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The "Interior Space of the Body" and the Localization of Physical Pain: Readings of Maine de Biran*

El "espacio interior del cuerpo" y la localización del dolor físico: lecturas de Maine de Biran

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Resumen. El objetivo de este artículo es estudiar la teoría del espacio interior del cuerpo de Maine de Biran a lo largo de sus tres componentes principales que son establecidos a lo largo de un diálogo crítico con Condillac y Destutt de Tracy, y desarrollados desde el punto de vista de la teoría del esfuerzo. Esos componentes son: la durabilidad del esfuerzo primordial; la posibilidad de percibir el espacio exterior; la consistencia del tiempo furtivo de la sensibilidad.

Palabras clave: Maine de Biran; espacio interior; cuerpo; sensibilidad.

Abstract. The aim of this paper is to study Maine de Biran's theory of interior space along its three major components, established along a critical dialogue with Condillac and Destutt de Tracy, and developed from the theory of effort's point of view. Those components are: the durability of the primordial effort; the possibility of perceiving exterior space; the consistency of the furtive time of sensibility.

Key words: Maine de Biran; Interior Space; Body; Sensibility.

1. The primordial fact

Is what we can learn of the complex organization of the brain and the central nervous system in any way analogous to what we can *know of ourselves* when actively exercising our faculties of thought, memory, attention, and perception? Is the anatomical construction or quality of the fibres that transmit nociceptive messages from the epidermis to the spinal cord at all similar to the individualized *meaning* of

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what *affects us* (as "pain", for example)? Is it possible to equate an *explainable* physiological body with a body that is *apperceived*?

The spirit – if not the letter – of this questioning can be traced back to how Maine de Biran (1766-1824) confronted the epistemological options pursued by the emergent *Science of Man* of his time. In fact, Biran's philosophy represents a fundamental critique of attempts to transpose the methodologies of the sciences of nature to the study of what is *human in man.* It is, in a way, a critique of a certain *air du temps* – of fascination with an *episteme* that is based on the primacy of exterior representation and, consequently, remains intoxicated by the dream of an integral experimental cartography of the *human way of being*. In such a transposition, under pressure from the methodologies of the sciences of nature, physiology occupies the study of man by trying to reduce interior, non-representable evidence to exterior, *readable data* (an option that remains live in the paradigm of biological naturalism under which we live today). According to Biran, this is a misguided approach, and in it the philosopher from Bergerac diagnoses a symptom of the *crises of the sciences*: in his view, this transposition brings with it the danger of epistemological standardization and, as a consequence, the peril of losing sight, on the side of the study of man, of the different kinds of phenomena that this complex reality entails. How can a science *about* man begin by ignoring what only someone who has de *immediate felling* of himself and is able to *communicate immediately* with his own thought can know about *being human*? How can such a science be built without asking how *man* comes to know *himself* (in that state of *conscium,* or *compos sui,*[1] without which nothing can be known) in the first place?

This does not mean that science is of no use to the study of man; far from Biran to sustain such a view. What he is arguing is that in order to do justice to the complexity of the human way of being, the *science of man* must recognise *differences*. We must, of course, try to know objectively (physiologically, neurologically, anatomically, biologically, medically), for example, "what an impression, a movement, a perception", a thought, a feeling, or, say, a pain is; nonetheless, what we cannot forget or ignore is that this kind of scientific approach will remain without rigor and without a true foundation if it ignores the necessity of first determining "how an impression is experienced, how an idea is thought, how a subject is possible",[2] how pain is lived. This is a crucial point: there are certain kinds of *facts* (interior ones) that can only be *considered* (better yet: that only occur) if the subject of knowledge identifies himself "with the active and consistently productive force of such acts, with the I that feels or apperceives itself in those operations".[3] That is to say, when we deal with the specificity of what is *specifically human in human beings,* to be "scientific" is not just to explain what can be "generalized" or objectified from "an exterior point of view"; it is also to make space for the subjectivity of an *interior and individualized point of view*[4] *on oneself*, as opposed to the knowledge that one can establish from a perspective *outside of oneself.*

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Ignoring this, according to Biran, comes with consequences, the first being that it becomes no longer necessary to describe *ontogenesis*: to describe how thought is born in a thinking being, how sensation, attention, perception *begins* in a sensitive, attentive, perceptive being. As P. Montebello has shown, Husserl, a century after Biran, would argue something similar, also denouncing the *crises of European sciences* and their symptoms, such as the blind option of searching for supposed exact idealities without reflecting on their genesis. What Biran identifies as the reduction of psychology to physics (physiology), and what Husserl calls the 'psychologism', 'historicism', and 'logicism' of the ego[5] represent the same concealment of the origins of meaning, the same disguising of the original way in which thought becomes present (of how thought is born for *me*), the same attempt to erase the limits of any analogical investigation into subjectivity.

It is with his famous theory of *primordial effort* that Biran, in turn, faces this fundamental demand. The primordial effort is, for Maine de Biran, the primitive inner relation (established by the active force of the will and the interior resistance of a muscular, consistent body) where the first *fact* we can ever know[6] is established: the fact of consciousness, the beginning of thought, the intimate evidence of the *I*.[7] This is, as is well known, a central thesis of Biran's philosophy: the *I* can be identified with the active force we call *will* only insofar as the existence of that force becomes a *fact* that occurs in a non-representable relational act; and this perseverant act can occur only if that force of will is applied to a consistent inner term that is the interior resistance of the body.[8]

This is a revolutionary and elegant principle with radical philosophical implications, one of which is to offer a solution to the problem of the beginning of consciousness, of the thinking self, that short-circuits traditional dualisms by means of an active primordial *duality* – a duality where two terms, distinct but never separated,[9] produce the embodied[10] apperceptive unity of a subjective relational *I* (the basis for a rigorous "interior" theory of faculties and emotions). In this way, Biran's theory of *effort* reveals that the apperceived *I* is not a thing, an organ, or set of organs, a *readable* or exterior location, but rather a subjective perspective – on oneself, life, and the world – that, because it depends on a non-representable way of *appearing* of a "interior" resistant body, is *an embodied act*.

It is to account for this inner resisting own body (*corps propre*) that Biran introduces the original idea of an *interior space* (*espace intérieur*). The first formulation of this idea can be found in the notes Biran took when revising the prize-winning version of his *Mémoire sur la décomposition de la pensée*, and its aim was to introduce a subtle conceptual clarification in his work: the idea that the unity of the inner resisting body of the primordial effort[11] (*effort primitive*) is a kind of *continuity of resistance* (*continuité de résistence*).[12]

2. A spacious body *without image and the ways of* interior active touch

Biran finds the expression *resistentis continuatio* in Leibniz's definition of material and objective extension, but for the French philosopher the expression seems particu-

larly adequate to express something different: a kind of *interior extension* or *interior space* inherent in the apperceptive primitive duality of *effort*. Needless to say, the *interior space* of which Biran speaks is not the provisory interior space of the objective body that disappears under the surgeon's scalpel. That impermanent physical extension is, in fact, an exterior space. The muscular inner continuous resistance of the body in the primordial effort is, on the contrary, an enduring subjective certainty that has no image because it is given *with the fact of consciousness* itself – and therefore must be distinguished from the body studied by anatomy and physiology. Biran states this clearly in an interesting anticipation of contemporary phenomenology (equally acknowledge by Merleau-Ponty, J. Patočka, M. Henry or P. Ricoeur, among other).

> The *I* cannot exist to itself without the feeling or the immediate inner apperception of the coexistence of the body: this is the primordial fact. But it can exist or have such an apperception without already knowing its body as an object of representation.[13]

The larger philosophical context of this argument is important: it takes place in a critical dialogue with Condillac and Desttut de Tracy regarding the question of how we can know *our* bodies as such.

Condillac's "ingenious hypothesis", illustrated by his famous *statue*, was to tackle the question starting from the experience of "double touch", understood as the origin of our judgements of exteriority: if the statue feels some pressure against the touching hand with no second sensation it is possible to conclude that it is touching a foreign body; but when the placing of the hand against the chest occurs, whereby one has two feelings, one in the hand, the other in the chest, what also happens is that while touching its chest, the statue can "locate its *I*, both in its chest and in its hand".[14] The difficulty here is to explain how we can be sure that we are *perceiving* our own bodies. Condillac's solution is to contend that one sort of sensation, conveyed by the hand, offers a necessary sensible "continuous" replica of the body as our own. In short, this depends on the hand's being capable of active touch, of being moved over the surface of a sensible body; moreover, there must be a sensation of continual resistance between the chest and the hand, a kind of tactual perception that provides kinaesthetic awareness of the body as "my" own. In a certain sense, along the sensible extension *constantly*[15] being touched, the *statue* will finally feel, "so to speak, under its hand, the continuity of the I".[16]

For Maine de Biran, this solution's weakness and lack of depth are evident: Condillac makes "sensation" both the objective basis of sensation and, at the same time, the subjective basis of the I;[17] by doing so, according to Biran, he promotes an unsustainable confusion of points of view and equivocally subverts the order of knowledge by supposing that the embodied continuity of the *I* could have been "known" before that "I" *was born.* But what would be the sense of something

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like an incessant touching or a succession of acts of touching parts of a body, if a constant *I* was not primordially known in its perseverant, durable and consistent apperception? How can any voluntary intentional effort of movement even be conceivable or fulfilled in time without the temporal density of an immanent and intrinsically active *point fixe* – that offered by an *unintentional*[18] primordial effort?

Condillac's analysis was to be contested by Destutt de Tracy, and there is a moment when Biran thinks his master and friend might finally point out the true path. Tracy disagrees with Condillac's assertion that the hand is the main "organ of touch".[19] This is not a minor disagreement: Tracy contends that one must distinguish between the pressure or surface felt against the hand and the more fundamental sensation of movement, or of voluntarily moving one's body. Without the willed movement of the percipient, Tracy argues, there would be no perception of space or body. We can imagine Biran's enthusiasm as he read Tracy's argument, according to which we must understand that, prior to feeling something against my hand, an internally experienced voluntary motility (*motilité*) connected with the voluntary muscles of the body is required. He is talking about "effort", it seems. But Tracy is not Biran, and the latter quickly understands that Tracy[20] only *appears* to be criticising Condillac or offering an alternative.

According to Biran, it becomes crucially evident in *Elements d'idéologie* that for Tracy, in the most primordial layer of analysis of voluntary movement, what is *first* true is that "we do not distinguish either exterior bodies or our own body",[21] even if by the *sentiment de resistance* we are certain that "we exist and that something else that is different from us exists too".[22] In fact, Tracy simply repeats Condillac's principles. They both work with the same acritical principles: that my "own" body only resists like the exterior bodies, that there is only one kind of resistance (exterior), one kind of voluntary movement or effort (the exteriorly observable kind), only one kind of body (one forced to coincide with its sensible surface), only one source of evidence (seen, touchable exterior things) and, consequently, only one kind of space: an exterior space conceived as a contiguity and traversed by exterior movements of "desire".[23] But once again: how is Condillac's movable touch, or Tracy's motility, even conceivable before or independently of a primordial apperceptive effort?

It is this necessary *architectonic* level of analysis that both Condillac and Tracy misinterpret. Had they pursued that kind of research, according to Biran, their doctrines would be quite different: they could have found another kind of resistance (an inner resistance of the body), another "kind" of body (a body without image), another kind of evidence (the evidence of the interior point of view) and, once again, last but not least, another kind of space: an interior space that is the continuity of inner bodily resistance and, in this sense, clearly distinct from exterior space. And this would be crucial: according to Biran, only the *interior space of the body* – the unity of an interior *continuous resistance* (and not the exterior resistance of a bodily surface), the spacious *non-*

representable resistance of the body of immediate apperception – undivided and constant, instantaneous and durable, massive and docile, gives consistency, unity and *durability* to the "fundamental feeling or (…) apperception of existing".[24] This is the basic condition of an exterior moving (perceptive) touch;[25] in other words, no exterior space would even be conceivable without the primordial fixed reference offered by the *primitive effort*, and consequently, without what gives that effort consistency: the *inner spatial resistance of the body* that is *instantaneously* crossed by the perseverant, *durable* "interior active touch"[26] that is primordial apperception.

The "very notable difference"[27] between an exterior resistance that "annihilates the effect of motor impulsion, that suspends or detains the movement determined by the will", and the interior resistance that "obeys or gives in each time the effort that constitutes the I"[28] becomes "essential":[29] the interior space has no image[30] or exterior figurations;[31] it is not a "container" that is visible or touchable from the outside, but nor is it a kind of introspectively accessible container of "personal feelings". It is what sustains the *duration* of the *conscious* or apperceptive *I.* In other words, the *time*[32] or *durée*[33] of the awakened *I* is, primordially, a way of *taking inner space* that, being a *continuity of resistance*, guaranties the *duration* of an *instantaneous* primordial *effort.* To say *I,* according to Biran, is then not to sustain any kind of self-centred idealism or the idea of an innate apodictic *I*; it is simply to *take up space,* one's own interior space.

3. A spacious resonant body *and the ways of* affective touch

The conclusion that to perceive exterior space one must first *be* an interior resistant space also means that no external references[34] are required to apperceive it; all that is needed is the *interior active touch* (*toucher intérieur actif*). In this sense, the space Biran is talking about is the emblem of the presence of the body in the *unintentional effort*. In a way, this kind of interior space corresponds to the embodied density of the a*wakened I* and can be intimately sensed even when "the sense of vision is veiled in the darkness *usque in spissi tenebris,* the sense of touch in the absence of any accidental pressure, the sense of hearing in silence, etc."[35] In this situation we are like the paraplegic described by Rey Régis, who, unable to exercise a particular effort on the sensible parts affected by sensible impressions (for example when someone presses one of his fingers), continues to feel pain (because in this condition, we are still ourselves *in the interior resistance of the body*) without apperceiving where: the pain is, in a sense, everywhere.[36]

But this is not all. Something more must be said because even if the idea of a *continuity of resistance* is Biran' first word on the subject of interior space, it is not his last. The interior space is not simply that inner consistent endurance of the apperceptive effort: "the interior space of the own body", argues Biran, "is also the place of affective impressions felt by the *individual.*[37] Biran is dealing here with what we could call today a "phenomenological dimension of bodily self-aware-

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ness"[38] that is pushed to its limits and, there, finds the multi-stratified complexity of our embodied way of being. Those impressions from our sensibility remain, at their most archaic levels, merged in what Biran calls "the confused sentiment of the absolute general life" of the "organization". But sometimes they can also "assume the form of relation as they unite by simple coincidence with the *effort* or the *I*",[39] in this case forming "compound sensations" that can be localized[40] in the resisting body in several ways.[41] This is to say that the primordial effort is due to be *complicated* by "variable or accidental impressions" of an affective and intuitive sensibility that can constantly *haunt* and derange the life of apperceptive effort (*la vie de relation*).[42] In these circumstances, the interior space – first known as vague and unlimited, dense and *coexistent* (to will), full and continuous, docile and perseverant – is suddenly *perceived* as variable and manifold, as circumscribed by many different intensities and rhythms when sensible impressions combine with a repetitive and intentional, or "particular effort".[43] In those coincidental combinations, it is possible to locate (touching an injury repeatedly, repeatedly acknowledging a pain in the chest by deep breathing) "points of separation" on the *continuum resistencis*.[44]

Here, it all depends on a coincidental encounter, at a single point of the interior space, between the duality of effort and the materiality of affective and intuitive sensibility, as if the resisting body were a multi-stratified inner *place,* an interior *spatial* interface that gives density to all layers of our own *vie subjective.* In this case, we are no longer in the situation of the paraplegic described by Rey Régis:

> I sense a pain in one foot, or in a mobile part of my body, I have the very distinct feeling of the existence of that part as the term of a voluntary effort, independently of the accidental impression that I perceive as I report it, while not feeling another interior part of my body, over which the will does not act except when accidentally affected.[45]

This is a crucial passage: to begin with, Biran points out that our subjective life is not only the apperceptive evidence of the primordial effort: to be *myself* is not merely to be an *I*; it is also to be the apperception of what affects me. What this means is that the unity of the *I,* though beginning with the effort, is never truly protected from the influences of the world and the amalgamations of life. What is uncanny here is that, on the one hand, we must distinguish between the apperceptive relational *I* and the "materials" of sensibility the *I* does not "cause" or originate; but on the other hand, it is still *me* that feels, and so it must be concluded that sensibility somehow combines with apperception. We must conclude, then, that the capacity of being a subject,[46] of having a life of *relation and consciousness*, involves not merely persevering in the primordial effort but also becoming more and more *individualized* by the interior difference, distinctiveness, of all that happens in me.

The coincidence of a repeated effort with certain organic points unfolds an excess of the body: the excess of the body *I*

am in relation to *body of the effort*. This surplus of the body remains the emblem of an interior embodied space that not only is *moved* as an element of the primordial duality of effort but also vibrates to the rhythms of all that affects me (within me or outside of me). When the *I* is "united with affections they make it say that it feels, with intuitions that it perceives."[47] We must then conclude that interior space is always caught by sensibility. In this sense, such a space is, in fact, a multi-stratified continuity of inner consistency: the continuity of resistance inherent in the primordial effort (the apperceptive evidence of the conscious *I*) and also a *kind of inner extension* – "compound and multiple"[48] – or a spacious unpresentable volume that densifies all the distinctions, movements, intensities and layers of subjective life. To locate a sensation (the first type of composition: the effort with the materials of affection) is therefore at the same time to experience what *I* am, and what is *felt* by *me* without being the *effort* or the *I*:[49] *I* feel a round or pointed pain, a cold or hot pain, a pain that expands or travels *within me*; *I* suffer melancholically the shrinking of my body, the enclosure *of myself.*

The multi-stratification of the interior space becomes clearer. In fact, something of an inner heterogeneity unfolds in that interior *continuous ground*: as if the inner volume of subjective life included an *inner exterior* of the apperceptive *I* at the centre of our subjective life. That heterogeneity would signal *in my subjective life* the "presence of an affective or intuitive matter that the *I* does not create, but rather follows in motion, in more or less active tension".[50] Maybe this is why Maine de Biran suggests, in a telling and much-studied[51] passage from *Note sur l'idée d'existence*, that the *sentiment d'existence*,

> [t]hat kind of vague and obscure feeling, connected to all and every mode of animal or organic life, does not differ in the animal man from the mode of existence or presence of the extension of his own body.[52]

And he adds, a couple of paragraphs later:

> Apart from any activity of the human person and due only to the impressiveness of his life, there will be for the animal man what I call immediate intuition of his own body.[53]

This is a surprising but central claim for two major reasons: first of all, because when Biran talks about the way we *feel our existence*, he is often talking about what causes that feeling to be unstable: the repercussions of the savage influence (on our temperament and our humour, for example) of pure affections (which remain impersonal and impossible to know at their origins).[54] A second problem arises regarding intuition, a term Biran uses to refer to simple or objective exterior perception, which gives us "existences outside ourselves" immediately; the difficulty here is that intuition works with exterior space and relies on the persuasive power of images – something that, as we have seen, is not applicable to interior space. What, then, is *an immediate* (interior) *intuition of the own body*? And why force in this way an analogy between exterior and interior space?[55]

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Let us look closely at intuition: if it is what gives us "existence outside ourselves", intuition is about visual perception, but also exterior touch. Let us relativize the primacy of image in intuition and – as A. Devarieux crucially proposes – focus our attention on touch. In this sense, an "immediate intuition" is an *immediate interior touch* of something perceived as exterior; in this case a kind of "exteriority" of the interior space. Along the *interior active* touch, we must then suppose, is another kind of interior touch: one that *feels* what affects us (without being *I*) as *touchable.* According to Biran, we must then talk about an *affective inner touch*[56] (*tact affective*) that follows a new kind of bodily continuity, of inner spacious duration: the rhythms of *the body I am* suddenly appearing as a landscape of sensible relational intensities, moods, oscillations.

According to Biran, the *affective touch* can only be fully grasped if we graft into the model of intuitive touch the model of *acoustic intuitions.*[57] To touch affectively is, according to Biran, to hear not only what touches us but, more archaically, what *touches itself* in *me*, what resounds in *me* from an "exterior" that is, in fact, an *interior of the interior.* The *interior space of the body* is, in its last stratification, a *resonant space* of "a body-pain, a body-joy"[58]. If the *sentiment d'existence* can be said to be the "feeling of the extension of the own body", that is because the immediate intuition of that *extension* or space is also an intuitive apprehension of an affective durability or temporality: a musical touchable temporality of sensibility – which the "barometer of the soul" measures each day, as if our bodies were to be understood on the model of Biran's favourite musical instrument: the *harp.*

4. Final thoughts

The three major components of Main de Biran's theory of interior space – the durability of the effort, the possibility of perceiving exterior space, and the consistency of the furtive time of sensibility – are a testament to Biran's modernity. As P. Montebello wrote in a recent paper, "Biran's philosophy remains of interest to us (…) "because we have not yet escaped from the questions that it poses"[59]. One of those questions has to do with the status of philosophical question we must give *consciousness* or *apperception* (or subjective personal existence), which, according to Biran cannot be reduced to anatomy and physiology or grasped in any exterior *manifestation*. The life of consciousness with its unique apperceptive and phenomenal order requires, in its originality, a radically different method from the one based on exterior observation: an internal study of the inner spatialized acts of consciousness as they envelop the body.

Biran's philosophical description of the body is also a testament to his modernity. The body apprehended here is not the body of the anatomist (an objective exterior body), nor that of the metaphysician (an absolute substance); it is first and foremost that immediate and lived body through which aperceptive consciousness of oneself is given, sensations are situated, perceptions are constructed and affections are *suffered* - as a primordial oscillation of something that, as M. Richir

came to emphasize, can well be *inside or outside ourselves*[60].

Biran's interest in the role of the body in the genesis of thought (and the differentiation of human faculties) led him to raise yet another modern problem. He saw that consciousness is always traversed by something that it does not create but that is imposed upon it[61], forming unexpected (and, for Biran, melancholic) new landscapes in *interior space.* Biran thus developed a theory of anonym, impersonal and potentially alienating *affectivity*. There, he finds a whole plane beneath consciousness, made of spontaneous associations of affects, intuitions, images and movements that form an underground stream that frequently disturbs, alters and agitates our general sense of embodied existence. Between the certainty of being oneself, found in *effort*, and the bizarre evidence of not being just *oneself* or *always just in oneself*, sensed in the disturbances of affectivity, Biran's original questions can be translated into one major simple inquiry: what does it mean to think with your body? Both the importance of this question and Biran's pioneer contributions to an informed answer cannot be ignore. They keep all their merits till this day.

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[3] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition de la pensée*, in *Œuvres de Maine de Biran*, t. III, Vrin, Paris, 1988, p. 326**.**

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[5] Montebello "Une individuation de la connaissance psycho-physique », pp. 83-84.

[6] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.1), p. 10.

[7] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol. 2), p. 506: « Nous avons vu en quoi consiste l'aperception immédiate interne du *moi* dans l'effort, qui comprend indivisiblement une résistance organique laquelle est inséparable à son tour de l'espace intérieur du corps propre. » For an analysis of the absence of the concept in the prize-winning version of the same text, see Anne Devarieux, *Maine de Biran. L'individualité persévérante*, Millon, Grenoble, 2004, pp. 184 ss.

[8] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.1), p. 9.

[9] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.1), p. 4: it is a "real indissolubility."

[10] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.1), p. 10.

[11] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition,* p. 432 : « Il y a d'abord un effort commun dans la locomotion générale du corps considéré comme une seule masse solidairement *mobile.* »

[12] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition,* p. 432: « Au déploiement unique de cet effort commun, à l'uniformité ou à la continuité de résistance organique doit correspondre le sentiment d'une sorte d'*étendue intérieure* d'abord vague et illimitée, mais qui n'en a pas moins la condition première et fondamentale d'où dépend dans un autre sens, la perception de l'étendue objective, je veux dire la continuité de résistance à un même effort voulu : *resistentis continuatio*. »

[13] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol2)*,* p. 287.

[14] Condillac, *Traité des sensations*, Fayard, Paris, 1984, p**.** 104. See Maine de Biran *De l'aperception immédiate. Mémoire de Berlin,* in Œuvres de Maine de Biran, t. IV, Vrin, Paris, 1995, p. 132 (*De l'aperception*). See Philip P. Hallie, *Maine de Biran. Reformer of Empiricism,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1959, p, 25.

[15] Condillac, *Traité des sensations*, p. 103.

[16] Condillac, *Traité des sensations*, p. 103; see also p. 104 : « La statue apprend donc à connoître (sic) son corps, et à se reconnaître dans toutes les parties qui le composent ; parce qu'aussitôt qu'elle porte la main sur une d'elles, le même être sentant se répond en quelque sorte l'une à l'autre : *c'est moi.* » See also Luís António Umbelino, *Somatologia subjetiva. Apercepção de Si e Corpo em Maine de* Biran¸ Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisboa, 2010, pp. 150-151.

[17] Bernard Baertschi, « La statue de Condillac, image du réel ou fiction logique ? », in *Revue philosophique de Louvain,* t. 82, 55(1984), p. 343.

[18] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 239.

[19] Hallie, *Maine de Biran,* p. 26.

[20] Maine de Biran, *Correspondance 1766-*

1804, in *Œuvres de Maine de Biran,* t. XIII-2 Paris: Vrin, 1996, p. 272 ss ; 303 ss.

[21] Destutt de Tracy, *Éléments d'idéologie* (4. Vol) ed. *facsimile,* Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart, 1977, p, 134.

[22] Tracy, *Éléments d'idéologie,* 134.

[23] Tracy, according to Biran, equivocally takes desire to be the will. Maine de Biran, *Correspondance 1766-1804*, pp. 275 ; 296 ; 314.

[24] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition,* p. 140.

[25] In this sense, according to Biran, it is only apparently that one finds the "own body" by the *contiguity under the juxtaposition of parts*. The "own body" is known in the *effort* as an interior space.

[26] Devarieux, *Maine de Biran*, p. 239.

[27] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition,* p. 432.

[28] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 282 ; Maine de Biran, *De l'aperception*, p. 156.

[29] Maine de Biran, *Essai,* (vol.2) p. 282.

[30] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition*, p. 439.

[31] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol. 1), p. 150: "(…) Indépendamment de la connaissance extérieure de la forme ou de la figure des parties de notre corps comme objet relatif au sens du toucher et de la vue, il y a apperception interne de la présence ou de la coexistence de ce corps propre toute relative à un sens musculaire spécial qui ne peut agir et se connaître qu'en *dedans* sans pouvoir se représenter *au dehors* ». Similar formulation, for instance, in Maine de Biran, *De l'apperception*, p. 134. See François Azouvi, *Maine de Biran. La science de l'homme*, p. 230.

[32] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition*, p. 432 : "Mais si le sentiment d'existence personnelle est inséparable de celui de l'effort commun qui se déploie simultanément sur des parties inertes ou *continûment* résistantes, on conçoit comment une certaine *forme* intérieure d'*espace* ou d'étendue corporelle peut être indivisiblement unie dès l'origine avec le sentiment relatif de moi commençant à exister pour lui-même dans un *temps*".

[33] Maine de Biran, *Essai,* (vol.2), p. 240 : « Cet effort non *intentionné*, qui s'étend à tous les muscles volontaires, constitue, avec le durable du *moi* ou de la personne identique, l'état de veille de ces sens divers qui concourent à la vie de relation ou de conscience (…). Périodiquement suspendu pendant le sommeil, l'exercice de la volonté, tandis que la vie organique roule sans interruption dans son cercle accoutumé, redevient présent à lui-même, dès que la même force recommence à se déployer sur la même inertie organique. Le sujet de l'effort reconnaît immédiatement son *identité*, sa durée continuée et sent qu'il est le même qu'avant le sommeil, sans qu'aucune impression accidentelle vienne motiver des souvenirs distincts, ou quelque relation déterminée entre un temps présent et un temps passé ».

[34] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 230

[35] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 240.

[36] Maine de Biran, *De l'aperception,* p. 127.

[37] Maine de Biran *Mémoire sur la décomposition,* p. 432.

[38] See D. Legrande, "Phenomenological Dimensions of Bodily Self-Consciousness", in S. Gallagher (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of the Self,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011.

[39] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 231 : « Les impressions purement affectives, qui se confondent d'abord avec le sentiment confus de la vie générale, prennent un caractère de relation en s'unissant par simple coïncidence avec l'*effort* ou le *moi*. »

[40] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 231.

[41] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 231.

[42] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), p. 240.

[43] Devarieux, *Maine de Biran* p. 243.

[44] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition,* p. 433.

[45] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol.2), 231-232.

[46] Pierre Montebello, *La décomposition de la pensée. Dualité et empirisme transcendan-*

tal chez Maine de Biran, Jérôme Million, Grenoble, 1994, p. 155.

[47] Devarieux, *Maine de Biran*, p. 243

[48] Montebello, *La décomposition de la pensée.* p. 155.

[49] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition*, p. 432.

[50] Devarieux, *Maine de Biran*, p. 243. Maybe this is why, in the case of physical pain, we feel that it is *me* who is hurting *me* in a non-transferable individual way, at the same time forcing me to wish to leave *myself* in order to return to *me*.

[51] Raymond Vancourt, *La théorie de la connaissance chez Maine de Biran. Realisme Biranien et idéalisme,* Aubier, Paris, 1944, pp. 184-185 ; Devarieux, *Maine de Biran*, pp. 286 e ss ; p. 295.

[52] Maine de Biran *Dernière philosophie : existence et anthropologie,* in *Œuvres de Maine de Biran*, t. X-2, ed. Vrin, Paris, 1989, p. 256.

[53] Maine de Biran *Dernière philosophie,* p. 254-255.

[54] Maine de Biran, *Essai,* (vol 2), p. 201.

[55] Maine de Biran, *Mémoire sur la décomposition,* p. 432.

[56] Devarieux, *Maine de Biran*, p. 297.

[57] Maine de Biran, *Essai* (vol. 2), p. 220 : « La vibratilité de ces cordes harmoniques de l'instrument auditif sert aussi à conserver les impressions, après que leur cause a cessé d'agir, à lier dans les différents instants du temps les termes d'une suite mélodieuse (…). Devarieux, *Maine de Biran*, p. 289.

[58] Devarieux, *Maine de Biran*, p. 167.

[59] Pierre Montebello, "Maine de Biran and the Mind-Body Problem: An Introduction and Commentary on *The Relationship between the Physical and the Moral in Man*", in Maine de Biran, *The The Relationship between the Physical and the Moral in Man,* edited and translated by D. Meacham and J. Spadola, Bloomsbury, London/Oxford/New York/New Delhi/Sidney, 2016, 140.

[60] The importance and actuality of this analysis can be easily measured by the impact they had, for example, on M. Richir's project of recasting phenomenology (see Marc Richir, *L'écart et le rien. Conversations avec Sacha Carlson*, Million, Grenoble, 2015, pp. 154, ss ; 222 ss.). The starting point of Richir's architectonic is the problem of the sublime. In it, the idea of a primordial "rebound of affectivity" plays a decisive role in the redefinition of the "phenomenological field itself". Such a redefinition implicates to put *hors-circuit* the ontological simulacrum (subjectivity) in its role of simulacrum, in order to assume it - in its archaic register - as no-adherent-to-itself, that is to say, as the *inner space* (the *thumos*) where the reflexivity of phenomena resounds: something bounces "there" and echoes "here" in the reflexivity of an embodied, inner *spatialized,* original *proto-thinking* – that "something" being *nothing but the phenomenon*. In this sense, affectivity becomes a central feature in Richir phenomenological project – and so will became Maine de Biran's work: in it, according to Richir, we can find (well ahead Heidegger) the true philosophical meaning of *Stimmung.* In a first moment, Richir does not find that "affectivity" is convincingly developed by Husserl (in his readings of Brentano). This perspective changes when Richir entails a close analysis of key writings in *Husserliana XXIII*; meanwhile, Heidegger's analysis of the *Stimmung* will play the role of a main reference, but Richir soon finds out that regarding *stimmung* Maine de Biran anticipates all Heidegger says on the subject.

[61] Montebello, "Maine de Biran and the Mind-Body Problem", 152.