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PHILOSOPHERS IN NEWSPAPERS : ABOUT A COLLABORATION BETWEEN JOURNALISTS AND PHILOSOPHY PROFESSORS ON THE *LIBÉ DES PHILOSOPHES*

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Abstract
Which conditions must a philosophic speech meet to be published in a general media? In order to propose elements of answers to this question, we analyse the production conditions and the results of an original collaboration between journalists and researchers. In a pragmatic sociological approach, we describe how the journalistic situation obliges philosophers to perform their work in the newspaper around a small number of practices, which are supposed to be agreed by journalists. We shall analyse how these philosophers present their social status, then we shall present the grammatical rules that constrain the philosopher in Liberation, and then we shall analyse the « journalistic » work of these philosophers as a compromise between philosophy and journalism.

Keywords
Philosophers, journalists, collaboration, time-scale issue, context

INTRODUCTION

The media access is a key resource for philosophers. French philosophers have a long and complex relation to the media public space : they were the first who invested it during the Enlightenment, and some of them composed "a professional model whose Voltaires *Conseils à un jounaliste* is the most remarkable example" (Prodhomme-Allègre, 2010). For some journalists, the philosophical discourse can be an ally to distend the heavy reliance that journalism maintains with the social sciences, and especially the sociology (Goulet and Ponet, 2009). In fact, many famous French philosophers, including Alain (Leterre, 2008), Bergson (Vieillard-Baron, 2007) or Jean Paul Sartre (Zarka and Barash, 2005), regularly published in the national press.

However, the success of those few famous authors should not mislead us : the convergence between the mainstream media and the philosophical discourse meets many obstacles. On one hand, many professional philosophers prefer socializing with their peers on precise and complex discussion, using a discursive style which cannot fit with the formats published in the newspapers (Crettaz von Roten, Moeschler, 2010). On the other hand, journalists who work for mainstream media publications have a temporality that oscillates between the daily

and the weekly publication (Neveu, 2009), far away from the untimeliness claimed by many philosophers.

Which conditions must a philosophic text meet to be published in a general media? This issue was extensively discussed under the more general question of the relationship between the intellectuals and the media, which include two main types of analysis.

On the one hand, many sociologists invested the methods of Pierre Bourdieu to analyse the similar social properties of public intellectuals, journalists who collaborate with them, and of their common readership. This approach, which notably guide the work of Louis Pinto (Pinto, 1983), easily describes how can a readership can arise at an historical moment for philosophical reflections in the news. It can also explain the ease with which intellectuals and sociologists can exceed their mutual professional cultures to cooperate on a common project. However, this explanation by the social properties tends to describe this phenomena as a kind of social magic, an automatism between people with the same social properties. We are rather interested by the specific commitments in which journalist and intellectuals invest when they agree to mutually reconcile their role.

The second group of intellectual studies which explore the relationship between the journalists and the intellectuals are more long-winded on this issue, even if their work is focused on a coarser theory. This group of approach is very present among the historians of ideas ; they explain the collaboration between journalists and intellectuals by their common involvement in social venues, networks, group mobilized around causes. This line of work is particularly employed by François Dosse (Dosse, 2003). In particular, this author has observed that that some of the journalists who popularized the writings of Gilles Deleuze during the 1970's were his former students (Dosse, 2003). Despite its lack of sociological theory, this approach advantageously points the unifying role of the coexistence, the shared beliefs, in the intellectual collaboration. However, this kind of work does not offer the precise details we search about these collaborations.

We would like to develop in this text a comprehensive approach of this kind of intellectual collaboration, using the theoretical ground of the pragmatic sociology. We shall pursue the observations of the journalistic work made by Luc Boltanski (Boltanski, 1990) and Cyril Lemieux (Lemieux, 2000). We chose the 2011 edition of the *Libé des philosophes*, a product release from a cooperation between journalists and sociologists, as a case study ; our work on this edition shall excerpt from this analyse the existence of some minimal grammar rules, which philosophers must submit on their self-presentation and on their speeches to be publishable by journalists.
We wished to study this case by relying on a number of empirical materials. First, we examined this newspaper in a qualitative and a quantitative manner. Then we collected several testimonies about the context of this cooperation. We viewed on the newspaper's website the video of the press conference which involved together the philosophers and the journalists. We also based ourselves on the testimony of the philosophers published in this edition, telling the conditions of this collaboration. Finally, we took notes on the book of Robert Maggiori (Maggiori, 2011), the *Liberation* journalist who organized this cooperation; his book details the beliefs that incite him to create relations between philosophy and journalism. We interviewed him a few weeks after the publication of this special issue, which

enabled us to obtain clarification on some practical details of this issue. We also chose to include in this article excerpts from interviews conducted as part of our PhD, with journalists of the French newspaper Le Monde. Indeed, these journalists work in a section specialized in the publication of intellectuals forums. They explained some principles that apply to the texts that they receive when they want publish them in their section. It seemed to us that the techniques used in Le Monde had also prevailed for making *Libe des philosophes*.

In the first part, we shall see that the writers who participated in this *Libé des philosophes* have put forward their signs of incorporation into the philosophers community. This highlightness can be explained by the fact that these authors write in *Libération* to an audience that is not supposed to know anything about the professional philosophers field – the readership of *Libération*, but also the journalists team of Liberation, who frame this operation. What do these marks say about the philosophers character expected by these journalists? We inspired ourselves from the sociological work of the economics of greatness, to measure these expected qualities. We concluded that they are both of academic and media nature.
In the second part, we shall discuss the grammatical constraint of the philosopher's interventions in the *Libé des philosophes.* We supposed that the philosophers had language restrictions related to the specificity of the press. We identified three of these constraints: the maximum size obligation, the need to reason with common place arguments, and the requirement of an elegant expression. We were particularly interested here in the tensions between the usual practice of philosophical writing and the specific constraints of this exceptional exercise.
In the third part, we looked through a synthetic reading of the whole number, to meet some special features of the prose of these philosophers journalists. We were trying to characterize what distinguishes it from ordinary journalistic production. We identified four characteristics of these articles (Generalizing, recalling the history of the philosophy, problematizing, discussing « democracy ») and we considered that these features constitute the kind of rhetoric expected from a philosopher who writes on a newspaper.

HOW DO PHILOSOPHERS PRESENT THEMSELVES IN THE *LIBÉ DES PHILOSOPHES?*

What is a philosopher? This question has no easy answer because one can be a philosopher with no official capacity for doing it, no acknowledgement from the official institutions. Dictionaries that offer a precise definition of the term "philosopher" clearly distinguish the professional practice of the philosophy and the philosopher who use their time as rationally studying nature, natural causes and morality. Therefore, we wondered how the journalists of *Liberation* present the philosophical activities of their guests.

This question is related to the nature of *Libé des Philosophes*, which is an hybrid object. Once a year, the daily newspaper *Libération* is entirely written by philosophers, but still respects the editorial standards of the rest of the year. The articles of this special issue also cover the news of the day, and their size fit in the usual ones. We assumed that the intention of the authors of this issue was not upset their readership. As a consequence, we assumed that the journalists would recruit some philosophers who would be easy to identify as such. But

we also wondered to what extent the philosophers recruited for this special edition would be professional philosophers – teachers in high school or university, researchers. Therefore, we precisely observed the titles claimed by the 49 philosophers who wrote the 43 articles – some philosophers had co-authored articles. We supposed that the title claimed by these philosophers has been designed to convict the readership that they are real philosophers.

We were inspired on this idea by the scientific paper "La Dénonciation" (Boltanski, Darre, Schiltz, 1984), which studies under what conditions a person external to a newsroom has legitimacy to intervene in a national newspaper. In this paper, the authors observe how journalists ensure the consistency of the texts they publish in their newspapers. They note that journalists give some importance to the title put forward by the author. They conclude that a journalist plans to publish a text only if it considers that it fits the title with which the person signs it. Therefore, we supposed that the article and the signature of these philosophers are balanced with the rest of their intervention. Indeed, the readership of Liberation is supposed to be "large": tens of thousands of readers. The subject of articles is also supposed to be "large": international conflicts, national politics, great artistic performances etc.
How philosophers must appear to be estimated by the readership as important enough to write on first class topics for a national audience? Indeed, the authors are partly legitimized in advance by the reference made in the journal cover that this issue is written by philosophers. Actually, the brown banner printed on the front page introduces: "Today, the *Libé* des Philosophes". This title gives a certain stature to the authors, since it indicates that each participant in this issue is a "philosopher". But this banner is not the only sign proposed to the readers to attest to the importance of the published authors. 47 authors out of a total of 49 are presented with a detailed signature: name, grade, institution, title of a published book.

The accumulation of these titles serves to keep the promise written on the cover: the authors presented here are "real philosophers", who teach philosophy and write philosophy books available in the "philosophy" aisles of the book stores. The exact titles of the authors are often quoted in full. On the 49 philosophers who write *Libé des philosophes*, we have 34 philosophers presented with a specific professional title: 69% of the total group. The detail is: 7 researchers at the CNRS, a junior lecturer (Charles Girard), 2 research directors, 4 senior lecturers, 20 university professors, the incumbent of the Bologna "Chair of semiotics" (Umberto Eco), two high school teachers, and a psychoanalyst.
The 11 others sign in a more "vaguer" way. The philosopher Paul Audi signs without any title. Michel Serres signs the same way – we shall suppose that it is related to its international reputation. Two other philosophers claim their attachment to a special institution, the "Philosophy International College" – a French special institution, co-founded by important French philosophers in the 1960's. One of the authors presents himself via a description of his work: "translator of Spinoza's correspondence." Some other authors cite their university affiliation, without any specific grade. A brief Internet search reveals that most of these researchers presented without specific grade are senior lecturers or professors (one instance is Elisabeth Roudinesco, simply presented as an "historian").
This signatures review leads us to note two things. On one hand, the recruitment of philosophers by Robert Maggiori has been drawn from a population previously recognized and selected by other "official" philosophers, recruited by their peers. We shall try a parallel with the recruiting logic of televised debate analysed by Eric Darras (Darras, 1995): political leaders invited by journalists to speak on the media have previously been distinguished by

their own group. During our interview, Robert Maggiori was not very concerned about the logic of his recruitment, he insisted on the "freedom" that had guided his choice. Our assessment is fully consistent with his own statement: this journalist probably operates a free choice within a population of philosophers previously selected by editors, selection boards, and co-optation among peers. It would be interesting to initiate a longer and a more complete inquiry to describe precisely the logic of selection on a project such as *Libé des philosophes*. The field of professional philosophy is rather closed, and deeply related to the field of philosophical publishing. The philosophers who are published by a recognized publishing company (PUF, Vrin, Herman etc..) are selected by the directors of the collections, who are generally involved on recruiting committees. Selected authors have a good chance to attract Robert Maggiori's attention. The recruitment of professional philosophers for *Libé des philosophes* does not mean that the internal hierarchy of *Libé des philosophes* obeys the internal rank of the French university. The most valorised texts of the issue were written by the philosophers who regularly appear in the media. Robert Maggiori explains that "Michel Serres has a great body of work behind him, he is 80 years old, he is a member of *Académie Française:* you listen to him more clearly when he speaks. It is natural that he signs the editorial. This year, Umberto Eco did me the honour of agreeing to join the editorial board. He has never done it anywhere else. It is normal that he signs the largest article and the editorial". These two personalities are well known among the general public. Nevertheless, they are not known in 2010 as ground-breaking philosophical researchers – they are more likely known as consensus-seeking personalities.

On the other hand, even if the precise grade of these philosophers is often displayed, its absence is an option. We shall recognize here several logics. First, some philosophers are known enough by the media to have the right to be evasive on their exact grade: Elisabeth Roudinesco, Michel Serres. Second, some contributors emphasize their properly philosophical function (translator of Spinoza's correspondence, President of the "Collège International de Philosophie") without extending their more modest grade on the national education system. Thus, *Libé des Philosophes* allows its contributors to choose their grade, according to the image they want to send. This is is not the case in the professional environment, where the dissimulation of grades can be interpreted as a mark of imposture.

We shall now study the manner in which the philosophers have been supervised by journalists during the writing of the *Libé des Philosophes*.

The principles of philosopher's interventions in the *Libé des philosophes*

The interventions of the social scientists in the mainstream media are submitted to the rules and standards of the newspaper (Villeneuve, 2008). Most newspapers of the general daily French press feature a special rubric that welcomes the contributions of the foreign experts about the "hot" topics. We shall now present here the main demands – collected on interviews – of three journalists who are responsible of these foreign contributions. The first one is Robert Maggiori, and the two others are Sylvain Cypel and Sophie Gerhardi, journalists from the "Débats" section of the newspaper *Le Monde*. As we explained in the introduction, we interviewed these two journalists during our PhD research. As they work in a section specialized in the publication of intellectuals forums, it seemed to us that the techniques that they described also prevailed for the framing of *Libé des philosophes*.

These three journalists both agree about three main principles that they impose to external collaborators in general, and social scientists in particular. The first one is the space constraint. The second one is the need to reason with common places arguments. The third one is the constraint of formal inventiveness.

The maximum size constraint, an obligation to respect the journalistic formats. According to Robert Maggiori, philosophers write in *Libé des Philosophes* with absolute freedom: "We never correct anything in their paper. We never say to them, write this, or write that. They write absolutely whatever they want. The only censorship is when an article is too long; I have to cut it because it doesn't fit. But it's not censorship". The size constraint is a radical breakdown for the social scientist. Any academic paper is usually a response to one or more previous research done by others. Researchers respond to colleagues, which takes time and space. On the other hand, academics are supposed to present as much details as possible of their research process. Then, these details are supposed to be checked and challenged by their fellows. And here, Robert Maggiori just needs to get the result of the researcher. Other journalists are on the same position: Sylvain Cypel has the same definition of a "good" contribution of a social scientist: "Yes, there are constraints. Suppose I receive an extraordinary paper, 20,000 signs. I publish papers between 5000 and 8000. 9000 maximum. So I ask the contributor to reduce by half, "Sometimes I take the 20,000 signs excellent paper. I tell the author, you must bring it to 8000. It must be cut more than half. The author says it's impossible. When I have a little time, I propose to rewrite it myself".

The obligation to reason with common place arguments, an obligation to collect the greatest number of readers. Any newspaper contributor has the obligation to avoid excessive critics against one or more social groups, or to question too hard the ideas and the facts alleged as true in the consciousness of the reader. We find this idea in the speech of Robert Maggiori: "They are philosophers. They write under the truth regime. They sign their paper. They cannot write whatever pass in their head. Because the day after the publishing, they have their name written under their text. Otherwise, their students could receive it in a funny way. This is not true for our other experience, "libé des écrivains" [the newspaper invites writers to replace journalists]. A writer has more freedom to move into a fiction, this is his job". The "libé des écrivains" example proposed by Robert Maggiori indicates more precisely the difference it makes between a "researcher" and a "writer". The "truth regime" claimed by Robert Maggiori implies that the collaboration with the philosophers is a relationship of truth because of the responsibility philosophers carry on with their professional environment. Scientific contributions to the journals are supposed to shake up a bit the conventional wisdom, and to challenge the view of readers on current events, but this challenge must not exceed certain limits.

These limits are more detailed by Sylvain Cypel: "I have two interdictions. Two types of papers that are never published on my rubric. This is an ethical reason. I do not publish reflections that are based on a wrong fact. If someone writes: "there is twenty thousand deaths each year on the roads", and then proposes a reasoning on the fact that there are twenty thousand deaths on the roads, and I know there are only eight thousands [deaths on the roads per year in France], I will not publish it. And the second thing I did not publish is incitement to hatred. Whatever: racial, ethnic, religious, gender etc.. Otherwise, from the Marxist to the extreme right, as long as it's consistent..." Neither the pamphlet, nor the questioning of the

dominant social facts – here, the official calculation of deaths on the road – can be accepted by the journalist. We shall imagine imagine that a researcher could write in 8000 wrote an article criticizing the calculation of deaths on the road. The author could prove that "there are twenty thousand deaths each year on the roads". But, actually, that assertion would be the result of its reasoning. Not its base. To propose another argument, based on that new interpretation of the reality, that researcher would need much more a space than he can find in a newspaper.

The requirement of an elegant expression, the need to maintain the market value of the newspaper. Robert Maggiori explains that his experience helps philosophers to express their ideas in a more lightly, easy to read manner: "The press needs the richness of the philosophical reflection. The journalistic reflection should also alert philosophers. The journalistic style should help philosophers to get rid of some academic or historical references, which are not transferable. For me, it's a good effect". If social scientists are not writers, yet they are asked for writing skills. Scientists must express their ideas in a rich, entertaining, light language. Sophie Gherardi expresses this idea in another way: "We sometimes receive heavy calculated texts with a political pressure to publish them as they are. Of course, some texts deserve to be published as they are, without any change. I think about texts written by writers, with calculated effects. But here, the expressions and phrases are often assembled to make a compromise, not to express ideas". Journalist evokes here a text written by a senior political organization. Undoubtedly, a "heavy calculated text" written by a researcher would would give the impression to intervene in a national political debate, while being signed by an intellectual representing only himself.. Therefore, it would it would conflict with the editorial line of the topic, and it would probably not be published.

The *Libé des Philosophes* has an important specificity, when compared with the operation of the mainstream media which usually publish articles from intellectuals. These kind of contributions are mostly always done via mail or e-mail (Villeneuve, 2008). The researcher proposes his contribution, the journalist responds or does not respond, sometimes offers some corrections. If everything goes fine, the researcher's article is published. The selection and the corrections of the article are made via an interaction between the author and the journalist. The *Libé des Philosophes* has been partly done on the same principle. Part of the journal's special edition has been prepared several weeks before. These done-in-advance pages are called the "cold" pages, as their topic has no precise link to the actuality of the predicted publishing day. As Robert Maggiori explains: "The difficulty of organizing [*Libé des Philosophes*] was to ensure that the philosophers I contacted – about a hundred – could be divided in two groups. Some are living abroad; they cannot be here the day before the publishing. I gave them the items that can be written a long time before the publishing day. For example this year, I needed a big paper on the history of lying in politics. I asked Gregory Chamailloux. Obviously I gave him nearly three weeks before". This part of the making of the *Libé* des Philosophes is not different from the usual collaborations between journalists and social scientists in a newspaper. The article is sent in advance, its form and content are potentially negotiated between Robert Maggiori and guests.

What distinguishes the *Libé des Philosophes* is that dozens of philosophers came to work and interact with other philosophers and journalists at the newspaper's desk. Robert Maggiori described it: "Some pages of the newspaper – the hot pages – are supposed to be written the

day before the publishing. So philosophers come onto the desk. They came here. There was Umberto Eco, there was Michel Serres. They participate to the usual editorial conference. They propose their remarks, their advices. Every one of them chooses, as journalists usually do, the topics that seem more interesting or most appropriated for them. Then they follow the rubric's chief they chose. Some go to sports, others go to politics, others go to economy. They write the article the same way a journalist would do. Technically assisted by a journalist".

This description of the organizer is conform to another testimony, a story written by a group of four philosophers who describe the ""making-of" of *Libé des Philosophes* into the pages of the *Libé des Philosophes*. This description – published under the title "On the looking glass" is signed by Gregory Cormann, Vinciane Despret, Vanessa Nurock and Corine Pelluchon. Written in a light and friendly fashion, their article begins: "The newsroom, 10 am, the worlds and the coffees circulate: from the outside, the events are scrambling [...] everyone leaves the desk with its subject: the kitchen, the books, the culture, the Taser, the interview of the Economy Minister, the NaP, the Italian rectors of universities supporting the student's strike. We walk between the offices".
The description of this day of work presents it as a light meeting between philosophers and journalists. The experience takes place in the daily newspaper daily Liberation. A short video on the website of the newspaper shows five minutes of this editorial conference. On the video, Laurent Joffrin – head chief of the newspaper – stands next to Michel Serres, and talks to Umberto Eco who is sitting at the other end of the table. Elisabeth Roudinesco speaks briefly. The only philosopher who intervenes in this video without being known on the French media is Françoise Gaillard, a Paris VII philosophy professor.

This presentation of the conference advantages the philosophers which are most frequently involved in the French media. This focus on the most famous philosophers follows the recipes proposed by the media consultants, to improve newspapers sales: a journal must offer to the reader what he is mostly familiar with (Brandewinder, 2009). According to Robert Maggiori, this imperative of promoting the most famous philosophers did not disturb the free choice of the philosophers. Each philosopher had the freedom to choose the subject he wanted.

The journalist and coordinator propose me an anecdote to understand the atmosphere of freedom that led to the writing of the *Libé des Philosophes*: "It was a free choice. To give you a simple example, that can help you to understand. It was 11:30. The Economy chief said that today there is a news conference with Christine Lagarde [the ex-French Economy Minister]. He said Christine Lagarde is ready to give us an interview. Is there any philosophers that can come with us? Two philosophers, two young women, Elizabeth Praingal and Daniel Cohen Levinas – the daughter of Emmanuel Levinas – raised their hands and say "we are interested". So they went on interviewing Christine Lagarde. Without any preparation. They had no idea that they would choose this type of report. Philosophers like to make journalism as a game".
The frame of the philosophical intervention in *Libé des philosophes* is not negotiable. The journalists propose the coverage of an event, without any preparation. In this situation, the work of the philosophers is not an exercise of "total freedom". On the contrary, their work becomes a game of instant responsiveness, spontaneity, a very different exercise according to the temporality of the philosopher.

Robert Maggiori mentions this difficulty when he describes the preparation of the *Libé des philosophes:* "Days before, weeks before the event, I talk to my philosophers guests who feels difficult to understand that they have to wait the day before the publication to write their article. When I invite philosophers two months before to participate to this issue – it takes two months of preparation – they tell "of course I would be happy to accept". They are ready to make an article right now! But they must wait, because nobody knows what's going to be hot on December 2. It is difficult to make them wait. My guests are anxious". Philosophers write freely, but they exert their free will in a frame they do not totally control.

This difficulty is reflected in the testimony/article of the four philosophers: "We hear a question: "Is it philosophical enough?" Surprisingly, the question is asked by two philosophers, to a journalist who read their text on the screen [...] the temporality of the journalism is assumed in a chain of delegations [one writer, many editors]" This text explains a profound difference between philosophy and journalism. The philosophers must accept to give a quickly produced text, to a chain of actors who will advise, discuss, illustrate and title it. Most philosophers already know this situation. When they write a book – even in the humanities and social sciences – they are not alone, they do not exercise any absolute free will. The authors write on a chain, and are often advised about the procedure or the style of their work. But philosophers meet here an editorial universe with a tighter time constraint, a more direct interaction.

The testimony of the four philosophers reports the relative despite felt by the philosophers involved in this experience: "I'm not sure that we have different things to say than most of the people about what just happened". Indeed, "philosophy takes time, time in history. It demands work; you need a situation that immediateness does not offer. However, we need to deal with the immediateness and participate to the present". The philosopher questioned by his colleagues is ambivalent. Some philosophers invited to the event are probably ambivalent too, otherwise this testimony would not have been reported by the article of the four philosophers. This injunction to "participate to the present" must be compared to the administration injunctions and assessments to self-promotion and publication, imposed to European academics on the ten past years. The first edition of *Libé des philosophes* has been held in 2007, the year when Valérie Pécresse, French Minister of Education and Research wrote the Universities Freedom and Responsibility Act. In this sense, this editorial project meets another concern of these intellectuals, specialized in speculative discipline: they may well prove this way to their ministerial supervision that they perform an outreach activity among the general public.
This particular situation may explain the ease with which participants of the *Libé des philosophes* agreed to work for free, as it is explained by Robert Maggiori when I asked him about the cost of this operation "My answer is clear. We made the deal on this basis. When we make the *Libé des écrivains*, we pay the writers. Few writers make a living with their books. Very few in France. 99% of French philosophers are teachers. He has a salary. Being paid 150 Euros for a paper does not make any sense. Nobody asked me to be paid. A few participants come from Germany or Belgium, we refund their tickets, it's the least we can do. But we do not pay, because they are already paid". Thus, the work on *Libé des philosophes* – an exercise of popularization – seems to be a part of the demanded work of the philosophy teachers.

Of course, we cannot say that the philosophers involved in the *Libé des philosophes only* obey to a vulgarization constraint imposed by their administration. There are other issues, explained by the four philosophers who describe the return of two other philosophers from a trial report: "We did not think the trial debate would decide what is philosophical and what is not. We were amazed that judges could cry for philosophy in order to encourage the three defendants to condemn the demonstrators who threw stones to the police: "Do you dissociate from these violences, in a philosophical sense?" Later, the judge said: "You people have a commitment philosophy. How far does your commitment philosophy go?". Undoubtedly, most philosophers participate in the *Libé des philosophes* to promote the philosophy exercise to which they devote their lives. They defend it in the public space, where the word "philosophy" is often used to refer to useless speculation, morality or personal development.

We now propose a content analysis of the *Libé des philosophes*. As we saw it, *Libé des philosophes* is not a plain philosophical exercise .The issue is written by philosophers, but it closely follows the professional imperatives of the journalistic profession. We will now look for the main compromises made by the philosophers to have their work accepted by journalists. We will also see how journalists maintain the framework of a "daily newspaper" all around the philosophical writings.

What does it mean to philosophize in *Liberation*? Some characteristics of the newspaper of December 2, 2010

We must seriously consider the words of Robert Maggiori: philosophers have seen the substance of what they have written published without censorship. However, it was necessary that the newspaper maintains its standards as a daily newspaper. Without forcing the philosophers to turn their articles into sources of information, the journalists exercised discreet control. Photos, headlines and news in brief items have already reported the event commented on by the philosophers. For example, the page "Events" begins with two articles, one by Elizabeth Roudinesco and another by Umberto Eco. These two articles talk about the front page headline story: the publication of numerous diplomatic cables by the website Wikileaks. The reader doesn't need the philosophers' articles to specifically inform him about the ins and outs of this case. This work is done by eight separate elements, arranged in a double page around two articles: a picture, where we find the main symbols representing the key elements of the case (a globe, an eye, a hand held up indicating "stop"), a square containing two phrases "the context / the issue". To that should be added six "references" describing the number of diplomatic cables, defining Wikileaks, recalling its main elements, recalling the existence and the words of its main figure Julian Assange, and recalling his controversial status in the organization Wikileaks. For readers who do not wish to read the entire article, the editorial staff of Liberation has provided a headline and a sub-headline, which give a fairly accurate picture of the argument outlined in the article. Then, the articles in the inside pages are often illustrated with a photo with a caption. So, the philosophers are free to write their articles without having to recall the facts they are writing about. We can understand Robert Maggiori's sentence: "we don't want these philosopher to become journalists. We want the philosophers to write like philosophers" . Here, the philosopher is the one who tells the established facts already known by the reader. Then, what is this exercise about? We have seen that the work is carried out fewer than two specific pressures: the

pressure of a production line very different from what the philosophers generally do and the pressure of a strong social norm that forbids questioning the dominant representation of the social facts.

A systematic census was conducted on the 43 articles composing the 2010 *Libé des Philosophes*. We have researched in each article the main characteristics of this practice, "philosophizing on the news". An article, especially a long article, shall contain several ways to "philosophize". When we summarized the different rhetorical elements included in the articles, we tried to identify four major types of habits used by the philosophers to "philosophy on the news":

1. Generalizing, spotting « symptoms »
2. quoting philosophers, writing anecdotes about philosophers, recalling the history of the philosophy
3. Asking questions, problematizing.
4. Being concerned about « democracy ».

Generalizing, spotting « symptoms ». The main attribute of the social scientist is the capacity to propose general assertions. Also, the "generalization" is the most common inclination of the articles of these 2010 *Libé des philosophes*. This "global vision" rhetoric leads some contributors to start their articles with encompassing concepts. Some huge concepts are used as premises: for example, Françoise Gaillard writes about "the growing spirit of the Western democracies", Zoe Samara supposes that "a language reveals the mentality of its users". Others generalize from facts: for example, Michael Hardt writes that "all governments are reducing funding for public education and increasing university fees". Emmanuel Blondel, on a solo mode, uses generalities to deliver a prophetic speech: "We reign by proximity, by adhesion or derision. Everyone does it, symbolically; we are all fooled by this game". The rhetoric of the "symptom" is rarer. Anne Dufourmantelle and Michaela Marzano use it when they write that "the tragedy of the town of Colombes is a symptom of a society sick of its fear". Michael Hardt interprets "the relative calm on American campuses as a symptom of the problem" of nowadays universities. However, if the word "symptom" is rarely expressed, the diagnostic is often present. Some contributors use terms like "phenomenon", "trend", "horizon". The main philosophical attitude in *Libé des philosophes* consists in taking a step aside, to describe a general situation which is impossible to see with the eyes of the reader, engaged in its daily business.

Quoting philosophers, writing anecdotes about philosophers, recalling the history of the philosophy. According to Robert Maggiori, the singular vision of the philosophers takes its strength from the "historical roots" a philosopher can mobilize:"When a philosopher writes on a newspaper, either in the *Libé des philosophes* or in *Rebonds* [the rubric of the newspaper *Libération* where philosophers usually propose their articles], he shows that today's problems do not arise from nowhere. Problems have roots, they were already handled before. We used to think that the problem is born today. Nope. The philosopher has a vision of it all". The historical root of a philosopher is, among others, the history of the philosophy. Many articles quote philosophers. It occurs generally at the end of the articles.

Jean-Claude Monod writes: "Hannah Arendt suggested: one of the most difficult tasks (...)". Pierre Guenancia criticizes the idea that some populations shall not be ready for

freedom and democracy "by pointing out that Kant refuted this "fallacy". Jean-Paul Jouary cites "Pliny the Elder". Blondel quotes Emmanuel Kant about the "vice of democracy". Serge Audier quotes Gilles Deleuze's interest in the tennis sport. Jean-François Pradeau writes about football, and quotes Heraclite with a touch of irony: "Maybe it is because we never play twice on the same lawn, as the Heraclitean commentators would say". Writing the weather report, Martin Rueff mentions Socrates's "walk on ice". This use of quotes by many philosophers of *Libé des philosophes* shall appeal several comments. On one hand, the name of a great philosopher refers to a further thought – which is useful, when you need to philosophy on 25 lines. When he writes "this problem has been addressed by this great philosopher", the author partly solves the problem of the lack of space and the problem of the lack of time. On the other hand, the great quoted philosopher is an authority. He is supposed to assert the authority of the author. We suppose that the mention of a great philosopher is like the mention of the grade of the author, the mention of his/her University, the mention of the title of his/her book. This philosopher is able to say "Hannah Arendt suggested (…)". He read Hannah Arendt, he understood her books. Philosophy is his/hers.There is a third explanation. This name dropping is probably a moral support for these philosophers during this experimental contribution to a newspaper. As written in the article/testimony of the four philosophers, some participants take examples from the history of the philosophy to assess that some predecessors have already made the same exercise as him: "The journalist that does a good job is a philosopher; the philosopher who does his job well is a journalist. Names? "Descartes, Pascal and Kant in particular, the Kant of Anthropology". The process of invoking "great figure" is constant on the last book of Robert Maggiori, *The profession of critic, journalism and philosophy*. The coordinator of *Libé des Philosophes* said that the Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci was a journalist before being a philosopher.
Asking questions, problematizing. Questioning is the most common rhetorical figure used by the guests of the *Libé des philosophes*. Almost every contributor uses it. Most often, the question occurs early in the paragraph. Sometimes they are two. We assist then to a balance. "Does it mean this...? Does it mean that...? " Thus, the questions are used as a breath. The series of questions and answers allows contributors to make their contribution in *Libé des philosophes* as their ordinary work.

Being concerned about "democracy". A significant number of articles in this issue talks about the Western democracy, or the French democracy. Sometimes writers suppose that democracy is in trouble. Thus, Françoise Gaillard says about Wikileaks "Should we see [Wikileaks] as a maturity sign of our democracy? No assurance". Emmanuel Blondel, already quoted, writes about "the vice of democracy" and supposes that "a small form of asceticism would not hurt us." A headline recalls that "democracy is the acceptance of dissidence". Philippe Corcuff justifies a public controversy about the "telethon" because: "The debate is fully justified in a democracy challenged by a variety of causes, all claiming for light". The article by Marc Crepon about Ivory Coast supposes that "the hope of a democratic process in the lead of public affairs seems lost again". This reflection on "democracy" is an interesting key to understand the approach of these philosophers, who contributed to this issue. Indeed, "democracy" is a contradiction for the work of many contemporary philosophers. Largely, the history of philosophy was written in order to severely criticize "democracy". Indeed, several important philosophers – among which Plato may be cited – severely criticized the principles of democracy.

Therefore, teachers who worked on *Libé des philosophes* are publicly positioning themselves around this contradiction. Moreover, the newspaper *Liberation* is a political and general newspaper, participating in the movement of opinion and freedom of expression – which makes it an integral part of the French democratic political system. In order to avoid an unmanageable gap between their usual activity and this participation at *Libé des philosophes*, the contributors use "democracy" as a vanishing point that helps giving coherence to their activities.

CONCLUSION

Philosophers who have contributed to the *Libé des Philosophes* accepted, during this experience, to profess in a foreign social universe. The time and space constraints involve other constraints, including the inability to develop radically different propositions from common sense. Philosophers who agree to participate in this experience are receiving, in exchange, a huge audience and a certain freedom in the presentation of themselves. We may add that philosophers are reconnecting with the "democratic" ritual illustrated by the character of Socrates: contributors of the *Libé des Philosophes* are exercising their questioning in public, like the first philosophers did. It was noted that this process is accompanied by a constant reflection on "democracy." This is probably the limit to cooperation between journalists and philosophers. Generally, journalists are very concerned by the defence of democracy; philosophers belong to an older political tradition, in which aristocracy is a possible option.

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