

Exemplier Alain Petit

Shaftesbury l'Eros platonicien

Texte No1 Shaftesbury, The Moralists, A Rhapsody, Part1, Section 3, P .29

« But I have now a better Idea of that Melancholy you discover'd ; and notwithstanding the humorous Turn you were pleas'd to give it, I am persuaded it has a different Foundation from any of those fantastical Causes I then assign'd it. Love, doubtless, is at the bottom : but a nobler Love than such as common Beautys inspire. »

TexteNo 2 The Moralists, Part 1, Section 3, P .30 sqq.

« Knowing as you are (continu'd I) well-knowing and experienc'd in all the Degrees and Orders of Beauty, in all the mysterious Charms of the particular Forms : you rise to what is more general ; and with a larger Heart ,and Mind more comprehensive, you generously seek that which is highest in the kind. Not captivated by the Lineaments of a fair Face, or the well-drawn Proportions of a human body, you view the Life itself, and embrace rather the Mind which adds the Lustre, and renders chiefly amiable.

« Nor is the Enjoyment of such a single Beauty sufficient to satisfy such an aspiring Soul. It seeks how to combine more Beautys, and by what Coalition of these, to form a beautiful Society. It views Communities, Friendships, Dutys ; and considers by what Harmony of particular Minds the general Harmony is compos'd, and Common-Weal establish'd.

« Nor satisfy'd even with Publick Good in one Community of Men, it frames itself a nobler Object, and with enlarg'd Affection seeks the Good of Mankind. It dwells with Pleasure amidst that Reason, and those Orders on which this fair Correspondence and goodly interest is establish'd (...)

« Still ardent in this pursuit (such is its Love of Order and Perfection) it rests not here ;nor satisfies it self with the Beauty of a Part ; but extending further its communicative Bounty, seeks the Good of All, and affects the Interest and Prosperity of the Whole. True to its native World and higher Country, 'tis here it seeks Order and Perfection (...)

« And since all hope of this were vain, if no Universal mind presided(.. .) 'tis here it labours to discover that healing Cause by which the Interest of the Whole is securely establish'd, the Beauty of things, and universal Order happily sustain'd.

« This, Palemon, this is the Labour of your soul ; and this its Melancholy ; when unsuccessfully pursuing the supreme Beauty, it meets with darkening Clouds which intercept its Sight. »

Texte No3 The Moralists, Part 2, Section 3, P .90

« For if there be in Nature such a Service as that of Affection and Love, it remains then only to consider of the Object, whether there be really that Supreme One we suppose. For if there be Divine Excellence in Things ; if there be in nature a Supreme Mind or DEITY ; we have then an Object consummate, and comprehensive of all that is Good or Fair. »

Texte No4, The Moralists, Part 3, Section 1, PP .164_165

« But whatever, continu'd he, be supposed of uncompounded Matter (which is a thing at best pretty difficult to conceive) yet being compounded , and put together in a certain number of such parts as unite and conspire in these Frames of ours, and others like them ; if it can present us with so many Innumerable Instances of particular Forms, that share this simple Principle, by which they are One, live and act, and have a Nature or Genius, peculiar to themselves and provident for their own Welfare ; how shall we at the same time overlook this in the Whole, and deny the great and general One of the World ? how can we be so unnatural as to disown Divine Nature, our common parent, and refuse to recognize the Universal and Sovereign GENIUS ? »

Texte No 5 The Moralists, Part 3, Section 2, P.206

« No wonder, said he, if we are at a loss, when we pursue the Shadow for the Substance. For if we may trust to what our reasoning has taught us , whatever in Nature is beautiful or charming , is only the faint Shadow of that First beauty. So that every real Love depending on the Mind, and being only the Contemplation of beauty, either as it is really in it self, or as it

appears imperfectly in the Objects which strike the Sense ;how can the rational mind rest here, or be satisfy'd with the absurd Enjoyment, which reaches the Sense alone ? »

Texte No6, The Moralists, Part 3, Section 2, P.216

« Of All the Forms then, said I, those according to your Scheme are the most amiable, and in the first Order of Beauty, which have a power of making other Forms themselves : from whence methinks they may be stil'd the Forming Forms(...)

« And here you have unaware discover'd that third Order of Beauty, which forms not only such as we call mere Forms, but even the Forms which form(...)

That which fashions even Minds themselves, contains in it self all the Beautys fashioned by those Minds ; and it is consequently the Principle, Source, and Fountain of all Beauty. »

Texte No7, The Moralists, Part 3, Section 2, PP.236-237

« IT should appear from our strict Search, that there is nothing so divine as BEAUTY : which belonging not to Body, nor having any Principle of Existence but in Mind, and Reason(the Divine Part) is discover'd and attain'd by this alone, when it inspects it self, the only Object worthy of it self(...)

Thus the improving Mind, slightly surveying over Objects, and passing over bodys and the common Forms, where only a Shadow of Beauty rests, it presses onward to the Source, and views the Original of Form and Order in that which is Intelligent. »