

A psychopathology à *l'impossible* - On Henri Maldiney's inclusive anthropology of Schizophrenia

Hommage to Henri Maldiney for the anniversary of his death

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“Madness is a possibility of man without which he wouldn't be what he is.”
(Maldiney, 2012a, S. 273)

Abstract: This homage to Henri Maldiney explains the fundamental concepts of Maldineyan thought and their philosophical and psychopathological implications. The concept of transpassibility is the leitmotiv of Maldiney's philosophy, and of great relevance for contemporary French phenomenology. This concept allows for an inclusive way of apprehending the genesis of psychosis, which is in line with recommendations made by the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006). Transpassibility is the openness of our experience to a radical change which Maldiney calls the "event" (Maldiney, 2007c). This article places this innovative idea within the classical phenomenological context and points out its implications for psychopathology. For Maldiney, our openness to the event and thus to a radical change of our natural attitude also contains the possibility of the closure of our experiential horizon. This, according to Maldiney, results in the schizophrenic experience.

Introduction: On December 6th, 2013, the French philosopher Henri Maldiney died at the age of 101. His philosophy has played an important role in the evolution of French philosophy especially of the phenomenological strand. Maldiney's ideas have to a large extent developed from of a close study of nosological categories such as schizophrenic and affective psychosis. In this homage I will present some of the key principles of Maldineyan thought, which has found little recognition to date in Anglo-Saxon philosophy and psychopathology. My main purpose will be to explain the psychopathological and psychiatric implications of these principles. I will first make some observations about Maldiney's life and look at how his work is embedded in the contemporary philosophical landscape. I will sum up some of the main ideas of Maldineyan thought, which will enable me to give closer scrutiny to his approach to the psychopathology of psychosis. Finally, I will explain his concept of schizophrenia in particular.

1 - Life and philosophical influences

Henri Maldiney was born in Meursault on the 4th of August in 1912. After his studies at the ENS (école normale supérieure) in Paris, he was taken prisoner of war in Germany during World War 2. After the War he first worked as a philosophy teacher in the Belgian town of Gent and then took up a post as professor of philosophy at the University of Lyon - at the same time as Gilles Deleuze.¹ He retired in approximately 1982, but continued his philosophical investigations until the day of his death.²

Like many other French philosophers of the first half of the 20th century, Maldiney was strongly influenced by Husserlian phenomenology and even more by Martin Heidegger's fundamental ontology. Heidegger's seminal

¹ Deleuze's thinking certainly has been more inspired by Maldiney than the other way around. For closer investigation see Goddard, 2008.

² Special thanks to Jean-Pierre Charcosset for this, and other helpful information.

"Being and Time" presented a radical exploration of being and "Dasein" - Heidegger's critical term for subjectivity - suggesting a new and concrete way of understanding human subjectivity (Heidegger, 2006). But it would be wrong to classify Maldiney's thought as Heideggerian or Husserlian or as belonging to any other phenomenological school. For Maldiney, phenomenology mainly consists in elaborating our perception, our "Anschauung", as Husserl would say, and not in reinterpreting the phenomenological theories of others (Maldiney, 2007b, S. 184–185). That is why Maldiney's interactions with art and psychiatry have probably been the most important influence on his thought. His exposure to art and psychiatry was shaped by life-long friendships with artists such as Tal Coat or André du Bouchet and psychiatrists such as Roland Kuhn or Jacques Schotte (Chrétien, 2012) - not to mention Maldiney's close exchange with the Lyonnaise psychiatric hospital "le vinatier". Maldiney started publishing books relatively late - at the age of 61 - with a collection of essays entitled "regard, parole, espace". This collection also contains the essay "comprendre" which is one of the few texts that has been translated into a foreign language, namely German (Maldiney, 2006 with foreword by Bernhard Waldenfels).³ Maldiney published some influential work on art. On the topic of psychopathology, by far his most important work is "penser l'homme et la folie" - a collection of essays containing the influential "psychose et présence" (Maldiney, 2007c, Kuhn, 2004, S. 80–87).

Besides the influences I already mentioned, one can find constant reference to classical philosophical schools in Maldiney's writing, above all German Idealism (Hegel, Fichte and most importantly Schelling). Further, Maldiney frequently comments on Psychoanalysis (he mostly focuses on Winnicott but also makes rather critical references to Lacan), the so-called

³ Recently two other essays have been translated into German. See Maldiney, 2007a and Maldiney, 2011. For translations into other languages see <http://www.henri-maldiney.org/traductions>

Schicksalsanalyse (Leopold Szondi), and Linguistics (Gustave Guillaume).

2 Key principles of Maldineyan thought

I first want to focus on the style of Maldiney's writing as this style – and style in general – is essential for the comprehension of his thought. This thought concentrates on ontology, aesthetics and psychopathology. However, locating Maldiney's philosophy within one phenomenological school is difficult, as already noted. One might not even call it phenomenological, if we understand phenomenology as transcendental phenomenology, as its founder Edmund Husserl did. After all, Maldiney's meditations on art and psychiatry led him to a critique of the transcendental approach in phenomenology. The difficulty to really categorize and define Maldiney's thought as "aesthetic philosophy", "ontology" or "philosophy of psychiatry" is due to the fact that Maldiney himself does not align his work with these distinctions (Waldenfels, 2006). His writings are not to be taken as operating each of them in one distinct discipline (such as aesthetics or psychiatry). One cannot simply focus on one set of questions, such as those of aesthetics and "digest" his answers to them before moving on to the next. It is rather that Maldiney unfolds his ideas in a non-directive and a poly-referential way, not taking into account the habitual boundaries of academic disciplines and methodologies. This makes it hard for the novice reader to set foot. When reading Maldiney for the first time one might be confused or even irritated by Maldiney's way of writing. He does not tend to give an introduction to the specific topic he is going to look at – if it were only one – nor does he give any summary of his argumentation. A Maldineyan text may start with ontological questions that then lead on to reflections on Hegel or Schelling and further to discussions of psychoanalysis and linguistic questions before turning back to Heidegger's fundamental ontology via some remarks on Kafka and Chinese painting. Consequently,

Maldiney's texts seem to lack structure, and the answers given at the end sometimes don't appear to be related to the questions asked at the beginning. But this first impression vanishes by the time one plunges deeper into Maldiney's way of thinking. Slowly, one realizes that what is important is not only *what* Maldiney is saying, the contents of his arguments, but also the way these contents are expressed: his apparently erratic and associative style; the refusal to respect disciplinary boundaries; the persistent, almost repetitive way of asking the same questions and unfolding the same motives throughout his whole *œuvre*; an argumentative pattern passing from contractions and densifications of arguments to disruptive jumps and then to an unflinching reformulation of problems within another theoretical framework. All this represents an approach to solving philosophical problems that is perhaps less of logical but rather of stylistic and finally *rhythmic* nature. Consequently, the actual and most profound structure of Maldiney's texts is one that can only be read *between the lines* – it is their *rhythm* experienced by the reader. And so it is not surprising that it is precisely the idea of rhythm that is also central to Maldiney's conceptual thought itself.

In the following I want to further elaborate on the role of rhythm and rhythmic experience in Maldiney's philosophy. But remember that rhythm is not to be taken as a mere content of Maldiney's thinking but that his thinking itself is rhythmic. This can be thought of as a resolution of the ancient philosophical problem of how to reflect upon a subject without turning it through this mere reflection into something else (an object of reflection). That is, a reflection on rhythm has to be rhythmic itself because the way one reflects upon a matter has to be *affected by the matter itself*. Maldiney's style therefore has a material justification. It underlines his phenomenological affiliation to a philosophy oriented towards "things themselves" (Husserl's "zu den Sachen selbst").

2.1 Rhythm, transpassibility and pathic experience

Rhythm

For Maldiney, rhythm is a fundamental component of our worldly experience. Let us first look at the definition Maldiney is giving of rhythm. He notes that rhythm is not simply a fixed sequence of intervals or time points but rather a constant creation of tensional duration (Maldiney, 2012b, S. 17). For him, it would be a mistake to confuse rhythm with a cadence or a clock pulse. Consequently, rhythm is nothing that could be represented in metric terms as it is the case for cadences: Rhythm for Maldiney is essentially irrepresentable (Maldiney, 2007b, S. 187). When trying to explain his idea of rhythm, Maldiney contrasts the rather static image of a ticking clock with the image of a wave (ῥυθμός, *rhythmós* = gr. = *to stream* – which in Greek may refer to the movement of waves, see Kluge, 2002, p. 764). A moving wave can be described as a unified entity with two opposing movements that pass one into the other: Before reaching its peak the ascending part of the wave slows down and then passes into its descent (Maldiney, 2012b, S. 18). "Consequently the two moments, ascending and descending, are each of them in procession of themselves into their opposite." (idem, p. 17) Descent and ascent are thus two opposites that are always in a relation of reciprocal transformation in which one opposite becomes the other. This very transformation for Maldiney is rhythm: it guarantees the unity of the wave (idem). Rhythm is the actual and constituent transformation or process, integrating the ascending and descending parts of the wave, turning it into the experience of the wave as a whole. Rhythm integrates these different parts into one form - but not a form identical to itself but rather a "form in formation" (idem) – which is the very sense of the word trans-formation. In contrast to what one might expect, rhythm thus has nothing to do with constancy but rather with the experience of dynamic change or a

transforming duration (idem). Maldiney hereby explicitly refers to concepts in the theory of painting such as the concept of dynamic 'Gestaltung' (in contrast to the static 'Gestalt') put forth by Paul Klee and also Hans Prinzhorn (idem, p. 18-19). Rhythm, for Maldiney, is something that can be found in any situation where opposites and particulars turn into one another. This occurs, for instance, in music (where sounds turn into one another), sculpture (where shapes turn into one another) or dance (where body-movements turn into one another), just to mention a few. Even though Maldiney's complete definition of rhythm is more complex, for our purposes it is satisfactory to define rhythm as *the experience of an integrating transformation*.

To understand the fundamental role Maldiney accords to rhythm in our every-day experience, we should now focus on the phenomenological concept of "world". In everyday life we usually refer to "world" as the objects that we are surrounded by. In phenomenology, however, the concept of "world" refers to the way these objects appear to us, the meaning they have for us and finally the fact that these meanings are linked to a *significatory whole* or – in Heideggerian terms – to a "totality of involvements" ("Bewandnisganzheit", Heidegger, 2006, S. 364, see also Wheeler, 2013). In the phenomenological literature, this significatory whole is often referred to as the horizon or world-horizon on which we contextualize our concrete and meaningful perception of objects (Zahavi, 2003, S. 97). Since meanings always have a temporal and a spatial dimension for us, the idea of "world" can also be given a temporal and a spatial dimension. Moreover, "world" in phenomenology is generally thought of as something we experience in a pre-reflective and bodily way and always in some mood (Heidegger, 2006, S. 134–140, Merleau-Ponty, 1976, Fuchs, 2000).

Maldiney agrees with these ideas. But he points out that the way we experience the world is fundamentally rhythmic (Maldiney, 2012b, S. 30). This means that rhythm is not to be thought of as a single object that we

experience within our world or within our temporal and spatial experience – the spatio-temporal experience of the world itself is rhythmic and is unfolded by rhythm (idem). Since rhythm above was defined as the experience of a form in formation or transformation we can now say that for Maldiney the constitutive frame of each of our single-object-experiences, its horizon, is lived by us in a permanent and actual transformation. For Maldiney every single-object-perception is contextualised by a holistic experience of change. Therefore "world" for Maldiney is all but static. To give only a glimpse of what the experience of a rhythmical world looks like, in one place Maldiney cites a passage of Rainer Maria Rilke's "sonnets to orpheus" :

Breath, you poem beyond all seeing!
Pure and ceaseless demi-urge
in counterpoise with our own being.
Interchange in which I rhythmically emerge.
(Maldiney, 2006, S. 95, engl. translation by Hunter, 1993)

Transpassibility

Maldiney turns the idea of a rhythmically experienced world into something more radical by pointing out the sheer openness of our fundamental rhythmic experience to the unknown and unpredictable – and therefore the possibility that the entire signficatory structure of our world might change. This openness for Maldiney is the actual and final horizon on which we understand our world. It represents the condition of our world as such. To distinguish this openness from classical phenomenological concepts of horizon, Maldiney often refers to it as the "foundation" (fr. fond) of our existence (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 198).⁴

⁴ The horizon of our world is not – as Maldiney once said in a critical remark on Husserl – just "the side of things turned to us" but rather the "side of the event turned to us"

Due to the openness just described, the world is susceptible to abrupt change, which puts the rhythmical order of the different temporal, spatial etc. structures of our world at stake. Maldiney calls such change an "event" (événement – Maldiney Maldiney, 2007c, S. 183ff). When defining "event", Maldiney gives many kinds of examples referring explicitly to psychiatric descriptions (see below). His preferred one though is an old mountain-hunter waiting for a chamois to appear. Maldiney first cites the hunter's own description: "[W]e didn't see it coming - all of a sudden it was there, like a breeze, like a void, like a dream." (idem, p. 295) and he then comments: "The sensation of an emotion (émotion ressentie) (of the hunter) goes beyond the expectation and the meaning of the chase. It is overwhelming according to the overwhelmed world. The appearance of the chamois does not integrate into an already existing configuration: to the contrary, it abolishes it. It is the breaking point of a field of incidence and of reception (...)." (idem)

This example shows that the event in Maldiney's sense should not be understood as something happening within the rhythmic and meaningful world, but that the very way these meanings are (rhythmically) structured, their frame, depends on the event and is altered by it: Although the hunter hastily intends the appearance of the chamois, although everything, the entire meaningful structure of his world, seems to be prepared, the appearance of the chamois itself cannot be preempted and therefore this world passively depends on it. As soon as the chamois shows up, this world has to change in an unforeseeable way and has to adapt itself to this event (idem, p. 296).

Maldiney generalizes this idea: Our world constantly has to respond to unprecedented demands. This for Maldiney is the very condition of our world and consequently of our experience of reality. It can only exist as the

(Maldiney 2007c, p. 308, p. 213).

constant experience of the unknown and unforeseen. Consequently, Maldiney can say: "The real (le réel) is always what one didn't expect" (idem., p. 105).

The ambiguous model of passive confrontation to the unknown and active response to it is defined by Maldiney as "transpassibilité". "Passible" is the French word for "liable". The prefix "trans-" indicates the fact that "transpassibility" should be understood as a fundamental property that takes part in every experience and is not only limited to certain experiences or circumstances. The rather jurisdictional term "liable" (fr. passible) describes the above well: When we are legally liable to a fine, we are on the one hand passively in charge of it and on the other hand, we actively have to carry out that charge by responding to the fine.

But how do we respond to it? We do it in a rhythmical way. Rhythm therefore is the location of transpassibility: rhythm is open to a radical change and responds to it. Due to this responsive function Maldiney considers rhythm to be an integrative transformation (Rigaud, 2012, S. 59–60).⁵

Pathic experience

Besides the concepts of rhythm and transpassibility there are many other concepts in Maldineyan thought that should, but cannot be explored here.⁶ But let us at least briefly take note of the importance of Viktor von Weizsäcker and Erwin Straus for Maldiney's philosophy. It should be clear by now that for Maldiney the experience of our world is rhythmic. The very horizon of our rhythmic world-experience is constituted by the openness towards the unknown, that is, the event to which our rhythmic experience is "liable"

⁵ If already familiar with Maldiney's works one might ask why we don't mention Maldiney's concept of transpossibility (*transpossibilité*) here which could be taken as the coexistent and responsive counterpart of transpassibility. Since the connection between the two concepts is very complex we cannot give closer scrutiny to it here.

⁶ In particular, his concept of language (*parole*), his ideas on psychotherapy and psychoanalysis and his approach to art should be mentioned.

("passible"). But it is not enough to show *that* we are open to the "event". One also has to show *how* we are experiencing such an openness. To do so, Maldiney relies on Straus' concept of sensing ("spüren", which in German has connotations of both tracking and suffering, see (Spiegelberg, 1972, S. 272) on the one hand, and on v. Weizsäcker's concept of pathic experience on the other. But Maldiney translates them both from the dimension of the vital into an ontological and daseinsanalytical dimension (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 279). For Maldiney, it is in virtue of a fundamental *sensory* and *pathic* experience that we are in touch with the unknown foundation of our world and not in virtue of intentional cognition. To illustrate this point, Maldiney uses the term "présence" in its Latin meaning (prae-sens) indicating a sense of an entity being "ahead of itself" ("être à l'avant de soi"). He often associates the word présence with the French word "pressentir" which means "to sense" or "to anticipate in an emotional way" (idem, p. 54). Consequently for Maldiney the word "présence" indicates that we are "ahead of ourselves" in the unknown foundation of our world in a pathic and sensual, and not in a cognitive way. This is a claim made very clear in Maldiney's critique of the dialectical philosophy of Hegel (Maldiney, 2012a, S. 323–400).

2.2 Philosophical implications of the concept of transpassibility

Having introduced the key principles of Maldineyan thought, we will now turn to the philosophical implications of Maldiney's certainly most influential concept, namely transpassibility. Transpassibility invokes a fundamental critique of transcendental phenomenology and more generally of a transcendental philosophy trying to define the a priori conditions of the possibility of knowledge. Take the example of Husserl's "natural attitude": Husserl's aim is to give the aprioric groundings of the fact that in our daily life we act with a natural attitude of assurance. This transcendental enquiry is the

attempt to define the conditions that necessarily have to be fulfilled for the possibility of our every-day-attitude and our every-day-judgements. Defining such conditions thus leads to a justification of our natural attitude: Husserl thereby seems to turn our every-day-assurance into a transcendental assurance. Maldiney questions such philosophical attempts by insisting on the intrinsic unpredictability of our lived (and rhythmic) experience and proclaiming that on the whole it is impossible to define a preliminary frame of our experience by aprioric conditions. As Maldiney puts it: The project of trying to define the conditions of possibilities only takes into account the *possible – not the impossible* (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 288–292). But for Maldiney, the impossible as the pure unknown of the possibilities of our experience is the actual foundation of our experience. It seems like there is a structural problem within transcendental phenomenology which prevents it from giving an adequate description of the experience of this unknown in all its radicalness. This problem becomes especially severe with regard to intersubjectivity as the encounter of the other. For Maldiney, in the transcendental perspective "every other, equal to all the others, is just some term in an unlimited space of possibilities." (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 289) Hence the other will never appear as the one that might break the frame of possibilities of our experience apart.

Maldiney applies this critique to Husserl's concept of the Alter Ego but also to Heidegger's concept of the Mit-sein (being-with). For Maldiney, their perspective would not only miss our radical experience of the unknown – it would also miss the fragility of any preliminary condition of our natural attitude. For Maldiney this natural attitude is all but natural – not even in the transcendental way Husserl envisaged.⁷ It stands on an abyss of the impossible and unpredictable event that might break it apart. That is why Serge Meitinger also calls Maldiney's philosophy "a phenomenology towards

⁷ Zahavi comments on Husserl's transcendental idealism that it "can be seen as an attempt to redeem rather than renounce the realism of the natural attitude." (Zahavi, 2003, S. 70)

the impossible" ("une phénoménologie à l'impossible", Meitinger, 2002). For Maldiney, Husserl's "Urdoxa" of the continuity of our experience is actually only a means of scaffolding this fragility (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 307).

With this stance, Maldiney is close to Emmanuel Lévinas' Philosophy of alterity (Levinas, 1990). But what is even more striking is the resemblance to the recent work of Claude Romano. The fundamental question Romano tries to answer is: "[W]hat can phenomenology become, once one has given up the transcendental perspective?" (Romano, 2010, S. 7) To this purpose, Romano sets out to develop, like Maldiney, a philosophy of the event – where the event is the fundamental experience of alterity or the unknown. But for Romano this does not only involve showing how the experience of alterity fragilizes the subject's transcendental frame – as Lévinas did – but also elaborating the faculties enabling us to experience alterity. In Maldineyan terms transpassibility would be such a faculty.⁸

Another recent philosopher who is in line with Maldiney's critique presented here is Marc Richir. Richir also stresses the actual fragility of our natural attitude, and in contrast to Husserl considers phenomenology to be a "deconstructing" method, dismantling the certainty of our everyday beliefs by pointing out their abyss – instead of founding them in apodictic judgements (Gondek & Tengelyi, 2011, S. 26–29). Richir therefore uses the slogan: "The more [phenomenological] reduction, the less givenness"⁹ and explicitly employs Maldiney's concept of transpassibility when developing his own concept of formation of sense (see Tengelyi, 2010).

⁸ Romano calls these faculties "événementiaux" (derived from "événement" and in contrast to the Heideggerian "existentiaux"). Consequently, Romano does not entirely leave behind transcendental philosophy. It seems that a search for "conditions of possibilities" has turned into a search for "conditions of impossibilities".

⁹ "D'autant plus de réduction, d'autant moins de donation" (Richir, 1995, S. 154, see also Gondek & Tengelyi, 2011, S. 26)

3 – Psychiatric aspects of Maldineyan thought

3.1 Psychopathological implications

Karl Peter Kisker once spoke about the coercion of psychiatry to become philosophic (Kisker, 1960, S. 10). When reading Maldiney, the reverse also suggests itself: it appears to be equally true that philosophy is in some respects coerced to become psychiatric. Why would that be?

As we have seen, transpassibility introduces a fragilizing component to our experience. Maldiney argues that we are constantly facing new 'events' which, as the unknown impossible, have to be integrated into our rhythmical worldly experience. But if transcendental phenomenology turns out to be insufficient for giving an adequate account of the unprecedented alterity of the event, then what could?

This is where Maldiney's analysis of psychosis sets in. If transpassibility is the faculty through which we are in touch with a radical and unprecedented alterity, then this radical alterity can also lead to the loss of our contact with alterity or a turning away from it. For Maldiney, it is this loss of the connection to the alterity of the event that is at the structural core of psychotic experience. The psychotic experience therefore indirectly bears testimony to our openness to alterity by showing the consequences of losing it. Whereas in our everyday life, we are not aware of our openness to alterity and so easily "play the game", as Maldiney puts it (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 7), the psychotic human being has lost the capacity 'to play the game' because she has lost her openness to its foundation. "The psychotic does not cheat", as Maldiney tersely explains (Maldiney, 2007b, S. 174).

The incapacity to 'play the game' is also at the centre of Wolfgang Blankenburg's theory of schizophrenia (Blankenburg, 2012 see also Mishara, 2001). Blankenburg (echoing patient Anne from one of his case studies)

speaks of the loss of “natural evidence” (Verlust der natürlichen Selbstverständlichkeit) - which Blankenburg also describes as a fundamental loss of common sense (Blankenburg, 2007). At the end of his 1971 study, Blankenburg investigates into the conditions and circumstances of the loss of common sense (Blankenburg, 2012, S. 138). There, he underlines the importance of intersubjectivity and the experience of alterity, but also invokes psychodynamic and biological theories as final explanations (idem. pp. 120-121). Maldiney's philosophy can be seen as offering an alternative to Blankenburg's approach: By putting a radical emphasis on the importance of alterity and intersubjectivity, Maldiney questions the validity of the concept of common sense and its transcendental justification, which Blankenburg still offers to some extent (Landazuri, 2012). As we have seen, for Maldiney, our everyday attitude can only be enacted by constantly being liable to its own radical and unpredictable change that it has to integrate. It is hence characterised by a permanent rhythmical transformation which might fail at any point. Thus with the concept of transpassibility the possibility of the loss of common sense can be explained with reference to a phenomenological structure of our experience. It becomes more tangible as a possibility that is located within the structural order of our experience (as a possibility at the very foundation of our experience). Consequently, for a phenomenological psychopathologist, transpassibility makes it possible to stay within the field of phenomenological analysis without having to fall back on psychodynamic or biological reflections (as Blankenburg does to some extent when trying to explain the genesis of psychotic experience).¹⁰

¹⁰ We hereby don't want to question the necessity of such research.

3.2 Example: Maldiney's approach to schizophrenia and therapeutical implications

To get a better and more concrete understanding of the importance of transpassibility for psychopathology we will now take a look at Maldiney's approach to the nosological entity of schizophrenia.

As we have seen, Maldiney considers the loss of transpassibility - that is the openness to the event – to be the fundamental problem of psychosis. We have also explained above that the way we experience this openness is not to be thought of as a cognitive or intentional process but as a pathic and sensed one. A loss of transpassibility therefore necessarily goes along with a loss of pathic connectedness to the world and to its foundation. This loss of transpassibility that compromises our pathic experience can then lead to a predominance of the cognitive and representative dimension of our existence. This is why Maldiney defines psychosis in general as the transformation of "presence into representation" ("de présence en représentation", Maldiney, 2007c, S. 18).

This transformation takes a specific form in schizophrenic psychosis. In order to elaborate a general eidos of this specific form, Maldiney analyses the schizophrenic experience in terms of worldhood, temporality, spatiality and intersubjectivity. The principal idea of these analyses is that in schizophrenia an event to which we were open and that we have experienced could not be integrated by our rhythm. As we have seen, transpassibility has at once a passive and an active function – the latter being the obligation to respond to the event rhythmically. We also said that the event is not something happening *within* the world, but a transformation of the world as a whole. As an example of such an event, Maldiney picks up Binswanger's case study "Suzanne Urban" (Binswanger, 1994). A crucial moment for Suzanne Urban's appearance of schizophrenia is when she is sitting in a doctor's room,

witnessing the doctor's medical examination of her husband, who suffers from cancer. The doctor gives her a look of dread, reflecting the very bad result of the examination. She, as a reaction, wants to scream, but the doctor indicates she should not for the sake of her husband. Maldiney comments on the doctor's look: "Under normal circumstances already, any expression is not within the world, but the world opens up from it. We are under the projection (surplomb) of the transcendence of the other's face. But when it has the fascinating power felt by Suzanne Urban, the expression is *the* world. It imposes itself in an absolute proximity, like the one of a face glimpsed in the night, glued to the window, erasing the entire space of the scenery – and whose expression is on us without distance." (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 203) This experience described by Suzanne Urban thus equals the definition of the event with regard to our entire worldly structure. Just a few weeks later, as Binswanger reports, Suzanne Urban's schizophrenia appears – with delusions about having to die from cancer.

What happened? As Maldiney claims, we are open to an event to which we have to respond rhythmically. One of the most rhythmical and primary responses to the event for Maldiney is the scream (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 202, 204) – the one that Suzanne Urban was forbidden: "A scream launched into the world would have freed Suzanne Urban from the rigid, immutable situation in which she was subdued under the expression. This expression has become the insurmountable event that the patient then reproduces indefinitely, and which continuously absorbs in her the possibility of every other event." (idem, p. 204) Consequently, for Maldiney, the incapacity to respond to an unpredictable event leads to a closure of our openness *to any other event*. An attempt – a delayed attempt – to respond to it is *delusion*. As the event deeply questions our everyday experience, delusion is the attempt to restore "a backwash of normality, the defensive counter-manifestation" of the experience that could not be integrated (idem, p. 207). But not only is the

attempt delayed – it is also only an *intentional* and *cognitive* one and thus insufficient to restore openness to any other event: The response would have to be a pathic and sensed one. As for Maldiney delusion is the cognitive attempt to restore a coherence of experience that has been put at stake by the event he also calls it "schizophrenic hyperjustification" (idem., p. 60). As for many other psychopathologists, for Maldiney delusion it not the fundamental problem in schizophrenia, but the most impressive: "The event of delusion hides another event." (idem, p. 200) This other event is the very event that could not be integrated into our rhythmical experience. Alluding to Karl Jaspers, Maldiney calls this loss of transpassibility and of sensed wordly connectedness the "primary delusion" (Jaspers, 1997, S. 97, Maldiney, 2007c, S. 200).

We might wonder about the therapeutical lessons that could be drawn from this understanding of schizophrenia. As we have seen, reflection on art and aesthetics plays a very important role in Maldiney's work. He accordingly considers art to be a very important form of therapy for schizophrenia. As art for Maldiney basically consists in a rhythmical expression of our existence, and since this rhythmical expression is what the schizophrenic human being misses, art can be considered a re-rhythmification of the rhythmically impaired schizophrenic experience. Roland Kuhn suggests that there is a need to reintroduce this aesthetic approach to psychiatry. To do so, he draws on both Maldiney and Hans-Georg Gadamer: "It seems essential to me today to fruitfully apply the work of Gadamer and Maldiney to psychiatry. I hope I have enough time and strength remaining to continue with work in that spirit." (Kuhn, 2004, S. 86)¹¹

Maldiney himself often insists on the importance of an aesthetically and also anthropologically orientated psychiatry and psychotherapy. But he also considers art to be a way of *self-treatment* outside the confines of actual

¹¹ Unfortunately, Kuhn didn't since he died one year later.

psychiatric and institutional help – an idea he elaborates on in a study on the schizophrenic artist Sylvain Fusco (Maldiney, 2003, S. 82).

Maldiney also takes it to be generally the case that therapy of schizophrenia cannot be formulated in definite and technical terms, since its aim is always the *indefinite*, holistic and irrepresentable experience. Its task could be to retrieve "in perception the feeling, in the world the *Umwelt*, in the project the reception, in nothingness the open, in presence the self. Presence can only be the one of a self by its openness to the event." (Maldiney, 2007c, S. 213)

Conclusion: In our tour of Maldineyan thought, the idea of transpassibility transpired as the most fruitful and original one. Transpassibility invokes a critique or deconstruction of our everyday experience and consequently furnishes a new way to apprehend the "loss of natural evidence" put forth by Wolfgang Blankenburg as the defining moment of schizophrenic experience. As we saw, using the concept of transpassibility, this loss can be expressed as a human possibility in a more concrete and, in a way, more "possible" way. Despite Maldiney's criticism of all transcendental phenomenology, transpassibility could be taken as a condition of possibility of Blankenburg's "loss of natural evidence". The possibility of this loss is consequently understood as an essential part of human existence that could principally affect both the patient and the psychiatrist.¹² We hence might call Maldiney's anthropology *inclusive anthropology*. After centuries of exclusion, discrimination and even annihilation of schizophrenic or – to use a less medical term - insane people, Maldiney's theory is of highest political and ethical interest. This importance is even growing in the light of the United Nations' *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (United Nations, 2006). Maldiney's inclusive anthropology furnishes the necessary theoretical groundings for the *Convention's* request of social inclusion of

¹² A possibility which is thereby undergoing dichotomous ascription of the insane patient and the sane psychiatrist.

persons with schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is an indispensable and inevitable part of human existence and Maldiney's descriptions of the schizophrenic experience may enable social understanding and recognition of people with schizophrenia and help us respond to their needs. This is why Maldiney's work deserves being read and heard now more than ever.

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