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THE NEW CLIMATE REGIME BETWEEN LATOUR AND SERRES: THE THÉÂTRE DES NÉGOCIATIONS AND THE EUTOPIA OF THE PARK*

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EL NUEVO RÉGIMEN CLIMÁTICO ENTRE LATOUR Y SERRES: EL THÉÂTRE DES NÉGOCIATIONS Y LA EUTOPIA DEL PARQUE

Abstract

Addressing the New Climate Regime between Bruno Latour and Michel Serres consists here in drawing attention to ‘assonant terms’ (language of the world and retroaction), applying to them the Serresian operation of translation, which could

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allow to grasp the ‘variations’ and the ‘invariant’. Starting with Latour’s remarks (Face à Gaïa) on Serres’ *Le Contrat naturel*, that is credited with pioneering attention to the idea that the Earth ‘retroacts’ to what ‘we’ do to it, I analyze Latour’s reflections with specific reference to his interest in Serres’ idea of translation. I then move on to examine Latour’s geopolitical suggestions (Face à Gaïa) and translate them into Serresian positions (Parc National des Pyrénées). My journey concludes with a problematic reflection on Latourian-Serresian invitation to follow the lines that connect us to things, and to shed light on the compositions to which the human gives rise with the non-human.

Keywords

Language of the world; retroaction; agency; translation; eutopia.

Resumen

El análisis el Nuevo Régimen Climático entre Bruno Latour y Michel Serres consiste aquí en dejar que la atención sea atraída por los ‘términos asonantes’ (lenguaje del mundo y retroacción), aplicándoles la operación serresiana de traducción, que podría permitirnos captar las ‘variaciones’ y lo ‘invariante’. Partiendo de las observaciones de Latour (Face à Gaïa) sobre *Le Contrat naturel* de Serres, al que se atribuye el mérito clamando de haber abierto el camino a la idea de que la Tierra es ‘retroactiva’ a lo que ‘nosotros’ le hacemos, analizo las reflexiones de Latour con referencia específica a su interés por la idea de traducción de Serres. A continuación, examino las sugerencias geopolíticas de Latour (Face à Gaïa), y las traduzco a posiciones serresianas (Parc National des Pyrénées). Mi viaje termina con una reflexión problemática sobre la invitación a seguir las líneas que nos unen a las cosas y a arrojar luz sobre las composiciones a las que lo humano da lugar con lo no humano.

Palabras clave

Idioma del mundo; retroacción; agentividad; traducción; eutopía.

Introduction

Dealing with the theme of the New Climate Regime (Latour, 2015, 17) between Bruno Latour and Michel Serres does not, in my intention, consist in conducting a comparative/textual analysis aimed at tracing cross-references, allusions, or mutual critical observations. Rather, it is to draw attention to assonant terms/arguments such as language of the world and (retro)action, and to apply to them the Serresian operation of translating (*traduire*), which could make it possible to grasp the ‘variations’, to measure the transformations of the message, the negotiations etc., and behind them, the ‘invariant’ (Serres, 1974, 11).

My path begins with Latour’s observations in *Face à Gaïa* (read in relation to some passages of the brief presentation of Serres’s thought made by Latour in 1988 (Latour, 1988)) on *Le Contrat naturel* of Serres (Serres, 1990), which is credited with having ‘pioneeringly’ and significantly drawn attention to the idea that the Earth ‘retroacts’ (*réroagit*) in response to what ‘we’ do to it (Latour, 2015, 74-81). In this context, I analyze Latour’s reflections (subject-object relationship, New Climate Regime, *trait/contract*) with particular reference to his interest in Serres’s idea of translating. I will then examine the Latourian geopolitical proposals expressed in the 8e *Conférence* of *Face à Gaïa* (*Comment gouverner des territoires (naturels) en lutte?*) (and in particular in the presentation of the simulation *Théâtre des négociations*) (Latour, 2015, 285-347) and attempt to translate them into the positions set up by Serres in the *Parc National des Pyrénées* (Serres, 2007). A short text that effectively articulates (a kind of case study?) themes such as change (ecological *latu sensu*), ‘retroaction’, new perspectives of humanization, the question of representation, etc., and proposes the natural park¹ as an eutopia, a real space of free connections and a political (ethical) model.

Finally, in its last part, the circle of my path ‘closes in the opening’, with a problematic reflection, between Serres and Latour, on the invitation to follow the lines that unite us to things, not to interrupt the search for connections, to pass through the different agglutinations to which traditional representational politics does not give voice, and to shed new light on the compositions to which the human gives rise along with the non-human.

¹ Among the many works by Serres reflecting on eco-political issues, the reason for the choice of this text (a recreation of a Serresian excursion in the Pyrenees National Park together with the *Gardiens du Parc*, published in a celebratory volume released in 2007 on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Park itself) is that it presents, in a concrete and situated way, the ‘model’ of a new world as a hypothesis of ‘response’ to the challenges of the climate crisis.

The Soundtrack of the World: A Latourian Serresian Invariance

In order to better understand and substantiate Latour's (Latour, 2015) recognition of the cruciality of Serres' *Le Contrat naturel* in drawing attention to the idea of the earth's retroactions (it can be moved, and it can react), it is worth taking a step back in time by recalling the Latourian considerations on Serresian 'a-criticism' and 'pre-Copernicanism'. In *The Enlightenment Without the Critique: An Introduction to Michel Serres's Philosophy* (Latour, 1988), in trying to find the best 'word' to describe Serres's thought, Latour identifies as a salient feature of Serres's philosophy a-criticism, that is, its non-belonging to 'critical' philosophy. The philosophy that, from Descartes to Kant, to Marx, etc., has reduced "the world into two packs, a little one <the cogito, the transcendental, the class struggle> which is sure and certain, and the immense rest which is simply believed and in dire need of being criticized, founded, re-educated, straightened up ..." (Latour, 1988, 85); a philosophy that, from Kant onward, can be defined as a Copernican revolution that revolves things around the mind or what is defined as the focus that occupies the center (Latour, 1988, 88).

In Serres's thought Latour, on the other hand, does not find any kind of negation, overcoming, subsuming, overshadowing (Latour, 1988, 91) neither when, for example, it comes to the relationship between language and things, nor between science and the world (Latour, 1988, 89).

Faced with the relationship between language and things, Serres, in fact, in a pre-Copernican way (Latour, 1988, 89), argues that things, because of their richness, are irreducible to our knowledge, and suggests looking at them not from the point of view of the knower, but from that of the known. Faced with the relations of the sciences with the world, he asserts that scientific knowledge does not reduce or abolish the world, nor does it reveal its essence, but it adds to it, it is within it, is part of its culture (Latour, 1988, 89). The Latourian conclusion on Serresian thought is thus that "Serres just provides the soundtrack of this movie: the world" (Latour, 1988, 97).

A reflection is necessary here. I am convinced that, when framed between its 'premises', i.e., the notations above, and what 'will be' of it in the 2e *Conférence of Face à Gaïa* (*Comment ne pas (dés)animer la nature*), this statement constitutes a crucial juncture in the path of focusing/translating Latourian and Serresian 'assonances'. The general features of Serres's reflection that attract Latour's attention/appreciation and lead him to this conclusion seem to be, beyond and within the framework of a-criticism and pre-Copernicanism, a-dualism, a-reductionism, relationality, connections, interest, at-

tention, and recognition of the world in its varieties, agency, etc.; all approaches/themes that, indeed, resonate in Latourian thought: importance of the network of relationships, of context, of the here and now; proceeding step by step; idea that science adds to the world, not replaces it, etc. (cf. Croce, 2021; Manghi, 2018a; 2022).

Thus, the idea of providing the soundtrack of the world appears to be the ‘assonance of assonances’, the ‘common’ task that Latour seems to grasp and express between himself and Serres. To put it in the discourse I am pursuing, it is the general invariant through translation, that is, the terrain of negotiations that can/must be activated between the different Latourian and Serresian ‘assonances’. And in this ‘assonance of assonances’, I see in filigree the theme of the ‘inadequacy’ of any definition, individuation, distinction, separation, hierarchy of subject and object, as well as the theme of the recognition of the irreducibility of multiplicity of the world, of a-centrism and of course of anthropo-eccentrism.

It is well known that these themes ‘become very much’ in Latour and Serres, but, although the references would be many, I believe that Latourian *Comment ne pas (dés) animer la nature* (as well as *Face à Gaïa* as a whole), and the Serresian *Parc National des Pyrénées*, are two of the most significant texts to focus on.

Earth ‘Retroacts’ in Response to What ‘We’ Do to It: A Latourian Serresian Issue

The Serresian (but also very Latourian) concern for the world and its varieties, expressed in *The Enlightenment Without the Critique*, becomes, through a conceptual twist, in *Face à Gaïa* description/warning in the face of uncomfortable ‘truths’ such as global warming and the New Climate Regime (i.e., “la situation présente, quand le cadre physique que les Modernes avaient considéré comme assure [...] est devenue instable”) (Latour, 2015, 16).

As in many of his works over the last two decades, in this book Latour addresses the issue of the climate crisis by believing that it has become essential to forge new categories for living and acting in the New Climate Regime. That is to say, in the current ecological change, geologically called the Anthropocene, but which he prefers to express in sociological-political terms, better suited to emphasize the opposition to the ancien régime and the related ideas of revolution to be invented, the need for a revision of previous concepts of nature and the reorganization of public space to adapt our conditions of existence to this new subversive situation.

The question that runs through *Face à Gaïa* concerns what could replace the old (modern) ways of looking at nature as the pendant of human subjectivity and the background of human actions (cf. Aït-Touati & Coccia (Eds), 2021). Developing Lovelock's insights (Lovelock, 1991; 2000; 2006; Lovelock & Hitchcock, 1967; Lovelock & Whitfield, 1982), to whom he acknowledges the use of the mythical Greek name Gaia (with several misunderstandings) to refer to the fragile and complex system by which living phenomena modify the Earth by keeping it in a condition to harbor life (habitable because it is inhabited), and the merit of pointing out that the Earth itself is not an inert surface and the environment is not a context that shelters and protects us, Latour points to the figure of Gaia itself, understanding it primarily as a collective term to indicate precisely a widespread proliferation of agency ("puissance d'agir") (Latour, 2015, 18).

We are thus witnessing a radical change in perspective: due to the unforeseen effects of human history, the elements that the ancien régime brought together under the name of Nature leap to the fore; everything we have made unstable (oceans, climate, glaciers, etc.) interacts with us, with the risk of a war of all against all. And now the old Nature has disappeared, it is precisely the turn of Gaia, neither subject nor object, neither active nor passive, neither local nor global, an unpredictable being, probably consisting of a series of feedback loops in perpetual turmoil; a system that evolves with us and confronts, questions, and challenges us even violently; in any case, "l'occasion d'un retour sur Terre" (Latour, 2015, 17).

"Mais désormais, il n'y a plus de spectateur, parce qu'il n'y a plus de rivage qui n'ait été mobilisé dans le drame de la géohistoire. Ce qui vient vers nous, c'est cela que j'appelle Gaïa, et qu'il faut regarder en face pour ne pas devenir fou pour de bon." (Latour, 2015, 50). This statement opens the reflection, carried forward in *Comment ne pas (dés) animer la nature*, on agency, on the difficulty of distinguishing between humans and non-humans (cf. Bontempi, 2017) and specifically on the question of Earth's retroaction.

Latour, in particular, with regard to the topics of our interest, clearly highlights the derivative/secondary character of attributing inertia (absence of agency) or animation (presence of soul) to an actor (Latour, 2015, 64), rather drawing attention above all to the intermingling, to the continuous exchanges of action through transactions and negotiations between agencies of different forms and origins, in the context of what, with an explicit geological borrowing, he calls the metamorphic zone (Latour, 2015, 74); a zone that, at the moment when the human-non-human, nature-culture distinction becomes precisely a secondary operation or abstraction, we must learn to inhabit.

It is thus only by setting aside the image of man acting against a background of things that the idea of earth's retroaction in response to what 'we' do to it can be understood 'differently', and one of those who first made such an effort was Michel Serres in his *Le Contrat naturel* (Latour, 2015, 74).

The 'assonance', here, takes shape through the mouth of Latour himself, who recognizes Serres as the first to have drawn attention to the connivance between previously distinct agents (such as the old figures of subject and object), considering them intermingled and interchangeable.

Between Latour and Serres, at this point it seems to me that I can grasp the idea of a 'subject' (agent) that is so called because it can be 'subjected' to the (re)actions of another agent, which, in turn, derives its subject name from being equally 'subject' to the action of the other (Latour, 2015, 77). According to Latin etymology, the sub-jectum, says Serres, is in fact that which is thrown under (cf. Serres, 2001; 2003; 2010) Whether we talk about the Anthropocene, Gaia, the New Climate Regime, the Natural Contract, or the Park (themes to which the operation of translation will apply), it is no longer possible to admit the idea of an active subject acting autonomously on an inert objective context, that is, to dualistically/dialectically oppose subject and object.

If then the subject shares agency with other subjects equally lacking autonomy, and non-humans reveal as agencies connected to what we are and do, the Earth, in turn, loses its role as object, of what 'is thrown in front of' or 'must be kept at a distance'. To understand the meaning of the idea of the Earth's retroaction to our actions, it thus becomes essential, in Latour's words, not to distribute agency simply and a priori between 'human' and 'non-human' actors.

In this perspective, beyond the ambiguities and/or inherent problems of the idea of natural contract, noted by Latour in the 2e Conférence (Latour, 2015, 79) and also more recently (cf. Manghi, 2018b, 119), what I consider a key to interpretation is his focus on the meaning/role of the term *trait* in Serresian thought. Indeed, it should be recalled that Serres traces the term *con-trat* (contract) back to its primary meaning of *jeu de cordes* (set of cords) (Serres, 1990, 169), whose 'simple element' is precisely the *trait*, i.e., the bond, which is a 'technical' expression, drawn from the legal, geopolitical, scientific, and geometric context, through which he designates transactions between the agencies of different types of entities (so-called subjects and objects) (Latour, 2015, 79).

In *Le Contrat naturel*, but also at other times in his works (cf. Serres, 2009; 2010), Serres states something very important for my discussion, namely that we do not know the language of the world, but we do know its animistic, religious, or mathematical

versions, since the Earth speaks to us in terms of forces, bonds and interactions (Serres, 1974; 1990). It is thus that, by pointing to a 'slippage', almost a translation, between *trait, jeu de cordes* (con-tract), forces, bonds, Serres, as Latour points out (Latour, 2015, 80), identifies as a condition of the possibility of speaking the language of the world the ability to translate its various versions from one to the other. In other words, the translation becomes the resource that allows us to understand by what we are attached to and on what we depend on; this is, precisely Earth's retroaction. And in the end Latour says: "si nous devenons capables de traduire, alors les lois de la nature commencent à avoir un esprit." (Latour, 2015, 65).

In conclusion, what Latour reiterates with Serres is the shallowness and inadequacy of the 'phenomenon' of de-animation: to say that the Earth has not only motion but also a way of being moved that makes it react to what we do to it is not the delirium of a madman possessed by the idea of adding a soul to what does not have one (Latour, 2015, 85)

But then, if the Earth system "n'est pas morte" (Latour, 2015, 85), if Gaia is "« en guerre »" and "« prenant sa revanche » sur les humains" (Latour, 2015, 87; Lovelock, 2006, 150), what to do?

The New Climate Regime and its Geopolitics: between the Théâtre des négociations and the Eutopia of the Park

Although the terms, figures, and modes of argument are different, the question, the cogency of addressing it and pointing to hypotheses of response are perceived as unavoidable and urgent necessities by both Latour and Serres.

Before proceeding, it seems appropriate to draw attention and spend a few words on Latour's remark, in the 2e Conférence, that translation is Serres' "grand projet" (Latour, 2015, 80). In this regard, it should be recalled that the character of Hermes, god of the roads, crossroads, messages, communication, and commerce, is the 'sign' that underlies not only the cycle of Serres' works named after him (Serres, 1969; 1972; 1977; 1980) (one of which- Hermes, III- explicitly dedicated to translation (Serres, 1974)), but precisely Serres' entire research, which is informed by the effort to connect 'things' (fields, contexts, sciences, etc.) in themselves heterogeneous (Dolphijn, 2019; Moser, 2016; Watkin, 2020; Rignani, 2022).

Under the Serresian 'big hermetic umbrella', to put into communication/communicating thus means to travel and precisely to translate, to exchange, to negotiate, to pass

into the place of the 'other', taking up the word as a cross version of it. But it should also be specified that translating is properly understood as the operation of translating, which works in the widest way and in the most diverse fields: it is application (Serres, 1974, 11). The operation of translation makes it possible to 'measure' the transformations of the 'message', and the range of variations between the extreme limits of the 'traction' that lies below the threshold of what is invariant.

Thus, if becoming able to translate is essential in relation to the world and its language, in a 'meta-reflexive' sense the same is true from Latour's 'language' to Serres' and vice versa.

So, let us return to the question: what to do?

The essential thing, as Latour repeats again and again, is to try to face Gaia, a kind of signal telling us to return to Earth, as well as the only way to shake Moderns' beliefs about who they are, the epoch they live in, and the ground on which they stand. Only if Gaia appears as a threat, can we be sensitive to the difficulty of being of this earth and become aware of the New Climate Regime (Latour, 2015, 271).

But to acquire such a 'non Modern' view of ecological problems, it is essential to accept that we are divided over them: we must recognize that we are in a state of war, even before we seek new forms of sovereignty; we can no longer believe that we live peacefully under the protection of a single unifying Nature, and must instead seek to identify our enemies and the territories to be defended (Latour, 2015, 271-272).

The New Climate Regime thus requires us to take up the political discourse to finally make it 'geo-political'; and the starting point of this 'refounding' is, along with the awareness of the obsolescence of the idea of an indifferent Nature, the recognition of the non-unity or rather the division of the human species. For Latour, this means making room for collectives in mutual conflict: hence the distinction/conflict between the *peuple de la Nature* and the *peuple de Gaïa*, that is, in geohistorical terms, between the *Humains* of the Holocene and the *Terrestres* of the Anthropocene (Latour, 2015, 274). In the Latourian view, what distinguishes them fundamentally is the mode of "taking possession": *Humains* take the Earth, while *Terrestres* are taken by it. This means that the Moderns are 'incapable' of belonging to any cosmos and indifferent to the effects of their actions and to the retroactions that might make them aware of what they are doing and responsible for what they have done; and that in contrast *Terrestres* can consider themselves responsive because they belong to a territory² and their "délimitation [...]"

² Neither a sign on a two-dimensional map, nor a nation-state, territory, for Latour, is something, made up of networks in constant intermingling and opposition, on which an entity depends for its subsistence and which it is willing to defend (Latour, 2015, 278).

est rendue explicite par l'état d'exception dans lequel ils acceptent d'être placés par ceux qu'ils osent appeler leurs ennemis ” (Latour, 2015, 278).

But if I try to rewind for a moment the thread of this first 'part' of the Latourian response to the “what to do?” question, before entering the 'heart' of the geopolitics of the New Climate Regime, a prolepsis of assonance with Serres' Parc National des Pyrénées (which I 'launch' and introduce now, to elaborate on later) begins to resonate.

In the context of the Latourian-Serresian recognition of the obsolescence of the so-called old climatic regime, that is, of what Serres points to as the attitude of a man who, become strong, endangers an environment that has become fragile, and who is able to 'kill the mountains' (Serres, 2007, 10), the figures of the Gardiens du Parc assume a prominent role in the Serresian proposal of future geopolitics. Referred to by Serres as “Tisserands démocratiques” (Serres, 2007, 23), they are indeed intent on creating a new kind of aggregation in which we, by constructing new human sciences (at the crossroads between the so-called humanities and the so-called exact sciences) and by thinking about a new law, will try to interweave the old exclusively human relations (political, in the sense of referring exclusively to the man-made polis) with the real relationships of the environment.

It is precisely in these “inventors” of threads “propres à tisser la trame arlequine de nos différences humaines avec la chaîne bariolée de l'environnement”, (Serres, 2007, 23), “pères de ceux qui, demain tenteront de renouveler la face de la planète à l'image de leur Parc” (Serres, 2007, 23), it seems to me that I can detect an 'assonance' with the Latourian Terrestres. Of course, in this as in other cases, we need to perform the 'translation operation' that allows us to 'measure' the range of variations under the threshold of the invariant. In so doing, we realize that the variations here are not negligible: there is no mention (at least not explicitly) of territories to be defended, nor of enemies, nor of conflicts; but at the same time it comes to light that the invariant exists and has its consistency: the Terrestres and the Gardiens du Parc are different from the 'Moderns', they are 'tied' to the earth and aware of its retroactions, they are 'heralds' of the new geopolitics 'dictated' by the New Climate Regime, and they are in a broad sense 'relationists'.

Having said and kept this in mind, it is now necessary to continue with the overview of Latourian geopolitical suggestions, of course with an ear outstretched to perceive 'Serresian assonances'.

So, if Humains and Terrestres are at war, how to govern the territories in struggle?

To hypothesize answers to this question that informs the 8e Conférence of Face a Gaïa, Latour starts from the Théâtre des négociations, a simulation/performance that

took place on his initiative at the Théâtre des Amandiers in Paris in May 2015 (Latour, 2015, 285-311; cf. Ferrando, 2015).

One of the main goals of this play was to revisit and redefine the principles and implications of international climate conferences in an attempt to overcome the aporias of climate negotiations. Thus, the basic idea/objective was to stage alternatives to COP (Conference of the Parties) type negotiations by representing 'prospective' geopolitics, i.e. the map of new territories, the conflicts they provoke and the methods of resolution that should be imagined to restore peace. In other words, it was to propose, in a kind of alternative diplomacy experiment, new rules for negotiating on climate by simulating aspects that real negotiations generally leave out.

One of the major critical issues identified in these negotiations was representation: classical representatives (delegations of nation-state) monopolize the stage by misrepresenting all beings and collectives involved in the ecological crisis. Therefore, in addition to not providing any arbitrator/unifying element of these delegations, in order to facilitate the start of the negotiations, it was deemed essential to consider other actors by introducing delegations of non-states, such as the collectives or territories most directly affected by climate issues, some critical regions (polar regions, Amazon, California), and non-humans. These delegations, understood as powers possessed by interests (general properties of the interpenetrating agents) other than human ones, were intended to activate processes of re-politicizing the negotiation by acting on territory, that is, by pressuring human interests through the formation of other territories, so as to prevent the too rapid development of some coalitions at the detriment of others. On stage, therefore, only strong interests capable of designating other stakeholders as enemies were represented, thus creating an opposition that redefined territories.

Unlike the Holocene, in which these interests and connections were not present in the debate except in the form of 'silent' and 'inert' data and reports, the agents received a voice and authority compatible with that of the other agents and capable of defending their own interests, even exerting a corrosive action against the boundaries of the territories of which the nation-states continued to consider themselves masters.

The attempt/purpose, in short, was to politically express a disaggregation of agents to make visible the encroachment of territories on each other, the fronts of the conflict, and the 'borders' between friends and enemies, which could only be done by including as many delegations/land-grabbing parties as possible in the negotiation room.

What the simulation ultimately showed is that the most realistic way of doing politics and governing in the era of climate crisis is not to appeal to a (utopian) common prin-

ciple (state of nature, etc.) that would only be able to depoliticize negotiation by turning it into a simple application of rules of distribution, but rather to give oneself a territory, thus re-politicizing negotiation through the idea of belonging to a land (Latour, 2015, 298). This means acting from the bottom up, asking stakeholders not to lay down their interests, but to redefine them by modifying the territories they want to dominate, possibly lengthening the list of entities included in their interests. (Latour, 2015, 299).

The perspective that has emerged to which Latour draws attention is thus, on the whole, that of a decentralization and diversification of the diplomatic scenario, a functional enlargement of the collectives represented, a disaggregation of the aggregate of the nation-state, and thus a reopening of negotiations as well as a highlighting/representation/tracing/reproduction of other encroachments, assemblages, alliances, front lines, feedback loops.

In short: a multiplicity of actors, a distribution of agency that corresponds to a multiplicity of territories interacting, reacting, and mixing with each other, a rethinking/redistribution/sharing/limitation of sovereignty. All this in the pluri/multi-verse of Gaia, which does not claim to rule in place of states forced to submit to its laws but manifests itself “comme ce qui exige que la souveraineté soit partagée” (Latour, 2015, 307), a configuration of new political entities in the perspective of a (always fragmented) political body to be composed one agent after another.

At this point, there are two alternatives that Latour sees for the future: either a kind of violent eco-modernization constituted by the extension of the hegemony of the nation-states on earth, with the simultaneous opening, for the moderns, of a new horizon of domination, or instead the acceptance of bowing to Gaia, taking on distribution the of agency and the rethinking/renewal of the question of democracy as the focus of political debate and action (Latour, 2015, 311). The “issue de ce combat” (Latour, 2015, 311), with the desirable elimination of Modern and Nature, etc., is largely related to learning to live, as Terrestres, finally taking into account the presence of Gaia and thus accepting finiteness at the political, scientific and religious levels and restoring the meaning of ‘limit’.

In the face of Gaia, we are called to completely redesign our cosmology (Latour, 2015, 317), learning a new way of inhabiting the old world no longer in its extension but in its intensité. Terrestres, in fact, are called to explore the question of their limits, pushing themselves, as Latour puts it, plus intra (Latour, 2015, 318), toward an earth, which is not new, but whose face must be renewed, accepting to weigh less on Gaia’s shoulders.

The emphasis is ultimately on local experimentation, on the search for connections that allow for maximum plurality and ensure minimum exclusion, on the partial

compositions and configurations to which the human gives rise along with the non-human, on the urgency of a reorientation toward the earth through a re-articulation of human life on it, a redistribution of agency and an attempt to identify the relations of dependence that allow life on earth. All this, of course, once any unifying higher entity has been cleared away.

While beyond what has been said there are perhaps not, at least in *Face à Gaïa*, many other ‘political’ indications for dealing with climate catastrophe (cf. Croce, 2022), what seems to me fundamental, even in terms of ‘assonances’ with Serres, is essentially the call for a renewed awareness of the connections between things and, therefore, for a ‘negotiation (re)composition’ (cf. Corrêa & Magnelli, 2021) of the ‘body politic’, ‘piece by piece’, ‘body by body’, without interrupting the search for connections, going through the various clots, gradually including their perspective, and continuing to follow all the lines, in a framework of increasing complexity.

And it is this very suggestion of a renewed awareness of the connections between things that seems to me to be ‘assonant’ with the perspective indicated in the Parc National des Pyrénées, and on which we can then try to implement, as before, the operation of translation.

The Park is in fact understood by Serres as a space open to free relations; a space in which human interactions play to the full of the interactions of living beings and things with each other, and which is thus the ‘realization’, to be understood proactively as a program of change, of this mutual interweaving of relationships. A ‘political’ context, which precisely because of these characteristics is not utopian, but is instead real and achievable: good governance, that is, eutopia, a good place to live (Serres, 2007, 23-24).

It should be specified and emphasized in this regard that the Park, in the Serresian vision, brings together, as it were, the (last) new disruptive phase of the hominization process and the model/project of future geo-eco-politics. According to Serres, in fact, hominization was/is marked by three phases of domestication (i.e., literally, the human invitation to other living beings in one’s home in order to form with them and with things an original group an original group), the first represented by agriculture, the second by science, and the third precisely by the park, each of which implied/implies groups of individuals, acts, relationships, a space and a habitat (agriculture: rural families, households, farm, domestic species; science: scientists, greenhouses, botanical gardens; park: the *mélange*) (Serres, 2007, 19-22). If in the first two phases Serres identifies in humans a prevalence of ‘parasitic’ attitudes toward other species (in the first domestication there is a selection of domesticated animals and in the second a selection

of individuals that represent a specimen) and a tendency to nullify ‘cultural diversity’, in the park phase he detects something revolutionary, precisely the *mélange*. That is, as we shall see later, the end of all separation, the consideration of the community of living beings and things in a specific biotope, the coexistence of all species in an open space, with the preservation of the groups corresponding to the farm or the greenhouse, to which, however, is added a new reality consisting of the multiple relationships entertained by humans and non-humans.

In the park (phase), in fact, a collective (political) decision leaves flora and fauna to their relations and their environment, that is, to their interactions, ending the old/modern separation and asymmetry of subject/object, culture/nature, in favor of a reciprocal interweaving of relations. This constitutes a model that, for the present/future of hominization, urgently needs to find a way to be implemented at the geo-eco-political level, thanks in part to the work of *Gardiens du Parc* (interweaving the three phases of hominization), the ‘fathers’, as mentioned, of anyone who engages in this endeavor (Serres, 2007, 22-24).

Walking in the mountains, at a time when the future of the planet is in question and man’s place and role in it unknown, is therefore not painless: the Pyrenees ‘need us’ and make their voices heard, and the *Gardiens du Parc*, the ‘humans of tomorrow’, are the Latourian sensitive ones, that is, those who are able to perceive their call.

But then, at this point, could Gaia’s challenge be ‘translated’ into the Pyrenees’ challenge? The room for maneuver is certainly wide and the operation is bold, but in any case, the fact remains that the Pyrenees constitute a ‘call’ addressed to humans to change direction to the earth, as well as to the idea of the limit, that is, to limit oneself in favor of the mountains themselves. It should also be noted that, again, as in Latour, the approach is bottom-up: human-non-human connections and intersections are left free, are recognized, are highlighted, and are also, so to speak, ‘represented’.

In other words, it is a matter of eliminating selections and separations, minimizing exclusions, and, above all, ‘taking note’ of the *mélange*. That, in Serres, is a ‘keyword’ through which he expresses the spatial or conceptual situation of the node, difficult to analyze (i.e., to undo, to separate), exchanger, floating, facilitator of fusion, fluid prone confluence and producer of intersections (cf. Serres, 1985, 82-83). Indeed, the geo-political perspective that the invention of the Park inaugurates is in fact that of the fluid and the liquid (by its very nature metastable, not sectionable, nor confineable) (a ‘metamorphic zone’?), certainly difficult to think through the conceptual-political tools that Latour would define modern, but in any case, a direction of the future

(Serres, 1985, 83). This thus calls for a philosophy/politics of ‘mingle bodies’, which Serres, on the example of the Park, outlines, on the political level, as a recognition of the *mélange* through an institution to be built indicatively on the model of the Park itself, as a collective decision to leave all entities to their interactions, that is, free of their own relationships, and as ‘democratic’ weaving, that is, as the invention of threads suitable for weaving the composite web of human differences with the variegated chain of the environment.

If I pay attention to the ‘assonances’ and try once again to enact the operation of translation, I seem to grasp the instance, albeit sketchy, of representing the various fluid agglutinations (the invention of threads to weave the warp of human and non-human differences) and of listening to the language of the non-human and translating it in a way that is compatible with human language.

It seems to me, then, that, between Latour and Serres, there is a conviction that realistically one cannot move forward without giving a voice to water, forests, etc., and without representing them with a human voice capable of being understood by other humans. Indeed, Latour in *Face à Gaïa* adds that it is fictional to believe that the ‘interests’ of water and forests can be considered without a human impersonating, authorizing, and representing them (Latour, 2015, 301-302)

Questions rather than Answers...

This is a neuralgic point where the issues of agency distribution, retroactions of earth, its language and translation are intertwined; issues that, on the whole, trigger problematic reflections in me, essentially in the form of questions. Recognition of the *mélange* and entanglement of human and non-human agents most likely ends up requiring humans a representation that brings into play their capacity for ‘interpretation’/‘intermediation’: could this mean lifting the curtain on an ‘ethical space’ of human responsibility for ‘linguistic mediation’ between non-human and human language (this, in an ontological perspective of moving beyond mere flat ontology)?

And again: if the agency shifts from the human to the non-human and vice versa, can there be that ‘agglutinations’ that are more ‘relevant’ than others, which thus crack any flat ontology (cf. Bontempi, 2019, 161) and require ‘particular’ forms of representation?

Is the Serresian call to learn to translate one ‘language’ into another ‘timely’ here? A translation which, however, not to be forgotten, in the effort of ‘traction’ might also

‘betray’ the ‘original message’; and which, in any case, is a kind of negotiation... The area of maneuver is undoubtedly wide and there is room for ambiguity...

But on the other hand, as we have seen, in the operation/process of translation, in addition to variations, there is also the invariant; so, taking a step further, why not think that, across the threshold of the Latourian collection of interests, negotiations, feedback loops, etc., and the Serresian recognition/thinking of the *mélange*, etc., there might be an invariant constituted, for example, by a geo-political instance, realistic in the Latourian language and eutopian in Serresian language, of a different way of being in/with the world, one that seeks to reflect/mirror as closely as possible how things really are (or perhaps even how they have always been)?

An instance, in other words, of recognizing the animation of the world? Surely the ‘knot’ of representation remains, for the time, being ‘knotted’...

In the end, however, the climate crisis was/is the catalyst for the recognition, finally in a geopolitical and geohistorical perspective, of irreducibility, multiplicity, *mélange*, bond/relation/negotiation as categories of existence etc.; as well as of the importance/urgency of acting as the ‘soundtrack of the world’.

But could this also eventually mean accepting dependence on non-humans (Latour, 2020)?

Will the future be made of new forms of -cracy or of more-than-human negotiations or instead of no power at all?

Politics? Or instead, as Serres suggests, “il faudrait trouver un autre mot” (Serres, 2007, 21)?

It cannot be predicted; maybe we are still brainstorming, but Terrestres and Gardiens du Parc will/should (most likely) play their part.

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