



Reality in Jeanne Hersch (1910–2000)

Piergiacomo Severini

Università G. d'Annunzio di Chieti-Pescara

In *L'être et la forme*, Hersch tries to show that “nothing is real in human consciousness without taking form” (Hersch 1946: 4) and reality is “all that has an actual presence in consciousness” (Hersch 1946: 4). The human mission is being the *incarnator*, namely transposing the subjective transcendent value on the existence mode of nature (Hersch 1946: 114).

When the human being finds in the world a worthy object thanks to her freedom, she wants such object in-itself, but she cannot eliminate herself, so she obtains only an “object-for-the-subject” (Piguet 1951: 54). The subject exerts her *hold* on the objective *matter* and the result of the conflict between hold and matter is *form*, namely the *mode* that subjectively re-elaborates some objective aspects of matter. Reality is composed by all the forms held by the subject.

In *La transcendance du singulier* (Hersch 1950), Hersch deepens human daily incarnation of reality. The subject's freedom lets her read a cypher of transcendent value in the singular objective matter, so the subject tries to incarnate such transcendent value in the immanent world in a subjective mode. The more the objective matter is worthy and represents transcendent value, and the stronger subjective hold will be, the more form will resemble hold rather than matter.

Subjective hold is the novelty that subjective incarnation introduces in the natural world. Such novelty is an ontological production that does not add new matter to natural world, but rather gives a new possible order to it. In conclusion, subjective reality is a new and free point of view on the deterministic natural world, namely the actualisation of the capacity of freedom in existence and its incarnation in natural world as *test of existence* (Hersch 1946: 114).

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