

Book reviews

Réflexions sur les limites de la rationalité

Louis Perron et Pierre-Antoine Pontoizeau (dir.),
La philosophie de la limite chez Jean Ladrière
(Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 2018)

Gheorghe-Ilie FÂRTE

Enseignant influent, auteur prodigieux (650 articles scientifiques), intellectuel raffiné, catholique engagé, membre dévoué et efficace des nombreuses institutions (notamment de l'Institut supérieur de philosophie de l'Université catholique de Louvain), Jean Ladrière jouissait au cours de sa vie d'une immense autorité morale et intellectuelle (Van Parijs 2007) et son influence est restée vivante. En 2017, soixante ans après la publication de son « œuvre majeure et séminale » (Perron & Pontoizeau 2018), *Les limitations internes des formalismes. Étude sur la signification du théorème de Gödel et des théorèmes apparentés dans la théorie des fondements des mathématiques*, et 10 ans après sa mort, quelques personnalités francophones de Suisse, du Canada, de Belgique, de Roumanie et de France se sont rencontrés dans un colloque à Montréal pour réfléchir sur la « problématique des limites de la rationalité tant au plan théorique que pratique » (Perron & Pontoizeau 2018). Treize articles présentés lors du colloque ont été inclus dans ce volume ainsi qu'une préface écrite par Louis Perron et Pierre-Antoine Pontoizeau et un portrait académique de Jean Ladrière élaboré par Mathilde Bataille.

Chercheurs de renom de divers domaines universitaires – physique, mathématiques, logique, philosophie et théologie –, les auteurs ont exploré la pensée ladrière pour fournir une perspective philosophique intégrative et contemporaine sur la limite. Bien que centrés sur le même sujet, les travaux des auteurs sont suffisamment hétérogènes pour dire qu'ils illustrent dans une certaine mesure l'incommensurabilité des savoirs et l'existence de nos limites. Dans ce qui suit, je ferai référence à certaines idées des auteurs, qui pourraient inciter les lecteurs à une lecture plus approfondie du livre.

La contribution de Louis Perron, *La problématique des limites chez Ladrière*, corréle la pensée des limites ladrière avec « l'irréductible facticité du réel », « la rude concrétude ontologique du monde » et « l'inévitabilité de la massivité des choses » (p. 11). L'expérience contemporaine des limites a une forte charge émotionnelle. L'homme contemporain ressent la crise de la modernité, plus précisément les manifestations de sa décadence : une profonde désillusion, les révisions radicales, la déconstruction, l'incertitude, la critique de la critique, etc. (p. 13). Les limites externes imposées par la nature, les limites de

la raison théorique et la réalité du mal façonnent l'expérience historique actuelle, notre relation au futur et notre sens de l'avenir (p. 23).

Le réflexions logiques de Constantin Salavastru sur « l'impossibilité de dépasser les obstacles de la connaissance qui vient de la nature même de la pensée humaine » (p. 26) rappellent quatre « faits de limitation » : (a) les paradoxes logiques (du paradoxe antique du menteur au paradoxe contemporains de la théorie des ensembles formulé par Bertrand Russell), (b) les axiomes des systèmes déductifs, (c) l'impossibilité, à l'intérieur d'un système axiomatique, de satisfaire à la fois la cohérence et la complétude et (d) la distinction entre le langage-objet et le métalangage. Après avoir remarqué à juste titre que la plupart des solutions aux paradoxes et autres antinomies ne sont, en réalité, que restrictions qui limitent la pensée, Constantin Salavastru conclut ce qui suit : « [T]oute la pensée travaille par l'intermédiaire des actes de limitation et ces actes de la limitation s'équilibrent réciproquement » (p. 43).

L'article de Jean-Paul Delahaye sur la force axiomatique du hasard reprend les conclusions de Gödel concernant l'incomplétude pour révéler les liens établis entre l'incomplétude, la complexité et le hasard. L'une des conclusions importantes de l'article est que « ce qui manque dans une théorie formalisée est essentiellement de l'information sur la complexité et le hasard » (p. 53).

Dans son article *Jean Ladrière et la problématique des frontières*, Denis Miéville a avoué son intérêt particulier pour les « limitations internes des formalismes » et a remarqué le fait que Jean Ladrière « maîtrisait, de manière incomparable, l'art difficile de faire vivre la science des limitations » (p. 57). Refusant de se refermer dans les limites rigides de la logique traditionnelle, Denis Miéville propose le projet d'une logique qui « brise, en fonction de ses projets, les frontières des possibilités expressives, conceptuelles et inferentielles de la logique standard » (p. 61). Cette logique trouve son origine, au moins partiellement, dans les travaux d'un logicien qui s'est distingué par son inventivité et sa créativité : Stanislaw Lesniewski.

Pierre-Antoine Pontoizeau discute les limites internes des formalismes « en reprenant les constats posés déjà par Nicolas de Cues sur l'inadéquation des symboles finies évoquant des objets excédant la finitude » (Pontoizeau 2019 : 253). L'auteur remarque les positions similaires de Jean Ladrière et du théologien protestant Paul Tillich concernant la distinction entre *la raison sémantique* (produisant indéfiniment du sens) et *la raison instrumentale* (fantasmant un formalisme panmathématique) (Pontoizeau 2019 : 253).

En proposant une redéfinition des conditions transcendantales, Mathilde Bataille insiste que « le monde et la raison ne sont pas à opposer » et « il n'y a pas d'un côté une idéalité contemplatrice et d'un autre, une matérialité étrangère à l'activité de la raison » (p. 96). Dans ces conditions, le lieu au sein duquel se constitue historiquement tout objet c'est la logique (p. 96).

Le philosophe Hubert Faes explore le sens contemporain de la finitude du monde, la contingence des limites, les traits de la rationalité moderne et la relation de codépendance entre la finitude de l'existence et la finitude de la

raison. L'auteur remarque que « la raison humaine n'est pas simplement soumise à la finitude de l'existence » (p. 109) et il conclut avec optimisme que « [d]ans la finitude de l'existence, la raison est raison d'espérer » (p. 109).

La contribution de Mathieu Guillermin, *L'incommensurabilité, imperfection ou limite significative ?*, propose « un éclairage alternatif sur la question de la limite des discours (rationnels) et des champs de connaissances » (p. 111) qui part de l'hypothèse que « la notion d'incommensurabilité, telle que mise en avant par [Thomas] Kuhn ou [Paul] Feyerabend, peut nous conduire à une compréhension des discours et démarche rationnelles qui soit analogue à celle de [Jean] Ladrière » (p. 111).

Parce que nous n'avons pas l'intention de résumer tous les articles du volume, mais seulement d'inciter les lecteurs à les lire, je me limite dans ce qui suit à mentionner les autres contributions au volume. Ainsi, l'article de Jean-Michel Counet porte sur mathématiques, connaissance de soi et limites de la raison. Jean-Claude Simard discute l'industrialisation des sciences et propose une logique macro-historique. François Lepage présente la logique intuitionniste avec négation forte comme limite externe aux croyances rationnelles. La théologienne Thérèse Nadeau-Lacour fait un exercice d'herméneutique réussi pour établir un lien entre l'excédence et la limite. A la fin du volume se trouve un article de Bertrand Hespel qui corrèle les idées de Ladrière sur la limite avec le célèbre théorème d'incomplétude de Kurt Gödel et la violation de l'inégalité de John Stewart Bell.

Très denses en idées et diverses en approches, les articles rassemblés dans ce volume peuvent constituer des points de départ pour d'autres travaux sur la limite. Les chercheurs ont révélé la fécondité de la pensée ladrière et la pertinence de l'approche interdisciplinaire au problème de la limite.

Références

- PONTOIZEAU, Pierre-Antoine. 2019. « Note de lecture. » Review of *La philosophie de la limite chez Jean Ladrière*, by Louis Perron et Pierre-Antoine Pontoizeau (dir.). *Hermeneia* 23: 249-253.
- VAN PARIJS, Philippe. 2007. « Jean Ladrière, philosophe de toutes les sciences, penseur de l'espérance. » *La Libre Belgique*, 27 novembre. Retrieved from <https://uclouvain.be/fr/instituts-recherche/isp/jean-ladriere-philosophe-de-toutes-les-sciences-penseur-de-l-espérance.html>.

**From Obama to Lady Gaga.
Exploring Classical and Contemporary Perspectives on Political Speech**

Jonathan Charteris-Black,
Analysing Political Speeches. Rhetoric, Discourse and Metaphor
(2nd Edition, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2018)

Iolanda PRODAN

Described by Ruth Wodak (a well-known representant of DHA) as „both ambitious and appealing”, the second edition of *Analysing Political Speeches. Rhetoric, Discourse and Metaphor* explores political speeches from a variety of approaches: classical rhetoric, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) and Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA).

Divided into three parts, the book provides an analytical view on political speeches, focusing on generous excerpts taken from the speeches of famous politicians (John F. Kennedy, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, Tony Blair), actors and singers (Emma Watson, Lady Gaga) or characters of historical plays (Shakespeare’s *Henry V*). Defining political speech „as a coherent stream of spoken language that is usually prepared for delivery by a speaker to an audience for a specific purpose on a political occasion” (xiii), the author claims that a political speech needs to persuade through „fluency, a high level of confidence, authenticity, spontaneity and the ability to inspire trust” (xviii).

The first part describes the traditional approaches to rhetoric, oratory and discourse. Naming the Aristotelian triad *ethos-pathos-logos* „artistic proofs” (8), Charteris-Black’s theoretical take on classical rhetoric is illustrated by large extracts from the speeches of British and American politicians. The same goes with the section on arrangement in classical rhetoric in which he analyses important speeches by B. Obama and D. Trump. By choosing contemporary political speeches, Charteris-Black proves his commitment to show how the classical branches of oratory „stood the test of time” (8) and „relate to modern ways of thinking about how language is influenced by considerations of social purpose and context” (7). In the second chapter, dedicated to the style and figures of speech in classical rhetoric, the author reiterates the need to approach the selected speeches considering their historical circumstances and purposes. The first part ends with a section on coherence and cohesion in discourse, in which the author provides a clear-cut take on the two concepts: „Cohesion [...] is concerned with the linguistic means through which a speech gives the impression of being unified [...]. It contrasts with coherence, which is concerned

more with the other types of cognitive and schematic knowledge that are identified when analysing the speech context” (61). Taking as example John F. Kennedy’s inaugural speech (1961), Charteris-Black underscores that „whereas cohesion is more objectively present in the text” (77), coherence is evaluated by audience according to knowledge and experience (77).

Titled *Critical Approaches to Discourse*, the second part of the books is divided into four chapters. Of these, two are of particular importance: Chapter 6 (*The Discourse-Historical Approach*) and Chapter 7 (*Ad Hominem Arguments and Corpus Method*). The main virtues of DHA are analysed (the four levels of context, the attention paid to historical context of speeches, the types of discursive strategies) as well as the questionable approach to the concept of *topoi*. As far as the Chapter 7 is concerned, Charteris-Black addresses the issue of impoliteness from the perspective of *ad hominem* argument taking as examples D. Trump and H. Clinton’s presidential campaign speeches. In author’s focus are *ad hominem* arguments and impoliteness as entertainment and coercion. Entertainment through impoliteness „can [...] contribute to a political and social identity that is subsequently nurtured through social media” (167). On the other hand, impoliteness of *x* also may become a way of forcing the victim (*y*) to adopt an abusive language (albeit less vulgar) intended to affect the positive social image of *x*. The theoretical insights are followed by generous section on president Trump’s 82 speeches, dealing with main verbs, adjectives and nouns employed in constructing the never-ending dichotomy „us versus them”.

The last part of the book, *Critical Metaphor Analysis*, opens with a chapter presenting a theoretical framework of metaphor. The author briefly touches upon metaphor definition and the issue of metaphor in political discourse, providing ten guiding-questions employed in research design (205). In Chapter 9, the author applies the Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) on Obama first’s inaugural address in two case studies preceded by two useful sections on CMA. Aiming to „identify *which* metaphors are chosen in persuasive genres such as political speeches, party political manifestos or press reports, and [...] to explain *why* these metaphors are chosen, with reference to the interaction between an orator’s purposes and a specific set of speech circumstances” (217), CMA is structured in four stages (217-219): (1) contextual analysis (leading to research questions about metaphors in specific social and political contexts and selection of speeches), (2) metaphor identification (focused on deciding what counts as metaphor), (3) metaphor interpretation (showing how metaphors are classified, organized and arranged) and (4) metaphor explanation (determining speakers’ purposes in using certain metaphors). Through a generous selection of political speeches, Chapter 10 provides a detailed overview of seven persuasive purposes of metaphor: gaining attention and establishing trust, heuristic, predicative, empathetic, aesthetic, ideological, mythic (248). In illustrating the ideological purpose of metaphor, Charteris-Black has chosen Lady Gaga’s speech (2010) blasting the discrimination against bi- and homosexual military personnel (259).

Obviously, Charteris-Black's newest books has some virtues: the focus on historical and social context of selected speeches, the exercises encouraging the readers to apply the introduced approaches to discourse, the variety of genres of political communication discussed (televised debates, tweeting, blogging etc.), sample text analysis, figures and tables providing essential information on the topic, an interesting selection of orators ranging from former and incumbent presidents to music and movie stars, suggestions for further readings and a short glossary. However, without a strong background on his previously published works (i.e. *Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004; *Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), the oversimplified approach to conceptual and theoretical frameworks makes difficult to understand author's intended message. Despite these shortcomings, Charteris-Black's book is highly recommended to experts and advanced students of communication and political sciences.

A Kaleidoscopic View of Charisma

Vincent W. Lloyd, *In Defense of Charisma*
(Columbia University Press, New York, 2018)

Aditi Anamaria GHERAN

In Defense of Charisma is the fourth book written by associate professor Vincent W. Lloyd of theology and religious studies at Villanova University, Pennsylvania. The book was published in 2018 by the New York based university press named Columbia University Press. He is the author of *The Problem with Grace: Reconfiguring Political Theology* (2011), *Black Natural Law* (2016) and co-editor of the work *Race and Secularism in America* (2016). Throughout his works, he challenges his readers to meditate and explore important matters such as political theology, race, American traditions, secularism etc.

In Defense of Charisma functions as a guide which presents a broad spectrum of the different shapes and forms that embody charisma. Vincent W. Lloyd specializes in philosophy of religion, religion, politics and race including all the knowledge gained in these fields in his book. Therefore, his work includes references to literary, theological and philosophical texts, bringing vivid examples of how charisma presents itself. The book also includes some examples from today's network age, taken from both television and social media platforms, like Twitter. The book is structured in five chapters which are individual case studies that support the differences between authoritarian and democratic charisma. The *Afterword* of the book contains chronological narratives depicted from Lloyd's research into a deeper understanding of charisma and its multifaceted forms of manifestation. This way the author encourages others to study this concept by setting an example of his academic journey.

Lloyd gives a lot of examples of charismatic figures from various fields such as historical, literary, cinematographic trying to create a 360°panoramic view of the concept. The first chapter includes proof that the Biblical figure, Moses, had democratic charisma through a rather interesting contrast between the Biblical writing and the cinematographic work 'The Ten Commandments'. The other four chapters also include the mixture between the four famous novels from the 20th century American literature, which are put face to face with their screenings. Lloyd uses this juxtaposition between the written text and the moving picture to show the universality of charisma and that it can be contained in various mediums.

Charisma has been a topic of interest amongst scholars along the years and will continue to represent a strong, vast subject of academic study. One of

the strongest points of Lloyd's work is that it dichotomizes the concept of charisma into authoritarian and democratic charisma. This distinction is very important towards a deeper understanding of the multiple layers of charisma, as seen in Vincent W. Lloyd's objectivity. The word 'defense' used in the title has no personal link to Lloyd, but ties together the two faces of charisma, showing how the good and the evil co-exist in this very controversial concept. The negative aspect of the complex phenomenon titled charisma thrives from the failure to distinguish between these two types, according to Lloyd's views. Recognizing and understanding the two different types of charisma will then lead to the loss of confusion in the scholarly and popular discussion of charisma.

According to the authoritarian charisma, the leader uses it as a tool to gain social advantage, to build his status quo to the disadvantage of the masses. The followers of an authoritarian leader are easily manipulated by the face of control, surrendering their better judgment. Lloyd emphasizes the idea that any time a scholar is critical of the notion of charisma, he is in fact referring to the authoritarian manifestation of charisma. Lloyd argues that a lot of controversial leaders such as Adolf Hitler had, indeed, a type of charisma that electrified the masses of people. This would classify under the authoritarian model of charisma, which is opposite to the democratic model.

On the other hand, the democratic charisma offers the audience the chance to engage in the layers of knowledge which is given to individuals, helping them to discover the three fundamental discernments of the human mind: the truth, the beauty, the good. The democratic charisma has no hidden purposes, its primordial purpose being to connect individuals with their own inner charismatic being, having a contagious dimension. The concept of democratic charisma developed by the author is described as being universal, found in all individuals, from our neighbors to our colleagues or family members. The universal dimension of charisma Lloyd puts forward is an atypical approach to this concept, different to Max Weber's traditional ideas about a charismatic leader.

The author links the charisma to two concepts that he describes in the introductory part of the book: the human and humanity. The main connection between the two is that democratic charisma makes the human visible, while the authoritarian charisma succeeds in concealing it. Lloyd understands humanity and the human being as having a pure core that is strongly tied to the three fundamental discernments: the truth, the beauty, the good. This idea runs throughout 'In Defense of Charisma', supporting the author's belief that charisma is an universal asset rooted in the divine image that every human holds. The author states a new approach, arguing the fact that every ordinary person has layers of charisma which are usually camouflaged by cultural and ideological factors.

While Max Weber moved the roots of charisma from the theological meaning to a new sociological understanding, Vincent W. Lloyd brought it back to its biblical essence. Many academic writings go on the path of criticizing charisma, or what Lloyd understands as authoritarian charisma, but in his work the author focuses on setting the concept within a normative frame. Therefore,

the attention is placed on the dichotomy that Lloyd puts forward. This is one of the strong points of this book- not trying to criticize or praise charisma, but attempting to understand the binary form of this phenomenon, linking it back to its Biblical roots.

Another strong point in this academic writing which differs from other works on charisma is that it draws its focus on the unmeasurable role of media. This is, again, another dimension which was not explored by Max Weber along with the traditional interpretation of charisma that followed him. Lloyd emphasizes the fact that media is an important component that can create and draw attention to the charismatic figure, working as a catalyst. Media is an indispensable dimension of charisma through which the author understands, not just the new media but actually all outlets from the spoken word to the written one. Charisma must manifest through a media in order to reach an audience, seeing as it manifests only in the presence of others.

The author raises a general question about how the new media will influence the concept of charisma. He gives examples of figures which are perceived as charismatic due to their magnified multimedia presence, such as Oprah. He also draws attention to the new interest in the spectacular dimension of charisma. This term was once dedicated only to individuals, however today it can be linked to moments and not directly to people. In today's society we can witness a more charismatic performance, shift that has ties with the need and fascination of modern individuals for grand shows and spectacular acts.

Through the use of a very vivid interpretation and presentation of charisma, the author Vincent W. Lloyd sets charisma within a normative model. This model is different from the sociologist approach of charisma, which is mainly descriptive and the cultural theorist approach, which is set to reveal the negative part of charisma. Therefore, Vincent W. Lloyd takes the route of a conceptual analysis, its main goal being to unravel various faces of charisma. He "defends" charisma by presenting both authoritarian and democratic forms and proceeds to maintain objectivity throughout his writing. Lloyd opens a new area of research when it comes to the concept of charisma and invites other scholars to join the conversation. He especially suggests the need of in depth analysis on the linkage between the new media, its tools, fast development and the complex phenomenon of charisma.

