GATE. ON THE POSSIBILITY AT LIMIT OF A NUMINOUS SENSE

Alexandru-Ioan Cânda
PhD, West University of Timişoara

Abstract: By taking a position towards the numinous through which the opening of a framework for the manifestation of human-numinous presences is sought, the mystic finds himself in a state of expectancy in front of the Sacred Gate (Gr. Ἱερὰ Πύλη) which is viewed not as an unsurpassable limit, but as an intermediate zone through which the numinous can manifest itself. However, speaking of an open spatiality in the world of the mystic's being, it also becomes necessary a positioning towards the unspoken word as a threshold-sign that marks both a state of evocation of a past numinous sense but already semantically fixed, and a separation from a numinous sense that still escapes understanding. In all this dynamic, the framing of the threshold in a system of linguistic-numinous signs carries with it the symbol coming from the numinous and opens a space of encounters built on a linguistic intimacy at the limit in which the numinous sign becomes a numinous sense reached through the mediation of the Other.

Keywords: gate, hermeneutic phenomenology, intention, language, semiotics

1. An unsurpassable limit

Following a specific positioning towards the numinous, which aims to open a space of manifestation of human-numinous presences, the mystic is in a state of expectancy in front of this Sacred Gate (Gr. Ἱερὰ Πύλη) which is viewed not as an unsurpassable limit, but as a threshold through whose unidirectional permeability the numinous can come to presence.

So the numinous being in a *state of mystical concealment* (Ro. *stare de ascundere mistică*) (See Cânda, 2024[b], p. 28) will be able to emerge of its own will from this mystery of censorship, manifesting itself towards the mystic that is already present, being in a *void-of-being* (Ro. *gol-de-ființare*) following a *lingering-in-fact* (Ro. *zăboviri-în-fapt*) which implies an opportunity towards seizing the sacred (See Cânda, 2024[a], pp. 1309, 1312).

Since we are talking about an open spatiality in the world of the mystic's being, we are also talking about a positioning towards the unspoken word as a threshold-sign that marks both a state of remembrance – of evocation – of a past numinous sense but already semantically fixed, as well as a separation from a numinous sense that still escapes understanding – therefore of an elusive semantic definition.

If the existential act is a simple epiphany of *to be* that is consumed without leaving any residue and fully satisfied itself (See Șora, 1990, pp. 85-86), then the act of lingering in anticipation of the Presence of the Other also presupposes a *with-everything-here-and-now* (Ro. *cu-totul-aici-și-acum*) of a form that, perfected through its own potency as a constructive tension between the natural and the unsuspected, imposes itself as a landmark-sign in this construction of expectations at the limit.

2. The threshold as a referential sign

If entering the numinous presupposed a travail of crossing, by *stopping-at-the-limit-of-meaning* (Ro. *oprirea-la-limita-sensului*) a crossing in itself is initiated (See Cânda, 2024[a], p. 1307), but not only as a travail of revealing of a pre-existing numinous as a natural given of being, but especially as a *travail of constructing a numinous linguistic sign* (Ro. *travaliu*

de construire a unui semn lingvistic numinos) necessary to address this sense – and therefore to open a space of encounters built on a linguistic intimacy.

Here is interesting to see the definition of the linguistic sign by Henri Wald (1983, p. 25):

> "The linguistic sign is a dialectical unity, within which the phonetic and semantic are *contradictory*, because the third element does not exist; *interdependent*, because one does not exist without the other; *asymmetrical*, because the first determines the second, and *autodynamic*, because the tension that the retroaction of the second causes on the first moves the entire structure."

Applying this formulation to the numinous linguistic sign, we have instead: a *convergence* through unutterance (so not a total rupture since "the freedom to be silent does not eliminate the need to speak" – Pavel, 1993, p. 52), through the *sense-which-is-but-escapes-understanding* (Ro. *sensul-care-este-dar-scapă-înțelegerii*) (but which acquires an existence for itself – See Ponty, 1999, p. 242) and through the presence of *the-Other-as-bearer-of-numinous-sense* (Ro. *Celuilalt-ca-purtător-de-sens-numinos*) as a third element; a *conditioning by an Unconditioned*; an *eccentricity* through the sovereign determining positioning of the Other and an *exodynamics* tributary to the numinous – but with a homogeneous engaging mechanism through which the distinction of the sign is also its constituent (See Saussure, 1998, p. 134).

Since the aptitude of the sign resides exclusively in its referential character (See Gadamer, 2001, p. 308), in the case of the *threshold as a referential sign* (Ro. *pragul ca semn referențial*) we have a referentiality augmented by the sign itself which will impose a future sense and a future interpretation. If the sign is a representation of a presence which is not an image (See See Derrida, 2015, pp. 37, 65), then the threshold-sign carries with it only a latency of symbol of an *it is already like that* (Ro. *deja este așa*), and not an imaginative projection of an *it may be somehow* (Ro. *poate fi cumva*).

So, the referentiality of the sign-threshold means its framing in a system of signs. In this case, the framing in a system of linguistically numinous signs through which the sign-threshold carries with it the symbol as a given coming from the numinous, the sign-threshold becoming a symbolic referential as an *it is already like that in the language* (Ro. *deja este așa în limbaj*). Thus, the numinous sign is an aprioristic given of language – so the sign can have a possible way of existing (See Peirce, 1990, p. 256) through precisely this *numinous sign as a given of language* (Ro. *semn numinos ca dat al limbajului*).

But the existence and nature of this given-sign is unknown to the mystic before entering a path of exalted religious experimentation – so the sign can even be an unimaginable (See Peirce, 1990, p. 270), but which nevertheless has existence and permanence, the unimaginable sign thus having an associated existent and persistent character.

On the sign, Charles Sanders Peirce has two relevant formulations (Peirce, 1990, pp. 254, 257):

> "The Sign (...) [is] something which is so determined by something else, called its Object, and which determines a certain effect on a person, an effect which I call its Interpretant, that the latter is determined mediated by the former." (pg. 254)

> "There are (...) two Objects of a Sign: the Mediated outside the Sign and the Unmediated inside the Sign. Its interpretant is everything that the Sign transmits: knowledge of the Object must be acquired through collateral experience. The Mediated

Object is the Object outside the Sign (...). The Sign must indicate it through a **suggestion** (...) which is the Unmediated Object." (pg. 257)

Applying these to the numinous sign, the numinous Other becomes the Mediated One who determines by givenness the existence of the sign, and the sign – by its own persistence of imposition – indicates the Other by suggestion as the Unmediated. So, the Other discovers itself in the very content suggested and transmitted by the sign through an incipient-morphological volatility that becomes a definitive-etymological reality.

In this diachronic linguistic dynamic in which objects are themselves signs in an indefinite regression towards a hypothetical logos (See Sebeok, 2002, p. 57) – a travail of unveiling through the necessary relation to the presumed word –, the threshold-sign finds a positioning between the conditions of signification and truth (See Eco, 1982, p. 79) of relation to the object as a purely demonstrative application of the sign (See Peirce, 1990, p. 84) – therefore as a referential conditionant both for its own being and for the bearing form of the sense.

3. From the proximity of beingness to the approximation of sense

In this framing of the limits, however, unattained, we do not have an *expectation-in-suspension* (Ro. *așteptare-în-suspendare*) (Cânda, 2024[a], p. 1308) of the first mystical experiences, but a tendency from the sign as given of being towards the sense as being of the sign. Thus, this spiritual journey between phenomenon and essence (See Wald, 1973, p. 122) through which thought as *One in loss of reality* (See Pleșu, 1994, p. 235) becomes a *One in retrieval of reality* (Ro. *Unul în regăsire de realitate*) – of a reality of the word bearing numinous sense.

If the concretization of the sense is an interpretation of understanding (See Gadamer, 2001, p. 297), then it becomes necessary to focus on the numinous sign as *meaning-given-towards-a-numinous-something* (Ro. *înțeles-dat-spre-un-ceva-numinos*) – therefore as numinous sense. Since sense is occurrence and accession-to-language (See Gadamer, 2001, pp. 319, 353) – therefore bearer of origin and impetus –, then the numinous sign becomes *meaning-given-through-the-numinous-language-of-the-Other* (Ro. înțeles-dat-prin-limbajul-numinos-al-Celuilalt) as *semantic-positioning-towards-the-Other* (Ro. *poziționare-semantică-față-de-Celălalt*) (Cânda, 2024[b], pp. 37-38) through which a definitive fixation in the semiotic reality of relationship with the numinous is sought.

If validation in reality requires a distinct incorporation into a system (See Carnap, 1972, p. 268), then the recognition of numinous language as real also requires first a positioning of semiotic belonging, and then a novel use of language through metaphor to imagine a new ontology (See Eco, 2009, p. 63) of semantic addressing as placing-in-sense (Derrida, 2015, p. 178) – be it a signified sense (*Zeichen-Sinn*) or an expressive one (*Ausdrucks-Sinn*) (See Ponty, 1999, p. 349).

These formulaic positionings of signs – therefore morphological frames for addressing a previously prepared enunciation – are not subsequent instantiations of the self in ephemeral fragments of experience (See Husserl, 2011, pp. 212-213), but are precisely the aprioristical within the framework of absolute presence as such (*absolute Selbsgegebenheit*) (See See Husserl, 2002, p. 27).

Thus, signs also become the marginals of language, not being just impositions of form in the constructible word of language, but rather *signs-as-expositions-of-yet-indistinct-senses* (Ro. *semne-ca-expuneri-de-sensuri-încă-nedesluşite*).

4. The marginal as a signified exposed

In the state of expectancy generated by positioning at the limit of the numinous already present for manifestation, the *sign-as-marginal-of-language* (Ro. *semnul-ca-marginal-al-limbajului*) does not imply a placement in inferiority or vulnerability, but a preparation for framing a numinous signifier (Cânda, 2024[b], p. 12) necessary for the language of interaction with the numinous as the Other.

If through the act towards *another* the addressee is the one who possesses the signified (See Șora, 2006, p. 114) which essentially belongs to him as its bearer (See Gadamer, 2001, p. 303), for the enunciation and the subsequent numinous dialogue, the signified not only already belonged to the Other, but was also a prior mysterious given to the mystic in the form of a semiotic field (See Wald, 1983, p. 109) – there being no essential and original act of signifying for the constitution of language (See Foucault, 1996, p. 121) and the being being pure of sign (*reines Zeichensein*) (See Gadamer, 2001, p. 312).

So, the understanding of what the sign is derives from resemblance (See See Wright, 1995, p. 144) – hence from an essential similarity that thus facilitates a *channel of sense donation* (Ro. *canal de donare de sens*) as a "given in representation" (See Husserl, 2011, p. 242) – hence a system of signification that is motivated by communicative intentions (See Eco, 1982, p. 38).

Thus, the marginality of the sign is precisely the validating communication intention of both a system of signification and a system of signs, the numinous sign becoming *sign-as-intention-of-numinous-language* (Ro. *semn-ca-intenție-de-limbaj-numinos*) towards the unveiling at the limit of language of a numinous sense.

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