics categories have to emerge to compensate for the deficits (lack) of the past epistemology and ethics.

The development of a symbiotic epistemology and ethics in *first philosophy* is outcome of a complementary activity between the host’s epistemology and ethics to respond to the crisis that the welcoming of the *stranger guest*’s brings about in *first hospitality*. The crisis is related to the host’s expectations – generated by the past epistemology and ethics – that are challenged when facing the *newness* of the *stranger guest*. Thus, both epistemology and ethics attain from the same source their motivation for their conceptual constructs, which source is associated with the *newness* that emerges from the welcoming of the *stranger other*. Further than that, the concepts and ideals that epistemology and ethics develop in a *first hospitality* context are developed through a mutual sharing and contrasting operation. Therefore, ‘the welcome of the *other* as guest’ in *first hospitality* becomes the means operation through which epistemology and ethics develops within a symbiotic relationality.

*First Hospitality as first* for symbiotic epistemology and ethics:

The notion of *first* in the Aristotelian understanding is not solely a means for other ends as in Cartesian *first philosophy* in which case *first* – that is epistemology – becomes a means through which other philosophical reflections are realized. For Aristotle the notion of *first* is also an objective for which any human effort should aim either directly through *first philosophy* or indirectly through other disciplines. Aristotle’s interpretation of *first* is that of a motivating subject that generates movement by being an object for the movement. Thus, for Aristotle *first mover – unmoved mover* – initiates movement through the desirability for the same *first*. Ultimately the effect of the *unmoved mover* (*first*) on any movable (living) being, is in moving
them towards their full potential that is, in motivating them to be who they ought to be. Aristotle describes first using a mechanistic approach,\(^{553}\) however, when analyzing first within the Aristotelian corpus, first assumes a signifying role; that is first becomes the instrument through which the activities and the existence of human and non-human alike assumes a meaning.

There is an analogy between the Aristotelic first philosophy operation of first and the operation of first in first hospitality; both first’s implications transcend the first philosophy and the first hospitality operation. Thus, first hospitality’s first, as for the Aristotelic first philosophy’s first, generates an influence and implications that go beyond the first hospitality/philosophy operation itself. The first hospitality transcending influence and implication is based on the meaning\(^{554}\) that ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ gives to the human being and which meaning motivates a quality of behavior, action and praxis. Derrida explained the motivating aspect of hospitality using the notion of “concept of concept”\(^{555}\) that is, hospitality is perceived as the motivator through which concepts are both constructed and interpreted – including concepts outside the praxis of hospitality – and which concepts are responsible of generating actions.

If every concept shelter or lets itself be hunted by another concept, by an other than itself that is no longer even its other, then no concept remains in place any longer. This is about the concept of concept, and this is why I suggested earlier that hospitality, the experience, the apprehension, the exercise of impossible hospitality, of hospitality as the possibility of impossibility (to receive another guest whom I am incapable of welcoming, to become capable of that which I am incapable of) – this is the exemplary experience of deconstruction itself, when it is or does what it has to do or to be, that is, the experience of the impossible.\(^{556}\)

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553 Aristotle describes the role of the unmoved mover as that through which the cosmological being and movement (life) is generated through an operation of desirability.

554 Meaning in this context is interpreted also as motivation and goal for human life.


Derrida’s understanding of hospitality as “concept of concept”\textsuperscript{557} is related to his conception of deconstruction.\textsuperscript{558} Derrida notes that hospitality is a generator of meanings, which meanings are subsequently expressed through diversity of actions. The uniqueness of these actions is that they have as their end objective ‘the welcome of the other as guest’.

Epistemology and ethics act as tracks on which human actions move (act) and develop. The uniqueness of these tracks (epistemology and ethics) within first philosophy is that these tracks do not lead to a separate end but instead they have the same end: ‘the welcome of the other as guest’. This unidirectional of epistemology and ethics in first hospitality has two important and parallel outcomes (1) symbiotic operation between epistemology and ethics, and (2) diversity of reflections and actions; both outcomes are complimentary to each other.

Historically first philosophy recognized ether epistemology or ethics as the means operation and in doing so the cosigned means operation prevails over other operations. Thus, Descartes, by attributing epistemology as the means operation, epistemology the prevalent operation activity over others in his philosophy, while Levinas’ first philosophy, in attributing the means operation to ethics, positions ethics as the prevalent operation over others. In both the Cartesian and the Levinasian philosophy epistemology and ethics do not operate symbiotically, since one – epistemology in Descartes and ethics in Levinas – takes priority over the other.

The symbiotic operation of epistemology and ethics in first hospitality is motivated by the first hospitality focus that is ‘the welcome of the other as guest’. The arrival of the stranger other and the other’s request for hospitality is overwhelming for the self, and induces the self into a state of wonder. Wonder is induced in the self when the self encounters the other as the first agent\textsuperscript{559}. Since in first hospitality the other – who is still potential guest – holds first agency, the actions of the other cannot be controlled or predicted by the self. Therefore, the self, when confronted by the other in first hospitality is simultaneously confronted by the other’s newness and novelty. Furthermore what Derrida attributes to hospitality, is also valid for first

\textsuperscript{557} J. Derrida, Acts of Religion, 374.

\textsuperscript{558} The ideal of deconstruction in Derrida is centered on the exploration of a meaning – which can ether be a text or objects – through which human being develop their relationality.

\textsuperscript{559} First agent refers to the other as motivator of other agentic operations which includes the self’s.
hospitality – that is the host in first hospitality becomes a follower of the guest, and in following the guest the host’s reflections and actions are developed. Thus, in first hospitality the other becomes the catalyst through which the self’s actions are developed and expressed.

… [H]ospitality… does not only consist in welcoming a guest, in welcoming according to the invitation, but rather, following the visitation, according to the surprise of the visitor, unforeseen, unforeseeable [imprévu, imprevisible], unpredictable, unexpected and unpredictable, unawaited [inattendu]. Hospitality consists in welcoming the other that does not warn me of his coming.  

The end (objective) of first hospitality – ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – is distinctive since the end is a human being/s with agency, instead of a conceptual end. The state of wonder that the self experiences in first hospitality generates a different outcome than that of Descartes’ first philosophy wonder. Instead of dichotomizing thought into mind/body – as in Cartesian first philosophy – it generates a thought that is based on the symbiotic operation between epistemology and ethics. Accordingly, since in first hospitality the first is a person/s who is requesting hospitality, an abstract or conceptual response would not suffice. In this context, ethics assumes a decisive role since it is through ethics that the self engages with the immediate needs (physical and others) of the stranger guest.

Giving priority to ethics, as in Levinas first philosophy, would not preserve hospitality from being reduced into a humanitarian response. A humanitarian response subsists in the self that assumes a first agent role by bearing responsibility for the other and the other’s needs. The risk of falling into the fallacy – identified by Levinas himself – of reducing the other into sameness, since it is the self according to her/his categories that determines the identity and the needs of the guest. In first hospitality there is an epistemological operation through which, the other is perceived as other (stranger) by the self. The perception of the other as stranger (other) is central to the first of first hospitality. Thus, ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ would not operate as first hospitality if the guest is not correspondingly perceived as stranger.

Epistemology in first hospitality is what motivates the perception of the other both as guest and

as stranger. The epistemological perception of the guest as stranger on its own can generate an attempt for assimilating the other into the self’s understanding of sameness. Thus, it is the symbiotic relationship of epistemology with ethics, that gives space for the other to act as other and according to her/his agency.

During the praxis of first hospitality both epistemology and ethics assume ‘the welcoming of the other as guest’ as an end objective of their operation. Consequently, the common first (end) of epistemology and ethics positions them in a situation of complementarity and reciprocal relationality, identified as symbiotic relationality. Thus, ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ becomes the cause for symbiotic relationality between epistemology and ethics, while the symbiotic relationality becomes the affect that ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ generates within the epistemological and ethical operation. The symbiotic relationality between epistemology and ethics is based on the ongoing experience of wonder that the self experiences when facing the other who is seeking hospitality. This coming section will explore the relationships of first hospitality and wonder, and how first hospitality becomes a space for wonder that generates more wonder.

6.4: Wonder as First Hospitality Distinct\textsuperscript{561} Companion

The encounter in first hospitality between the self (host) and the other (stranger and guest to be) generates a sense\textsuperscript{562} of wonder. The sense of wonder emerges from two complimentary perceptions: on the one hand the perception of the other as other by the self, and on the other hand the perception of the possibility for relationality between the self and the other. In facing the other in a first hospitality context, the self is overwhelmed by the differences (that the self perceive) between the self and the other, while at the same time the self is interested in relating with the other as other. Thus, wonder is the combination/merging of the

\textsuperscript{561} Distinct in this context refers both to uniqueness and privilege presence of wonder in first hospitality.

\textsuperscript{562} Sense in this context refers to an experience that is both sensorial and cognitive.
simultaneous experience of *overwhelmed* and *interest* that arises in *the self* during the encounter with *the other*.

Therefore, the state of wonder is a combination of understating *the other* as other for *the self* to be understood or grasped within preconceived and assumed epistemological and ethical categories. The same time the encounter between *the self* and *the other* harbours an interest in *the self* for *the other*, which *interest* generates closeness and immediacy (relationality) between *the self* and *the other*. The combination of *overwhelmedness* and *interest* that wonder generates throughout the experience of *first hospitality* offers a dialogical space through which on the one hand established epistemology and ethics are questioned and critically scrutinized, and on the other hand new symbiotic epistemological and ethical practices are generated.

The sense of wonder that *the self* experiences during her/his encounter with *the other* in *first hospitality* context is analogous to the experience of *the self* when exploring *first cause* in *first philosophy* context. In both *first hospitality* and *first philosophy*, wonder subsists on an operation basis on three conceptual gears\(^{563}\) – *otherness*, *desirability* and *aporia* – which take place in *the self* when engaging with their *first*.

When *the self* encounters *the other* in *first hospitality* context, three operations happen simultaneously in *the self*. The self perceives *the other* as other (1) *otherness* – where *the self* perceives *the other* as ‘not *the self*’ (different). The ‘not *the self*’ perception of *the other* does not generate opposing or antagonistic perceptions of *the other*; instead, *the self* perceives the other as ‘not *the self*’ (other) while, simultaneously, *the self* foster a (2) *desirability* to engage and relate with *the other* as other. What appears to be binary opposing operations, that is the operation of perceiving *the other* as other (*otherness*) and the *desirability* for *the other* as other are held together by the operation that emerges from the sense of (3) *aporia* that *the self* experiences when facing *the other* (both as) stranger and as guest in the context of *first hospitality*.

\(^{563}\) See Chap. 4. Sec. 6.
The *aporetic* operation of *the self* is intrinsic to identification of *the other* by *the self* – in *first hospitality* context – instantaneously as both *stranger* and as *guest*. The notion of *stranger guest* is an apophatic construct, since *the self’s recognition* of *the other* as guest, is accompanied by an *awareness* of *the other* as unknown stranger. Thus, the more *the self* relates with *the other* as guest the more *the other* is perceived as unknown (stranger) for *the self*. The *aporetic* operation merges together the cognitive act of *recognition* of *the other* as guest and the *awareness* of *the other* as stranger. The notion of *recognition* as its etymological origin indicates is a cognitive action that interprets the present with a past experience, while the notion of *awareness* is entrenched in a present cognitive experience that does not necessarily hold an interpretation. The *aporetic* operation brings together the *recognition* of *the other* as guest, where *the other* is situated within the past praxis (tradition) of hospitality, and the *awareness* that by situating *the other* as guest the past understanding of guest does not fulfill the preset guest needs, since the guest in *first hospitality* context is also a stranger for *the self*. As Derrida clearly states, hospitality juggles two notions that appear contradictory: possibility and impossibility.

It is a little as if “hospitality,” the name *hospitality*, came to name [*surnommer*], but also to give a kind of proper name to this opening of the possible onto the impossible, and reciprocally: when hospitality takes place, the impossible becomes possible but as impossible. The impossible, for me, for an “I,” for what is “my own” or is properly my own in general. 

Wonder in *first hospitality* context is what motivates *the self* to go beyond what Derrida identifies as ‘I’ or “my own,” while the catalyst that motivates *the self* to wonder in *first hospitality* is *the other*. Thus, *first hospitality* is the context through which wonder is generated because it *explicates* both the congruencies and incongruencies of *the other* for *the self*. The *explication* of congruencies and incongruencies is an operation in *first hospitality* that emerges from the *three conceptual gears* on which *first hospitality* operates. Therefore, desirability,

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564 Etiologically recognition refers to the interpretation of the present cognitive experience through a past experience. Therefore in recognition the memory becomes the hermeneutic through which a present experience is interpreted.

otherness and aporia motivate the self to engage with the other both as relational and as other to the self. Congruencies and incongruencies of the other make both the possibility and impossibility of welcoming the other perceivable for the self. Thus, the self in perceiving the congruencies and incongruencies is motivated to reach out to the other – as both stranger and guest – and to attempt to accommodate the other’s needs and demands. Meanwhile, throughout the first hospitality welcome operation, the self becomes always more aware that the needs and demands will never be fully satisfied by the self’s actions, since the other is other, thus incongruent to the self.

The entire action of the self in first hospitality, starting with the perception of congruencies and incongruencies of the other, and with the attempt to respond to the other’s needs and demands, is constantly being accompanied by the sense of wonder. Wonder becomes the drive by which first hospitality becomes a practice of a series of welcoming actions, in the meantime first hospitality praxis keeps on stimulating the sense of wonder. Therefore, wonder is the outcome of an aporetic experience that emerges from the first hospitality ambiguous experience, where the other is perceived as both stranger – thus, distant from the self – and at the same time as guest – thus, immediate to the self. The bridging operation of the guest and the stranger perception in first hospitality, through the act of welcome, has the potential of converting wonder into an educable experience for the self.

Two qualities that triggers first hospitality’s wonder and develop wonder into an educable experience for the self, are alterity and vulnerability of the other. Alterity and vulnerability in first hospitality context are perceived as two intrinsic notions i.e. that one assumes the other, and that they reside in the epistemological perception of the other. It is epistemological because in first hospitality the self perceives and processes her/his perception of the other through the combined categories of alterity and vulnerability. Therefore, the self/other encounter in a first hospitality context generates an understanding in the self that there is an unequal power relationship between the self and the other. The self as host is in an

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566 The use of the term educable is to highlight the aptitude or the ability of learning that first hospitality through the experience of wonder generates in the self. In this context first hospitality is perceived as the ideal educational structure or tool through which the self’s education is developed.
advantages/privileged position over the other as guest. Levinas explains the intrinsic relationality between alterity and vulnerability in the other by identifying an existential and ethical situation of the other who is also identified as not I (alterity). Hence, the perception of the other as alterity for Levinas is accompanied with the perception of the other as vulnerable. Thus, the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability induces the self into a state of self-awareness, where the self becomes aware of the self’s own advantages and privilege position over the other.

The Other as Other is not only an alter ego: the Other is what I myself am not. The Other is this, not because of the Other’s character, or physiognomy, or psychology, but because of the Other’s very alterity. The Other is, for example, the weak, the poor, “the widow and the orphan,” whereas I am the rich or the powerful. It can be said that intersubjective space is not symmetrical. The exteriority of the other is not simply due to the space that separates what remains identical through the concepts, nor is it due to any difference the concept would manifest through spatial exteriority. The relationship with alterity is neither spatial nor conceptual.  

The merging of alterity with vulnerability in the epistemology of the other by the self in first hospitality context generates a distinct educational experience. Thus, ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ in first hospitality can be explained using the metaphor of the eyeglasses: in first hospitality, alterity and vulnerability are the two lenses of the (single) epistemological eyeglasses, through which the self perceives and relates with the other. This first hospitality ‘epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ generates a distinct function and operation of the three conceptual gears – otherness, desirability and aporia. Thus, while the three conceptual gears in first hospitality keep their operational characteristics when they are relating with the other that is first in first philosophy, an ethical dimension is included in first hospitality, which positions the self as responsible for both uniqueness (otherness) and existence (being).

The perception of vulnerability in the epistemology of the other in first hospitality moves the operation of the three conceptual gears from an exclusive cognitive context to ‘ethical and

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epistemological symbiotic relational context’. The ethical input is what motivates the self/other relationality from being a relationship based on acquaintance\(^{568}\) of the self with the other, to a new level, that of being a relationship based on ethical responsibility of the self for the other. An important development that first hospitality triggers through the positioning of the conceptual gears into an ethical setting is that the self/other relationality displays the ontological identity of the self: being responsible for the other. Thus, being responsible for the other does not only highlight an ethical operation of the self – responsible for – but it also highlight an ontological state of the self that is – being responsible for. In other words, first hospitality by instigating in the self a self-understanding of being responsible for the other it offers an ontological and existential identity insight to the self’s life.

The understanding of the self as responsible for the other motivates the self to engage with the other in a learning mode. This willingness for the self to learn from the other is not arbitrary but is motivated by the epistemology understanding of the other as other and the ethical responsibility for the other. Thus, ‘the symbiotic relationship epistemology and ethics’ in first hospitality creates an educational space – identified as educability – through which the encounter with the other has the possibility of becoming an educational experience. The quality of educational experience that first hospitality generates is not a ‘one-way operation’ – where the self is positioned as learner and the other as teacher – instead, it is an alternating teaching and learning operation between the self and the other. The next section will further explore how first hospitality has educable qualities, and which qualities generate a distinct educational experience, which includes the alternating operation of teaching and learning.

6.5: First Hospitality Educability: Engaging with Newness

The epistemology of the other in first hospitality motivates the self to consider the ethical implications, and which ethical implications subsequently condition the quality of relationality between the self and the other. The quality of relationality between the self and the other

\(^{568}\) The notion of acquaintance in this context is to identify a relationality that is based on cognitive information and knowledge about the other, who is regarded as the object of the relationality.
other develops as a distinct educational operation, marked by the self/other mutual learning and teaching activity. The distinction of the educational operation is determined by ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ that the self assumes throughout the first hospitality experience. To identify the distinction of first hospitality’s ideal and praxis of education it can be helpful to first identify the contrasting ideal and praxis i.e., identify what is not first. In brief, first hospitality ideal and praxis of education is not a curricular package, i.e., a teaching program to be imparted within a specific space and time, usually associated with a school setting, also identified by Paulo Freire as “banking education.” In the “banking education” model Freire notices a clear demarcation (dichotomy) between the teacher and the learner, identifying the teacher as a sole teaching agent.

Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositaries and the teachers is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the “banking” concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposit. They do, it is true, have the opportunity to become collectors or cataloguers of the things they store. But in the last analysis, it is the people themselves who are filed away through the lack of creativity, transformation, and knowledge in this (at best) misguided system. For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in world, with the world, and with each other.

In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence. The students, alienated like the slave in the Hegelian dialectic, accept their ignorance as justifying the teacher’s existence – but, unlike the slave, they never discover that they educate the teacher.

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569 Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.
570 Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.
571 In Friere’s thought teaching and learning are conceived as a dialogical activity that alternate.
572 Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.
‘The epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ within first hospitality generates an educational, understanding and praxis, that can be better described as a dialogical event. The identification of education in first hospitality as a dialogical event implies that education is a ‘designated happening’ that happens in a collective context, within a designated space and time, and that has particular properties. An important property of which is dialogue, where dialogue in this context refers to the alternation of the teaching and learning experience i.e. the learning and teaching activity are not exclusive to a category of people, instead they are activities that alternate. Thus, in first hospitality a teacher is a learner, while a learner is also a teacher. The distancing of first hospitality from what Freire identifies as the “banking education” model, shows how first hospitality operates as educability. The identification of first hospitality with educability is in reference to the ‘right context’ in which education as a dialogical event happens. Therefore first hospitality offers the conditions through which education is conveyed as dialogical event.

The understanding of why first hospitality is educability for an education that is a dialogical event can be explained through Freire’s understanding of dialogue. Freire states that: “The possibility of true dialogue, in which subjects learn and grow by confronting their differences, becomes a coherent demand required by an assumed unfinishedness that reveals itself as ethical.” Freire’s reflection on dialogue shows how there is an intrinsic relationship between the understanding of education as dialogical event and first hospitality’s ‘epistemology of the other as both alterity and vulnerability’. The following reflection will identify the reasons

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573 Though first hospitality can happen without preparation from the part of the host, the term designate shows that there is intentionality for the event of hospitality to happen. The intentionality is associated with the act of invitation in hospitality; thus in hospitality ether the host or the guest invites hospitality to take place.

574 Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.

575 Educability is the term that identifies the capability or aptitude for education i.e. the conditions under which education take place.

576 The ‘right context’ refers to the ecological niche – thus the many different properties that make the right context – through which education as a dialogical event emerges.

– first separately and then jointly – why ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ is the foundation for first hospitality as educability.

‘The epistemology of the other as alterity...’

The understanding of the other as other (alterity) in first hospitality offers an educable experience, because first hospitality becomes the context through which differences/alterity can be confronted. Without the encounter with the other, education becomes the context for which information is imparted in a monologue\textsuperscript{578} format – identified by Freire as “banking education”.\textsuperscript{579} The quality of information that “banking education” delivers is based on a selection of information accumulated from past experiences. Given that first hospitality focus is the welcome and the relation of the other as other, the wonder that this encounter generates become the educable grounds for teaching and learning of both the self and the other. Freire explains the process of teaching and learning as engaging and explorative operations and possibilities for with new knowledge. “Namely, that to know how to teach is to create possibilities for the construction and production of knowledge rather than to be engaged simply in a game of transferring knowledge.”\textsuperscript{580}

‘The epistemology of the other as alterity...’ in first hospitality challenges the self not to settle with a fixed understanding of knowledge that has been conveyed to her/him through an established systematic structure i.e. “banking education”.\textsuperscript{581} Thus, ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity...’ in first hospitality generates with the opposite operation and effect of “banking education,” since ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity...’ engages the self with the nowness and the newness of the self/other encounter. The newness and nowness

\textsuperscript{578} Monologue is the binary opposite of dialogue and it refers to a one-sided speech and impartation of information lead by the one who has more power.

\textsuperscript{579} Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.

\textsuperscript{580} Freire, P. Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civil Courage, 59.

\textsuperscript{581} Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.
of the self/other encounter problematizes the self’s past knowledge and information by demonstrating a diverse situation, while at the same time motivating the self to look for solutions. In short, the educable nature of the encounter with the other as alterity\(^{582}\) is based, on the one hand on the problematic situation that the alterity of the other generates during the encounter with the self, and on the other hand on the problem solving efforts that the self has to work on in order to welcome the other.

Freire contrasts the “banking education”\(^{583}\) with the “problem-posing education”.\(^{584}\) For Freire “problem-posing education”\(^{585}\) is based on an educational model that engages with the present, therefore offering the subject more space to be agent for change – Freire sums up the notion of ‘creative agency for change’ using the term “revolutionary.”\(^{586}\) “The banking method emphasizes permanence and becomes reactionary; problem-posing education – which accepts neither a ‘well-behaved’ present nor a predetermined future – roots itself in the dynamic present and becomes revolutionary.”\(^{587}\) ‘The epistemology of the other as alterity’ offers the ideal context for “problem-posing education”\(^{588}\) because in being confronted with the alterity of the other, the self problematizes his present and past knowledge and is motivated to search for solutions – beyond her/his comfort zone – to welcome the other.

Hence, ‘The epistemology of the other as alterity’ becomes educability through two complimentary operations (1) the problem that arises when the self becomes epistemologically

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\(^{582}\) The notion of diverse as alterity does not refer to the occasional or the unusual encounter with the other but instead it has a more radical understanding and impact that is it is the perception of the encounter with the other as an encounter with newness.

\(^{583}\) Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 72.

\(^{584}\) Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 84.

\(^{585}\) Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 84.

\(^{586}\) Revolutionary for Freire is an operation that calls for emancipatory change, which operation is performed either by an individual or a whole community – though it always has a social impact. For Freire the notion of revolution opposes the fatalistic ideals of no change is possible or only people in authority can perform change. Every human being according to Freire has the potential of contributing in emancipatory changes: revolution.

\(^{587}\) Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 84.

\(^{588}\) Freire, P. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 84.
aware of the other as alterity, and (2) the self’s problem solving efforts to reach out and to relate with the other that is perceived as alterity. Accordingly, in first hospitality, the self’s engagement and relationship with the other motivates the self to engage with newness and novelty that the presence of the other brings. The self’s engagement with the newness in first hospitality, based on the epistemological perception of the other as other (alterity), brings the self into awareness of otherness and diversity and which awareness challenges the boundaries of the known, and stimulates the curiosity of the self to explore the new and the unknown that is the other.

‘The epistemology of the other as... vulnerable’

The understanding (epistemology) of the other as vulnerable is imperative in first hospitality because it creates the possibility for engagement with the other as alterity (other). The ‘epistemology of the other as... vulnerable” generates two important mindsets in the self through which the self is motivated to relate with the other as other: on the one hand, the understanding of the other as nonthreatening to the self and on the other hand, the self’s assumption of ethical responsibility for the other. The self can dare to relate with the other – by welcoming the other – in first hospitality because the other is perceived as vulnerable, and therefore does not pose a threat to the self. Furthermore, the self becomes aware of the self’s own powers and privileges. Thus, the vulnerability of the other becomes an occasion for the self to share her/his powers and privileges in form of hospitality with the other. Levinas explains the vulnerability of the other using the metaphor of nudity: for him, when “the face” – the other – seeks the self, “the face” presents her/himself in her/his nudity – vulnerability. For Levinas, nudity signifies the state of the other being alone, therefore not protected or mediated by systems or structures, when facing the self. Although the other presents her/himself as vulnerable (naked), for Levinas the other holds agency that is expressed through the other’s

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589 The newness and novelty that the self experience, is attributed to the perception of constructs, ideals and praxes that are different (other) from the self’s when encountering and relating with the other in a first hospitality context.

590 The vulnerability of the other makes the self aware of her/his powers and privileges, buy making the self perceiving her/his advantages position/situation over the other.
election (chosenness)\textsuperscript{591} of the self for hospitality – in this following quote (from Levinas) the other’s agency is clearly expressed when he claims: “The face has turned to me”\textsuperscript{592}

The nakedness of the face is not what is presented to me because I disclose it, what would therefore be presented to me, to my power, to my eyes, to my perceptions, in a light exterior to it. The face has turned to me – and this is its very nudity. It is by itself and not by reference to a system.\textsuperscript{593}

For Levinas, the self’s response for the other’s agency – defined by Levinas with the other’s act of chosenness – is identified as responsibility. Therefore, in this instance the other presents her/his “nakedness” to the self and the self perceives the other as vulnerable; a shift in the self’s attitude is generated from the self’s interest in to be responsible for the other. Levinas perceives interest in the other as an activity that is motivated by the self i.e., the self is the one that motivated the engagement with the other, whereas, responsibility is motivated by the other’s agency, that is, when the other comes to the self in a naked (vulnerable) state. Thus, in the instant the self perceives the other as vulnerable, the self assumes a responsible concern for the other. Levinas terms this responsibility as “dis-interestedness” response, thus not motivated by the self’s interest but by responsibility that is motivated by the other’s chosenness.

From the interestedness which is the rapport to being, as concern for being, there is passage to the human, the discovery of the death of the other, of his defenselessness and of the nudity of his face, and in turn the response to this discovery: goodness. This discovery of his death, or this hearing of his call, I term the face of the other. Dis-interestedness is taking on oneself the being of the other. I also term this “responsibility.”\textsuperscript{594}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{591}See Chap. 5. Sec. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{592}Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 89.
\item \textsuperscript{593}Levinas, E. Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority, 89.
\item \textsuperscript{594}Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 108.
\end{itemize}
For Levinas, in being responsible for the other the self becomes the existential niche for the other, thus, the medium through which the other can express her/his being as other from the self. Levinas clearly states that being responsible for is intrinsically connected to the uniqueness (alterity) of the other. According to him, by being responsible for the other, the self transcends her/himself to engage with the otherness of the other. What makes the self’s responsibility into a niche for the alterity of the other, is the perception of the self’s responsibility, as a response to the other’s initiative and agency, expressed in the act of chosenness. The act of chosenness entails the other choosing a self, thus identifying the self from other selves. Therefore, the election of the self motivates the self to stand out as unique and to respond in a unique way to the other who is unique (alterity) and who has unique demands. In short, because the self’s responsibility is initiated by the other’s act of chosenness, the self’s responsibility for the other is expressed in the form of a space through which the other is welcomed as other (alterity).

Responsibility is transcendence from the one to the other, the newness of a rapport going from the unique to the unique. Responsibly in effect is inalienable; the responsible self is no longer the self closest to itself, but the first one called. Unique as elected. No one could replace this self nor absolve it from its responsibility. Transcendence from the unique to the unique, before all community: love of the stranger, hence holier, higher than fraternity.595

‘The epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’

‘The epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ shows how the notions of alterity and vulnerability in a first hospitality context offer a complementarity epistemology through which educability is generated. The encounter with the other and ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ through which the self perceives the other in first hospitality becomes educability for the self because they reveal what Freire identifies as unfinishedness. Freire perceives unfinishedness as an awareness of incompleteness that motivates the human being to desire and search for completeness. In Freire, the momentum/activity that unfinishedness generates – which starts with the awareness of incompleteness and leads into a

595 Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 108.
search/operation for completeness – is identified with the learning process. Thus, for Freire the potentiality of learning (educability) lies in unfinishedness.

The best starting point… is the unfinishedness of our human condition. It is in this consciousness that the very possibility of learning, of being educated, resides. It is our immersion in this consciousness that gives rise to a permanent movement of searching, of curious interrogation that leads us not only to an awareness of the world but also to a thorough, scientific knowledge of it. This permanent movement of searching creates a capacity for learning not only in order to adapt to the world but especially to intervene, to re-create, and to transform it. All of this is evidence of our capacity for learning, for completing our incompleteness in a distinct way from that characteristic of other mammals or of plants.596

Freire’s conception of unfinishedness offers an explanation of how ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ is intrinsic to first hospitality’s educability. In first hospitality context ‘the epistemology of the other as…vulnerability’ is based on the self’s recognition of the other as in need of the self’s assistance. The need that the self perceives is a need based on the other’s unfinishedness, therefore the other’s needs cannot be fulfilled autonomously by the other’s own efforts, instead the other requires the intervention of the self. Subsequently, the self’s ‘epistemology of the other as alterity…’ presents the self’s own unfinishedness, where the self realizes that she/he is also in need of the other’s intervention. The alterity of the other positions the self before newness, for which the self is inadequate to accommodate – since the other is too new. As the self faces the alterity (newness) of the other, this alterity – of the other – spawns awareness in the self of her/his inadequacy, which inadequacy in turn manifests the self’s own unfinishedness.

Both alterity and vulnerability of the other induce the self and the other to relate with each other, which relationality has a twofold outcome. On the one hand, the vulnerability of the other motivates the other to seek in the self’s her/his assistance, while on the other hand, the newness of the other is so new that the only resource that the self has to engage with the other her/himself. Accordingly, unfinishedness becomes educability according to Freire because it motivates the self and the other to seek and to learn from each other. In short, unfinishedness

motivates the self to step out from the comfort zone of the known, and to engage with the unknown (newness) that is the other.

I like to be human because in my unfinishedness I know that I am conditioned. Yet conscious of such conditioning, I know that I can go beyond it, which is the essential difference between conditioned and determined existence. The difference between the unfinished that does not know anything of such a condition, and the unfinished who socio-historically has arrived at the point of becoming conscious of the condition and unfinishedness. I like being human because I perceive that the construction of my presence in the world, which is a construction involving others and is subject to genetic factors that I have inherited and to socio-culture and historical factor, is nonetheless a presence whose construction has much to do with myself. It would be ironic if the awareness of my presence in the world did not at the same time imply a recognition that I could not be absent from the construction of my presence. I cannot perceive myself as a presence in the world and at the same time explain it as the result of forces completely alien to me. If I do so, I simple renounce my historical, ethical, social, and political responsibility for my own evolution from the life-support system to the emergence of Homo sapiens. In that sense, I renounce my ontological vocation to intervene in the world. The fact that I perceive myself to be in the world, with the world, with others, brings with it a sense of “being-with” constitutive of who I am that makes my relationship to the world essential to who I am. In other words, my presence in the world is not so much of someone who is merely adapting to something “external,” but of someone who is inserted as if belonging essentially to it. It’s the position of one who struggles to become the subject and maker of history and not simply a passive, disconnected object.597

The distinction that Freire makes between “conditioned and determined existence” and by associating unfinishedness with conditioned, explains how unfinishedness functions as educability. Unfinishedness is not a predetermined experience that determines human actions, instead, for Freire, human unfinishedness598 has the potential of developing into educability, which is considered the setting for the development of creativity and criticality. The condition


598 Freire’s notion of unfinishedness is universal, thus human beings participate in it by virtue of ‘life’ that humanity shares with the rest of creation. “…unfinishedness is integral to the phenomenon of life itself, which besides women and men includes the cherry trees in my garden and the birds that sing in their branches.” Freire, P. Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civil Courage, 55. The notion of unfinishedness in Freire is perceived as a positive force that generates life through the mutual dependence of living creatures. It is important to note that although the concept of unfinishedness affects the world, only living creatures can experience it. The distinct quality of unfinishedness in humanity is that the human being has the potential of being aware of her/his own unfinishedness.
that Freire perceives for *unfinishedness* to become educability is awareness of *unfinishedness*. Thus *first hospitality* through ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ generates awareness of *unfinishedness*, through which the human condition of *unfinishedness* becomes educability. What Freire explains as “being with” *the other*, is motivated by the same motivation that motivates *first hospitality*’s educability that is the awareness of *unfinishedness* – *consciousness of unfinishedness*.

6.6: *First Hospitality* for Symbiotic Epistemology, Ethics and Politics

The impact of *first hospitality* in transforming *unfinishedness* into educability is in generating an educational process through which ethics, epistemology, and politics operate symbiotically. In Freire’s thought *unfinishedness* becomes the symbiotic merging point of ethics, epistemology and politics. For Freire both the “political nature of education”599 and the human ethical decision making faculty (ability) emerges from the *unfinishedness* condition of the human nature. However the condition through which ethics and politics emerge from *unfinishedness* is what he identifies as ‘consciousness of *unfinishedness*’. In Freire’s thought, ‘consciousness of *unfinishedness*’ is the key that unravels the ethical and the political human qualities from the *unfinishedness* human condition.

The ‘consciousness of *unfinishedness*’ that Freire reflects upon is not mere knowledge or information about unfinishedness, instead it is the outcome of a thinking and reflective operation that emerges when facing the human condition of *unfinishedness*. Hence, ‘consciousness of *unfinishedness*’ in Freirean terms, is the outcome of margining the self’s human historical experience of *unfinishedness* with the self’s reflection; from a philosophical perspective this reflection is associated with epistemology i.e., the Freirean notion of ‘consciousness of *unfinishedness*’ is synonym to ‘epistemology of *unfinishedness*.’ Since both alterity and vulnerability reveals the *unfinishedness* nature of both the self and the other to the self, the

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599 Freire, P. Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civil Courage, 100-1.
‘epistemology of unfinishedness’ conduct the same operation that the ‘epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ does in first hospitality.

For Freire consciousness (epistemology) is a dialectic operation that is associated with reading, he claims that there is a “dialectical relation between a reading of the world and a reading of the word.” Thus reading, for Freire, is an operation through which the self engages with the word around her/him through the mediating process of reflection. Hence, for Freire reflection is an epistemological operation that brings into consciousness the object of its operation. Yet, Freire notes that when reflection brings into consciousness the cognizance of one’s own unfinishedness, a distinct activity is generated: learning.

If we reflect on the fact that our human condition is one of essential unfinishedness, that, as a consequence, we are incomplete in our being and in our knowing, then it becomes obvious that we are “programed” to learn, destined by our very incompleteness to seek completeness, to have a “tomorrow” that adds to our “today.” In other words, wherever there are men and women. There is always, and inevitably something to be done, to be completed, to be taught, and to be learned.

In my opinion, none of this makes any sense if attempted outside the socio-historical context in which men and women find themselves and within which they discover their vocation to find “completeness,” to become “more.”

The Freirean understanding of learning as an outcome of ‘the epistemology of unfinishedness’ explains how and why epistemology in first hospitality does not operate in isolation but instead in a symbiotic operation with both ethics and politics. For Freire learning is a non-neutral activity based on options and decisions that motivates the self to intervene in history. Henceforth for Freire “education, [is] that specifically human act of intervening in the world.” Therefore, for Freire, epistemology is not an introspective operation; instead, he perceives epistemology as an operation that motivates the self to engage with history. The intervention operation is based on both ethical and political actions. Thus, when confronted with

‘the epistemology of unfinishedness’ the self acts ethically by assuming the responsibility of decision making, while at the same time the self also acts politically by perceiving and generating options and possibilities. Both ethics and politics, for Freire, are driven by the desire of completeness for what is perceived as incomplete (unfinishedness).

The real roots of the political nature of education are to be found in the educability of the human person. This educability, in turn, is grounded in the radical unfinishedness of the human condition and in our consciousness of this unfinished state. Being unfinished and therefore historical, conscious of our unfinishedness, we are necessarily ethical because we have to decide. To take options. Our historical unfinishedness demands it. It opens up space that we can occupy with ethical grounded attitudes, which can in practice be subverted. We can only be ethical, as I have said before, if we are able to be unethical. To transgress. 603

First hospitality is the context through which the ‘epistemology of unfinishedness’ generates an understanding of incompleteness in the self of both the self’s and the other’s. This understanding of incompleteness calls for an ethical and political response with the endeavoring objective for the self604 of attaining completeness for the other; meanwhile, this endeavoring operation becomes a learning experience for the self. The political nature of first hospitality is initiated in the self’s ethical responsibility for the other. Thus, while first hospitality operates primarily on the binary trails of ‘the ethical responsibility for the other’ and on ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’, first hospitality generates an impactful political outcome. Levinas, though holding onto a conception of ethics as first, does not exclude the importance of politics that emerge from in the self/other relationality. Instead he clearly states that hospitality is also a political expression that emerges from the self’s responsibility for the other. Hence, for Levinas, relationality with the other necessitates both mindfulness of and relationality with what he identifies as “third party.”605 In the Levinasian thought hospitality emerges from both the mindfulness of and relationality with the third party.

603 Freire, P. Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civil Courage, 100-1.

604 In first hospitality the attempt of offering completeness is attainable through the self/other dialogical engagement, and in which the other place a leading agency role.

The relation with the other, is accomplished as service and as hospitality. In the measure that the face of the Other relates us with the third party, the metaphysical relation of the I with the Other moves into form of the We, aspires to a State, institutions, laws, which are the source of universality.\(^\text{606}\)

According to Levinas, for politics to operate ethically, they have to emerge from ethics as relational – which for Levinas is based on the self/other relationality. If politics operate independently from the self/other relationality, politics becomes self-serving, thus, giving rise to all sorts of tyrannical rule, where what matters are universalistic rules rather than the people. “But politics left to itself bears a tyranny within itself; it deforms the I and the other who have given rise to it, for it judges them according to universal rules, and thus as in absentia.”\(^\text{607}\) Thus for Levinas what saves politics from the tyranny of universal rule is political structure that is centered on the unicity of the I – both the self’s I and the other’s I. In Levinas own words: “The I as unicity by relation to which the work of the State must be situated, and which it must take a model.”\(^\text{608}\)

The symbiotic relationality of ethics and epistemology with politics in first hospitality generate a political model that is formulated on the uniqueness of the I – both the self’s I and the other’s I. What generates this political model is the fact that first hospitality politics is situated in symbiotic relation of ethics – that is perceived as ‘responsibility for the other’ – and ‘epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’. Thus, as for ethics and epistemology, politics in first hospitality has to relate with the other as unique and alterity (other). Therefore the first task of politics in first hospitality is the preservation of the other as other, through which the other can relate and engage with the self and the third party (society) as other. Preservation in this context is understood as protection of the other from the assimilation or elimination of the other by the third party. The object of preservation is to give space for the

\(^{606}\) Levinas, E. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 300.

\(^{607}\) Levinas, E. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 300.

\(^{608}\) Levinas, E. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 300.
other for an eventual\textsuperscript{609} engagement with the self and the third party as other and as agent. Therefore, preservation is a space where the other feels safe to emerge as other at her/his own discretion (time).

The politics through which the other is preserved as other for an eventual emergence and engagement with the third party in first hospitality is identified as sanctuary. At first glance sanctuary would seem to convey a preservation of the other from the third party. However, when sanctuary is analyzed from a first hospitality perspective a different understanding of preservation emerges; the preservation of the other from the third party becomes preservation for the third party. Therefore, the self’s act of hospitality preserves the other from the third party, for the third party.

Through sanctuary – the political expression of first hospitality – the other is recognized as unique and other and thus, preserved from the tyranny of the universal rule,\textsuperscript{610} with the possibility for the other for an eventual social and political (third party) involvement – or re-involvement. The mere act of preservation of a human life – who is considered other by the third party – through the giving of sanctuary is in itself a political act because it confronts the universal rule through the subversion of it.

Derrida, using the model of medieval city-states, highlights how sanctuary frees the third party from the bondages of universal rule and confers to a community/society (third party) political agency, which agency he identifies with political sovereignty. For Derrida the third party – which can mean a city or other forms of social communities – that grants sanctuary generates for itself a sanctuary that preserves its political agency from the dominion of a

\textsuperscript{609} The engagement of the other with the self and the third party is eventual because on the one hand it is lead by the agency of the other, thus according to the discretion of the other and not according to the self’s or the third party’s desires. On the other hand the other can only express her/his engagement with both the self and the third party when the other’s other is welcomed and included.

\textsuperscript{610} The Holocaust is an example that explains how sanctuary is a political instrument that preserved lives many of which where later instrumental in offering new political ideals based on their experience and engagement. Thus, the sanctuary practiced during the Holocaust, by people who subverted Nazi laws through the act of hospitality, was instrumental in preserving human lives, where the preservation of these lives eventually was transformed into political engagement of themselves as the other (Jews and others persecuted during the Holocaust) with their social and political context.
universal rule. Thus, sanctuary, according to Derrida, by preserving *the other* as other (unique), also preserves the uniqueness of agency and identity (sovereignty) of the community (*third party*) that grants sanctuary. Derrida uses the example of the city of Ravenna that welcomed Dante when he was exiled from Florence, by granting sanctuary to him; not only was his life preserved but also Ravenna’s sovereignty and Dante’s contribution to human heritage.

In the medieval tradition, on the other hand, one can identify a certain sovereignty of the city: the city itself could determine the laws of hospitality, the articles of predetermined law, both plural and restrictive, with which they meant to condition the Great Law of Hospitality – an unconditional Law, both singular and universal, which ordered that the borders be open to each and every one, to every other, to all who might come, without question or without their even having to identify who they are or whence they come. (It would be necessary to study what was called sanctuary, which was provided by the church so as to secure immunity or survival for refugees, and by virtue of which they risked becoming enclaves; and also *auctoritas*, which allowed kings or lords to shield their guests (*hôtes*) from all those in pursuit; or, what occurred between the warring Italian cities when one became a place of refuge for the exiled, the refugee, and those banished from another city; and we who are reminded of writers in this context can call to mind a certain story about Dante, banished from Florence and then welcomed, it would seem, at Ravenna.)

The educability of *first hospitality* is generated through the reaching out operation of the *self* to ‘welcome the other as guest.’ The ethics, epistemology and politics as a symbiotic operation are intrinsic to the reaching out operation since the symbiotic operation is what directs the cognitive and the physical reaching out activities of the *self*. Hence, sanctuary as the political expression of *first hospitality* offers a reaching out operation by creating a dialogical space with the *other*, through the preservation of the *other’s* uniqueness (*otherness*). The educable nature of sanctuary resides in the offering of a (safe) space where the *other* is free to express her/his identity and agency to the *self*. The *other’s* freedom is what challenges the *self* to extend her/his ideals and conceptions and to engage with the *newness* that emergence with the coming of the *other*. Thus, *first hospitality*, through its political action of sanctuary, creates

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611 Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 18.

612 The term cognitive and physicality are a conceptual distinction to identify the process through which knowledge is acquired, the former refers to reflection and logical operation and the latter refers to sensorial and physical operations. They are conceptual distinctions because during the actual knowledge acquisition process the two operations are entwined.
space for the other to be free to be other then the self, which freedom becomes educability, because it offers to the self an encounter with newness. In conclusion, first hospitality in offering sanctuary for the other, the other is free to express her/his identity and agency, thus, generating an educable space where the self can engage with the other as other.
Chapter 7. *First Hospitality* Implications: Education for Democracy

*First hospitality* in this thesis, as discussed in the previous chapter, is considered the habitat that stimulated the development of *the self/other* encounter to develop into relationality – as Levinas *ethics as first philosophy* intended. This relationality is based on the first *hospitality*’s first ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ where a merging activity happens between pre-philosophy and first philosophy. ‘The welcome of the other as guest’ offers to the self the possibility of engaging with meanings that emerges from *the self/other* encounter and which meanings are perceived as new and other to the self. Thus, though the self is confronted with the otherness (diversity) of the other, first hospitality generates a situation where the self is not treated by the otherness of the other but instead the self assumes an ethical responsible attitude for the other that motivates the self to welcome the other.

Furthermore, the symbiotic relationality of ethics, epistemology and politics that first *hospitality* generates motivates the self to engage with the other by preserving the other, as other and which preservation has both educational and political implications. The following reflection will identify and explain the educational and political implications of first *hospitality* by exploring a key implication that is an ‘education for democracy.’ Though the method of first *hospitality* does not appear always democratic – as when ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ is primarily motivated by an ethical responsibility and not by a democratic decision – it still holds robust democratic future implications; thus this explains the reason for identifying the implication of first *hospitality* with the phrase ‘education for democracy,’ rather than ‘democracy in education’ or ‘democratic education.’

There is an important difference between educating for democracy – which implies a causal and uni-directional relationship between teaching, learning, and the reproduction of a democratic society – and democracy in education – which necessarily involves enacting democratic principles in the classroom. Educating for democracy is explicitly intended to facilitate the development of the skills necessary for participating in a democratic society, but may not be carried out in a democratic fashion. Democracy in education, on the other hand, enacts democratic practices in the classroom, making education into a democratic process rather than a means toward a future democracy.
There is no guarantee that democracy in education will result in citizens who support
democratic schemas of social government.\textsuperscript{613}

The conception of implications attributed to \textit{first hospitality} is based on the notion of
\textit{first cause} as a cause that generates other causes. Therefore, since the implications that will be
considered are implications of a \textit{first cause}, the direct implications of \textit{first hospitality}’s \textit{first}
\textit{(cause)} also have causational features.\textsuperscript{614} As in any \textit{first cause} and \textit{causes}\textsuperscript{615} relationality,\n\textit{causes} have to hold a resemblance features with their \textit{first cause} origin. Accordingly, the
implications of \textit{first hospitality}’s \textit{first} – identified with ‘the welcome of \textit{the other} as guest’ –
have to hold resembling features to its \textit{first cause} origin. Hence, the object of this last chapter is
to analyze how \textit{first hospitality}’s \textit{first}, that is ‘the welcome of \textit{the other} as guest,’ induces
(\textit{causes}) other actions and operations that are not explicitly a \textit{first hospitality} action but have
\textit{first hospitality} resemblance. The central feature that \textit{first hospitality} generates in any of its
implications is a dialogical relation between \textit{the self} and \textit{the other} that educates.

\textit{First hospitality}’s \textit{first} – ‘the welcome of \textit{the other} as guest’ – generates a dialogical
operation between \textit{the self} and \textit{the other} that offers an educable experience, identified with the
alternating of teaching and learning between \textit{the self} and \textit{the other}. Any implications of \textit{first
hospitality} have, as characteristic, the dialogical activity between \textit{the self} and \textit{the other} that
generates educability. Thus, the implications that emerge from \textit{first hospitality} have to have
similar dialogical and educable traits, identified with the two operations: \textit{the self}/\textit{other} dialogue
and \textit{the self}/\textit{other} alternating teaching and learning experience. Since \textit{first hospitality}
implications have an extensive reach and impact\textsuperscript{616} this reflection will be based on strategic

\textsuperscript{613} Portelli, J. Neoliberalism, subversion, and democracy in education in Encounters on Education Canada: Queens
\textsuperscript{614} Cause in \textit{first philosophy} construct is considered a generator of other actions, phenomena or beings.
\textsuperscript{615} The implication of \textit{first cause} is more causes, considered secondary causes.
\textsuperscript{616} The phrase ‘extensive reach’ implies that the \textit{first hospitality} implications include in it quantitatively many
people, while the extensive impact refers to the intensity of the effect on the people.
sampling of five different praxes to identify how *first hospitality* implications will be of a benefit for these praxes’ operations.

The five praxes identified are intrinsically connected through the praxis of democracy. The implementation of democratic ideals and principles through *first hospitality* operations is not only the first praxis to be analyzed but it will also function as a basis for the other four praxes. The objective is to explore how *first hospitality*’s influences and implications are beneficial in order to generate a more robust democracy through explicit and inexplicit democratic operations. Therefore, the first praxis to be analyzed will be explicitly focused on democracy and how *first hospitality* directly supports the democratic ideals and operations, while the other four praxes that will be explored will show how *first hospitality* implications support the praxes that are not directly identified with democracy and have a supportive role to a more robust democratic experience.

The first praxis that the first subchapter will reflect on, titled ‘*First Hospitality an Infrastructure For Democracy*’ focuses on the infrastructural role of *first hospitality* to the dialogical operation of democracy. Dialogue is intended as the coming together of diverse people to exchange diverse conceptual and praxis thought, with the objective of producing policy and governing structures that are beneficial for the common good. Thus democracy as

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617 Strategic sampling means that the samples that are being reflected upon have themselves a strategic influence on other actions and operations.

618 Since *first hospitality* is engages with both the conceptual/theoretical and the practical nature of human operations, the analyses of praxes offer strategic samples to identify the implications – both the conceptual/theoretical and the practical – of *first hospitality*.

619 The phrase robust democracy refers to the practice of democratic ideals not only as a system of government but also as a way of life; through which every aspect of the human life becomes an expression of democratic ideals and principles. An essential aspect of robust democracy is the establishment of the social justice value of equity. The objective of equity is to see that people’s needs are met so that all the members of a democratic community can participate in the policymaking and government effectively. Though, John Dewey does not make use of the notion of robust democracy his reflection on democracy champions the ideal of a democracy as a way of life within a modern context. See, Dewey, J. *Democracy and Education*, New York: Dover Publications, INC. 2004. 82-4.

620 The notion of support refers to both to an ideological preferential option but also to conceptual infrastructural support for a system of thought.

621 The notion of common good refers to the shared resources that are of benefit to the whole community.
a praxis that has as its objective a governing system, that is participatory and inclusive necessitates a constant dialogical exchange between diversity of people that hold different ideals and practices. The democratic ‘core structure’ that will be identified as a guarantee for the coming together of differences, and the engagement with diversity within a democratic community is freedom of expression. In this first section, freedom of expression, will be considered as a ‘core structure’ that necessitates an infrastructure through which diversity can be generated, maintained and engaged with. An important democratic implication is that the symbiotic relationality between ethics, epistemology and politics that first hospitality generates, is perceived as having all the qualities to function as an infrastructure for freedom of expression. The symbiotic relationality between ethics, epistemology and politics will be considered an ideal niche for diversity to be generated, engaged with and maintained.

The second section, ‘First Hospitality School: Everything is about Teaching and Learning’ will show how the educable ideals and praxis that first hospitality generates can renew and emancipate the school structure from a dichotomous teaching and learning approach to an alternating and all inclusive teaching and learning experience. The alternating teaching and learning experience that first hospitality educability offers broadens the walls of the schooling experience and everything that the self experiences becomes a potential for an educational practice. The reflection will unfold in three consecutive sections, through which first hospitality educability implications (benefits) will be explored and evaluated through the construct of a first hospitality school. The implications will focus on how the making of first hospitality first that is ‘the welcome of the other’, into a school mission statement – first hospitality school – will effect the school in three important operations: ideals and practices,

622 The term ‘core structure’ in this context highlights the means through which the actualization of democratic ideals and practices can be established in a community.

623 The notion of infrastructure denotes a foundational support on which the structural (means) operation is developed.

624 The alternating teaching and learning experience is when both the students and the teachers have the potential of both teaching and learning.

625 The all inclusive teaching and learning experience is when every experience of the subject has the potential of being an educational experience.
community and government, and habitat and habit. The subchapter will also show how the first hospitality impact of these three operations will make the schooling system a more effective educational space that fosters a democratic way of life.

The third section ‘First Hospitality for Long Life Education’ furthers the second section’s inclusive/holistic aspect of first hospitality educability. It introduces the argument that the holistic aspect of first hospitality educability conflicts with, on the one hand, an ideal of education that is limited to a timeframe (phase) as in the schooling system and, on the other hand, to a production model of education, where education becomes essentially a provider of skilled laborers for the market. The first of first hospitality, ‘the welcome of the other,’ makes the self aware of her/his inadequacy to welcome and thus motivates for ‘more’ and ‘further’ education. This subchapter will highlight how there is a parallel operation between the driving forces that motivate first hospitality and lifelong education, which will be identified with the operation of the three conceptual gears: otherness, desirability and aporia. The final objective of this section is to explain how the first hospitality ‘epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ motivates and supports adults to further their lifelong education by positioning them as agents of their own educational process. The benefit for a democracy when adults further their education is that it reinforces an informed citizenship participation operation, which subsequently expands robust democratic practices.

The fourth section, ‘First Hospitality: The Welcome that Leads’ will explain how first hospitality offers a hermeneutic of leadership that goes beyond the industry and market understanding of leadership as ‘executive’ and ‘administration.’ Thus first hospitality generates an understanding and practice of democratic leadership that does not dichotomize between leaders and followers; instead, it stimulates a leadership participation from every individual within a community by motivating their agency. The election of the self by the other and the alternating welcome between the self and the other in first hospitality is what generates an

626 The notion of election positions the other as the first agent in hospitality, since the act of hospitality is initiated by the other’s agency, who chooses the self and requests from her/him hospitality.

627 The alternating welcome between the self and the other is that in first hospitality the subject and object of hospitality alternate; in other words the self welcomes the other while the other welcomes the welcome of the self.
understanding and practice of democratic leadership that is both inclusive and engaging within community members and nonmembers. Hence, the inclusive and engaging aspect of first hospitality leadership generates a welcoming attitude toward innovation and newness. The ‘bottom-up’\textsuperscript{628} dialogical attitude that first hospitality generates instigate a more critical approach toward the status quo and thus, a more venturing and explorative spirit that gives rise to new possibilities within a democratic community.

The fifth and last section ‘First Hospitality’s Welcoming Education: a Contrast to Inclusive Education’ offers a contrast between first hospitality’s welcoming education and inclusive education. The contrast demonstrates the deficit of inclusive education in relation to the recognition and engaging with the other as agent, and which deficit can be of an obstacle to ‘education for democracy.’ Thus, this section will highlight how the ideals and praxes of inclusive education are not free from the Holocaust possibility influence, furthermore inclusive education is perceived as a potential enabler for Holocaust possibility. This section proposes welcoming education as an ideal and praxes for the generating of services and facilities in education operations and institutions to engage with the other as agent. The main characteristic of welcoming education is that any educational operation within welcoming education is initiated by the recognition of the other as first cause through the other’s act of chosenness\textsuperscript{629} of the self. Thus, contrary to inclusive education – the subject and object are fixed – welcoming education generate a situation where the subject and object of the educational operations and institutions alternate dialogically. This dialogical alternation of subject and object – due to the alternation of agency – in welcoming education challenges the Holocaust possibility and supports an ideal and praxes of ‘education for democracy.’

\textsuperscript{628}The notion of ‘bottom-up’ refers to a political and a governing structure that engages with the interest and needs of the whole community/society.

\textsuperscript{629}See Chap. 5. Sec. 2.
7.1. First Hospitality as an Infrastructure For Democracy

Democracy is an ideology that has as its objective the sharing of government through the active participation of all the citizens – if it is a nation state – or the members of any other community that has democracy as its governing ideology. To actualize its objective, democracy seeks to generate structures for people to participate actively in the policymaking, and in the actualization of these policies through governmental operations. Thus, for a democracy to be effective it is necessary to have the creation of systems and structures through which citizens can express their ideals and beliefs. Two key expressions/operations that make a democracy effective are freedom of expression, and suffrage. Freedom of expression includes any form of communicative expressions that identify political preferences through moral influence, while suffrage is interpreted as active participation in policymaking and government through voting and political representation.

Freedom of expression is the structure on which democratic government is built, since it is through freedom of expression that citizens exchange information and views through which they can formulate their political ideals. Freedom of expression is an essential condition for a democracy because it engages the citizens in the participation of policy making and government. Thus, an affective democracy requires a ‘bottom-up’ political participation. And suffrage without freedom of expression does not allow for the political participation of citizens in a ‘bottom-up’ approach. Suffrage without freedom of expression can lead to the rise of non-democratic systems (regimes) in power, because citizens are not given the space to express their political viewpoint and voting rights in an informed way, instead citizens are susceptible to being led into ideological indoctrination.

Freedom of expression is based on the processing – through reflection – of the historical contexts and experiences of the individual, which are then articulated and expressed as a

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630 Moral influence is the persuasion of ideals and practices through the means of communications.
631 Ideological indoctrination is when people are introduced to an ideology without allowing for critical engagement with the ideological content. Totalitarian movements use ideological indoctrination to induce people within their movement.
political preference. Though it is the self as an individual person that reflects and articulates her/his freedom of expression through a political preference, the process that instigates, influences and nurtures the individual reflection is based on the encounter and relationality with the other. Thus, the quality of relationality with the other that the self experiences has influence on the self’s democratic participation. The operation of the other’s influence on freedom of expression can be explained as follows: the diversity that the self experiences through the encounters and relationality with the other is processed into more diversity, that the self expresses through freedom of expression. Thus, democracy operates by exposing the self to diversity, in turn the self becomes her/himself a generator of more diversity through the communication of freedom of expression. This democratic operation supports the objective of democratic government: that is through freedom of expression more cohesive polices are generated and that have as their interest the common good.

For democratic government to engage with diversity, it needs an infrastructure through which diversity is nurtured and supported in the public forum. The problem that arises when diversity is engaged in the public forum is that diversity emerges as different from the mainstream, and thus, a possible contester of the status quo, which in turn positions diversity in a vulnerable state. Therefore, for the structure of freedom of expression to be effective in a democratic context it requires an infrastructure that is able to support freedom of expression. The infrastructure has, on the one hand, to preserve the otherness of the other, while on the other hand, it has to support the presence of the other – as other – in the public arena within a democratic community. The self/other encounter/relationality, when situated in a safe dialogical space, becomes a dynamic force through which both diversity (otherness) and dialogue are generated; subsequently, the complimentary operation of diversity and dialogue are what generate freedom of expression.

First hospitality has all the qualities to operate as infrastructure for freedom of expression precisely because first hospitality has, as its main objective, the generating of a safe dialogical space where the self and the other can engage and relate with one another, while at the same time preserving the otherness of each other, without assimilating each other into

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632 Political preference refers to ideological option and selection of an individual or a community.
What makes *first hospitality* an ideal safe dialogical space for the self/other encounter and relationality, and therefore, an infrastructure for freedom of expression, is the symbiotic relation between ethics, epistemology and politics that *first hospitality* generates. Thus, the symbiotic relationship between ethics, epistemology and politics makes *first hospitality* the safe dialogical space where the *otherness* (diversity) of the other can be nurtured, preserved and engaged with.

The symbiotic operation of ethics, epistemology and politics that *first hospitality* generates, implies that the proper operation that each notion represents does not conflict with the other; instead it enhances and compliments each other’s operation, generating a distinct synergetic operation. Ethics in *first hospitality*, instigates in the self a sense of responsibility for the other that motivates the self to engage with the other, by welcoming the other. Epistemology in *first hospitality* is the operation through which the other is identified as other from the self and keeps on being identified as other while the self engages and relates with the other. Even though the other is epistemologically perceived by the self as other, the other is not excluded or eliminated because he/she is other from the self. Instead, through the responsibility for the other that ethics instigates, the other becomes an object of relationality. Consequently, the symbiotic relationality between ethics and epistemology in *first hospitality* is what motivates the self to engage/relate with the other as other.

The political aspect of the symbiotic operation in *first hospitality* is identified as sanctuary. Sanctuary is a safe space for the other granted by a community/society or individual, in a situation of hostility against the other for being other. Thus, in a sanctuary context, the other can freely be other and freely expresses her/his otherness. Sanctuary has three functions: (1) it preserves the other as other from a social/political context that is hostile, (2) it offers a community/society or individual the occasion to assert their agency as an entity through the

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633 The notion of *sameness* is when the other is perceived with the category of the self without allowing for the other to express her/himself with her/his categories.

634 See Chap. 6. Sec. 6.
sovereign\textsuperscript{635} act of hosting \textit{the other} who is different, (3) it can offer another occasion (chance) for the social/political context to experience and to engage with the diversity of \textit{the other} when the social/political context is no longer hostile – hence when it is more democratic. The three functions of \textit{sanctuary} both protect \textit{from} and give sendoff\textsuperscript{636} \textit{into} the social and political arena \textit{the other} as other.

The symbiotic relation generated by \textit{first hospitality} functions as an infrastructure for freedom of expression because it offers the ideal environment through which diversity can be nurtured, expressed and engaged within in a democratic context. The \textit{first hospitality} offers democracy an epistemology through which diversity of both \textit{the self} and \textit{the other} is preserved as visible, and an ethics that generates engagement and dialogue between diversities, and politics – interpreted as sanctuary – through which diversity is preserved and protected from exclusion or assimilation (\textit{sameness}) – and when it is safe for diversity, engaged with. \textit{First hospitality} infrastructure operation for freedom of expression is essential for the actualization of the democratic ideals since ‘the welcoming \textit{the other} as guest’ – \textit{first hospitality first} – supports the ‘bottom-up’ operation by engaging with diversity. Thus, the \textit{first hospitality} infrastructure (implications) for democracy is not predominantly noticeable in an explicit policy or ideology; instead, its perceptibility is more evident in an operational format, i.e. the ordinary experience, where ideals, polices and practices are generated and engaged with diversity.

\textbf{7.2: \textit{First Hospitality} Schools for Robust Democracy}

The infrastructural nature of \textit{first hospitality} is also perceived in the implications of \textit{first hospitality} ideals and practices in educational institutions or structure – such as schools – that should have democratic ideals and principles as an integral part of their mission statement. Thus \textit{first hospitality} in education does not function as an explicit curricular or instructive program;

\textsuperscript{635}The notion of sovereignty denotes the independent agentic operation of a community/country to formulate policies, and to implement them.

\textsuperscript{636}The notion of sendoff refers to the support that \textit{first hospitality} gives through sanctuary for \textit{the other} to assert her/his \textit{otherness} in the social and political arena.
instead it functions as an ethos\textsuperscript{637} that motivates democratic ideals and practices through the educational experience. *First hospitality* brakes with the stereotypical understanding of education that divides the teaching and learning roles, which facilitates the rise of non-democratic ideals and practices since it forms a ‘follower mentality.’\textsuperscript{638} Instead, by centering educational ideals and practices on ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – which will be identified in this context as *first hospitality* school\textsuperscript{639} – *first hospitality* generates the ideal conditions for a holistic education experience that promotes the democratic ideal and practices.

The holistic understanding of *first hospitality* education means that every aspect of the *first hospitality* experience is about both the teaching and learning; praxis as a simultaneous\textsuperscript{640} operation. Thus, in *first hospitality* teaching and learning are not limited to a specific role, but are two complimentary and alternating experiences that every human being has the potential – and the right – to experience. A dichotomous teaching and learning understanding of education generates a systematic structured education that presupposes who is the teacher and who is the learner; in other words, teaching and learning are attached to specific roles. Thus, education becomes a mechanistic operation to be operated by a certain category of people – identified as teachers – and for a certain category of people – identified as students. *First hospitality*, through its main objective ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ generates an educational experience that seeks to include every aspect and moment of both the *self’s* and the *other’s* life\textsuperscript{641} as a teaching and learning instance.

\textsuperscript{637} Ethos is interpreted as the fundamental ideals and principles of an individual or a community, which leads praxis. The merging of the ethos with the praxis will formulate the character of both an individual and a community.

\textsuperscript{638} ‘Follower mentality’ is the attitude expected from non-democratic rules and ideologies as for instance totalitarian regimes.

\textsuperscript{639} *First hospitality* schools refers to any school that considers as its core value the praxis of ‘the welcome of the other.’ Thus any school that adopts as its *first* the *first hospitality*’s *first* can be considered as a *first hospitality* school.

\textsuperscript{640} The simultaneous operation of teaching and learning in *first hospitality* signifies that during the act of teaching a simultaneous learning experience takes place and vice versa.

\textsuperscript{641} Since *first hospitality* is based on the mutual sharing of the *self’s* and the *other’s* life every aspect of both the *self’s* and the *other’s* life has to be included and to be shared.
The holistic approach to education that implements the democratic ideals of dialogue and participation in a first hospitality schools are identified with the practices of dialogical engagement and government participation. Both operations generate an environment through which the school community is introduced into the democratic ideals and values through the practice of these ideals in the school grounds. Subsequently, the dialogical engagement and the quality of government associated with a first hospitality school, create a habitat where education is developed as a teaching and learning habit for individuals. The following three sections focus on these three practices that operate the democratic ideals and practices within the first hospitality schools through dialogue, government and education as a habit. 

Dialogue Engagement: Beyond Secular or Religious

When a school assumes for itself first hospitality’s first, the school ethos will no longer fit within the stereotypical Western categorization of secular or religious schools. For a school ‘to hold’ on the first hospitality’s first, all its ideals and activities have to emerge as a response to this first and not to an a priori ideal that schools would formally identify as its ethos. Thus, a first hospitality school breaks with the ideal of a school that is perceived as a reproductive space of a particular set of beliefs and values, which are transmitted through a fixed and pre-set curriculum. Instead, the main task for the first hospitality school is the engagement with the values and beliefs of each and every student, even if they are different.

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642 A habit is a constrictive activity – distractive activities are associated with vise – that, through with practice and repetition becomes ‘second nature’ to the subject; thus, fluent and easy to perform.

643 The use of the term first denotes how first hospitality becomes both the ideal and the practice under which a school operates. The terms ideal and practice are both identified with the action of ‘the welcome of the other’, thus ‘the welcome of the other’ becomes the school’s first.

644 Religious schools in this context refer to faith schools that besides imparting an academic education to their students, they also impart a faith identity and praxes. Examples of these schools are Catholic, Jewish and Islamic schools within Western context, which schools besides following the national curriculum they also offer a faith education.

645 The use of the notions beliefs and values are not exclusive to religious beliefs and values but it also includes ideologies, ideals and other cultural and social categories that influence actions and behavior.
from the school’s beliefs and values. The engagement with the students’ beliefs and values is based on the teaching and learning operation of every aspect of the school. As much as a first hospitality school is willing to share, through teaching, its beliefs and values, it is equally important for teachers to learn\textsuperscript{646} from their students about their beliefs and ideals.

The prioritization of a first hospitality school to engage with the student’s beliefs and values – ‘bottom-up’ – over a ‘top-down’\textsuperscript{647} implementation of beliefs and values transforms the school into a dialogical space where students can express their faiths and beliefs more freely, while at the same time engage with the other’s beliefs and values. Accordingly, a school that professes first hospitality as its first, on the one hand, aims for a safe communicative space for the other to share her/his beliefs and values, while on the other hand, the encounter with diverse beliefs and values prompts for an explorative and learning attitude in the whole school community.\textsuperscript{648} The non-clustering of a school’s labels as secular or religious by first hospitality prevents the development of a ‘top-down’ ethos. Instead, the ethos of a first hospitality school – ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – on which polices are formulated becomes a work in progress based on a dialogical operation within the whole school community. Therefore, although first hospitality offers to a school a clear and defined ethos, its ethos allows for the school to be diverse, as a school, from other schools – including other first hospitality schools – and to be open to further diversity in the future.

\textit{Subsidiarity: a Teaching and Learning Government}

\textsuperscript{646} Learning in a first hospitality context always induces teaching, since learning becomes the best way of teaching learning.

\textsuperscript{647} ‘Top-down’ is when ideals and policies are implemented by a powerful or privileged class of people without engaging with the rest of the community.

\textsuperscript{648} The safe communicative atmosphere in first hospitality school has the potential of instigate an explorative learning attitude in the whole school community because learning is not secluded to the students but as with teaching, learning involves every member of the school community.
The holistic nature of the school that holds’ first hospitality as its first can be clearly perceived in the system of government\(^{649}\) that the school adopts. Thus, a first hospitality school government does not function exclusively as an administrative machine with the sole objective of regulating and managing polices and resources. In order to explore the uniqueness of first hospitality school’s government, a short contrast with conventional school’s\(^{650}\) government will follow for a more comprehensive understanding. In short, the ethos that motivates conventional schools is based on compliance; the school’s main objective is to see that its resources, operations and students comply with the standards pre-established by the school governing body, which in many cases is not internal\(^{651}\) to the school – as is the case of government and religious schools. An important function of conventional schools is the identification of leadership in the school with the school administration, since the administration is perceived as being responsible for perpetuating the school ethos. Teachers in conventional schools are more likely to assume a less leadership role and more of a technical role. Teachers are expected mainly to implement the curriculum within their classes, while students are perceived as passive depositories of information and knowledge.

A first hospitality school’s main interest is to generate a dialogical space to ‘welcome the other as guest.’ Thus, the innovative and frontier nature of first hospitality school is based on the construction of structure through which every person within the school and every operation of the school is included in both the teaching and the learning experience that emerges during ‘the welcome of the other as guest.’ Though a first hospitality school might have the same government structure as an ordinary school, the governing operation is different. When the experience of ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ is prioritized over any other experience, the hierarchical structure of a first hospitality school operation is inverted to a ‘bottom-up’ operation – that is, school administrators and teachers perceive their role as collaborators and

\(^{649}\) The use of the term ‘government’, instead of administration, is because it is associated with both the making and the application of policies, while the term administration is mostly used for the policy application operation.

\(^{650}\) In this context conventional school are schools, where operations are not primarily motivated by first hospitality’s first that is ‘the welcome of the other.’

\(^{651}\) The standards in many schools are not established by them but by a higher institution that funds and governs the school polices.
supports of the school that is perceived as a full-fledged organic community that has ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ at its core existence.

It is essential for a first hospitality school’s government to establish a system of government that engages with the school context so that the school can initiate possibilities ‘to welcome the other as guest’. For these possibilities to actualize, the first hospitality school community has to apply a model of leadership that is shared with the whole school community. Hence, a first hospitality school leadership is not exclusively expressed by a small number of people identified as the school administrators, but instead, leadership pertains to the whole school community, since all the members of the school community are involved in, and share in, the responsibility to ‘the welcome of the other as guest.’

The shared leadership experience that a first hospitality school offers presupposes a community that is self-confident enough to reach out and to engage with the unknown other. Thus, this constant engagement with the other in a first hospitality school will motivate the whole school community – including the students – to engage in both the teaching and learning operation. For the school to engage in teaching operations with the other refers to the introductory operation that the school community has to carry out to ‘welcome the other as guest,’ while the learning engagement refers to the engagement with the other’s newness (otherness) within the school community and which becomes a learning experience for the whole school community. Therefore, the act of ‘welcome of the other as guest’ motivates the school community to share in both leadership responsibilities and in the teaching and learning operations. Consequently, these acts of sharing enhance the community bonding of the school because all share in the responsibility for the other. The governing system that is best in line with first hospitality school ethos of ‘welcoming the other as guest’ and of shared leadership, and teaching and learning operation is best expressed through subsidiarity.

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652 Self-confidence in this context refers to the community’s ability to recognize its resources and skills and is willing to share them.

653 The other is unknown because the other is new for the self, thus, in relating with the other the self has to venture into unfamiliar grounds.
Subsidiarity is a governing structure of a community that assumes responsibility for itself and for the social setting around it and is lead by an ethos that emerges from a community – thus, not imposed on by an external influence. Hence, a subsidiarity government in a first hospitality school supports the community effort to ‘welcome the other as guest’ by recognizing an agentic force within every member of its community. The recognition of agentic force in subsidiarity is manifested in a construct of government where the whole community shares leadership. Thus, the sharing of leadership responsibility within the school community becomes a democratic praxis that both strengthens the community experience of the school and engages the school with the other, by welcoming the other.

Two important characteristics that a first hospitality school develops through its subsidiarity government are a sense of belonging, and autonomy. Belonging has dual consequences in first hospitality schools: (a) it binds the school community together through the sharing of the government experience and responsibility and (b) it gives a sense of ownership through which ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ is practiced. Autonomy in first hospitality school refers to the recognition of the self’s and the other’s agency; the self’s agency is expressed through the act of welcome, and the other’s agency is expressed through the act of election and the welcome of the welcome of the self. Thus, subsidiarity offers a dialogical space in first hospitality school through which the self’s and the other’s agency engage with one another.

_A Habitat that generates Teaching and Learning as Habit_

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654 The school that is governed by the principle of subsidiarity has the autonomy to develop a curriculum and teaching operation that engages with needs that emerges from the context of the school.

655 Ownership in first hospitality schools means the recognition that the self has something to offer to the other. The sharing with the other of what is considered property is what makes possible the act of hospitality.

656 Election is when the other choice the self to host her/him.

657 The welcome of the welcome of the self is when the other in first hospitality welcomes the self’s offer of hospitality.
A *First hospitality* school ethos to ‘welcome the other as guest’ motivates the school to engage within a context that is beyond the school walls. By welcoming the other the school engages with a context that is not identified as its own, and therefore it pushes the self to engage with the other by welcoming the novelty and newness that derives from the encounter with the other. Since the teaching and learning experience that emerges from ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ is beyond the traditional school expectations, a *first hospitality* school transcends the teaching and learning experience beyond the school expectations and context. The opposition of *first hospitality* school to any forms of assimilation method – through which the visibility of otherness of the other is systematically eliminated or minimized – makes the other’s otherness more visible to engage with. Thus, the school community becomes acquainted with the other’s presence, where the other’s presence is visible for the school community to engage with.

The acquaintance with the other’s otherness transforms the school community into a habitat in which all school community (not only the students), through ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ acquires the necessary skills to experience teaching and learning beyond the school walls. Thus, the habitat of a *first hospitality* school, is characterized by offering the self an acquaintance with the other’s otherness – through the act of welcoming – generating in the self another acquaintance that of *aporia*. The experience of *aporia* is an experience of mixed feelings – usually associated with wonder, doubt, perplexity, concern and others – which emerges when the self is faced with the newness and otherness of the other. Thus, in a *first hospitality* school, due to its constant exposure of the other, the self is habituated in experiencing *aporia*.

Since *aporia* is an essential aspect of the *first hospitality* school context (habitat), members of the school community are able to experience teaching and learning in similar *aporetic* context. Consequently, by associating teaching and learning with the *aporetic* experience – that emerges from ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – it cultivates teaching and learning in the self in the form of a habit, through which teaching and learning are no longer associated with a school structure but, instead, with a way of life. The cultivation of habit

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658 Acquaintance refers to a habitual relationality with the other’s presence, since for *first hospitality* school community it is a norm to have in its midst the presence of the other.
associated with the experience of teaching and learning through a first hospitality school enables the self to experience teaching and learning in any other aporetic context, one of which is a democratic context. Since democracy operates on the encounter with diversity, the experience of aporia is the predominant feeling that a member of a democratic community has to engage with. The avoidance of aporetic experiences generates a non-democratic engagement with a community, which gives rise to certain ideologies and systems of government that oppresses diversity.

7.3: First Hospitality for Lifelong Education

When education is led by market and/or industry ideals, education becomes narrowly associated with the schooling system, where school is perceived as training and instructive grounds with a specific career and functional objective. The association of education with a schooling system has generated a mindset where education is not only constrained to premises – as discussed previously – but also constrained to a time frame identified with a schooling period, thus, school becomes a phase experience within a lifetime. Furthermore the influence of industry on education has limited the educational experience to technical training operation, thus, constraining the educational experience to a specific end product. Both the phase and product understanding of education holds an ideal of education that is focused more on the end result than on the learning experience itself; consequently education becomes another product at the service of the industry/market. A conception of education that is delineated to a phase and

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659 An example that can illustrate the influence of the market or/and industry on education is the influence of neoliberal ideology on education. See Apple, M.W. Between Neoliberalism and Neoliberalism and Neoconservatism: Education and conservatism in a global context, in eds. Burbules, N.C. and Torres, C.A. Globalization and Education: Critical Perspective, New York: Rutledge, 2000. 57-78.

660 Industry denotes a production of commodities that generates an economical capital, thus, when applied to education, there is a risk that education becomes subjected to a production line with the end objective of benefiting the market more then the individual and her/his community. In this educational context the agency of both the teachers and students is subjected to the industry expectations.
product\textsuperscript{661} situation generates an educational setting that opposes the democratic ideal of a lifelong education praxis that permits the members of a democratic community to participate in informed democratic government.

An implication for education generated by \textit{first hospitality}, that is of a crucial importance for a democratic community, is that \textit{first hospitality} is motivated by ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ and that transforms the teaching and learning experience into a habit. Thus, the habitual characteristic of education is that an educational experience is not limited to a specific timeframe and/or specific objective. Instead, \textit{first hospitality} fosters an understanding and praxis of education that is lifelong, which implies that the operation of education accompanies and comprises the life experiences (existence) of a human being. \textit{First hospitality} education through the praxis of ‘welcome of the other as guest,’ engages both the life experiences and contexts of both the \textit{self} and of the \textit{other}, while at the same time the encounter that \textit{first hospitality} generates between the \textit{self}’s and the \textit{other}’s diverse experiences and contexts, offers a mutual challenge. Thus, an essential quality of lifelong education is that education both conveys (expresses) and challenges the life experiences of the subject.

\textit{First hospitality} and lifelong education has in common the use of the notions of ‘more’ and ‘further.’ Hence \textit{the self} that ascribes to \textit{first hospitality} ideals and practices converges with a lifelong education practice by always aspiring to learn ‘more’ and to ‘further’ one’s understanding about \textit{the other} that requests hospitality. \textit{The self} that is driven by \textit{first hospitality} ideals and practices is made aware of her/his own inadequacy when confronted with the otherness of \textit{the other} during the act of hospitality. Hence, the self-awareness of inadequacy is what motivates \textit{the self} to engage in lifelong education operation, since it motivates \textit{the self} to further her/his understanding of \textit{the other} and of how to welcome. Therefore when \textit{the self} is elected by \textit{the other} to be welcomed and hosted by \textit{the self}, this act of election questions the establishment and the known of \textit{the self} by exposing \textit{the self} to the unknown and the unfamiliar experience of \textit{the other}.

\textsuperscript{661}Phase and product are complimentary because the notion of product – end product – denotes both the product as having a specific objective but also a finishing line of the production of the product. Thus when the notion of product is applied to education, education becomes narrowly associated with an end product and its operation starts to have a specific finishing line period – phase education.
The engagement of lifelong education with the historical context of the subject generates a quality of education that both instigates and values criticism and creativity. The source of criticism and creativity are the ‘more’ and the ‘further’ through which the self motivates her/himself for education. First hospitality is the ideal habitat for lifelong education because it enhances the need for ‘more’ and for ‘further’ through the sense of ‘inadequacy’ and ‘lack’ that the self experiences when welcoming the other. Thus, the self-awareness of inadequacy that the self experiences when welcoming the other, motivates the self to aspire for ‘more’ and for ‘further’ and which aspiration causes the self to be critical about the present non-welcoming context for the other, and to be creative in generating a welcoming context for the other. In other words, both ‘inadequacy’ and ‘lack’ motivate the self to be critical of the present situation and context and at the same time to envisage an alternative experience with the objective of accommodating (welcoming) the other.

The criticism and creativity that first hospitality generates through lifelong education breaks with the ‘phase’ or ‘product’ forms of education – non-lifelong education – since these forms of education have as their main objective the perpetuation of the institution’s ideals and practices of the intuitions that created them. Consequently, in a non-lifelong education ideal, non-conventional thinking or actions associated with critical and creative thinking are either restricted or excluded. Non-lifelong education presents education as having a clear and finite goal; thus, education becomes a package that is known, finished, and complete. Contrary to ‘phase’ and ‘product’ education, the first hospitality goal of ‘welcome of the other as guest’ generates an ambiguous situation that, on the one hand, offers a clear goal that is ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ yet on the other hand, the act of ‘welcome of the other as guest’ positions the self in an ongoing operation – work in progress. Accordingly, ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ in the first hospitality setting becomes the drive that motivates the self to engage in lifelong – continuing – educational experience.

The driving force that motivates first hospitality is the same driving force that motivates lifelong education in first hospitality, identified as the three conceptual gears: otherness, desirability and aporia. Otherness, desirability and aporia motivate the self to engage with the other by welcoming the other. As in the case of first hospitality, when it comes to lifelong education, the three conceptual gears, each have a specific role, while at the same time they
operate organically, that is each gear has a complimentary role towards the others in regard to lifelong education. Thus, the perception of otherness, generates an awareness in the self of diversity that the self does not possess, while desirability motivates the self to further her/his understanding of the otherness by engaging with the other. Aporia is what motivates wonder and perplexity in the self, through which the self realizes that there is ‘more’ to know and ‘further’ to learn.

A major challenge that lifelong education faces is to encourage and to engage people into education regardless of their age or social status. First hospitality offers a solution in this regard because it both motivates the self to engage in lifelong education, but it also sustains the self throughout the lifelong education process. It motivates because through the act of ‘welcome of the other as guest’ the other’s proximity bursts the bubble of alienation by making the self aware of an otherness that she/he was not aware of before. Furthermore the ethical responsibility for the other which is manifested in an ongoing operation welcoming and hosting the other motivates the self to keep her/himself in the process of education.

An important factor that encourages the self to engage in lifelong education in first hospitality is ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ that first hospitality generates. Accordingly, ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ motivates the self on the one hand to perceive the alterity (otherness) of the other, while on the other hand the epistemology of vulnerability motivates ethical engagement. The combination of the two – alterity and vulnerability – in an epistemology is important for education because while the self is exposed to the otherness of the other, the otherness is not seen as a threat – thus, an object of elimination or avoidance – and through the perception of vulnerability the self is motivated to engage with the other. Therefore, first hospitality does not only offer an exposure to diversity (otherness) through which education is a possibility but it also realizes the possibility of education through the ethical responsibility that the self assumes as a commitment when encountering the other. Hence, the act of welcome in first hospitality both exposes the self to

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662 In this context the concept of alienation refers to the lack of awareness of the self for the need to further her/his education.
diversity and at the same time commits the self to engage with diversity. Both exposure of and commitment to the other are essentials in persuading and maintaining lifelong education.

First hospitality both encourages and offers a context for lifelong education because it reveals the lack of education and the need for ‘more’ and ‘further’ education for the self. Through ethical responsibility, first hospitality instigates and motivates the self to engage in and to commit for further education. Thus, first hospitality in the process of lifelong education is ideal for adult education because the adult self is not considered as a passive object in her/his educational process. Instead, the ethical reasonability for the other that first hospitality generates empowers the adult self to further her/his education as an active subject whose education is contributing not only for her/his advancement but also for the other’s. Therefore, first hospitality creates a lifelong educational setting where adults are regarded as agents of their own education – and not as passive students – hence the experience and knowledge that adulthood generates is valued. Furthermore, first hospitality generates a lifelong education that resonates more with the adult self because it makes the learning process an intrinsic aspect of the welcome practice; thus, learning becomes an active agentic experience through which the self is contributing through ‘the welcome of the other as guest.’

In conclusion, the cause (reason) in first hospitality that makes lifelong education more effective is the ethical responsibility for the other, which is expressed in ‘the welcome of the other as guest.’ Accordingly, since the ethical responsibility for the other is what motivates both ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ and the educational experience in first hospitality, lifelong education becomes a must. Thus, first hospitality breaks with the ‘phase’ education format because the ethical demands that come with ‘the welcome of the other’ are not limited to a prescribed period of time. It also brakes with the ideal of ‘product’ education because the educational agency is not associated with an institution or market needs, but instead is associated with the self/other relationality as needs. Since first hospitality education is not an exclusive matter of the self, but it is mainly an expression of responsibility for the other, education becomes a lifelong operation. In other words education is lifelong in first hospitality.

663 The adult experience in first hospitality is valued because hospitality is based on the shared experiences of both the self and the other.
because it is not reliant on the needs and ideals of the self. Instead education is based on the needs that emerge from the self/other relationality; these needs are ‘beyond the self’ own needs, expectations and ideals. Furthermore, the ‘beyond the self’ lifelong educational qualities that are generated in the self are transferable qualities that would enhance the democratic community with engaged individuals that are ethically responsible and intellectually formed.

7.4: First Hospitality: The Welcome that Leads

The notion of leadership has many different operations but the prevailing operations that a consumerist market model tend to highlight in leadership are that of ‘executive’ or ‘administrative.’ The market appreciation of ‘executive’ or ‘administrative’ in some instances in Western culture has become the leadership hermeneutic, thus reducing the notion of leadership influence to ‘executive’ powers or ‘administrative’ operations. The limiting of leadership to ‘executive’ and ‘administrative’ operations has generated, on the one hand, the dichotomization of people as leaders and followers, and on the other hand, the perception of both the leaders and the followers as technicians instead of agents. Without excluding the ‘executive’ and ‘administrative’ qualities, leadership in a democracy necessitates a more complex and holistic ideal and practice through which people can perform as agents. The quality of the self/other relationality that first hospitality generates makes first hospitality, the context through which leadership can develop as a space that does not dichotomize between leaders and followers. In this way it enhances the participation of every individual as agent within a community.

The first of first hospitality that is ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ generates a situation where the other – that is regarded as an outsider and a stranger to a community – assumes a leadership role. The leadership role of the other can be expressed because of the alternating of agency between the self and the other that first hospitality generates, which in turn generates another alternating role – that of leadership. The leadership alternation is initiated in first hospitality when the self is chosen by the other to host her/him. Subsequently, the self
responds to the other’s leadership act of choosing by leading into welcome. The other’s leading act of election and the recognition of it by the self’s leading act of welcome generate a dialogical leadership relation between the self and the other. Accordingly, welcome in first hospitality holds a leadership operation, which is not exclusive to the self but alternates between the self and the other.

The other, in electing the self for hospitality, is leading the self into leadership by inviting her/him to be a host. In turn the self, in hosting the other, is, on the one hand, recognizing the other’s leadership and, on the other hand, is protecting the other — through the giving of sanctuary — for further and future leadership operation. The act of welcome in first hospitality is not a reactionary activity led by a prescriptive ritualistic practice; instead, welcome in first hospitality is regarded as a leadership operation because it is an operation where the host leads the guest into the newness of her/his own otherness. Therefore, first hospitality’s conception of leadership is not that of a guardian or executer of status quo, instead, first hospitality calls for a conception of leadership that is engaging with newness and diversity and that generates more newness and diversity. This generating of newness and diversity is a key operation that enacts democratic ideals and praxes, and prevents non-democratic ideals and practices, for instance oligarchy or totalitarianism.

First hospitality, in realizing its first that is ‘the welcome of the other as guest,’ generates a distinct leadership quality, which is indispensable for a democracy. This distinct leadership quality is based on two simultaneous and complimentary leadership operations. On the one hand it leads – by welcoming – into newness, and on the other hand it operates a leadership that is dialogical, which means it applies a leadership that does not differentiate between the leader and the follower. Hence, in first hospitality leadership does not reside in a prescribed role but in a dialogical relationality, and this relationality, because the act of welcome, implies also a leadership operation. Therefore, the alternating of welcome between the self and the other generates an alternation of leadership roles. With first hospitality the concept

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664 See Chap. 5. Sec. 2.

665 The role of the host in first hospitality is interchangeable between the self and the other because both are carrying out a welcoming operation towered each other.
of leadership breaks with both the notion of leadership operation of implementing ‘top-down’ rulings and polices, as well as a notion of leadership that has, as its objective, the reinforcement of a status quo. Instead, first hospitality generates a concept of leadership that is based on the appreciation and engagement of the agency of both the self and the other, which in turn, generates a leadership that is a democratic ‘bottom-up’.

A key quality of leadership that first hospitality generates – through the alternation of the welcome between the self/other – is openness for diversity and innovation. This openness is the outcome of first hospitality motivating the self to engage with the newness and otherness of the other. Thus, through ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ first hospitality generates a leadership rooted (present) in the historical context of the self/other encounter. Accordingly, the key qualities of a first hospitality leadership that is open for diversity and innovation and rooted within a historical context, are qualities there are needed for many different institutions and that are perceived as an essential aspect for institutions that operate on democratic ideals and principles. Thus, for these institutions to operate toward engagement with diversity and innovation, they necessitate a robust democratic ‘bottom-up’ governmental structure and an ongoing ‘work in progress’ operation, which first hospitality leadership, through it’s the self/other alternating welcome, can contribute in both. Furthermore, first hospitality leadership offers a challenge to established non-democratic institutions that have, as their exclusive objective, the establishment of a status quo, dictated by a ‘top-down’ institution.

First hospitality leadership is essential in democratic contexts where the participation of a community is valued as an infrastructure for any operation and activity within the community. Any democratic institution that operates its government through the participation of the whole community has either the learning and teaching engagement between its members as the intended product, or as byproduct. Since these institutions generate and necessitate an educational experience, even though they don’t necessarily identify themselves as educational

666 The notion of institutions refers to any collective organization that identifies itself with, a mission statement and which mission statement functions as an objective for the institutions different operations.

667 The phrase ‘work in progress’ for a democracy is very important since one of the essential features of a democratic government is that it is a governmental system that is always recreating and renewing itself to include more the participation of its members.
institutions, their operations will be enhanced and reinforced through a leadership that is
dialogical and does not dichotomize between leaders and followers, as first hospitality
leadership does.

In conclusion ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ in first hospitality generates a
democratic leadership operation that motivates a working ethos that engages with the present
situation/context and that is open for diversity and innovation. Subsequently, this engagement
and openness generate a robust democratic community that is confident in its own potential and
is free to critically conceive of both past and present structures/systems that disengage from the
other. The first hospitality first is based on a hermeneutic of leadership that is possible in every
human being since every human being holds the possibility of engaging and welcoming the
other. The hermeneutic of leadership consistent with first hospitality is applicable in and should
be beneficial for any institution that values democracy as a governing model and as an ideal to
pursue, since first hospitality leadership, through the engagement with the other, sustains the
democratic ideals of ‘bottom-up’ policy making and government.

7.5: First Hospitality Welcoming Education: a Contrast to Inclusive Education

First hospitality in this research has been offered partly as a solution against the
Holocaust possibility that incubates within modernity. Holocaust possibility, in this thesis is
perceived as a thinking process that excludes the engagement with the other, and which has the
possibility of leading humanity towards a holocaust situation. Furthermore Holocaust
possibility operates in direct opposition to the democratic ideals and praxes, because it favors a
totalitarian ideal of government. This thesis tracks the presence of Holocaust possibility within

668 The term offered partly denotes that first hospitality is not reduced to a remedy for Holocaust possibility, since
first hospitality has a more proactive operation to offer.

669 See Chap. 4. Sec. 1.

670 Holocaust situation refers to any human tragic happening that has similarities and analogues causes and effects
to the Holocaust historical happenings.
modernity, by analyzing modernity through the historical Holocaust. Thus, the Holocaust functions as a “window”671 (hermeneutic tool) through which modern ideals and praxes – includes contemporary ones – can be observed and scrutinized. The objective of the Holocaust possibility scrutiny in this thesis is twofold: to explore within ideals and praxes any thinking operations that incubate in them traces of Holocaust possibility, and to offer first hospitality as a solution that functions as immunity672 against the Holocaust possibility.

The scrutiny of modernity that the Holocaust window offers has the power of penetrating through the democratic and benevolent facade of many of modern ideals and praxes until it reaches the operation where Holocaust possibility incubates. This Holocaust possibility incubation is manifested through ideals and praxes that function as ‘enablers’673 for Holocaust possibility to emerge within human operations and institutions. This thesis shows how Holocaust possibility emerges from modern isms conceptual operations, which operations are founded on particular first philosophy construct that is characterized by a spiritualized first philosophy674 – which limits or excludes engagement with physicality – and the associating of first cause with the self.675 Thus, any ideal and/or praxis operations that are influenced by a spiritualized first philosophy and by the association first cause with the self offer an enabling support for Holocaust possibility to emerge. As discussed in this thesis, the historical happening of the Holocaust, calls for a vigilant676 attitude with the objective of identifying the Holocaust possibility within any modern ideals or praxes.

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671 See Bauman, Z. Modernity and the Holocaust, viii.

672 The term immunity in this context refers to first hospitality capacity of preventing Holocaust possibility to emerge by offering a contrasting thinking and praxis construct.

673 The term ‘enabler’ refers to ideals and conceptions that can instigate and offer support for the Holocaust possibility to emerge.

674 See Chap. 4. Sec. 7.

675 The association of first cause with the self historically has become a modern phenomenon especially with the emergence of totalitarianism in modernity. See Chap. 4 Sec. 6.

676 See Chap. 4. Sec 1.
The history of the Holocaust has shown how together with propaganda, education ideals and praxes functioned as habitat that enable. The Holocaust possibility to emerge and later to be executed into the Holocaust. Accordingly, vigilance over educational ideals, policies, and praxes to trace any Holocaust possibility influence is imperative, while the creation of educational ideals and praxes that can prevent the Holocaust possibility is essential. Since the Holocaust possibility operates by excluding the other, the how question of educational institutions engaging with the other (diversity) is an indicator of the presence or absence of the Holocaust possibility. A paradigmatic ideal that is influencing educational polices and praxes – especially within the Western world – regarding the engagement with the other within educational institutions is the notion of inclusive education.

Inclusive education is perceived as a tool through which the other can benefit from the educational system and operation of the self – intended as both institution and individual. Inclusive education aims to open up its educational operations and institutions to include the other within the system. When the open up praxes fails educational institutions attempt to include the other through a process of reaching out to the other by providing facilities and services to make the educational experience as accessible to the other as it is for the self. Hence, the inclusive education objective is to generate educational polices and praxes to bring the other in proximity (close to) to the self, and which proximity offers the other the opportunity to share in the self’s educational prospects and operations. Inclusive education is also perceived as educationally beneficial for the self, because the proximity of the other provides the self with a learning opportunity that emerges from the encounter with diversity (otherness) of the other. An example of inclusive education operations within schools is the many services that schools offer/give to students who are perceived as potential dropouts. Some of these services undermine the community and relations of the students by transferring the students to facilities that have as their objective the catering for the student’s academic needs.

Though the interest in the other in inclusive education is presented as an educational interest, when inclusive education is evaluated through the Holocaust window it shows how it can enable the Holocaust possibility. The Holocaust possibility enabling trends of inclusive

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Paradigmatic ideal refers to ideals that leads other the formulation and constructs of other ideals and praxes.
education is based on the common first philosophy influence that the Holocaust possibility and inclusive education share. The proximity that inclusive education generates is not an arbitrary operation; instead, it is planned and motivated by the self. The other, in an inclusive education setting, engages with the self on ‘invitation’ of the self i.e., inclusive education is an initiative of the self. Thus, the educational interest in the other in inclusive education is formed on an a priori understanding of the other, and that the self formulates through different ideals and notions of the other without having the need to engage (a posteriori) with the other first. Though there is the possibility of renovating and reformulating the inclusive educational ideals and praxes after the encounter with the other happens, this possibility can be attained only if the self’s agency permits it.

The problem that inclusive education generates in education is related to who initiates the educational inclusive operation, which who is associated with the self’s initiative, and not the other’s request. The self’s initiation of inclusive education is based on the self-own epistemological preconceptions of the other, and which preconceptions are based exclusively on the self’s ideals. Thus, the whole operation of inclusive education runs the risk of being confined within the self’s preconception of the other’s identity and needs, generating a situation where inclusive education become instrumental in assimilating the other into the self’s ideals and praxes, without allowing for the other to express her/his agency. This assimilation of the other into the self’s ideals and praxes – which is a form of exclusion of the other – is based on an entitlement that the self assumes over the other, and which entitlement is supported by the spiritualized first philosophy and by the assuming of the self into first cause. Accordingly, on the one hand a spiritualized first philosophy supports the self’s formulation of ideals and notions about the other through the self’s exclusive cognitive operations, without having to engage with the other, while on the other hand the assumption of the self as first cause allows

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678 This is a risk because within inclusive education the self/other encounter does not necessarily lead to a positive situation where the other’s agency is both valued and engaged with. The problem is that inclusive education does not give the guarantees for the valuing and engaging with the other as other.

679 Assimilation is a form of exclusion because for the other to be assimilated into the self, the other has to abandon her/his otherness to comply with the self’s identity, ideals and praxes.

680 The notion of support in this context refers to spiritualized first philosophy and the assumption of the self into first cause as being a foundation for which the entitlement of the self over the other in modernity is constructed.
for the other to be considered either as an effect (consequence) or as a second cause. Though inclusive education can produce educationally beneficial effects for the other, and it can eventually allow for the other to express her/himself as agent in some cases, it does not give preventive guaranties for educational institution, system or/and operation against being an ‘enabling potential’ for the Holocaust possibility.

First hospitality educability shares the inclusive educational ideal of engaging with the other, but at the same time through its developing of a welcoming educable space for the other, it offers a distinct engaging operation that neutralizes Holocaust possibility. First hospitality ability to neutralize the Holocaust possibility within education and to impart robust democratic ideals and values is based on the recognition and relationality with the other as agent. In first hospitality education, the role of the other as agent is asserted correspondingly (immediately) to the self/other first encounter, this because first hospitality perceives its welcoming education as an operation that is initiated by the other act of chosenness of the self. The term welcoming education refers to the self as second cause that establishes educational operation and institutions to welcome the other (as first cause) agentic action of chosenness.

Both inclusive education and welcoming education perceive the importance of offering educational services and facilities to engage with the other within educational institutions or operations. The distinction between the two is that in welcoming education services and facilities are created and offered on request of the other, while in inclusive education services and facilities are created and offered based solely on the self initiative. Thus, educational services and facilities in welcoming education are preceded by a dialogical exchange between the self and the other. In this dialogical exchange the other has the opportunity of expressing her/his needs and desires, while the self is invited to act creatively and critically to generate possibilities – services and facilities – to accommodate (welcome) the other. The distinction between the inclusive education and welcoming education is based on the way the subject and

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681 The notion of welcoming education refers to an educational operation and structure that is inspired by first hospitality’s first – that is ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ – and where the other is related with as agent and not as a passive receiver of services and facilities. The aid services and facilities for the other that emerge within welcoming education are the outcome of dialogical engagement between the self and the other, and not the preconceptions of the other’s needs by the self.
the object function within the operations and the institutions they generate. Thus, in *inclusive education* the subject and the object of the operations and institutions are fixed – the subject is always *the self* while *the object* is always *the other* – whereas *welcoming education* generates operations and institutions where the subject and object are transient because they alternate between *the self* and *the other*.

The alternation of subject and object in *welcoming education* is based on alternation of agency between *the self* and *the other*. The alternation of agency in *welcoming education* is triggered by the recognition by *the self of the other* as the initiator (*first cause*) of the *welcoming education* operation, through the act of *chosenness* of *the self*. Though *the self* is situated in a more educational advantages situation\(^682\) the recognition of *the self* as being *chosen* by *the other* offers a dialogical space for *the other*, where *the other* can communicate further her/his needs and ideas (*otherness*) to *the self*. In short *chosenness* prevents *the self* from acting as a sole agent, by creating an antecedent agentic operation\(^683\) for *the other* and through which *the other* can assume more and further agentic actions within the *welcoming education* operation.

*First hospitality*’s *welcoming education* reinforces robust democratic values, ideals and praxes by supporting educational operations and institution – through services and facilities – that give space for *the self/other* dialogical engagement. Thus, in *welcoming education* *the other* is not assumed into *the self*’s ideals and praxes, but instead *the other*’s presence and voice is asserted (as diverse) within the community. Furthermore the agentic alternation between *the self* and *the other* offers a mutual learning occasion for both *the self* and *the other*. The consideration of *the other* as *first cause* – through the recognition of *chosenness* as the initiation of *welcoming education* – challenges ideals and praxes (expressed as *isms*) that are founded on *spiritualized* first cause. The challenge is generated through the giving priority to *the other*’s needs (which includes the physical needs) and request over *the self* preconceived ideals. Thus,

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\(^682\) The educational advantages situation of *the self* is due to *the self*-having more educational resources or excess to resources than *the other*. This advantages situation of *the self* can be related to economical or/and political power of *the self* over *the other*.

\(^683\) *Chosenness* in *welcoming education* is regarded as antecedent agent operation because it makes way for *the other* to express her/himself in a more agentic way during and within the *welcoming education* operations and institutions. Thus, *chosenness* sets the tone within *welcoming education* operations and institutions for *the other* to express her/himself as agent and for *the self* to welcome and engage with *the other* as agent.
when the other’s needs and requests are prioritized and engaged with by the self in welcoming education, the self is compelled to abandon a spiritualized ideological thinking for a more holistic one that engages with physicality – as in first hospitality. The assumption of the other as first cause and the engagement with physicality in welcoming education provides educational institutions and operations with immunity against Holocaust possibility, and subsequently supports an ‘education for democracy’ ideals and praxes.

The support that first hospitality’s welcome education offers ‘education for democracy’ is based on the generating of an educational ideal and praxes that is based on a community experience. Thus, since the self in welcome education is lead by the other agentic act of choseness – through which the other expresses her/his educational needs and request – educational praxes is shifted from the exclusive domain of specialized people (teacher) to an organic community experience. This is because in welcome education the other is agentively (and freely) expressing her/his needs and requests – and which needs and request are not conditioned by the self’s own preconceptions – to the self, and which needs and requests motivate in the self the typical first hospitality self-awareness of inadequacy of the self to accommodate the other.

The feeling of inadequacy in welcome education motivates the self, on the one hand to engage dialogically with the other so that the self can better comprehend better and attend the other’s needs and requests, and on the other hand engage with the other not as individual but as a community of learners and teachers. Hence, the self who welcomes the other in welcome education is always perceived in the collective (community) sense and not in an individual sense. Furthermore, through the dialogical engagement with the other, the other helps the self to help the other her/himself. In conclusion since the self as individual educator in welcome education cannot suffice to accommodate the other, teaching and learning becomes an experience that emergence from the community that welcomes the other, and which community perceives the other as an integral agent of the educational experience.

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684 In first hospitality when the host is confronted with the guest agentic otherness, expressed in forms of different needs, requests, ideals etc., the host starts feeling inadequate to accommodate the guest, but which inadequacy motivates the host to engage more dialogically with the guest and others to accommodate (welcome) the guest. See Chap. 6. Sec. 2.
Chapter 8. Conclusion

The thesis, through the Holocaust hermeneutics, identifies, within modernity, a thought construct that does not relate and engage with the other, and which thought construct motivates the creation of both thinking and praxes that excludes the other. Furthermore, the thesis shows how this modern thought construct is built on the exclusion of the other – and excludes the other – and is supported by the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy that seeks to dichotomize the cogito self (the thinking self) from anything that is not the cogito self, namely the other. The thesis evaluate first the historical and philosophical development of first philosophy to diagnose spiritualized first philosophy relationship with modernity ideals and praxes of exclusion of the other, and to develop a solution that would counteract spiritualized first philosophy. The first philosophy reflection will lead the exploration of first cause – which is identified as a cause that causes other causes – as develops within different first philosophies. A common understanding of first cause that will emerge from first philosophes comparison is that first cause is identified as the other that has a causality implication on the self. First philosophy understanding of first cause is paradoxical: on the one hand, first cause is understood as the other that is not (distinct from) the self, while on the other hand, the other is relational to the self by being a first cause to the self.

Thus, on the one hand, the thesis identifies spiritualized first philosophy as support for modern thinking that excludes the other, while on the other hand, first philosophy is identified as the means to restore and reintroduce the other in the thinking operation through the assuming of the other as first cause. The understanding of the other as first cause, that the thesis argues for, is based on the Levinasian first philosophy understanding of first cause, that the encounter with the human being (carnal) identified by Levinas as the face of the other. Thus, this thesis supports the Levinasian break from the traditional first philosophy understanding of first cause as the other, as an abstract entity for a first cause that is an encounter with a human being. Furthermore, the thesis also favors the Levinas break with the traditional first philosophy context that is based on an abstract reflection – as the Aristotelic metaphysics or the Cartesian epistemology. Thus, the thesis, inline with the Levinasian thought, contextualizes its first
philosophy within the self/other relationality, which Levinas identifies as ethics as first philosophy. In spite the fact that the thesis opts for the Levinasian ideal of ethics as first philosophy, it also perceives a problem that emerges when implementing ethics as first philosophy ideals and praxes, and for which problem this thesis offers a solution.

The problem that this thesis identifies with regard to ethics as first philosophy, is that the development of the self/other encounter into relationality is not guaranteed; there are historical instances where this development was stunted. The encounter between the self and the other throughout the history of humanity has generated many different responses, which can be categorized under three main experiences:\(^{685}\) relationality, indifference and antagonism.\(^{686}\) Thus, this thesis perceives the self/other relationality as the source of educability and the way for future and further relationality. The thesis also recognizes that although antagonism may jeopardise the self/other relationality, it still harbours the possibilities for the self/other relationality. In contrast, the thesis identifies indifference as a neutralizer of the self/other relationality, and which neutralization paves the way for the execution of the Holocaust possibility,\(^ {687}\) by exclusion and exterminating the other, as in the case of the Holocaust.

This thesis develops first hospitality as a theoretic framework that functions as a thinking paradigm and habitat for the developmental of the self/other encounter into relationship, with the possibility of offering an educable experience for both the self and the other. In other words, it explores the possibility of how the encounter with diversity (the other) can develop into an educational occasion – which is identified with the term educability. Furthermore, the thesis argues that the educable experience of the self/other relationality has the potential of generating educational implications that support a democratic sociocultural and political context. The educable space that first hospitality offers is identified as an ideal support for the development and implementation of democratic ideals and praxes.

\(^{685}\) The notion of experience implies an undergoing of a particular situation, it can be perceived in both collective and individual terms.

\(^{686}\) These three experiences are used as umbrella (categorical) terms that is, in each of the three experiences there is a whole range of experiences that define a particular attitude.

\(^{687}\) This thesis identifies the Holocaust possibility with a thinking process that excludes the other and where the cognitive exclusion of the other generates possible situations where the other is excluded through systemic praxes.
The formulation of the notion of first hospitality and the understanding of its operation is based mainly on five different authors. Hannah Arendt, together with Zygmunt Bauman provides this thesis with a historical and sociological analysis of modernity from the Holocaust (hermeneutic) perspective. Their historical and sociological analysis of modernity gives an indication of the problem and of the resolution regarding the relationship of modernity with diversity. The philosophical construct of this thesis is mainly built on Emmanuel Levinas’ and Jacques Derrida’s philosophical reflections. The thesis’ understanding of ethics as relationality is many built on the Levinasian concept of ethics as first philosophy, whereas, the notions of hospitality and ‘the welcome of the other’ are based on Derrida’s theoretical framework identified as conditional and unconditional hospitality. Regarding the thesis construct of education based on the dialogical relationality between the self and the other, all authors have inspired and contributed; nevertheless, Paulo Freire’s educational ideals have been the basis for the understanding of an educational operation where the teacher and the learner alternate. Furthermore Freire’s notion of unfinishedness becomes the ontological and hermeneutic basis for conceptualization of the self/other relationality and education in relation to the development of a human person as a relational being.

The significance of this thesis is intertwined with the significance of the construct of first hospitality – which this thesis is the originator of – identified by the thesis as a habitat for both the development of the self/other encounter into relationality and for transforming the encounter with diversity (otherness) into an educational occasion. Although first hospitality is a conceptual construct, it has practical implication: on the one hand generating an attitude where the self/other encounter has the possibility of relationality, and on the other hand suggesting praxes that transform the encounter with diversity into an educational experience. The following four sections will highlight some of the significance that this thesis generates, the problems the thesis confronts, and the solution it offers. Each section highlights a characteristic of the different significances that first hospitality (thus, this thesis) in the diversity and the self/other debate.
8.1: *First Hospitality as a Thinking Paradigm Shift*

*First hospitality* as a thinking paradigm that generates the praxes of the self/other relational, is constructed on the *first philosophy* construct. The reason for using *first philosophy* as a construct is based on the historical role that *first philosophy* played in development of Western thought. From its Aristotelic origin, *first philosophy* developed a paradigmatic thinking through which *first philosophy* develops into a thinking process model that leads other thinking processes and praxes. Thus, in Western history, a change in *first philosophy* has produced a thinking perspective through which other thought formation – not necessarily philosophical – was formulated. The other paradigmatic role of *first philosophy* is that *first philosophy* offers a ‘reflective space’\(^{688}\) to the major Western historical happenings that generated a paradigm shifts. A clear example of this – and with which this thesis engages extensively – is the development of the Cartesian *first philosophy* as a reflective response to the scientific development – in particular the Copernican revolution – that marked the beginning of Modernity.

A central objective of this thesis is to offer *first hospitality* as a thinking paradigm – thought construct – that is constructed on the engagement and relationality with the other. The thesis identifies *first hospitality* thinking paradigm as a response to a modern thinking paradigm where it is possible to develop a thinking construct that excludes the other from its thinking process *a priori*. Furthermore, this thesis perceives the possibility of a modern thinking process, that excludes the other conceptually and *a priori*, as a cause for the rise of modern ideologies (*isms*) and praxes that systematically excludes the other, which eventually leads to the rise of totalitarianism and the execution of the Holocaust. Thus, this thesis develops its critique of modernity – exclusion of the other thinking possibility – utilizing the Holocaust as a “window”\(^{689}\) (hermeneutic tool) through which modernity is scrutinized to identify the Holocaust possibility within modern ideals and praxes. The notion of Holocaust possibility is

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\(^{688}\) The operation of *first philosophy* as a ‘reflective space’ means that *first philosophy* engages with the major Western historical happenings by producing a philosophical reflection and analysis of the happenings around.

\(^{689}\) See Bauman, Z. *Modernity and the Holocaust*, viii.
perceived as a development of totalitarian possibility, and which possibility is conceptualized
through the Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy and the assumption of the self as first cause.

The Cartesian spiritualized first philosophy is when first philosophy is formulated on an
introspective operation. The Cartesian introspection centers its first philosophy on the thinking self, and by marginalizing anything that is considered not the thinking self, which include physicality. When spiritualized first philosophy is taken to extreme, as in the case of totalitarianism thinking (or other form of isms), their ideals and praxes become so radically centered on the self – in first philosophy discourse, the self becomes first cause – that is it causes the marginalization and exclusion of the other. Furthermore this thesis highlights how the modern ideological thinking (identified as isms) utilizes the modern formula ‘science ergo progress,’ as a propaganda support for the exclusion of the other. Thus, the notion of progress – used as a synonym for modernity – becomes instrumental for the self (modern/progressive) to exclude the other, by categorizing the other as non-modern and archaic.

First hospitality, by positioning ‘the welcome of the other’ as first cause, abandons an objectified understanding of a first cause for an understanding of first cause that is eventful and relational. The first cause that motivates first hospitality operation compels the self to transcend her/his own self and her/his own comfort zone to engage and relate with the other. Therefore, ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ in first hospitality has the power to disrupt the modern isms thinking paradigm – which is supported by a spiritualized first philosophy. Thus, ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ disrupts the introspection sequel of the self, and which disruption is generated in first hospitality when the self is compelled to engage with the other by

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690 The notion of physicality is used to include the carnal reality of the human being which encounter with the other is not only a conceptual encounter but includes a tangible and physical encounter that can be perceived by the senses.
691 ‘The welcome of the other as guest’ as first cause is also referred to as first hospitality’s first.
692 An objectified first cause refers to any concept of first cause that is specified as an entity. Though the first case entity has an impact of the self, it does not necessarily assume a relationality of the self with the first cause entity.
693 First hospitality by considering ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ as first cause introduces the notion of event and relationality into the understanding of first cause. In other words, the relationality with the other, which is eventful because it happens in a historical context, in first hospitality is considered first cause – not only the other as being (other) but the other as both being (other) and as in relation with the self.
welcoming the other’s needs and requests – which may include physical needs and requests. In short, the thesis argues for the positioning of ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ as first cause by first hospitality generating a thinking paradigm shift that challenges the modern isms by opposing a spiritualized first philosophy (based on introspection) and an understanding of the self as first cause.

The identification and development of the major argument offered in this thesis, provides a significant contribution to the resolution of the problem of first philosophy as explained throughout this thesis. To reiterate, Aristotle attempted to resolve the problem of first philosophy by identifying it with metaphysics; the medievalist attempted to resolve the problem of first philosophy by merging metaphysics with theological reflection. Descartes attempted to resolve the problem of first philosophy by establishing it on epistemological grounds; and Levinas attempts to resolve the problem by identifying first philosophy with ethics. This thesis offers a detailed and extensive argument for resolving the problem of first philosophy by identifying it with ethics as interpreted by Levinas; however, it reconstructs the Levinasian notion of ethics by introducing the concept of first hospitality as precursor/foundation for ethics as first philosophy. Throughout the development of this argument the thesis uses the hermeneutics of the Holocaust.

8.2: First Hospitality as Habitat for Ethics as First Philosophy

The thesis interprets the self/other encounter using the Levinasian notion of pre-philosophy experience, which means that the self/other encounter is so meaningful (full of meanings) that it cannot be conceptually contained. The self can access the meaningfulness of the pre-philosophy experience that emerges from the self/other encounter through the development of a relationality with the other, where according to Levinas “the encounter with the other offers us the first meaning” and by first meaning he refers to the key to unlock the

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694 See Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 160.
695 Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 160.
meanings that emerge from the pre-philosophy experience. Since Levinas interprets the notion of ethics as relationality, he perceives ethics as the tool through which the self can engage with the first meaning, and subsequently with the meaningfulness (pre-philosophy) that emerges from the self/other encounter. This privileged access to and immediacy of ethics to first meaning and to pre-philosophy experience – the self/other encounter – motivates Levinas to conceptualize ethics as first philosophy. Levinas explains ethics as first philosophy as relationality that develops from the encounter of the self with the face of the other. Thus, ethics as first philosophy is initiated in the instance when the self is faced with the face of the other and the self replies to the other’s call (chosenness) by assuming responsibility for the other.

While this thesis supports Levinas’ ideal of developing the self/other encounter into ethics as first philosophy, where ethics as first philosophy is also perceived as an ideal response to the post-Holocaust challenge of developing a thought process that engages and relates with the other. The thesis also perceives a problem in the developing process from the self/other encounter to the self/other relationality – the way ethics as first philosophy intends. The problem is that there is a gap between the self/other encounter and ethics as first philosophy and that there are no concepts and praxes constructs that can guarantee the bridging of the two experiences. The history of the Holocaust gives evidence of situations where the self and the other lived in close proximity to each other and that their encounter was inevitable – but still it did not develop into relationality. Instead, it degenerated into exclusion of the other, which was expressed through indifference, oppression and elimination of the other.

The thesis constructs first hospitality as a developmental guarantee for the self/other encounter into the self/other relationality – as intended by the Levinasian ethics as first philosophy. Thus, this thesis perceives first hospitality as a habitat which operates as a preliminary operation and through which the encounter between the self and the other develops.

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696 For Levinas when the other faces the self, the other is not passive but instead is exercising an agentic action, which he identifies with the act of chosenness – of the self. See Levinas, E. Is It Righteous To Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas, 66.

697 An imperative aspect of the responsibility for the other that the self assumes for Levinas is based on the preservation of the other’s life and otherness. Thus, the self has to provide and support the other ‘to be other’ from the self.
into relationality. A key factor in first hospitality that supports the development of the self/other encounter into relationality is that first hospitality generates a relational habitat where the self relates with the other as agent. Accordingly, unlike other relational ideals and praxes – as for instance inclusion – first hospitality is initiated on the recognition of the other as agent, and which agency is manifested, when the other choses (chosenness) the self to welcome (host) her/him, and which follows with the welcome of the self as a response to the other’s request (chosenness) for hospitality. The recognition of first hospitality as a praxis that is initiated on the agentic act of chosenness by the other, supports the development of the self/other relationality because it sets the tone for further agentic operation by the other and for not excluding agency to the self’s operations. Thus, first hospitality enables an agentic operation that alternates between the self and the other. The alternation of agency in first hospitality becomes the basis for another alternation in first hospitality that of the subject and object.

The thesis argues that the habitat of first hospitality offers the possibility of merging relationality and otherness – two realities that appear to be in opposition of each other – through the symbiotic relationality of ethics, epistemology and politics that first hospitality generates. In first hospitality, the other is not only epistemologically perceived by the self as alterity (diverse) but also as vulnerable. Since the epistemology of the other as other is accompanied by an epistemology of vulnerability, the self does not feel threatened by the otherness (alterity) of the other, and instead, the self starts to assume an ethical responsibility for the other. The ethical responsibility for the other of the self is not ‘in spite of’ the otherness but it is categorically motivated by the otherness of the other, because in first hospitality the self is aware that the otherness (being diverse) of the other situates the other in a vulnerable situation. Thus, this ‘epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerable’ in first hospitality motivates the self to take ethical responsibility and to preserve the other as other.

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698 See Chap. 7. Sec. 5.

699 In this thesis the phrase ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ is used to show that alterity and vulnerability are always present in conjunction in first hospitality epistemology.

700 There are many reasons why the otherness of the other situates the other in a vulnerable state, but the main reason that this thesis gives is intrinsic to the being different.
In *first hospitality, the self*, motivated on the one hand ‘the epistemology of the other as alterity and vulnerability’ and on the other hand by ‘the ethical responsibility for the other,’ acts politically by offering a safe dialogical space\(^{701}\) for the other. The objective is to generate a safe dialogical space for the other to be and act other (different) from the self. This thesis identifies the *first hospitality* political operation using the traditional hospitality praxis of *sanctuary*.\(^{702}\) *Sanctuary* generates a welcoming space that preserves the other from a hostile sociopolitical/sociocultural context. In conclusion ethics, epistemology and politics come together in a symbiotic relationality in *first hospitality* because they are motivated and operated by a common objective/purpose that is *first hospitality first*: ‘the welcome of the other as guest.’ An important significance of the symbiotic relationality is that an alternative operation (symbiotic relationship) to modernity – where ethics, epistemology and politics are disengaged from one another – is offered. The other significance is that it creates the condition for *first hospitality*’s educability operation.

### 8.3: *First Hospitality* as Educability for Democracy

This thesis concludes by showing how *first hospitality* offers educable space through which the self and the other can teach and learn from each other. The educable experience of *first hospitality* emerges from the self/other encounter that develops into relationality and also the engagement with the historical context on which the self/other encounter takes place. Starting from the latter, the engagement that *first hospitality* generates with the historical context is clearly expressed through the political action of *sanctuary*. Thus, *sanctuary* positions a community\(^{703}\) as agent and which agency transcends universal ideological claims and praxes. In

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\(^{701}\) The notion of safe dialogical space refers to a space that is motivated by the ethical responsibly of the self (as individual or a community) for the other has two main objectives: the preservation of the other as other, and to engage with the other as agent. The dialogical space has to be safe to protect the other from any hostile situations generated by the third party – also identified as sociopolitical context – so that the other can be free to express her/his identity and agency.

\(^{702}\) See Derrida, J. On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 22.

\(^{703}\) Community in this context is defined as a group of people that share a common historical context and their connectivity is based on relationality and not just on a prescriptive legal definition, as in the case of a country. It
other words, a local community engages with the present historical context – the time and space of the self/other encounter – instead of allowing itself (the community) to be conditioned by past traditions, or prescriptive laws and regulations, which dictate the actions of the present. First hospitality generates an attitude where the self (as both individual and community) has to be self-confident in being willing to engage with the other without the mediation of universal laws or historical biases. Consequently, the self has to rely on her/his skills and resources and on the other (the guest her/himself)\textsuperscript{704} to ‘welcome the other as guest’.

This mutual dependence of the self and the other in first hospitality becomes educability because it allows for the other to engage with the self as is, without mediating social strictures, that empower the self’s agency by screening the other’s otherness from the self, thus, lessening of the other’s agentic role. By offering a dialogical safe space (sanctuary), first hospitality allows for the self and the other to experience the otherness (diversity) of each other, and which experience of otherness is analogous to the experience of the novelty and newness. The encounter with otherness positions the self into confronting newness, since the other’s otherness transcends the self’s ideals, ways (praxes) and possibilities. Consequently, the encounter with the other in first hospitality motivates the self to expand her/his horizons (known), by engaging and welcoming the newness that the other brings about.

This engagement with newness is what motivates the educational experience in first hospitality. In other words, the educable experience that first hospitality offers is based on the enablement operation of engaging the self with the newness that emerges from the relationality with the other. The claim that the encounter with the other’s otherness (newness) generates educability in first hospitality leads this thesis to ask question why; that is, why the encounter with the other’s otherness (newness) educates in first hospitality. In the thesis, the notion of wonder plays an important role in the education process that emerges from the first hospitality educable space. First hospitality generates a habitat where the self is, on the one hand, exposed to the experience of wonder, through the encounter with the other as other (newness) and, on the

\textsuperscript{704} Since first hospitality perceives the other as other from the self the act of hospitality necessitate the assistance of the other’s agentic action to welcome and accommodate the other her/himself.
other hand, supports the self in exploring what motivates wonder by supporting the relationality with the other.

As the thesis highlights, Plato and Aristotle already spoke of wonder as the initiator of the philosophical reflection, which – in the case of Aristotle – leads to the first philosophy reflection. In Western philosophy reflection, the notion of wonder, has for centuries been considered as the spark that ignites the self’s philosophical reflection. What this thesis does regarding wonder is, through first hospitality, transfer the reflection of wonder and learning from an abstract philosophical and cosmological one – as in the case of Plato, Aristotle and other later philosophers – to a human and carnal (tangible) the self/other encounter. This is not only a transfer of concepts and ideals but it also offers a new experience altogether, which positions the experience of wonder and learning into the mundane and recurrent state of the self/other encounter. The significance of this transfer is that first hospitality offers a habitat through which the mundane encounter with the other (as human being) is offered as an educational occasion. Therefore, the possibility for an educational experience is no longer limited to a designated time and space – for instance schools – and is instead extended to any situation where the self/other encounter happens.

The new experience of education through wonder that first hospitality educability generates has education implications that benefit a democratic society within the modern context. The thesis furthers Arendt’s claims that modernity has propagated an active thinking process, which operates exclusively on agency of the self without giving much space for the experience of wonder. Thus, the educational experience that this form of thinking generates becomes an exclusive agentic expression of the self, and when it infiltrates into educational grounds it transforms education into a praxis that seeks mainly the establish the self’s ideals and praxes. This form of active thinking becomes an ideal habitat for the rise of modern isms especially for totalitarianism where what matters is the self’s ideological beliefs and not the engagement with the other. First hospitality generates through the self/other relationality a form

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705 The notion of cosmology refers to an understanding of wonder that is triggered by natural phenomena.

706 Active thinking is a thinking process that is initiated on the self’s hypotheses and does not allow for thinking that is based on the surprising encounter with wonder. See Chap. 2. Sec. 4.
of thinking that allows for wonder to challenge the known of the self by engaging with the newness and novelty of the other.

The ultimate objective of this thesis is to show how the quality of the self/other relationality offers an educable space that supports the development and implementation of robust democratic ideals and praxes. Democracy distinguishes itself from other modern ideologies (isms) by not being fixed about specific policies, unless these policies affect the democratic participation of its citizens. Instead, it focuses its operation on a governing process that has as its objective the participation of all its citizens to generate policies that are of common good and interest. Thus, democracy does not live well with polices and/or praxes that are perceived as finite and fixed. Democracy necessitates a habitat that engages with change and diversity, to keep including all its members in the policy formulation and governing operations. First hospitality is identified as that habitat that stimulates and sustains the engagement between the self and the other, and which engagement develops habits within the self that make the self more disposed to engage with diversity and change.

8.4: Significance of the Implications in Education

The thesis follows the Freirean pedagogical ideals on the alternation between teaching and learning, and it furthers these Freirean ideals by offering first hospitality as a conceptual construct through which the mechanism that alternates the teaching and learning operates. What triggers the alternation of the teaching and learning experience within first hospitality is the other’s agentic operation identified with choseness. Thus, choseness operates as a fulcrum on which the teaching and learning alternate with each other. The habitat that first hospitality offers enhances this alternating operation by responding to the choseness of the other through ‘the welcome of the other as guest.’ Therefore first hospitality motivates the self to be receptive of the other’s agency, which can be expressed in being both a teacher and a learner.

707 The use of the terms common goods and interests is in plural, to highlight the diversity of goods and interests that a diversity of peoples have.
The self/other relationality within first hospitality generates very important leadership qualities that have life long educational implication.\textsuperscript{708} An important leadership feature is identified in this thesis with the praxes that first hospitality generates of engaging the self with the otherness of the other. Since the self encounter with the otherness of the other harbours an encounter with meanings, ideals, constructs and praxes that are not regarded as same for the self – thus, other for the self – the engagement of the self with the otherness of the other positions the self in a habitual state of engaging with newness. Hence, the leadership that first hospitality offers breaks with a notion of leadership that has as its main objective the perpetuation of the status quo, for a leadership that is able to engage with newness, and subsequently offer educational possibilities that are based on criticality, creativity and innovation.

The thesis identifies another important feature and significance that the first hospitality leadership generates is that of a relational leadership. The relational leadership model of first hospitality contrasts the dichotomous leadership model where the leader(s) and follower(s) are strictly identified and divided. Furthermore, dichotomous leadership associates leadership exclusively with the self, whereas in first hospitality leadership is perceived as an organic/holistic operation where both the self and the other assume a leadership role. The relational leadership apart from being in correspondence with the alternating teaching and learning operation, also offers a democratic leadership model and praxis since it perceives the potential of leadership operations as pertaining to everyone, which includes people within and without the community.

A significant contribution identified in the thesis is the infrastructural support for democracy through the first hospitality’s nurturing of freedom of expression.\textsuperscript{709} The nurturing effect of first hospitality for freedom of expression is based on the symbiotic relationship between ethics, epistemology and politics that first hospitality generates. The symbiotic relationship motivates the self and the other to engage and to relate with one another through

\textsuperscript{708} The leadership implications are identified with life long learning since first hospitality leadership operation has educational implications that are generated throughout a lifetime and includes every aspect of the human life.

\textsuperscript{709} Freedom of expression is perceived as an infrastructural support for the implementation of democratic ideals and praxes.
their proper (expression of) identity. Thus, in *first hospitality* epistemology, identifies the other as other and ethics, motivate the self to be responsible for the other – where being responsible is perceived as an integral aspect of the self’s identity – while politics intended as sanctuary offer a safe dialogical space through which both the self and the other can express themselves freely through their proper identity. In short, *first hospitality* symbiotic relationality of ethics, epistemology and politics generates an educable space that nurtures freedom of expression through the symbiotic relationality of ethics, epistemology and politics.

The final conclusion of the thesis offers a critique of the notion of *inclusive education*. The critique of *inclusive education* is based, on the one hand, on the hermeneutics of the Holocaust, where *inclusive education* ideals and praxes are perceived as incubating traces of Holocaust possibility, and on the other hand, on a contrast with *first hospitality* educability ideals and praxes. The issue that arises within this critique is that *inclusive education* operates exclusively on the self’s agency, while the other is agentic only when the self’s agency permits it through standards dictated by the self. Furthermore, the thesis identifies the potential of educational operations, services and facilities motivated by *inclusive education* ideals and principles being used as an assimilation apparatus, where the other is assimilated into the self’s standards, ideals and praxes.

The thesis contrast of *inclusive education* with *first hospitality* educability conceptions paves the way for the construct of an alternative idea and praxis of education, identified as welcoming education. The significance of welcoming education is that it generates an educational ideal and praxis that motivates educational operations, services and facilities to engage with the other as agent. Though the thesis focus is not welcoming education, it considers welcoming education as an important significance and implication that emerges from the first hospitality reflection and operation. The objective of the theoretic construct of welcoming education is to offer a thinking model (paradigm) for educational praxes where the other is engages with as agent. The thesis, through the development of *first hospitality* educability, offers a substantial theoretic and praxes framework on which the emerging notion of welcoming education can evolve into an effective educational implications. In conclusion, the engaging of the other as agent through welcoming education is perceived as a key operation, through which
first hospitality educational ideal of in transforming the encounter with the other (diversity) into an educational occasion can be implemented into educational praxes.

8.5: First Hospitality as Work in Progress

The thesis does not perceive itself as conclusive work since first hospitality unlocks the educational potential that is concealed within the self/other encounter. The key that this thesis uses to unlock this educational potential is identified with first hospitality’s first that is ‘the welcome of the other as guest’ as first cause – therefore, as cause for other causes. One of important causes that emerge from first hospitality’s first cause is that of welcoming education. Thus, welcoming education is perceived as an ideal and praxis that motivates educational institutions and operations to engage with the other as agent. The thesis gives only a glimpse of the effectiveness of welcoming education in creating educational spaces where the other’s agency motivates the participation of the other as both teacher and learner. Thus, more study and research is needed to explore the potential of welcoming education with regard to education and other fields where learning happens. Furthermore, the thesis offers a robust theoretical framework on which welcoming education can be furthered explored.

The thesis research and outcomes can be utilized as guide that, on the one hand, points to the challenges of the development of the self/other encounter into relationality, and on the other hand, offers solutions that sustains this development. What this thesis proposes as a solution is first hospitality, and what it perceives as sustenance (nourishment) for the development of the self/other encounter into the self/other relationality is first hospitality educability. The perception of first hospitality as a solution is in itself ambiguous – in the thesis terminology is aporia – in that the solution that first hospitality gives is in creating a situation of seeking for more, other and better solutions. Thus, first hospitality generates a habitat where the self is aware (and in need) of the more that comes through the encounter with the other, while at the same time the other is also aware of the need for more that the self can provide the other, by being a host for the other.

The notion of aporia is denotes the perplexity and wonder when encountering diversity.
A challenge that first hospitality offers for further research is based on the recognition in this thesis of historical contexts in which the self/other encounters happen. Thus, the encounter with the other is challenging not only because it is an encounter with the other who is considered other (diverse) but because the context in which it happens is in itself other (diverse). One of the contributions of this thesis is that it can be used as a guide for people who are interested in doing research into topics related to diversity, because the thesis can be utilized as a compass that helps to identify both the topics – regarding diversity issues – to be explored and the method to use for the exploration of the topic. In conclusion, the reading of this thesis by policy makers and educational practitioners can stimulate a more critical and creative approach of engaging with diversity, where diversity is perceived as an occasion to be cherished instead of a problem to be avoided.
Bibliography


https://www.socialeurope.eu/2015/12/migration-panic-misuses/


