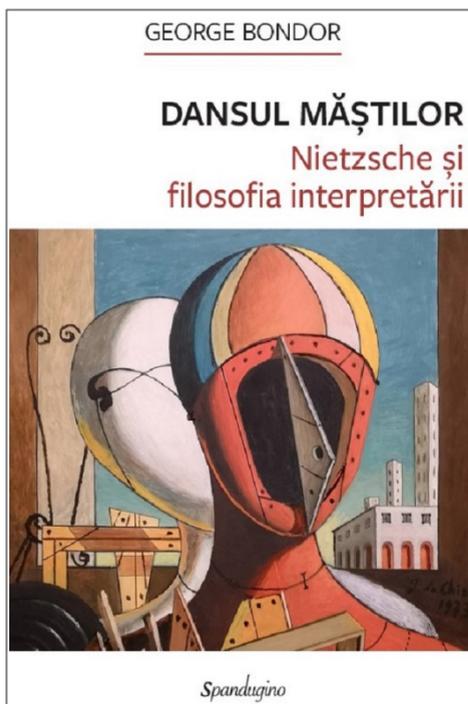


BOOK REVIEW

**George Bondor, *Dansul măștilor. Nietzsche și filosofia interpretării*
(*The Dance of Masks. Nietzsche and the Philosophy of Interpretation*),
ed. a 2-a, reviz. (second edition, revised), Editura Spandugion,
București, 2020**



In the very first page of “Note on first edition” there is a remark not to be missed by a quick reading. *The Dance of Masks. Nietzsche and the Philosophy of Interpretation* is an extract or, in Bondor’s words, “the processing of the doctoral dissertation” called *From Metaphysics to Hermeneutics. Fredrich Nietzsche*. In other words, the philosophy of interpretation or the dance of masks is not only the “path” from metaphysics to hermeneutics but, to a certain extent, “the final point”. Of course, the leading figure that takes us on this journey with, I might add, in my eyes not in Bondor’s, no final destination is Fredrich Nietzsche. But, setting apart my one idiosyncrasies, we must see how George Bondor constructs the road, mediated by Nietzsche, from metaphysics to hermeneutics or, better yet, from

metaphysics to interpretation (and, perhaps, we might also see what all these has to do with the “dance of masks”).

From where to begin, how to begin? Is there something more presumptuous except this word, almost unusable today, metaphysics? Are we not in this post-everything (modern, culture, human etc.) era, that we live in, once and for all, freed by any (how to call it?) specters of metaphysics? Don't we know already from Derrida, Deleuze, Foucault, Vattimo and so on, that metaphysics is dead? Of course, and we also “sense”, reading the same authors, who killed it: Nietzsche. But, from Bondor's book we don't “sense” it anymore, we know it for sure. Truth to be told - *The Dance of Masks. Nietzsche and the Philosophy of Interpretation* shows us in the most rigorous manner possible how Nietzsche killed metaphysics and “invent” interpretation. Of course, “invent” is not a suitable word for many reasons (although Deleuze will assert that an “invention” took place here), the first being that Nietzsche didn't invent it, but crafted it with meticulous attention and infinitesimal precision. And is Bondor's tremendous merit that we now see how interpretation becomes the new metaphysics (without, of course, being metaphysics). Still, not without a reason I named interpretation the new metaphysics giving the fact that hermeneutics (the other name of interpretation), at least until the last part of the XX century, carried the burden, through Heidegger but even more through Gadamer, of metaphysics. Now, this is not the case with George Bondor how is not interested in hermeneutics, as neither Nietzsche is, but in this, let us call it, “concept” named interpretation which is not often associated with Nietzsche. Not until Bondor's book, because, at least for me, interpretation, from now on, will carry the name of Nietzsche.

But how? How does Nietzsche constructs (invents, crafts, creates, forms etc.) such a concept? Let us give two examples (of course, the examples are from Bondor). (1) What does a rock do? “Acts” and “reacts” in front of something that borders it. Of course, that “border” “acts” and “reacts” in return. Thus, two “centers of force” “act” and “react” one upon another. To call it “perspectivism” is a bit too much, tells Bondor, but to call it, and we will see very soon way, “interpretation” (pp. 99 -103), is the most suitable thing to do. (2) What is “being”? Bondor reading Nietzsche: “The most known form of being is life, starting from which it was constructed the abstract concept of «being»” (p. 264). Nietzsche: “Life, as the most known form of being, is a will to accumulate force -: all the processes of life find here themselves the proper lever: nothing wants to be conserved, everything sums and accumulates” (Nietzsche *apud* Bondor, pp. 264-265). “To accumulate force” as the most inner will of life, or, more proper, will to power is, in Bondor's words, “interpretation” (p. 266). Thus, to put it bluntly, if in question is “a rock” or “Being”,

interpretation prevails. But then again, how? Are we entitled to assume that for a “rock” or for “Being” (setting aside, for some eyes, the unsuitable joining of rocks and being) interpretation is everything? We must take a step back and listen to Bondor: “The conceptual framework (...) composed by key-concepts such as force, will to power, life, value, evaluation and power, brought us in front of the task of clarifying the central concept of Nietzsche’s philosophy (...) *interpretation*. This concept designates in an equivocal manner – but this is way fertile from a philosophical perspective – *the act as such of the will to power*.” (p. 85, the last underlying is mine).

Perhaps if we are not paying enough attention to the fact that the act as such of the will to power is interpretation, we will miss the entire thesis of Bondor. Let us repeat: *the act as such of the will to power is interpretation*. Now, we don’t have to read Bondor’s book to understand that “the will to power” is central to Nietzsche’s philosophy, but we must read it in order to understand that “the act as such” or, more proper, “the doing of” the will to power is interpretation. But why, why this “doing” is so important? Only because in this “doing” everything that we know as we know it emerges. Acknowledging or, better yet, admitting (if we do) that the will to power is to be found everywhere (from the inorganic world to being) it is obviously the act as such i.e., interpretation, is to be found everywhere. Not only that it is to be found everywhere, but whatever something is, is because of it. Let us stress, nothing metaphysical occurred here, only an observation: the act as such of the will to power does (produces, creates, crafts, makes etc.) everything.

Maybe is a bit too much, let us take another step back to fully understand the thesis of Bondor. One of the most important ideas of Bondor is that we must not, under no circumstances, transform “the will to power” in a metaphysical concept. If we do, as we are used to do being philosophers, we miss the entire endeavor of Nietzsche. The will to power is not the new “I” or “Consciousness” or “Spirit” or “Substance” or “The Thing in Itself” or “The World” or “Being” or “Cause and the Effect” or “Law and Necessity” or, finally, “God” (see the entire p.30). The will to power must be understood, tells Bondor, following Nietzsche, in a “plural manner”. A plural manner without “unity, in-essentialist and non-substantialist” (p.20). A plural manner where “fluidity”, as life itself, becomes the only place where we can ground ourselves but only to realize that, being fluid, we must take a step forward. A sort of continuous “becoming” (and coming back, again and again) were nothing ever stops. Setting aside the poetic and anthropomorphic implications, something else is important: the will to power is not a metaphysical concept. “Becoming”, “fluidity”, “plurality”, “restlessness”, “interaction”, “facticity”, are more

suitable words to fully grasp the meaning of “the will to power”. All that being said (and known) we must see how the will to power acts. Because, let us repeat, *the act as such is interpretation*.

Digging beneath “the will to power” Bondor shows that “[e]very object – be that a natural thing, a concept, an idea, a representation etc.- constitutes itself due to the universal game of forces. To perceive as correctly as possible this process, we can imagine the world being formatted by numerous forces that interact by chance with each other” (p.43). Thus, if we are to speak, in a proper manner, about “the world” the only way to do it is by appealing to the never ending “game” between “center of forces”. If somewhere, somehow, something wins (and becomes, what we may call, reality) is only because somewhere, somehow, something losses. To put it more precisely: the never-ending “game” (battle?) between center of forces constructs reality. Let us recall - beneath the will to power stands force. Thus, “a natural thing”, “a concept”, “an idea”, “a representation” etc., that we know is only a force (the will to power) that managed to win (in this never-ending battle of forces) in front of “a natural thing”, “a concept”, “an idea”, “a representation” etc. But, and here is where interpretation (or the *act as such*) becomes central: “ This « will to power» expresses itself through interpretation, by the form in which the force consumes itself.” (Nietzsche, *apud* Bondor, p. 89). Thus, “every will to power interprets”, or, coming back from where we started, as Bondor says: *the act as such of the will to power is interpretation*.

To sum, in terms that we are already use to, but never properly understood, interpretation constructs reality. Or, better yet (at least for me, from now on), in Bondor’s words: “interpretation, we might say, is the means by which domination arises” (p.90). From here on propositions such as “the world is an interpretative process – encompassing but undefined” or “the reality has an interpretive character” or “interpretation is immanent to reality” etc. etc., are only, natural effects of *the act as such of the will to power*.

Nevertheless, a question may appear: what does all this have to do with the dance of masks? When an interpretation prevails (let us say, for obvious reasons, a metaphysical one such as “the unconditioned”) and becomes, and Bondor explains in details way and how (see pp.77-79), the most undeniable reality of the world, we must understand it as (and the name of it should be enough) an *interpretation*. By chance or, more properly, by force “the unconditioned” becomes “the truth” or “reality”. But Bondor following Nietzsche names it by her actual name: *mask*. A mask because only in and only through the conditioned the unconditioned may appear. The “conditioned” or the “appearance”, the “ground” of the world, the

“flesh” of man, are the places were, and from were, al the “masks” “dance” claiming their own truth as they should (being *the act as such* i.e, interpretation, of the will to power).

I would like to make one last remark. I am not pretending that my reading of Bondor’s book is complete. By far, the book in itself surpasses my limited interpretation. It is not easy to sum up all the exhaustive excavations that Bondor does on Nietzsche, and, after all, all the exhaustive excavation that Bondor does in one of the most important moments in western culture. However, I would like to end my attempt on George Bondor book, *The dace of masks. Nietzsche and the philosophy of interpretation*, with a quote: “we could say that the description of the world as the play of forces and of wills to power is a simple ontic explication, meanwhile the explication of the meaning of the world and of man, through the universal operator called interpretation, represents the ontological stake of Nietzsche thought.” (p.323)

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