



The Journal of
The International Association of
Transdisciplinary Psychology

Volume 2, Issue 1, May 2010

Reading Julia;

.....**or you'll never walk
alone**

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Philosophy has to stop testifying for the institutionally self-satisfied controllers, stop kissing up to state-sanctioned power plays, and instead get into the untested regions of new idioms, new addresses, new referents; it has to abandon its conciliatory habits.

(Avital Ronell: *The Test Drive*, 107; as read in Julia Hözl: *Transience. a poiesis, of dis/appearance*, 20)

How can one say that they are reading something, someone, as if there was an object to reading, as if we were reading an object, as if reading itself was objective? But here perhaps, we have to allow the 'as if' to speak for us, to speak 'as if' it can, and then take the responsibility that it is we—I—that am reading Julia. At the same time, I must attempt to read her in a manner which allows Julia to be Julia, and not subsume her work—her—under myself. In this manner, I am always reading her bearing in mind the singularity of this reading—a reading amongst reading(s)—always already momentary.

At best, it is a transient reading of *Transience. a poiesis, of dis/appearance*, one that slips away as it appears.

At best, I am always walking with Julia, but never with Julia at the same time ... my Julia, a Julia, Julia?

This is a walking with, that as Jean-Luc Nancy—a voice that beautifully resonates throughout Julia's text, through Julia—teaches us is a walking that is a "singular-plural," an event of being-with Julia, an unknown and often-times unknowable moment, which remains blind from us perhaps until it happens, and even then, can only be known through other events. In other words, all knowing is an act of memory, one that is always haunted by the possibility of forgetting; reading Julia is a movement, a trans, a translation, a reading of her through myself, through my memory, an act, but also already one that is shadowed by the potentiality that I cannot even know who this Julia I am walking with is.

Hence, there is no signification to my walking with Julia—no over-arching meaning that can be repeated, replicated, reproduced. However, this in no way diminishes its importance; walking with Julia is significant in itself. For, as she teaches us, in walking—in reading—time is the very sacrifice: "this transitive duration is transient itself ... the trans is the beyond; the beyond presupposes both duration and transience. The and *and* the or." (49)

This is a walking with where the other remains other, where Julia remains wholly Julia; but at the same time when we are walking with—reading— Julia, we are also inseparable from her. In other words, and here what choice do we have to but to attempt to speak in the words of another, walking (and reading) are names that both “cannot be named; [and] must be named.” (53)

And this is the very problem of naming itself: for what is to name but to attempt to ‘know’; but at the same time, naming is catachrestic—at the end, all one can say about a name is that it is named as such because it is named (so naming is always already tautological). As Julia continues to teach us, “it is only with/in their becoming different, within their becoming-transient that they can be named” (67) and to compound it even more, “for they cannot be named they have to be named, and their naming bears (their) metaphysical naming.” (80) In this sense, I sense that each name—each time Julia names, we name, I name—is then always already both a trace, and at the same time an opening: so a conflation, a future-anterior. And more than that, we don’t name as if we already know (as if there is some correspondence), but we name both because we cannot know, and we want to (need to) know at the same time. For, naming is always already an invocation of the absence of something; not as a negation of them, but as an affirmation of their presence that requires an absence.

Hence, this is a reading, a walking, that is a relationality that is pre-relational: this is a reading of Julia, a walking with Julia, that must be assumed before it can even happen, before it can even be tested. This is a thinking of the possibility of being with Julia, one that is walking into “untested

regions of new idioms, new addresses, new referents.” (Ronell, 107)

A thinking without a safety net.

A reading not only of the text, but of the name—of Julia herself.

One without origin, where “there shall be no beginning. In the beginning there is no beginning, for in the beginning there is nothing” (22)

And one without end.

Without an answer, for even if there was an answer, it would also always already be an opening to another question.

A movement, a transience, but not only of the self, but also with the other, with the self as other, where “transiAnce” is also “A(utre)” (55); where I am reading Julia, but am also opening the possibility that I am reading myself—not a reading through the self, but a (re)reading of the self as the self is walking with the other, as Julia is walking with me.

And here, it seems appropriate to potentially expose myself, my reading, and the gait that I adopt whilst walking, by attempting to take on Julia momentarily, attempt to separate, and face my reading of her, even as it might remain impossible to see her face. For, it would seem that in *Transienc. a poesis, of dis/appearance*, Julia is attempt to commit a “perfect crime,” a poetic crime, not by being too intelligible, nor unintelligible, but showing us that intelligibility is always already haunted by the unintelligible. Perhaps this is why she has to attempt to address the potentially un-addressable through poetry; for as Michel Deguy once responded to my question “what is poetry to you” in a summer conversation in Saas Fee, “poetry is not about unveiling the very visible, nor the invisible. Poetry is about unveiling the slightly visible.”

This is what Julia hints to us, not too obviously, but instead makes slightly visible to us on a footnote on pg 189—a partially hidden place, where one has to read carefully to see—where she echoes Jean Baudrillard in showing us that “the poem lacks nothing: any commentary makes it worse. Not only does it lack nothing, but it makes any other discourse look superfluous.” (*The Intelligence of Evil or the Lucidity Pact*, 211).

And here, even as we reluctantly reach the end—if only provisionally, for there was certainly no beginning to her text—we take note that it ends with a “_____.” (193) A scandalous ending perhaps; after all, what kind of conclusion is that. But on the other hand, what other conclusion could there have been? For, even if you and I are reading the same text, “the same is not identical.” (172)

“_____”: an invitation to read Julia, to walk with her.

Echoes

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