

# A Spectacle of Disappearance

On the Aesthetics and Anthropology of Emancipation

RASMUS DYRING

**ABSTRACT:** The paper examines the phenomenon of emancipation, not in terms of changes in personal status and rights, not in terms of changes in social structures and structures of power, but in terms of the anthropological metaphysics found at the core of the emancipatory effort. Having first traced this matter in the history of the concept of emancipation and secondly explored it phenomenologically in the Tunisian Revolution, the paper concludes by pointing to a fundamental difference between the traditional notions of emancipation and its recent manifestation in Tunisia; a difference, namely, between the human being as *possessing* and *producing*, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, as a primarily *responsive* being. This being–responsive at the same time sheds new light on the concept of freedom and how the experience of freedom and of being human guides the project of emancipation.

**KEYWORDS:** Philosophical Anthropology, Tunisian Revolution, Emancipation, Existential Anthropology, Responsiveness.

## I. Introduction: The Question of Emancipation as the Question of the Human Being

*Alle Emanzipation ist Zurückführung der menschlichen Welt, der Verhältnisse, auf den Menschen selbst.*

MARX 1981: 370

Let this formula from Marx's *Zur Judenfrage* be the guiding slogan of this essay. In the same text Marx instructs us that, when examining the phenomenon of emancipation,

[e]s genügte keineswegs zu untersuchen: Wer soll emanzipieren? Wer soll emanzipiert werden? Die Kritik hatte ein Drittes zu tun. Sie mußte fragen: *Von welcher Art der Emanzipation handelt es sich? Welche Bedingungen sind im Wesen der verlangten Emanzipation begründet?* (MARX 1981: 350)

Hence, instead of focusing on the emancipated and the emancipators, however justified or urgent their particular causes might be, the question to

ask is that about the *kind* of emancipation and the metaphysical conditions and commitments it carries. Now, if we are correct in assuming with our slogan that all emancipatory efforts refer back somehow to the human being *as such*; if emancipation is always a matter of making the world a place for human beings to dwell *qua human beings*, it immediately places at the core of the question of emancipation the question of the human being. Hence, when asking the question of the *kind* of emancipation the inquiry should not be limited to an examination of the societal structures that appear to obstruct or further the realization of human freedom; the structures within which a person or group of persons are elevated to a higher level of liberties and rights, or the structures that are destroyed in order that a new structuring of society more in tune with (what is presumed to be) humanity *proper* may arise. Heeding the anthropological “essence” of emancipation, the task should be that of investigating how emancipatory phenomena might *expose* — perhaps only in short glimpses and through the tight cracks in the (structural) walls — the *being* of human beings and how this exposition, this *experience of being human*, might inspire, perhaps even ground, the emancipatory effort of *Zurückführung* of the world *auf den Menschen selbst*.

In what follows I will do two things; first, sketch a short genealogy that will show how emancipation has traditionally been cast in the image of “the hand”: the hand *possessing* the power to give and take freedom, and in turn, the hand that destroys bondage and *produces* freedom. These schemata share the basic understanding that the problem of human freedom is ultimately a matter for human beings to handle: *freedom is within the grasp of human hands*. Secondly, I shall focus on the importance to the emancipatory effort of *experiences of freedom* that *impose* upon human beings only to withdraw *beyond the grasp of human hands*: experiences of freedom that expose the human being, not as possessor, not as fabricator, not even primarily as actor, but as a being that is characterized existentially by a non-substantive being-responsive. To this end I will undertake a phenomenological analysis of the political posture of self-immolation assumed by Mohamed Bouazizi<sup>1</sup>, who, as it turned out, thereby instigated the Tunisian Revolution. As one commentator of the events in Tunisia observes:

This revolution in Tunisia is a typical example of the self-mobilisation of ordinary people for their own emancipation, independent of a vanguard party or self-proclaimed revolutionaries. The iteration of the Tunisian revolution in other parts of Africa and the Middle East is fast becoming a pattern that speaks volume about the nature of 21st century revolutions. (CAMPBELL 2011)

1. Elsewhere I have analyzed Bouazizi’s act within a framework of “the concerted praxis of being human” and in particular as an instance of so called “provocative action.” Cfr. DYRING 2014

The expectation in turning to the Tunisian Revolution is thus that it might grant us a particularly clear view of the very event whence the emancipatory effort arose; a view not too cluttered by *ideological* preparations and retrospective justifications. Focusing on Bouazizi's self-immolation at the initiation of the emancipatory process, the present approach in some respects mirrors anthropologist Victor Turner's approach to the process of *rites de passage*: Instead of merely noting that a neophyte through a ritually mediated process went from one structural state with certain rights and duties to another, Turner zeroed in on the very *liminal* phase *betwixt and between* the clearly defined structural states. Here he found that the liminal phase exhibits an *endogen* type of "unstructured" social organization (TURNER 1970, 2008). The hypothesis to be pursued throughout this essay is that the phenomenon of emancipation as *Zurückführung* — as the transpositioning-back — of the world onto the ground of the properly human must be traced into the abyssal depths of such liminal experiences of human community.

## 2. A Short Genealogy of Emancipation

### 2.1. *Ex Manus Capere*

The concept of emancipation has its origin in early Roman Law. Here it specifically designated the process by which the head of a family, the *paterfamilias*, set free a family member, most often a son (*filiusfamilias*), from his supreme paternal authority, his *patria potestas*. It is important to note that this process was significantly different from that of freeing a slave, which in Roman Law was termed *manumissio*. However, both these terms play on the word *manus*, hand. *Missio manu* is literally the "the sending away by the hand", whereas *emancipatio*, with its etymological roots in *mancipatio* (transaction of property), from *manus* + *capere*, to take, designates a taking out of the fatherly hand — *ex manus capere* — of the son by the father (MELVILLE 1915: 110, 130). Add to this picture that a woman by marriage comes to be *in manu* of her husband; she is submitted to a "power as absolute and unrestrained as that of a father over his children in respect of his *patria potestas*, or of a master over his slaves by reason of the *dominica potestas*." (MELVILLE 1915: 142) The *Paterfamilias qua* husband, *qua* father and *qua* owner of the estate held in his hand a power that was supreme to the extent of ruling over the life and death of the members and the property (*in casu* the slaves) of the estate (MELVILLE 1915: 123)<sup>2</sup>.

2. This power was increasingly limited during the Imperial age. This, however, is not of importance to greater picture painted in this section (cfr. MELVILLE 1915: 125)

On the authority of the *patria potestas*, the *paterfamilias* could sell a son into slavery and he could set a son free from his authority. However, given the sons *agnatic* status — i.e. that he was related by blood to the family “empire” — definitively separating the son from the *patria potestas* and the rights and privileges inhering in the agnatic relation was not a straight-forward matter (MELVILLE 1915: 122). Upon selling his son into slavery (or, as it were, pledging him to another master) the son would remain agnatically *tied* to the family and return *in potestas* of the father, and to his former status and privileges, if he was eventually to be manumitted by the person to whom he was sold/pledged. The slave (by birth or capture), on the other hand, since he was without such agnatic status, citizenship and liberty in the eyes of Roman Law, and hence merely and literally a thing (*res*), a piece of property, could be manumitted immediately at the will of the master, and as freedman acquire the legal statuses of liberty and citizenship with the former owner remaining merely related to the him as *patron* (MELVILLE 1915: 113,117). If a father were to manumit his son, like he would manumit a slave, the son would immediately return *in potestas* of the father due to the strength of the agnatic tie. However, a legal path for the definitive severance of the agnatic tie was provided: according to early Roman Law selling a son three times would break the claim of the *patria potestas* on him and at the same the son’s recourse to the family privileges. By the procedure of *mancipatio* — a mode of transferring the ownership of certain types of property (*res mancipi*) such as immobile property, farming equipment and slaves — the father would sell his son three times to a person who by agreement with the father would manumit the son immediately and hence send the son back *in potestas* of the father. However, after the third sale, which legally freed the son from the *patria potestas*, instead of the other person manumitting the son from his ownership, the father would buy back the son in order to manumit him himself, thereby becoming the *patron* of the now freed son (Melville 1915: 125, 130). No longer *alieni juris*, i.e. under the authority of another, but *juris sui*, autonomous, the son is now in a position to attain for himself the *potestas* of an estate by marrying and establishing a family (MELVILLE 1915: 124).

In summary, the *original* schema of emancipation is that of a supreme ruler that possesses the autonomous power (*juris sui*) to take out of his *hand* — *ex manus capere* — a portion of this power to allow a person otherwise *in potestas*, and hence, *alieni juris*, to become himself *juris sui*. Curiously, this transferal of autonomous power was only legally possible by *transforming* those whose freedom was in question into a certain type of *thing* that could be owned and sold, and hence, be taken in hand only to be, in turn, *taken out of the hand* (*ex manus capere*). Early Roman emancipation is thus conditioned by an anthropology of the *possessing* human being, and, derived from this notion, the human being as a *thing* that can be owned.

## 2.2. A Bill of Lading for the Delivery of Freedom

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, when the concept of emancipation became explicitly tied to the question of slavery, the relationship between the possessing hand and the matter of freedom was still at its core.

During the American Civil War, on January 1, 1863, Abraham Lincoln finalized the so called *Emancipation Proclamation* that made public that the slaves in the rebelling southern states, in the eyes of the U.S. government, were free. The *Proclamation* has since been criticized for expressing “all the moral grandeur of a bill lading,” the subtext of this critique being that Lincoln only freed the slaves in order to enlist them in the Union army (HOFSTADTER 1954: 132, cfr. BELZ 1976). Hence, the critique goes, emancipation of the slaves was not a moral matter, but a question of military logistics, and the text of the *Proclamation* manifests just this. However, for Lincoln the problem of the abolition of slavery could not be solved simply by taking presidential action on moral outrage without committing at the same time the more destructive crime of acting in violation of the U.S. constitution. The particular quandary in which Lincoln found himself, was to balance, on the one hand, the fundamental metaphysico–anthropological intuition of the *Declaration of Independence*, “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness,”<sup>3</sup> and, on the other hand, the *Fifth Amendment* stating that “No person shall be. . . deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.”<sup>4</sup> Hence, while the slave *qua human being* was unalienably free *sub specie aeternitatis* (and Lincoln, as is evident, for instance, by his attempts already in the late 1840’ies at abolishing slavery in Washington D.C, believed this to be true), the slave *qua de facto property* could not be expropriated from an owner without “due process of law.” (cfr. FINKELMAN 2008: 355)

The text of the *Emancipation Proclamation* echoes the winding legal path — not unlike the winding legal path of the ceremony of *emancipatio* in early Roman Law — that Lincoln had to travel in order to emancipate the slaves without violating the constitution:

... on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty–three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a

3. Cfr. transcription of the *Declaration of Independence*: [www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html)

4. Cfr. transcription of the *Bill of Rights*: [www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill\\_of\\_rights\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html)

State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free. . . .<sup>5</sup>

First of all, the *Proclamation* pronounces as free only the slaves in the states “in rebellion against the United States”, not the slaves in the loyal slave states, and it makes no appeals to grand moral ideas such as those expressed in the *Declaration of Independence*. The reason for this narrow scope, and the implicit lack “of moral grandeur,” was that the U.S. Government, without being in violation of the Fifth Amendment, could confiscate the property of those who threatened and conspired against the Union, and *made use their property* in this endeavor. Because the slaves, just like other *kind of property*, such as the guns and horses, was used in the war effort by the southern Confederacy, the Union was constitutionally justified in expropriating this *property* without “due process of law” or “just compensation.”

As it was the case two millennia earlier, emancipation in the case of American slavery, hinged on the legally acknowledged *being–property* of those whose freedom was in question: only by recognizing the slave not as a free human being, but as *property*, was it possible within the legal framework to deliver the slaves from their bondage. This at the same time testifies to the relative weight of the metaphysico–anthropological frame–of–mind that grounds this legal framework; namely that the individual “pursuit of happiness”, that in the *Fifth Amendment* is protected in terms of the right of private property (*in casu* the property of the slave owner), outranks individual liberty (*in casu* the liberty of the enslaved human being). As a historian of law points out<sup>6</sup>, the characterization of the *Emancipation Proclamation* as “a bill of lading” is actually, in the light of this legal balancing act, quite accurate: “A bill of lading was the key legal instrument that guaranteed the delivery of goods between parties that were far apart and may never have known each other.” (Finkelman 2008: 386) Lincoln, a skilled, former railroad lawyer, drew up “a carefully crafted, narrow document: a bill of lading for the delivery of freedom. . . .” (FINKELMAN 2008: 386)

### 2.3. *Emancipation as the Production of the Freely Producing Human Being*

Alongside this *traditional* notion of emancipation that crystallized in processes of delivery of liberty modelled on legal processes of transaction of property and was grounded in an anthropological metaphysic of the possessing human being — in Antiquity, the *paterfamilias*, in modernity, with

5. Cfr. transcription of the *Emancipation Proclamation*: [www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured\\_documents/emancipation\\_proclamation/transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/transcript.html)

6. Finkelman, however, takes issue with the hypothesis that the lack of moral grandeur in the text should be a sign of a lack of moral commitment as regards Lincoln himself.

Locke, the self-possessing individual — a new schema of emancipation began to emerge with the growing power of the bourgeoisie in the city-states of the Renaissance and culminated in the American and French revolutions; namely emancipation not as a legally sanctioned process by which those in power *hand out* liberties to those not yet of their status, but emancipation as *self*-emancipation, as the more or less violent struggle of the “unfree” against the prevailing organization of society and the structures that prevent their liberation.

Prepared in Enlightenment philosophy and epitomized in the American and French Revolutions, the notion of the possessing human being, while still taking center stage, showcases a quite drastic metaphysical transformation: *self*-emancipation appeals (at least retrospectively) to the possession not of arbitrarily acquired property and privileges, but to an *inalienable possession* of rights inherent in individual human life *qua human*. For Marx, the recognition of this *apotheosis* of the possessing human being becomes a cornerstone in his critical thinking in general and, in particular, in his critique of the kind of *political* emancipation most notably found in the bourgeois-revolutions in North America and France.

While *political* emancipation — i.e. the elevation of the formerly powerless to an institutionalized level of political power — is certainly great progress, Marx writes, “sie ist zwar nicht die letzte Form der *menschlichen* Emanzipation überhaupt, aber sie ist die letzte Form der menschlichen Emanzipation *innerhalb* der bisherigen Weltordnung.” (MARX 1981: 356, emphasis added) The political emancipation is hence merely a restructuring within an order that as such is the root of human unfreedom. But what Marx here calls *Weltordnung* essentially boils down to the anthropological question; because if *all* emancipation is the *Zurückführung* of the world *auf den Menschen selbst*, the differences between political and properly human emancipation will be found in the kind of *human experience* that guides and grounds this *Zurückführung*.

With the bourgeois-revolutions, feudal society was resolved into its human ground. But since the agentive apex of this revolutionary distillation was the bourgeoisie, the human residue that remained was the human *qua bourgeois*, the individual, *der egoistische Mensch*.

Die *droits de l'homme* erscheinen als *droits naturels*, denn die *selbstbewußte Tätigkeit* konzentriert sich auf den *politischen Akt*. Der *egoistische Mensch* ist das *passive*, nur *vorgefundne* Resultat der aufgelösten Gesellschaft, Gegenstand der *unmittelbaren Gewißheit*, also *natürlicher* Gegenstand. (MARX 1981: 369)

Hence, the possessing human being that we find apotheosized in the notions of *unalienable human* rights has its ground in this *experience* of a given

natural human being. But emancipation must be more radical than this; it must transcend not just the societal structures, but just as much this given *human being* itself, if it is to break the shackles of (self-imposed) structural imprisonment: “Die *politische Revolution* löst das bürgerliche Leben in seine Bestandteile auf, ohne diese Bestandteile selbst zu *revolutionieren* und der Kritik zu unterwerfen.” (MARX 1981: 369)

This revolutionary *human* emancipation hinges, on the one hand, on the critical acknowledgement that the “natural” human being is historically *produced* in the furnaces of the productive forces and their societal organization and, on the other hand, on the revolutionary reorganization of the relations of production so as to make possible the production of the new, free human being — *der kommunistische Mensch*. This happens only when the human being “in seinem empirischen Leben. . . *Gattungswesen* geworden ist, erst wenn der Mensch seine ‘forces propres’ als *gesellschaftliche* Kräfte erkannt und organisiert hat. . .” (MARX 1981: 370) With this becoming *Gattungswesen*, becoming “species-being”, becoming *communal*, the destructive socio-economic forces, that in the capitalist-bourgeois society was created “aus dem Aufeinander-Wirken der Menschen” and which “ihnen bisher als durchaus fremde Mächte imponiert und sie beherrscht haben,” are brought under *communal* “Controle und bewusste Beherrschung. . .” (MARX 2008: 60) This matter, however, is now no longer merely a question of societal structures, but of “eine masshaften Veränderung der Menschen,” of an *anthropogenesis* in which subjects do not create *themselves* like Nietzsche, and later Foucault, would have it: the emancipatory anthropogenesis is a process in which “die Individuen allerdings *einander* machen, physisch und geistig. . .” Thus, with the human being’s becoming *communal*, that is, positing the “Gesellschaft als Subjekt” the question of emancipation becomes a matter of the “Selbsterzeugung der Gattung.” (MARX 2008: 60–1) Human emancipation is grounded — has its mode of *Zurückführung* — in the communal creation of a communal being. Human freedom, on this account, lies in the self-identity, the non-alienation, the unalienability of a communally created human *substance*.

Hence, with Marx’s *radicalization* of emancipation we find at the same time a radical shift in the guiding anthropological metaphysics: rather than the possessing human being with the *potestas* to *take out of hand* a portion of that power, or that *takes out of the hand* of an illegitimate power what is *unalienably* his or her possession *qua human*, Marx finds at the basis of emancipation the *producing* human being, the *homo faber*, whose hands have constructed the societal structures of unfreedom, but who, by the same token, has the (*gesellschaftliche*) power also to destroy these structures and build a new society and a new human being, in short *produce freedom*. While this transformation is quite drastic, human freedom is still — if not more



than ever, since this freedom now transcends radically human being *as such* in its physical and spiritual entirety — exclusively in human *hands*.

### 3. Toward an Existential Aesthetics of Emancipation

Having now traced in the history of emancipation anthropological metaphysics of the *possessing* and the *producing* human being, both intimately tied up with a metaphysic of the power of *human hands*, the task of this section is to explore, by way of a phenomenological analysis of the event that sparked the Tunisian Revolution, an *exposition of human freedom* in the very initiation of the emancipatory effort and indicate how this exposition, that is at the same time an *imposition* — something that is *not* within the grasp of *human hands*, but that encroaches in human experience with an abyssal pathos — is that which existentially brings within the *realm of possibility* the ensuing “structural” emancipation. Hence, the perspective pursued in the events of the Tunisian Revolution differs fundamentally from both the original and the modern notions of emancipation in the way it foregrounds as conditions of the emancipatory effort registers of human existence that remain withdrawn from and beyond the grasp of human hands.

It might be objected that this strict focus on the initiatory event — Bouazizi’s self-immolation — in its relative, analytical isolation (in its phenomenological reduction, if you will) runs the risk of succumbing to the temptation of “presentism”; the tendency, as a scholar in Tunisian history puts it, “to seek *causation* and meaning in the very recent past.” (CLANCY–SMITH 2013: 17, emphasis added) However, in focusing on the very phenomenon of Bouazizi’s self-immolation, the following analysis does not purport to say anything about *causality* and the historical and cultural conjunctions that structure social reality. Instead, the perspective laid on Bouazizi’s act sets out to trace an *experience of freedom* that *cut into* social reality and *cast* it in a new, potentiated light. This is not to suggest something like a radical historical break between a past of bondage and future of liberty, but rather the much subtler hypothesis of a *phenomenological modification in the political imaginary* of those on whom this event made an inexorable impact: a modification that transformed grievances despairingly suffered in the face of a seemingly *limitless authoritarian power* into motives toward radical sociopolitical change that suddenly *appeared* possible.

#### 3.1. *Impossibility and Invisibility*

The new, Hannah Arendt writes, “always happens against the overwhelming odds of statistical laws and their probability, which for all practical, everyday

purposes amounts to certainty; the new therefore always appears in the guise of a miracle.” (ARENDR 1998: 178) This characterization of the advent of the new resonates well with many descriptions of the events that transpired in Tunisia and subsequently spread throughout North Africa and the Middle East in the wake of Bouazizi’s act of self-immolation. The unfolding of the revolution, sociologist Guessoumi writes,

was unforeseeable and even inconceivable for most political analysts. . . Prior to Bouazizi [i.e. prior his and a number of subsequent instances of self-immolation mirroring Bouazizi’s act], it was nearly impossible to imagine such experiences crystallizing into a revolution, because there had been no clear indications in Tunisia of there being a general revolutionary tendency. (GUESSOUMI 2012: 21)

This absence of “a general revolutionary tendency” can be spelled out more concretely in terms of an absence of the active, collective movements otherwise commonly associated with revolutionary or quasi-revolutionary uprisings. Firstly, neither the banned communist party (PCOT), nor politico-religious or nationalist movements appear to have played any decisive role in the very early mobilization. Hence, initially no “vanguard parties” played any instrumental parts in preparing and coordinating an impending revolt (KHOSROKHAVAR 2012: 40). Secondly, while students, alongside all other individuals participating, played major roles in the initial phases of the uprising, there was no collective coordination facilitated by student movements (KHOSROKHAVAR 2012: 35). Finally, the workers’ union (UGTT) did play a role in the initial mobilization, but the ambiguity of the reaction of the UGTT toward the early uprisings only emphasizes the contours of the extremely decentralized nature of the uprisings. Whereas the leadership of the UGTT was pro-regime and thus sought to mediate between the revolting forces and the government in order to salvage the prevailing structures of power, there was a widespread cooperation between local branches of the workers’ union and the protesters in politicizing and radicalizing further the protests (KHOSROKHAVAR 2012: 39). In sum, it goes for all three organizational domains that any mobilizing role played, was played *after the fact* of Bouazizi’s self-immolation and the spontaneously formed protest movements.

This absence of a “general revolutionary tendency” prior to Bouazizi’s act hence indicates two things. First, on the level of the ordinary political imaginary, there were no *clearly realizable* alternatives to the prevailing order. There was no revolutionary intelligentsia ready to provide tenable blueprints, itineraries, infrastructure for the mobilization of social movements. Secondly, the radical sociopolitical change that prior to Bouazizi’s act seemed “unforeseeable” and “inconceivable” in the perspective of political analysis, was *despairingly impossible* from the perspective of ordinary lived

experience — it was, existentially speaking, the lived experience of *profound, political powerlessness*. As a journalist reported from Bouazizi's impoverished hometown roughly a month after the latter's self-immolation and a little over a week after President Ben Ali had fled the country; "[p]eople in Sidi Bouzid use the words 'impossible' or 'miracle' to describe the events of the last month." (FAHIM 2011)

Beside this twofold factor of sociological *improbability* and existential *impossibility*, there is another factor at play in constituting the peculiarity of the circumstances in which the Tunisian Revolution began; namely that it in an important sense seemingly erupted out of *nowhere*. As one reporter put it,

This is where an Arab revolution began, in a hardscrabble stretch of nowhere. If the modern world is divided into dynamic hubs and a static periphery, Sidi Bouzid epitomizes the latter. The town never even appeared on the national weather forecast. (COHEN 2011)

There is a clear pattern in the escalation of the protests that echoes this pattern of "dynamic hubs and a static periphery" — yet, with the inception of the revolts this pattern was turned on its head. During Ben Ali's presidency, the governorate of Sidi Bouzid (of which Bouazizi's hometown carrying the same name is the principal town) along with its neighboring governorates that together make up the internal, western part of the country had been systematically neglected to the advantage of the easternmost governorates with their bigger cities and coastal regions that sustain the lucrative tourism industry. This nation-wide asymmetry in socioeconomic and political standing was carried to the point where — sedimented in the "official state sociopolitical language" — the governorates of central Tunisia were "collectively labeled 'areas of darkness'." (SAIDANI 2012: 46) Again, like the sociological *improbability* of sociopolitical change from an existential perspective was experienced as despondent *impossibility*, what from the perspective of the official bureaucratic jargon derogatorily was called *areas of darkness* was experienced as profoundly demoralizing *political invisibility* by those dwelling in these neglected, dark areas.

### 3.2. Making a Spectacle of Disappearance

It was in the heart of this darkness, this space of sociopolitical *dis-appearance*, that the sparks of the Tunisian Revolution first flew. On the December 17, 2010, around noon, Bouazizi, in a last desperate act, assumed a political posture that somehow embodied the strength to cut through the *veil of political invisibility*. Earlier that morning Bouazizi — a young man of 26, who, without the prospect of more steady and financially rewarding employment,

supported much of his family as an unlicensed fruits and vegetable vender — had had a run-in with a municipal inspector, who confiscated his goods. Humiliated and indignant, Bouazizi went to the local municipal building to demand his property back. When he was turned away, he went to the local governor's office demanding an audition, but was rejected also here (FAHIM 2011).

What this story indicates — this story, that started with what locals called a “seemingly routine confrontation” — is how being a dweller in the *areas of darkness* was not merely a matter of structural inequality and institutionalized corruption, but equally and immediately an *existential* matter that crystalized poignantly in everyday experiences of powerlessness and political invisibility; experiences here concretized in the despairing impossibility of even “being seen” by the local representatives of Ben Ali's central government in distant Tunis (FAHIM 2011). In an Arendtian conceptual framework such *areas of darkness* (but this goes as well for all other registers of Tunisian public life equally under the sway of Ben Ali's authoritarian security apparatus) are extreme symptoms of the systematic, strategic dismantlement of a *genuinely political* public realm. Such political pathologies are not only dangerous due their de facto annulment of the liberties associated with a free public realm, but more foundationally because the public realm, according to Arendt's politics of existence, is the institutional correlate of what *ontologically* is the *space of appearances* in which alone human beings are properly free to appear before each other *as political beings* and be seen and acknowledged as such (ARENDR 1998: 199). Like *world* for Heidegger is the *clearing* (Lichtung) in which Being presences (anwest) and beings become unconcealed (unverborgen) in their Being, so the *space of appearances* for Arendt is the clearing in which alone the humanity of human beings can come to presence; systematically depriving people of the (ontic) possibilities of their *being-political* in this sense of standing forth *as* singular beings among a plurality of equally singular beings, in an ontological perspective amounts to systematically depriving people of the possibility of “practicing” fully their humanity (ARENDR 1998: 176, HEIDEGGER 2003: 40, cfr. DYRING 2014).

What happened next that fateful day in December is usually granted no more than two sentences and a couple of dozen words in most newspaper reports, despite the fact that it was indeed this event *in its singularity* that formed that occasion in response to which a revolutionary pathos swept across large parts of the world:

Sometime around noon, in the two-lane street in front of the governor's high gate, the vendor drenched himself in paint thinner then lit himself on fire. A doctor at the hospital where he was treated said the burns covered 90 percent of his body.

By the time he died on Jan. 4, protests that started over Mr. Bouazizi's treatment in Sidi Bouzid had spread to cities throughout the country. (FAHIM 2011)

Bouazizi had shown no signs of depression and left no statements behind that can positively disclose his final thoughts and motivations. Some — among them members of Bouazizi's family — explain his acts with reference to the humiliation he suffered in his encounter with the authorities, and emphasize the especially humiliating aspect that it was a female inspector that confiscated his goods (and *allegedly* slapped him in public in the process) (Fahim 2011, *International Crisis Group Report* n. 106 – 28 April 2011 p. 3, note 12), others point to the “fact” that he was an unemployed college graduate (which he was not) as a main source of frustration (ABOUZEID 2011, FAHIM 2011, KHOSROKHAVAR 2012: 31), while others still ascribe to Bouazizi himself a (proto-revolutionary) *political project of dignity* — he is here held to have anticipated the mantra of what subsequently was called the *Revolution of Dignity* (JDEY 2012: 83). However, whereas the answers to the question of Bouazizi's true motives and intentions can only be conjecture, the meaning of his act as it *appeared* can be approximated phenomenologically.

What above all seems clear in this lack of clarity, in the contradictions and the confusion regarding Bouazizi's status, motivations and intentions, is that Bouazizi's act *as it originally appeared* cannot be ascribed any explicitly *programmatic* (let alone revolutionary) content: it was not akin to, for instance, the deeds of revolutionaries dying for “the cause”, nor to modern acts of terrorism that, for their effect, hinge on a *manifest relation* to an explicit political program. Strictly speaking, Bouazizi's act did not *manifest* anything specific — with his act, Bouazizi did not strike up a political program for a generation of despairing youths to act out. Rather than being the manifestation of something the political meaning of which was *apparent*, Bouazizi, with his act of self-immolation, made a *spectacle of disappearing*, thereby leaving behind, in the midst of the areas of sociopolitical darkness, a *highly visible, open space*.

Given the prevailing circumstances of sociopolitical invisibility, the *spectacle of disappearance* did not leave an open space in the world simply by virtue of Bouazizi “withdrawing” himself from it; the act of disappearance *of itself* somehow generatively and originarily called forth this *new space* of appearances. The final two sections below attempt to trace the origin of this new space; first, with reference to the manner in which Bouazizi's “disappearance” made apparent the limit of the authoritarian power that had otherwise seemed limitless, and secondly, with reference to the manner in which this *liminal experience* was shared between a growing plurality of spectators who were *called forth* in the spectacle.

### 3.3. *The Outermost Possibility of Powerlessness*

From its birth in Ancient Greece, philosophy has been preoccupied with death — the limit at which mortals are utterly powerless — and more specifically with the relation of the powerlessness inherent in mortality to the problematics of human freedom. Whether this preoccupation found its expression in Aristotle's questions of the possibility of the eudaimonic *autarchy* of those not yet at life's end, in Stoic practices of *ataraxia* in the face of that over which one has no power, or much later, in Hegel's ideas of a *struggle to death* for recognition, in Kierkegaard's thinking of the proto-ethical *decisiveness* of death, in Heidegger's question of the existential wholeness of a *being-toward-death*, these conceptions of the relationship between death and freedom most often share an emphasis on how the possibility disclosed *at the limit of death* has its ontological anchor point somehow in the individual existence.

Much in this vein, Foucault points to the ultimately private character of death. In his exploration of the historical changes in configurations of institutionalized power, Foucault traces a basic structural transition from power as the sovereignty that implies the right to dispose over and of individual lives, i.e. to inflict death, toward power as the management of life *as such*, of biological survival — *biopower* (FOUCAULT 1998: 137). However, from the perspective of either of these schemata of power, death *as such* withdraws beyond the grasp of institutionalized power, beyond the grasp of societal structures. This becomes particularly evident in the phenomenon of suicide:

It is not surprising that suicide — once a crime, since it was a way to usurp the power of death which the sovereign alone . . . had the right to exercise — became, in the course of the nineteenth century, one of the first conducts to enter into the sphere of sociological analysis; it testified to the individual and private right to die, at the borders and in the interstices of power that was exercised over life. (FOUCAULT 1998: 138–9)

Whether power is defined in terms of the right to kill or in terms of the management of life, the limit of death *interlaces* institutionalized power that can only attempt to evade the *lacerating* force of death, never conquer it: “death is *power's limit*, the moment that escapes it; death becomes the most secret aspect of existence, the most ‘private’.” (FOUCAULT 1998: 138, emphasis added)

By facing death in the middle of the street, in plain view of by-passers and employees at the governor's office, in front of this official building that at once manifested the *presence* of (authoritarian) power and at the same time manifested the *exclusion* of the people of Sidi Bouzid from (political) power, from a genuinely political space in which to stand forth, Bouazizi's

act brought this *limit-of-death*, that is correlatively the *limit-of-power*, into the *common experience* of those watching; the limit of death in Bouazizi's case — although *irredeemably* and *singularly* the threshold of *his* existence — was thus transformed from being an ultimately “private” matter into being a truly *public thing*: a thing *shared* by everyone, yet *possessed* by no one.

These *communitary* and *expropriative* characteristics of what is here exposed is traceable in three directions; in its relation to Bouazizi, in its relation to the regime, and in its relation to the spectators of the spectacularly exposed *limit-of-power*. *Firstly*, dying by his *own hand*, Bouazizi usurped the power over his own destiny from *out of the hands* of the Tunisian *paterfamilias*, Ben Ali; in a *fleeting moment* he was *juris sui*. However, the *limit* of Ben Ali's authority as it was *hereby* exposed to the world, and the experience of a possibility of freedom beyond the constraints of authoritarian power that correlate with the experience of this limit, was *not* thereby in Bouazizi's command. The *limit-of-power* that was exposed, that was set-out in plain view in Bouazizi's act, was from its very *outset*; from the minute Bouazizi lid himself on fire, *beyond his hand* — Bouazizi disappeared (and)<sup>7</sup> this limit shone forth in the spectacle of his disappearance.

*Secondly*, the exposed *limit-of-power* was *beyond the hand* of Ben Ali — indeed, Bouazizi was himself in a sense *untouchable*. Once out in the open, Ben Ali had no choice but to respond somehow to the imposition of this limit embodied in Bouazizi's posture of self-immolation that was clearly encroaching on his authority; yet given the circumstances — that Bouazizi made a spectacle of taking his own life, not of attacking or agitating against the regime — Ben Ali could not possibly touch on the root of the matter and denounce Bouazizi himself as a usurper and a criminal; Bouazizi was structurally *beyond the hand* of Ben Ali. Hence, the latter had to somehow quarantine or hide what was exposed in the episode. Standing beside Bouazizi's bed, at the hospital where his burns were treated, Ben Ali in a TV-transmission on December 28, 2010, sought to strip Bouazizi's act of any political significance first by calling it an *isolated* act of a desperate man, and secondly, by attempting to bring those acts of protest, that in response to Bouazizi's act had evidently found a highly potentiated space outside or rather, in a *rift* in the fabric of authority, back within the domain of authority by denouncing these acts as the opportunist deeds of extremists and terrorists (GUESSOUMI 2012: 24, SAIDANI 2012: 47).

The rift that Bouazizi's act opened in that fabric of authority that had most recently appeared seamless and limitless was only torn wider open

7. The conjunction is here in parenthesis in order to indicate the simultaneity between the disappearance and the exposition without, however, suggesting a causal connection: Bouazizi's act was not the cause of the exposition, merely an occasion for something already interweaving power to shine forth.

during the ensuing weeks of protest, despite (or rather due to) the regime's efforts in the way of damage control and violent suppression of the protests. Ben Ali on January 13, 2011, in a final desperate attempt at covering up this rift in which the *limit-of-power* was exposed, tried to appeal to the Tunisian People by promising them a sort of "emancipation" that with the one hand grants a number liberties, while the other hand demands acceptance of the legitimacy of the prevailing order. Thus, Ben Ali promised not only "to reduce the prices of basic commodities and foodstuffs — sugar, milk, bread, etc." He also promised "full freedom for the media, in all its forms, and not shutting down internet sites, and rejecting any form of censorship on them. . . The field is open, from this day onward, for freedom of political expression, including peaceful demonstrations. . ." At the same time, Ben Ali made the case that political change required order to be restored and his own political leadership: "I reiterate to you, in all clarity, that I will work to promote democracy and to put pluralism into effect."<sup>8</sup> Ben Ali's speech only incited the protesters and the next day he fled the country.

### 3.4. *The Liminal Experience of Freedom and Community*

This brings us to the *third* direction in which the *communitary* and *expropriative* characteristics of the exposition of the *limit-of-power* can be traced; namely in its relation to the plurality of spectators. When Bouazizi made a *spectacle of disappearing*, not only did his posture force Ben Ali's apparatus of power into a defensive, reactive position; it, in a more primordial sense, *demande* a response from anybody within its reach. Those on whom this spectacle impacted — at first those in the immediate vicinity, soon after those in similar circumstances of sociopolitical darkness for whom the spectacle burned enticingly bright, and finally, with the large scale dissemination through various media, also the generally better off eastern Tunisian city dwellers — whatever their *concrete answers* to the situation would turn out to be, eventually found themselves in a situation in which they could not *not respond*.

Bernhard Waldenfels spells out this type of responsive inexorability by distinguishing between two modes of responding: on one level there is *answering* in a narrow sense, which means to directly address a matter in question and on a more primordial level there is *responding* as the mode in which one originally registers that one has been addressed, the mode in which one finds oneself to have been "placed on demand" and that *having to answer* somehow to the situation is given as an inexorable fact. As Waldenfels puts it

8. "The Last Official Address by Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, January 13, 2011", Translation by Tony Badran.



Das Antworten beginnt nicht mit dem Reden über etwas, es beginnt überhaupt nicht mit dem Reden, sondern mit dem Hinsehen und Hinhören, das eine eigene Form der Unausweichlichkeit aufweist. Den Imperative 'Höre!' kann ich nicht hören, ohne auf sie zu hören. Das Verbot 'Hör nicht auf mich!' führt zu dem bekannten *double bind*: Wie immer man darauf reagiert, man macht es verkehrt. Selbst das Weghören setzt ein Hören, das Wegsehen ein Sehen voraus. . . Dem Anspruch, der sich fordernd an mich richtet, entspricht ein *Antworten (response)*, das auf Angebote und Ansprüche des Anderen eingeht und nicht bloß Wissens- und Handlungslücken füllt. (WALDENFELS 2006: 60)

Bouazizi's *spectacle of disappearance* showcases such an inexorable force. The *behold!* of the spectacle — like Waldenfels' *listen!* — emplaces those simply registering it in the *imperative sphere* of the spectacle before any contemplation and interpretation of *what* is being demanded, *what* is in the process of unfolding, is even possible. Merely seeing the spectacle, merely becoming-spectator, is to have submitted already to the demand emerging in the spectacle. And, as worked out above, what was exposed in Bouazizi's spectacle of disappearance was not at Bouazizi's bidding. While Bouazizi obviously took in hand his own death, that which urgently demanded a response — that to which Ben Ali could not *not respond* — was not as such Bouazizi's death, but that exposition of the *limit-of-power* that per definition is at the bidding of *no one*, but from the outset withdrawn beyond the reach of any attempt at appropriation. Hence, in the face of this demand everyone is, in a sense, *alieni juris*; everyone is at the bidding of an alien — i.e. expropriative and unappropriable — force, before one can possibly begin figuring out how and what to answer to it "*juris sui*".

If this analysis is correct, the emancipation of the Tunisian People began neither at the hands of individuals, nor with the communal production of communal being; the emancipation began in an unassumable *elsewhere*. It began with "something" *unexpectedly taking out* of human hands (*ex manus capere*) the *initiative*. That is, with the *Zurückführung* of those watching into a place where they shared with a plurality of equally *ex-manci-pated* spectators, the *experience* of having been called upon by this "something" — the spectacular exposition of the *limit-of-power* — that was beyond their grasp, to which they could do nothing but respond. Hence, the emancipatory initiation that lies in the exposition of the *limit-of-power* was *equiprimordially* the exposition of *community* taking place *at this limit*.

The character of this experience of being brought to the *limit-of-power* echoes Victor Turner's findings in his exploration of the liminal period in *rites de passage*. According to Turner, the *liminality*<sup>9</sup> that characterizes such a being *betwixt and between* clearly defined states of social structure

9. The term liminality and the analytical isolation of the transitory liminal phase in the ritual process Turner adopts from Arnold van Gennep's *Rites of Passage* (1960 [1909]).

amounts to more than merely being in a vacuum; it entails a primordial “unstructured” mode of being together. *Communitas*, as Turner calls it, “breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality. . . It dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalized relationships.” (Turner 2008: 128) As such, *liminal communitas* is the positive phenomenal correlate of the negation of social structure, or in the idiom developed above, of the *limit-of-power*. Furthermore, the liminal experience of *communitas* “is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency,” “the feeling of endless power,” of a “regenerative abyss.” (TURNER 2008: 128, 138) It is “the Nay to all positive structural assertions, but . . . in some sense the source of them all. . . a realm of pure possibility whence . . . novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise.” (TURNER 1970: 96)

However, the similarities between Turner’s liminality and the liminal experience in the face of the *limit-of-power* ends with Turner’s characterization of *communitas* as the appearance of a “generic bond,” as “‘total’ communion with one another,” as something at the root of each person’s being that is profoundly “communal.” (TURNER 2008: 105, 116, 128, 138) The community exposed in Bouazizi’s spectacle of disappearance was rather a plurality of singular beings being exposed to “something” that was *not* of a common, already and profoundly possessed, origin. In that respect it recalls Nancy’s intuition that community is not based in a *common being*; in something like Marx’s *Gattungswesen*, or Durkheim’s societal substratum of *the Social*, or a communitarian essence, or any notion of human *nature*. In community, Nancy writes, “there is no communion of singularities in a totality superior to them and immanent to their common being.” (NANCY 1991: 28) Rather, what is shared in community is that which lacerates “the communal fabric,” that which pierces the immanence of communal life and exposes life (individual as well as communitary) to the *limits* of life. That which constitutes community is the simultaneous appearance — or *compearance*, as Nancy would have it — of *finite, singular* beings, who have nothing else but their existential *finitude* — that is, as it were, their deferred non-being, nothingness — in common (NANCY 1991: 30). But this was exactly what Bouazizi’s *spectacle of disappearance* originally brought into plain view; as argued above, the *limit-of-power* is the politically salient phenomenal refraction of the experience of the *limit-of-death*.

This newly formed political gathering was obviously not authorized, but Ben Ali could not definitively strike it down, not even with brute force, because it had its roots in this *abyssal elsewhere* beyond the *limit-of-power*, at once spectacularly illuminated, yet draped in Bouazizi’s untouchability. Once a plurality of “first responders” was called forth in this new space of appearances, spectators immediately became actors:

The protests in Sidi Bouzid were small at first, starting soon after the fire seared Mr. Bouazizi's clothes to his body and burned off his lips.

Bilal Zaydi, 20, saw the vendor's relatives and friends outside the governor's office that afternoon, throwing coins at the gate. "Here is your bribe", they yelled. Over the next day and half the protests grew and the police "started beating protesters, and firing gas", he said. Mr. Zaydi, a high school student, slept during the day, and then he and his friends would take on the police at night.

At the same time, news of the unrest was spread on the Internet by people like Shamseddine Abidi, a 29-year old interior designer who posted videos and updates to his Facebook page. A journalist from Al Jazeera was one of Mr. Abidi's Facebook friends, and quickly the Arabic channel, almost alone, carried the news abroad.

"I did my best", Mr. Abidi said. "It's a miracle."

Labor leaders said their members quickly joined the demonstrations, which grew violent in the face of increasingly brutal police retaliation. Dr. Ali Ghanmi, who works at the hospital in Sidi Bouzid, said the number of patients doubled during the unrest, injured from beatings or bullets. Two men who had been shot died of their wounds. (FAHIM 2011)

The early protests in the *areas of darkness* were spurred on by the *facts* of social injustice ("here is your bribe!") and of the brute force hammering down on those at the front lines. However, following Ben Ali's televised "bedside"–speech on December 28, 2010, it became increasingly clear that the laceration of the fabric of authority housed not only an opportunity for venting frustrations and making known socioeconomic grievances; the *possibility* of a radically new, as yet undefined, but certainly different, societal organization began to make itself *emphatically felt* (GUESSOUMI 2012: 24, KHOSROKHAVAR 2012: 39). As Arendt writes with reference to the American and the French revolutions — but it applies equally here — "the revolutionary pathos of an entirely new beginning was born only in the course of the event itself." (ARENDR 1990: 37) This pathos of freedom, Arendt specifies, "came to the fore only after they [the revolutionary events] had come. . . to a *point of no return*." (ARENDR 1990: 42, emphasis added) Hence, the pathos of radical novelty, and the freedom implicit herein, arise with the disclosure of that point where a "return" becomes impossible, at that threshold where a new *necessity* emerges; a necessity that positively put, is the *limit-of-power*, the limit where the *new possibility* of the future impossibility of *l'ancien régime* emerges.

The *revolutionary pathos of novelty and of freedom* is, existentially speaking, the mode of emplacement, of *Befindlichkeit*, in which the *limit-of-power* "comes over," "assails," and phenomenologically modifies the experience shared in the community of those inexorably called into the imperative sphere of its spectacular exposition (cfr. HEIDEGGER 2006: §29): "The sentiment of injustice and humiliation felt by the lumpen proletariat of the interior [areas of darkness]," gave way at this point of no return, at the *limit-of-power*, to

a *shared pathos of freedom* that gathered a manifold of local, self-mobilizing uprisings in a nationwide distributed network of emancipatory, revolutionary action (GUESSOUMI 2012: 25, cfr. also KHOSROKHAVAR 2012: 16).

#### 4. Concluding Remarks: Emancipation in the Prism of the *Homo Respondens*

The *kind* of emancipation traced in the Tunisian Revolution differs radically from the *traditional* notion of emancipation as it was originally found in Roman Law and perpetuated every time the question of freedom is posed in terms of those in power handing out liberties to those who do not (yet) have a share in power. But it differs also from *human emancipation* as Marx imagined it; Tunisian society does not seem to be heading in the direction of communism in any form. If anything, emancipation in Tunisia seems closer to the *political* emancipation of the bourgeois-revolutions of the Enlightenment. However, the task of this essay was not to determine the trajectory of the transformations in social structure, but, in response to the anthropological essence of emancipation indicated by Marx, to investigating how emancipatory phenomena might *expose* the *being* of human beings and how this exposition relates to the emancipatory effort.

In this respect, emancipation in Tunisia showcased an entirely different anthropology than either of the schemata of emancipation genealogically explored; whereas human freedom in both traditional emancipation, in the universalism of human rights, and in Marx's human emancipation was within the reach of human hands — be they the hands of the possessing human or the producing human — the emancipatory initiation in the Tunisian Revolution points in the direction of an imposing pathos of freedom infinitely beyond the reach of human hands. If this is true, emancipation as *Zurückführung der menschlichen Welt. . . auf den Menschen selbst* takes on a whole new meaning. Rather than being a revolutionary reduction of society to a common human substance (*Gattungswesen*) that henceforth freely (re)produces itself in accordance with itself, the emancipatory *Zurückführung* is now an *existential event* (in casu Bouazizi's *spectacle of disappearance*) in which human beings, at the "hands" of an expropriative and unappropriable force to which they cannot *not* respond, are emplaced at the limit-of-power from which a simultaneous experience of community and radical possibility arises. The anthropology that phenomenally comes to the fore in the initiation of the Tunisian revolution is one of the *homo respondens* — the being that exists *in* responding, whose freedom begins *elsewhere* than in the individual existence (cfr. WALDENFELS 2006: 62, 2015: 16ff). Enlightenment philosophy was right; human freedom is inalienable, but not because the

individual human being possesses freedom *sub specie aeternitatis*. Ontologically speaking, freedom is inalienable because it cannot be possessed in the first place.

## Acknowledgements

The thoughts presented in this essay have been developed in fruitful discussion with several colleagues at Aarhus University, Denmark. I would to thank in particular Line Ryberg Ingerslev, Kasper Lysemose and Thomas Schwarz Wentzer from the research project “Existential Anthropology – Inquiring Human Responsiveness” (Supported by a grant from the Danish Research Council (FKK), 11-104778).

## Bibliography

- ARENDR, H., 1990, *On Revolution*, London, Penguin Books.
- , 1998, *The Human Condition* (second edition), Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- BELZ, H., 1976, Protection of Personal Liberty in Republican Emancipation Legislation of 1862, in «The Journal of Southern History», 42 (3): 385–400.
- CLANCY-SMITH, J., 2013, *From Sidi Bou Zid to Sidi Bou Said: A Longue Durée Approach to the Tunisian Revolutions*, in HAAS, M.L., and D.W. LESCH (eds.), 2012, *The Arab Spring: Change and Resistance in the Middle East*, Boulder, Westview Press.
- DYRING, R., 2014, *The Concerted Praxis of Being Human: A Philosophico-Anthropological Essay on Being and Provocation*, in «Minerva – An Open Access Journal of Philosophy», 18: 111–141.
- FINKELMAN, P., 2008, «Lincoln, Emancipation, and the Limits of Constitutional Change», in «The Supreme Court Review», 2008 (1): 349–387.
- FOUCAULT, M., 1998, *The Will to Knowledge. The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, transl. Robert Hurley, London, Penguin Books.
- GENNEP, A., van, 1960, *Rites of Passage*, Transl. M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee. London, Routledge.
- GUESSOUMI, M., 2012, *The Grammars of the Tunisian Revolution*, in «Boundary 2», 39 (1): 17–42.
- HEIDEGGER, M., 2006, *Sein und Zeit*, neunzehnte Auflage, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- , 2003, “Ursprung des Kunstwerkes” in *Holzwege*, Frankfurt a. M, Vittorio Klostermann GmbH.

- HOFSTADTER, R., 1954, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It*, New York, Vintage.
- JDEY, A., 2012, *A History of Tunisia, January 14, 2011: The End of a Dictator and the Beginning of Democratic Construction*, in «Boundary 2», 39 (1): 69–86.
- KHOSROKHAVAR, F., 2012, *The New Arab Revolutions that Shook the World*, London, Paradigm Publishers.
- MARX, K., 2008, *Philosophische und ökonomische Schriften*, Stuttgart, Philipp Reclam jun. GmbH & CO.
- MARX, K., ENGELS, F., 1981, *Werke Band I*, Berlin, Dietz Verlag.
- MELVILLE, R.D., 1915, *A Manual of the Principle of Roman Law*, Edinburgh, Green and Son.
- NANCY, J.-L., 1991, *The Inoperative Community*, ed. and transl. by Peter Connor (et al.), Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.
- SAIDANI, M., 2012, «Revolution and Counterrevolution in Tunisia: The Forty Days That Shook the Country», in «Boundary 2», 39 (1): 43–54.
- TURNER, V., 1970, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press.
- , 2008, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Rutgers, Transaction Publishers.
- WALDENFELS, B., 2006, *Grundmotive einer Phänomenologie des Fremden*, Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp Verlag.
- , 2015, *Sozialität und Alterität: Modi sozialer Erfahrung*, Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp Verlag.

*Other materials cited:*

- ABOUZEID, R., 2011, *Bouazizi: The Man Who Set Himself and Tunisia on Fire*, “Time Magazine”, January 21, 2011. <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2044723,00.html>
- CAMPBELL, H., 2011, *Tunisia’s revolution: Self-organisation for self-emancipation*, 2011-01-27, “Pambazuka”, Issue 514, <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/features/70472>
- COHEN, R., 2011, *Facebook and Arab Dignity*, “The New York Times”, January 24, 2011. [www.nytimes.com/2011/01/25/opinion/25iht-edcohen25.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/25/opinion/25iht-edcohen25.html?_r=0)
- FAHIM, K., 2011, “Slap to a Man’s Pride Set Off Tumult in Tunisia,” *The New York Times*, January 21, 2011. [www.nytimes.com/2011/01/22/world/africa/22sidi.html?pagewanted=all](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/22/world/africa/22sidi.html?pagewanted=all)
- INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP: “Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (IV): Tunisia’s Way,” Middle East/North Africa Report n. 106 – 28 April 2011,

[www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/tunisia/106-popular-protests-in-north-africa-and-the-middle-east-iv-tunisias-way.aspx](http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/north-africa/tunisia/106-popular-protests-in-north-africa-and-the-middle-east-iv-tunisias-way.aspx)

“The Last Official Address by Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, January 13, 2011” Transl. by Tony Badran. <https://msmunatunagb.wikispaces.com/file/view/The+Last+Official+Address+of+Ben+Ali.pdf>

*All web materials accessed Jan. 21 2015*