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## FROM RESONANCE TO TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD

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The avenue opened up by Hartmut Rosa, who brings Critical Theory up to date, drawing on the work of Charles Taylor, is particularly stimulating for a number of disciplines in today's world, from sociology through social philosophy to educational sciences. By developing concepts that are both precisely defined and wide-ranging, such as 'acceleration' and 'resonance', Rosa enables us to name, identify and conceptualise 'something in the air in our time', which (almost) anyone can relate to in their own experiences, and understand the meaning. The same is true of the concepts of the 'world' and the 'relationship to the world' developed in Rosa's work.

We shall begin by focusing on these concepts, (1) to discuss the question of the *relationship to the world* which birthed the concept of *resonance*, both as a 'tranquil horizon' of human practice and as an alternative to alienation. (2) However, the question remains whether resonance can serve as a solution to the alienation caused by acceleration (of social rhythms), as Rosa suggests. This opens up a series of questions regarding the relationship between resonance and alienation – in particular, whether the concept of acceleration can account for all forms of alienation; whether the almost 'naturalisation' of alienation prevents us from fully grasping the social and political issues underlying our relationship to the world; and whether the existential aspect of resonance is a barrier to addressing those issues. (3) These questions are crucially important when thinking about *transformation* with a view to increasing and restoring the experiences of resonance – in accordance with a policy of 'de-alienation', which will require real action – and thus also thinking about the conditions of the struggle to create conditions favourable to resonance. (4) After critiquing the areas of economics and politics, viewed through the lens of the concept of resonance, we shall finally discuss the question of *education* which, according to Rosa, is one of the most crucial levers in favouring resonance. We discuss the possibilities which education opens up, and its limitations.

### RELATION TO THE WORLD, ACCELERATION AND RESONANCE IN THE MODERNITY

#### **Between subject and world**

Hartmut Rosa developed two concepts – acceleration and resonance – which are helpful in thinking about our relation to the world. Breaking with the modern tendency toward abstraction, Rosa thinks of relation as a concrete attitude, consisting of entering into a dialogue with the world. The sociologist says that he perceived this reality very early on in his experiences, during his upbringing in the Black Forest, then during his studies in Freiburg, and above all, subsequently, in London, when he met Charles Taylor, who provided him with the philosophical tools to reflect on it and conceptualise it. Indeed, Taylor, the author of *Sources of the Self*, developed a history of the individual which opens the door to reflection on the construction of the self and the formation of modern identity (Taylor, 1989). By thinking along these lines, Rosa discovered that the answer to the starting point of his works, which hinged on the question 'How have we become what we are?', depends on what we allow ourselves to be touched and moved by, and thus, the identity is contingent upon the relationship that the individual has with the world. Indeed, it is always the relationship with the world that defines the self – rather than, as was

thought in pre-Modern times, membership of society or the exercise of a role within it (prince, soldier, peasant, etc.) – in their own individual experience of the world (Rosa and Van Reeth, 2018).

Rosa describes such an approach, which could be termed phenomenological, at the beginning of his book *Resonance* (Rosa, 2019 [2016]): “as a social scientist, I wish only to soberly inquire what can be determined about the social conditions that make Anna’s life happy and Hannah’s life unhappy [N.B. these represent two ideal/typical positions of diametrically opposite experiences of the world, described by Rosa], as it seems to me unlikely that genes or hormones alone are responsible for the difference” (Rosa, 2019, p. 6). For Rosa, the goal is to develop “a detailed sociology of relation to the world” which is capable of “identifying the difference between two people’s attitude [Anna and Hannah] toward the world even in physical acts such as breathing and laughing, walking and speaking, sleeping and dancing” (Rosa 2019, p. 14).

Thus, it is impossible to think of the subject in isolation from the world – without considering the relation between the one and the other. Indubitably, this is the reason why Rosa takes great pains to define the subject and the world, because he is adamant that they should not be separated – the relation between them is a defining feature which makes them what they are. Rosa rejects any dichotomy between the subject and the world – any dualism which holds that either one of them exists independently of the other. In the face of such division, adopting a phenomenological approach akin to that of Merleau-Ponty, Rosa identifies two essential and invariable properties which characterise all subjects. “First, subjects are those entities that *have experiences* or, taking into account that experiences are always constituted intersubjectively, to which experiences manifest themselves. Second, subjects are the site at which motivated psychic energies materialize, i.e. at which the impulse to act becomes operative. [...] The world, in turn, can then be conceived as *everything that is encountered* (or *that can be encountered*)” (Rosa 2019, p. 34-35). Thus, Rosa establishes a fundamental link between the presence of the world and the subjective experience – a first principle at the heart of possible relationships of resonance.

According to Rosa, the world “as *everything that is encountered* (or *that can be encountered*)” manifests as the ultimate horizon within which things can happen and objects can be found, or, borrowing from Hans Blumenberg as a “metaphor for the whole experience”. This *whole* meanwhile turns out to be something both more than and different from the sum of all parts. The world is that which is always already given as prior to any consciousness” (Rosa 2019, p. 34). A little later on, he continues to flesh out his definition of the world: “Thus, unless otherwise differentiated, the terms *world* or *relationship to the world*, as used in this book always refer too everything at once: the subjective, the objective and the social world” (Rosa, 2019, p. 37). Rosa also mentions the importance of considering the subject to be an integral part of the world. The world, here, is different from ‘society’ or from the social arenas that we may hope to transform – but Rosa’s definition of the world includes the social world, which may be taken to correspond to what is usually known as ‘society’ or social spaces. The world, for Rosa, appears to be less something that can be ‘transformed’ than a space in which speech emerges to be heard. How, on the basis of Rosa’s sociology of relation to the world, and his proposed approach of listening and responding to the world around us, breaking free from instrumentalization and destruction, can we conceive of a social transformation toward greater fairness, a richer life and greater permanence?

### **Acceleration and alienation**

In the modern era, what characterises this relationship between the subject and the world, and how are we to define it? Rosa points out that, through technical progress, modernity promised to liberate us from all constraints stemming from lack of time – to transform that rare commodity that is time into an abundant resource. ‘Acceleration’ is the word he chooses to express this quest for speed, to gain ever more time (Rosa, 2010 [2005]). Over the centuries, technoscientific advances have made real progress towards this goal, but never actually managed to slake our desire for rapidity. Moving ever faster in order to free ourselves from the tyranny of time is the logic of acceleration, which has affected all areas of activity – in particular, through the development of information processing and the Digital Revolution. Time gains and productivity gains, intensified exchanges and increased means of

communication... we have hopped at an increasing rate from one thing to the next – indeed, from one world to the next. Everything has become fleeting, evanescent, tenuous. Reality has become liquefied, and the world has begun slipping through our fingers. ‘Liquid modernity’ (Baumann) is the playroom of consumerist individuals embroiled in markets driven by the frenzied desire for gain – time gains and monetary gains. “Plainly, for the capitalist economy, whether we want it or not, the equation “time is money” holds true everywhere” (Rosa 2010, p. 382). Everything is subject to time pressure, in an insatiable and increasingly crazed race.

One of the strengths of Rosa’s theory of acceleration is that it analyses the complexity of the technical and economic dynamics, which give the impression that this is an unavoidable feature of the era in which we live. Acceleration is at the very heart of contemporary societies driven by the capitalist system. Acceleration is not merely the effect of a drive for growth on the part of shareholders in multinational corporations. The dynamics of technical and economic acceleration are part of our uniquely human way of existing in the world. The paradigm of acceleration shines a light on the cultural and historical characteristics of humans in late Modernity. For our modern societies, acceleration has actually become an anthropological principle.

The feeling of lack of time is perceived as an experience of alienation, in the sense that we are no longer able to be fully present in the moment. Nothing is present any more, because nothing is *in* the present. The rushing torrent of time carries everything away. Everything escapes, and eludes us. The subject, others, and the world are the objects of continuous channel-hopping, fleeting relations, and immensely powerful machines. Digital messages and virtual objects on screens are representative of “our age, which is so vastly rich in ephemeral events, and so terribly poor in meaningful shared experiences” – especially given that, in “the haze of accelerated history”, past events “are no longer connected to the present, and even less so to our presence in the world” (Rosa, 2010 [2005], p. 387).

### **Critical Theory – recognition and resonance**

Ten years after publishing *Acceleration*, Rosa published *Resonance* – a book that was ultimately to have even more success. The opening lines set out “the central thesis of this book, stated in its plainest form”: “If acceleration is the problem, then resonance may well be the solution” (Rosa, 2019, p. 1) – a form of antidote. This is the hypothesis upon which Rosa’s reasoning is built. Certainly, modernity can be studied as the story of a ‘catastrophe of resonance’. However, it is possible to reverse this trend, and reflect on all the spheres of resonance which would extend our access to the world, and thus bring us out of our alienation. Resonance is a response to the desire for emancipation promised by modernity.

Thus, Rosa’s work focuses constantly on the matter of connection and interconnection, and therefore also the way in which subjects interact with one another and with the world. When the subject forges a connection with another by perceiving the signals that the latter sends, and echoing those signals in return, is this not a transformative factor – and as such, the elementary form of resonance? Could it be that resonance is the primary experience of all human beings who, in the cradle, experience back-and-forth communication with caregivers, long before they are able to actually speak?

Rosa developed the idea of resonance in seeking to understand what humanity has become in the Modern Age; his thinking drew upon the earlier works in Critical Theory. It may well be that, in late modernity, this primary and formative human experience of resonance has been silenced. Influenced by Axel Honneth, Rosa’s work is in line with that of the Critical Theoreticians of the Frankfurt School, which was set up between the two World Wars to analyse modernity on the basis of the shocking realisation that it had fallen back into barbarity. The first generation of critical theoreticians (among them Horkheimer and Adorno) seized on the question, considering the rise of Nazism and the horror of the Holocaust as revealing something about modernity, and stressing the importance of conflict in politics. The leading figure of the second generation, Jürgen Habermas, based his work on dialogue rather than conflict, looking at ways in which public life could be pacified. On the other hand, for the third generation of critical theoreticians, headed by Honneth, the motivations of Critical Theory must be

viewed through the lens of struggle. However, according to Honneth, such a struggle must be thought of, not in terms of material or financial objectives, but in terms of unfairness and the experience of lack of respect – of not being recognised as a human being.

In a way, for Rosa, resonance is a way of addressing Honneth's theory, whilst setting himself apart from his predecessor by opening up new dimensions of the subject's relation to the world. Thus, Honneth's work represents a crucial starting point for Rosa's, because recognition is a phenomenon which all human beings need in order to exist. However, Rosa does not stop at studying the intersubjective relations in which recognition takes place. Indeed, recognition only occurs between two or more subjects, whereas resonance can also take place between a subject and an object (nature, music and many more things besides). Thus, resonance is a far more multifaceted thing than recognition. Rosa notably explores the vertical axes of resonance: "*There is something. Something is present.* [...] It is the primal form of all relationships to the world. It is the primal form of all perception and all consciousness, from which subject and object, people, things and actions are first differentiated. It is the primal form of being" (Rosa, 2019, p. 258).

Rosa sets out a theory of resonance in every dimension to remedy the problem of alienation. Is it enough, though, simply to deal with the symptoms if the root cause of contemporary alienation is not examined and addressed? That cause, as we saw when looking at acceleration, is the widespread frenzied desire to gain time and money, triggered by the capitalist system. This begs the question: can Rosa really make such a critique of modernity without providing a corresponding critique of the capitalist system?

## RESONANCE AND ALIENATION IN THE CAPITALIST ECONOMY

### **The theory of relation to the world**

Rosa distinguishes between experience of the world and positioning in the world. Experience of the world is characterised by the response or silence of the world, whereas positioning in the world is the way in which one actively positions oneself in relation to the world - irrespective of one's experience of the world: as a strategy for dominating the world by extending one's access to it, or, on the contrary, as a development of creative interactions in which the subject is nourished by relationships. At the articulation of these two components, Rosa considers that "whether an individual life is successful or not depends both on sociocultural conditions as a whole and on the extent to which said conditions are compatible with one's own disposition". (Rosa, 2019, p. 15).

For Rosa, resonance is not just about developing a new concept, but about developing a theory of the relationship to the world that leads to profound paradigm shifts: the world 'speaks' and it is possible to listen to it. A life worth living does not lie in the accumulation of resources but in this listening and dialogue. Rosa writes - and this is the undeniable strength of *Resonance*: "However multifarious these may be, they all necessarily require overcoming the structural orientation toward escalation that is constitutive of modernity" (Rosa, 2019, p. 42). The link can be made here between a socio-economic-political background (capitalist mastery and one-upmanship, in the quest for escalation) and the loss of resonance.

Rosa's examples of resonance (the emotion of the falling snow, with the purring of a cat) give the measure of two essential values. That of *gratuitousness*, because these are not experiences that can be bought, manufactured or managed, but events that happen in a way that is difficult to predict, difficult to control.) That of *uncontrollability*: if I make the thing controllable, if it is 'at my fingertips', it is not a source of resonance because it is not something in the world that manifests itself spontaneously. On the other hand, if I cannot access it, I miss the experience. There is resonance in a providential encounter that makes "I am here" when something happens that I have not planned, that I have not ordered and that touches me.

Rosa structures his proposal in “axes of resonance”. Horizontal axes characterise human relations of proximity or equality: those lived in families, those lived in friendship, those invested in a democracy with other citizens. Diagonal axes characterise object relations: relations to objects, therefore, but also relations to work, to study (within the school), in sport or consumption. Vertical axes have, as one would expect, a transcendent dimension: religion, nature, art, or history.

It is indeed a renewal of social theory that Rosa aims at: “If and insofar as it is true that human modes of existence can be understood in terms of how human beings relate to the world, and if said relationships are fundamentally established via *relationships of an sensitivities to resonance*, the development and/or hindrance of which are in turn socially organized, then a *critique of relations of resonance* would appear to be the most elementary and at the same time most comprehensive form of social critique” (p. 38). A little further on Rosa writes: “it is resonant relationships themselves which first make subjectivity and sociality possible” (p. 40). Is this statement not contradicted by the extent of non-resonant relations in the contemporary world?

### **Another way of being-in-the-world**

Admittedly, resonance is not only a theoretical renewal of our relationship to the world, it also proposes a horizon that stimulates desire. Resonance is mobilizing, it evokes positive representations of the future of the human adventure. Indeed, for Rosa, the human adventure cannot be satisfied with modernity, which is “out of tune” (Rosa, 2019, p. 444). One of the contributions of *Resonance* is to show that “*another way of being-in-the-world, another form of relating to the world is possible*” (ibid.). *Resonance* outlines the contours of an 'elsewhere' full of common sense where the human adventure can be lived free of destruction. This utopian vision is one of the most important issues in contemporary thought. In this sense, Rosa's work is called upon to irrigate our search for instruments at the service of social transformation.

But here we see the same question emerging: what could be the socio-economic-political conditions for a 'recovered' resonance? By questioning the theory of resonance from the point of view of a political education, it is not a question of criticising a secondary objective of *Resonance* but of exposing a blind spot that could not appear in the theory elaborated by Rosa, whose primary work is to construct, with the relation to the world, a philosophical and sociological perspective.

We can talk about a major transformation of human temporality. It is true that time never stops passing, it is true that the same thing never happens exactly twice. But, in a process of acceleration, the change is twofold: firstly, in terms of speed (with major intra-generational changes, which means that one generation can no longer pass on to the next the reference points for adapting to the time of the world as it evolves), and secondly, qualitatively. It is clear that as social time accelerates, individuals are increasingly confronted with a kind of radical novelty, where the present seems to be overtaken by the future, which has a major consequence: not only is the transmission of reference points undermined, but the transmission process itself tends to be reversed. While accelerating, individuals have the feeling of being behind the global evolution of society and it is the younger generations who seem to be like a fish in water in such a temporality. This is understandable: between the childhood time, lived intensely, in presence, and the (former) adult time, articulating in principle a present enlightened by the past and preparing for the future, a sort of adolescent time is manifested, marked by hypermobility, when it is not by the flight forward (to escape the consciousness of time and finitude).

In his foreword, Rosa gives the keys to understanding his ambitious project of theoretical renewal. He illustrates various typical ideal positions that we readily recognise as possible types of relation to the world in the present time. Six characters are summoned from time to time in his book. Thus: « Gustav here embodies the principle of resource maximization; Vincent, the figure of the process-oriented artist and connoisseur of life. Anna stands for the establishment of intensive, enduring axes of resonance, while Hannah serves at the epitome of an alienated experience of (and thus a failed relationship to) the world. Finally, Adrian symbolizes a strategy of appropriating world by mastering it and expanding his range of options; Dorian, a strategy of appropriating world through mimetic adaptation” (Rosa, 2019, p. 15). As Rosa mentions, we see an affinity between Vincent, Anna and Dorian, on the one hand, whose

lives are marked by *Resonance*; and between Gustave, Hannah and Adrian, on the other hand, for whom the world is more silent. But the main question that Resonance does not answer is how to allow Gustave, Hannah and Adrian to get closer to Vincent, Anna and Dorian. More than that: how to allow this shift from contemporary societies to Resonance societies - more just and more human?

Rosa is aware of the limits of his enterprise, as he expresses in the opening lines of his conclusion: “it is not so easy to say how the project of changing the elementary form of the relationship to the world of a social formation should be carried out. There is no blueprint for this. Every philosophy and sociology here reaches its limits” (Rosa, 2019, p. 444). This forces us to return to our original problem: Is the undeniable problem of acceleration the major source of alienation and is resonance the ultimate solution to this alienation? One of the difficulties that any theorist may encounter is the fetishism of the totalizing concept, the uniqueness of which has something fascinating in its propensity to 'explain everything'. It is therefore necessary to consider that we are dealing with more than one modality of alienation and that we should therefore think of different alienations that are more or less interdependent, of a political, economic, societal and psychic nature.

The democratic system, independently of acceleration, is in crisis, insofar as it does not allow for the development of spaces for listening and responding - and therefore for resonance - at the level where an advanced society can expect them and at the level where the evolution of the world (towards disaster) requires it. The economic system, heavily implicated in the prevailing political impotence, produces its own social exclusion, impoverishes the diversity of experience and destroys that of nature as it alters life itself. Social time, for many reasons (loss of faith in a time other than that of life on Earth, acceleration of transport and communication, multiplication of addictive hobbies, etc.) deprives the individual of his availability and of the 'emptiness' that might be needed (Hétier, 2021). The mental dynamic, which is never independent of cultural and social time (Fromm, 2021 [1941], p. 19), is itself caught up in a growing desire for pleasure (Lebrun, 2016 [2009], 2020; Melman, 2002, 2019 [2009]), which leads to the intensification of experiences and their multiplication - no doubt as 'compensation' for the impoverishment experienced (Hétier, 2021).

All these factors can be obstacles to resonance. But they are not only a matter of acceleration and *their solution cannot be given by an increase in resonance*. One might even fear the opposite: that the quest for resonance is a new romanticism, oblivious to the socio-economic conditions that determine its relevance and effectiveness. Indeed, the happiness of resonance could turn out to be a 'side benefit' of solving independent socio-political problems.

Let us push the critique further. What about resonance in traditional societies, or in the ancient times of our Western societies? Is it not directly linked to a relationship of proximity (with others, with a culture, with nature) and authentic availability (taking time with others, internalizing a purely symbolic and not only utilitarian culture, establishing a communication and contemplative link with the forces of nature)?

Late modernity seems, in fact, to be more and more hermetic to the relations of resonance, to the point of making their occurrence impossible. Doesn't the efficient functioning of our technical and competitive world allow a minority to make a desire for pleasure prevail (and to create the need, in mimicry and consumption) that is completely heterogeneous to resonance (and, what's more, destroys the conditions of the latter)? In this chain of mute and reified relations to the world, the siphon of economic neo-liberalism sells what it takes to 'fill' social subjects, thereby making them unavailable for a resonant mode of relation to the world. And if ever a little emptiness is created that would give resonance a chance, then “panic seizes us at the idea that this silence might last. Only then do we sense the full magnitude of the existential alienation inherent in late modernity's relations to the world.” (Rosa, 2019, p. 177)

As for the marginalised people whom the globalised capitalist system has made move from poverty to misery (Rahnema, 2003), they have precisely lost, in the process, part of their relationship with the world. Should they not first be helped to regain their dignity in material terms (food, health care, access to education, etc.) and to develop their capacities (Sen)? In other words, in these different configurations,

the obstacle is not directly the difficulty of access to resonance, but to living conditions - which we know have been damaged in the context of advanced capitalist societies and under the impact of neo-liberal policies pursued for several decades. A social, political and economic struggle would then be necessary before being able to claim to remedy acceleration through resonance.

## RESONANCE AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

As we have seen, after having written *Acceleration*, which laid the foundations of the structural problem facing our contemporary societies, Rosa proposes with *Resonance* an aim to overcome and solve the dynamic stabilisation of our societies. However, he refuses to fall into the trap of a schematism (and nostalgia) that would make modernity the sole tomb of resonance, lost in technical mastery. In fact, modernity “dreams of a relationship to the world that is resonant through and through, in which body and psyche, spirit and nature, individual and collective history, the individual and society overcome their divisions, relate to each other as counterparts, and enter into vibrant responsive relationships to each other” (Rosa, 2019, p. 358). This orientation remains powerful in the very cultural space that induces alienation, in the “escalatory modernity’s tendencies toward reification” (ibid.). There has never been and never will be a 'paradise of resonance', a society where everything is resonant. Resonance is a phenomenon that always takes place against a backdrop of alienation, reification or simply muteness. We cannot make an economy out of resonance. Nor is it an absolute aim, it is about remaining free, one can refuse to resonate in a particular situation (Rosa, 2019, p. 446). Resonance stands in an 'in-between': it cannot be ordered, organised, controlled, nor should it be hindered by a logic of reification and growth. “Resonance tends to be impeded to the extent that it is made accessible” or “made exploitable as a productive resource”. (Rosa, 2019, p. 434).

Isn't there a further step missing with regard to the "how"? How can we enable everyone to learn resonance... especially when some people are unwilling to do so? Can we, in an intellectually honest way, hope for a shift of contemporary societies out of capitalist alienation - even though the main people holding power have no desire to go beyond the current rentier and speculative capitalism? The aim of good lives, worthy of being lived, calls for the creation of tools for social and political transformation. After having drawn a collective horizon of hope, here is a new and more delicate stage, consisting in transforming social situations. Is resonance truly a tool for social transformation, or is this where it stumbles? Is it a tool for thinking, a tool for thinking about action, or a tool to accompany action?

Through the resonance-oriented approach, Rosa “seeks to comprehend *the Other* of alienation and reification, and to make it productive as a regulative idea and an anchor of longing” (Rosa, 2019, p. 444). Alienation is the main conceptual tool put in dialectic with resonance. Thus, “the basic categories of *resonance* and *alienation* [are] the two complementary fundamental forms of our relationship to the world” (Rosa, 2019, p. 39). It is from these categories that Rosa seeks to better understand the causes and consequences of social stratification within which inequalities are maintained and reproduced. We could join him in wanting equal opportunities to participate in the spheres of resonance that nature, art, religion, school or work can offer, knowing that in all places, resonance is never automatic, controllable and sustainable; “its inaccessibility is a constitutive feature” (Rosa, 2019, p. 451). However, it can be encouraged or helped to break through the walls of insensitivity of a frigid world, to learn to put oneself in a favourable disposition to hear and respond to others, to live in a responsive world.

In some cases, it is access to these spaces that is made impossible by the social conditions of existence. Rosa gives the loss of a job as an example: it “should be understood not only as a resource problem, but also at least as much as deprivation in the sense of losing a critical axis of resonance” (Rosa, 2019, p. 454). For with the absence of work disappears a sphere of resonance “with respect both to relations of social interaction and to our material relationship to the world” (p. 457-458). Even when material survival and social protection are guaranteed within welfare states, “fear of unemployment is tantamount to fear of a *loss of the world*” (Rosa, 2019, p. 236). This fear is based on a factual reality as indicated by many works on the sociology of unemployment: destruction of social ties; withdrawal of the individual into the self, isolation, apathy and isolation into one's own emptiness (Demazière, 2006, pp. 88-89). The



critique of resonance relations must give major importance to all experiences of the world where it appears from the outset, not as responsive, but on the contrary, as silent or repulsive for people who are plunged into situations of exploitation, social contempt or xenophobia, who suffer for lack of the vital necessities (hunger, cold, etc.), or who live in contexts of oppression or repression. In modernity, the quest for autonomy was intended to increase the possibilities of a successful life; in reality, we are witnessing the destruction of these possibilities. “In a state of heteronomy or repression, we resemble a fixed string that cannot vibrate” (Rosa, 2019, p. 455) as the spheres and possibilities “of our individual and collective self-determination” promoted by “scientific knowledge, technological mastery [and] economic power” expand. (Rosa, 2019, p. 456).

This is why Rosa's analysis leads to proposing, not primarily transformations of social practices, but a *paradigm shift* in which the guiding concept is not the concept of autonomy but that of resonance. This is a way for the Sociologist to “remain entirely true to the emancipatory demand of the Enlightenment and Critical Theory” (ibid.) by offering “a path of escape from the danger, so darkly described by Horkheimer and Adorno, that modernity pursuit of autonomy will ultimately lead to the annihilation of the conditions of possibility of successful life” (ibid.). Rosa proposes to accompany this paradigm shift with concrete measures to develop this sensitivity to resonance, both in the political field and in our concrete lives. For example, he mentions the restriction of the competitive logic and a guaranteed minimum income (financed by inheritance tax).

But Rosa's work on resonance remains very modest in terms of concrete proposals for its socio-cultural analysis and the relationship between political power and resonance (Rosa, 2019, p. 454-456). In a social world marked by indifference and competition, the culture of realms of resonance is a real democratic issue, where the us-together is nurtured on the basis of a responsive or even conflictual relationship between individuals and with those in power, according to “an ongoing process of becoming more sensitive to a variety of voices in the sense of perspectives, modes of existence and relationships to the world” (p. 218), following the example of the recent convivialist movements.

Resonance has such a broad ambition that it is necessary to imagine a multidimensional setup for its implementation, which Rosa only partially achieves. Yet Rosa writes: “another way of *being in the world is possible*, but only as the result of a concentrated, simultaneous revolution of culture, politics and the economy. The aim of this book is to work out what the form and content of such a new relationship to the world might be, and to explore the potential paths toward effecting such a transformation” (Rosa, 2019, p. 28). How can this “political, economic and cultural revolution” be animated and accompanied? The term 'revolution' here, undefined, is particularly strong - one imagines, however, from reading the whole book, that it is by no means an insurrection with a popular takeover, but rather a breaking away from economic determinisms and a creative liberation.

The “political, economic and cultural revolution” that Rosa calls for is not, however, intellectually invested by him. And this, neither upstream nor downstream. If it is not upstream (on the real causes), the alienation that the author first sees unfolding in the form of acceleration cannot be fought effectively. Certainly, he does not naively propose slowing down or decelerating as a response to acceleration, but he does not seem to envisage the 'revolution' he evokes as being radically different in nature from resonance, where it is a matter of speaking out even if one is not heard, of struggling to be heard in spite of everything, and of opposing a system that relies precisely on the side lining of voices that oppose the interests of those who benefit from it. The problem of *those who do not want to hear anything* and whose power excludes, impoverishes and destroys and prevents the resonance of others cannot always be ignored. Those who are better endowed with various resources know how to create multiple spaces of resonance, under privileged conditions. Even if we assume that a political, social and cultural struggle will overcome what prevents resonance for most people, the question remains as to how far downstream we want a “resonant revolution” to lead. Could resonance be achieved and sustained as much as possible, even if, of course, it can never - Rosa insists - be guaranteed or controlled, without a simultaneous struggle against all the forms of alienation discussed above? On this point, the sociologist probably does not draw all the consequences of his ambition. To promote resonance is to engage in a genuine

anthropological revolution – beyond the political, economic and societal revolution that would reverse the causes of alienation, which cannot be reduced to acceleration.

Rosa points to the tendency towards accumulation (in the capitalist regime) as alienating. However critical one may be of capitalist alienation, which excludes (socially and culturally), impoverishes the relationship to the world and destroys life, diversity, resources, traditions, etc.), a total alienation without any hindsight of what the subjects play in their participation in this system is hardly conceivable. A system, however noxious, cannot stand without the individuals who participate in it finding some interest in it. Of course, one could argue that they are all deeply alienated, but that would not explain the freedom of the critical mind that denounces this alienation. The capitalist system never ceases to make promises and sometimes to allow expectations to be fulfilled: a certain material security, a relative predictability, a mastery of elements, objects, even experiences, and finally, a prospect of pleasure, with its accents of immediacy, unlimitedness and accessibility.

By contrast, the experience of resonance is “uncontrollable”, unpredictable, impossible to produce, and ultimately, arguably impalpable and rare. It is therefore understandable that we collectively opt for control, security and pleasure at the expense of resonance. There is a “surrender” in this (to the world, to nature, to others, to cultural rituals) which implies an acceptance of “poverty”- that of our ancestors, that of the First Peoples – a poverty (scarcity, emptiness, silence, lack, uncertainty, insecurity), into which we fear above all to “fall” (imagine a life without electricity...). An experience that is weak in resonance because it is controlled from start to finish by a relationship of consumption can still be "satisfying" insofar as it allows us to access the pleasure of control and saturation.

But not only that, this “existential” market, a profound but unpredictable sense of life exchanged for hollow but entertaining activities, is also found at the proper political level. That is to say, at the level at which action should be taken to combat injustice, poverty (including that of experience) and destruction, in order to establish the conditions for a living and perennial resonance. Indeed, we have not been able to radically innovate in relation to the democratic ideal of the Enlightenment and in particular with Rousseau's proposal to replace arbitrary government with a democratic government representing the people and having the force of law. Democratic *representation* is clearly no longer sufficient, because it is because it is both less and less representative and capable (and unwilling) of opposing an economic system that excludes, impoverishes and destroys the people themselves. Finally, it does not respond at all to the call for participation (with hands and not just with a voice, including in proximity, which is the only way to radically change the state of things - by actively influencing the political framework of the economy while converting the passivity of pleasure (consumption, leisure) into a resonant commitment.

This commitment is both that of maintaining democracy as a space for questioning and responding, but also as a space where all experiences are not constrained, as Dewey argued, and which opens up to ever-renewed perspectives of critique, creation and resonance. The political “market” that has prevailed so far has led to the idea that “power” (political, expert, etc.) should provide for everything – which is another form of “enjoyment” - to the expense of a possible everyday involvement in all areas. Finally, one can say that before a politics is conducive to resonance (if only by not preventing it), it must not only address the problems of exclusion, impoverishment and destruction, but must itself be a resonant politics, that is, a space where everyone can feel the possibility of a meaningful response to their own expression and participation. Democracy should indeed be, according to Rosa, “the central tool of modernity for making the world of public institutions and the structures of collective life responsive, making them speak”. (Rosa 2019, p. 40).

The valorisation of resonance, like the critique of acceleration that preceded it, is all-encompassing: it is the whole of society that is accelerating and it is the *whole* of society that is struggling to resonate and that 'should' find or rediscover spaces of resonance. It is undoubtedly necessary to distinguish between the different coordinates of these phenomena, at the risk of misunderstanding them and of not being able to think of solutions to the problems they raise. We can thus note, with Rosa, that the acceleration of social time is a new form of alienation in that it deprives individuals of a part of their availability. At this level alone, it's not easy because we know since Marx that the proletarianization of labour deprives

individuals of the meaning of their activity. However, in the West, working time has decreased considerably and tertiary work, which requires much more intellectual and subjective involvement, has become more prevalent, and, of course, “free” time has increased. These are therefore individuals who are fairly available and who engage in a saturation of their time, including through the multiplication of leisure activities. These individuals are actors, economically well-endowed actors and undoubtedly rather “urban”. On the other hand, we cannot hide the importance of social inequalities, which have been growing since the advent of neoliberalism.

## EDUCATION AS A COMPLEX PROCESS OF ADAPTATIVE TRANSFORMATION OF WORLD

Not everybody has access to work and an income that allows them to live in dignity, many have barely enough to live on and the time of the marginalised can be relegated to waiting, anxiety and boredom. Before things 'speed up', they need to 'get going'. In his novel *En finir avec Eddy Bellegueule*, Édouard Louis shows us an erratic childhood in a world left on the side of the road (the highway?), whose lives are long stretched out and often "vacant", far from any acceleration. Finally, the time of acceleration is to be analysed from a historical and anthropological point of view. It is strongly dependent, upstream, on the advent of a capitalist system that squeezes labour and technological forces and produces the means to exceed the natural dispositions of humans (powerful machines, remote communication instruments, etc.). Of course, this system is not without resistance, such as the “slow men” referred to by Vidal (2020). Downstream, it is quite striking to note that this massive acceleration - at the same time as the modification of the conditions of habitability of the Earth for all living creatures - corresponds to the endangerment of human life in society. It is obvious: “the great acceleration” (population, production, consumption, etc.) is causing the Anthropocene. As a result, acceleration cannot be interpreted solely in terms of alienation and loss of resonance. Under the social conditions in which it occurs, it is tantamount to *exclusion, impoverishment and destruction*. Even if resonance continues to appear as an existential goal, it cannot be aimed at or restored without simultaneously dealing with exclusion, impoverishment and destruction, which are both profoundly alienating problems and major impediments to resonance.

When we question the “how” in Rosa, that is, the ways in which we move from societies that stabilise dynamically through the acceleration intrinsic to capitalism to post-growth societies characterised by resonant listening and responding, we keep coming across educational modalities as we read *Resonance*. Education is seen by Rosa as a political means of choice: “Resonance, in the form of the capacity for sympathy and empathy, generates and signals demand for interaction and cooperation and thus social capital (as the ability to establish and maintain resonant relationships makes one sympathetic and attractive in social contexts). *Educational processes*, through which cultural capital is increased, seem to be fundamentally geared toward the successful establishment of resonant relationships (between students and teachers, and/or learners and the learned), being effective only when they result in the interactive *adaptative transformation of some segment of world*” (Rosa, 2019, p. 29; author's emphasis).

However, taking into account what has been highlighted above and in particular the political, economic and social conditions of alienation and therefore of everything that opposes resonance, it is not enough to make education a space for resonance. Yet, despite these reservations, education is probably the only way to respond to the challenge. Indeed, it is first a question of thinking and implementing a real articulation between different dimensions and not of aiming at them independently of each other. Moreover, it is not just a matter of building up social or cultural capital. Education is supposed to take care of both the support of the resonance to which children are available and the construction of a supporting experience. Rosa himself sees childhood as an age of life favourable to resonance: the children's closeness to things, their sensitive availability, their openness to others, and their curiosity in all directions can favour experiences of resonance.

But not all children are on an equal footing: not all live in a supportive, rich, challenging, open environment that encourages exploration and experimentation. Depending on how it is embedded in the school system, education can also alter the possibility of resonance. It is, in some cases, education itself that ends up being the worst obstacle to resonance. Rousseau had brilliantly shown that the social evil

that he observed in his time did not only require a new education, but first of all an education that would undo the education as it was being practised which led to this evil. Abstraction, rationalism, individualism, utilitarianism, verbalism, control, which education builds up, do not promote resonance. In order to encourage resonance, it would therefore be necessary, in education, to encourage experiences of sensitivity, contact, sharing, care, etc., while simultaneously combating... education itself, which manipulates and reifies the relationship to the world and to others. A resonant education (Tassin, 2020) would at the same time be a critical education, which would hear children when “it no longer speaks to them”.

Such an education can only be democratic, in the sense that it is open to democratic practices: both those well identified since the foundation of institutional pedagogy and, more recently, the practice of debate in class, the dynamics of speaking and listening, as well as of participation. Nothing is simple in this area: education requires a framework, rules and objectives, which cannot be discussed constantly, at the risk of destroying education - children could refuse to make any effort to learn if they were given total 'freedom'. Various educational experiences show that children become more involved the more they are allowed to participate. This needs to be done within a framework in which a number of decisions can be made and actions taken in which children's voices count. The final and most difficult question that could be asked of democratic education is its limits. What can such political education do in the face of the fundamental issues of injustice, poverty and destruction that are obstacles to resonance?

## CONCLUSION

After having set the conceptual framework of our reflection, that of the relation of the subject to the world, between acceleration and resonance, based on our reading of Rosa, we problematised two fundamental elements, economic and political: resonance and its alienation in the capitalist economy, and then the way in which resonance can be a tool for social transformation. This was done in order to discuss the question of education as a lever for action to promote resonance.

By way of a summary of what an education can uphold, insofar as it is likely to articulate the different dimensions of the problem, let us first stress that nothing would make sense if this education were not first and foremost committed to the search for resonance, at the same time as to the support of the resonances the child is available to: contact with nature, intensive exposure to meaningful works of art, involvement in affective and stimulating relationships. Secondly, it is a question of making room for a critique of alienation, which must be understood with regard to children and teenagers, i.e. firstly by referring to what is “responsive” and what is not, but also by carrying out a critique of education itself. The neoliberal manipulation of schooling (Laval, 2004), which justifies the relation to knowledge by economic utility, should be debated in school. Finally, beyond childhood and education, the more general obstacles to resonance should be the subject of both critical work and democratic practices. Each of these obstacles, social inequality, the sensitive and relational poverty of modernity and the destruction wrought by capitalism, are likely to be objects of knowledge, discussion/debate and practice. In other words, beyond the existential quest, resonance could be a real vector of knowledge, critique and political mobilisation, without in any way preventing entry into the struggle (Voirol, 2020).

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