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## **Otherness and Western philosophy**

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**Abstract:**

This text is an attempt to bring about a transformation of otherness and its impact on Western philosophy, a problematic that aims to grasp otherness by identifying and recovering its true original matrix that inevitably generates and establishes it within Western philosophy. The text also aims to demonstrate the significance of otherness and, above all, its contemporary manifestation as a practical philosophical act.

**Keywords:** Otherness ;Western philosophy ;phenomenology ;difference.

**1- Introduction:**

The concept of otherness is central to Western philosophy and refers to the recognition of the other as an entity distinct from oneself. It concerns the relationship between the self and the other, and how the other is perceived and understood in our social interactions. Otherness is often associated with notions of difference, diversity and plurality, and is an important issue in various fields, including politics, ethics, culture and psychology.

The concept of otherness emerged from the encounter with the foreigner, the culturally different other, the enemy and the general concept of the other. It is thus linked to the question of recognising and accepting others in their difference, as well as to the question of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between individuals. From this perspective, otherness can be understood as a condition for the possibility of social life and democracy, since it invites us to consider the other as a full subject with rights and freedoms that must be respected.

However, otherness can also be a source of conflict, discrimination and exclusion through the existence of prejudices, stereotypes and biases that prevent the recognition of others in their difference. It can also raise issues of cultural domination and the definition of cultural norms that can restrict the expression of cultural diversity.

In summary, otherness is a rich and complex concept that challenges our relationship with the other, our ability to understand and accept difference, and our values and social norms. Understanding this concept is crucial for the understanding of Western philosophy and for those who wish to deepen their reflection on human beings and social relations. In fact, the concept of otherness has become a widely popular and important issue due to wars and insecurity. This resurgence of the concept has had a dominant influence on Western philosophy.

Our article focuses on the following question What is the impact of otherness on contemporary Western philosophy?

To answer this question, we have chosen a hypothesis derived from several readings of different philosophical works, which is as follows Otherness in Western philosophy depends on the concept of difference. Indeed, otherness as a philosophical theme requires a thorough clarification. In order to fully grasp this issue, we have chosen the method of deductive analysis, since the subject is inherently philosophical.

## **2- The significance of otherness in Western philosophy today.**

First and foremost, otherness challenges our relationship with the other, both individually and collectively, and thus our ability to live together in a democratic and pluralistic society. Indeed, recognising the other in his or her difference is a necessary condition for building interpersonal and social relationships based on mutual respect and cooperation.

Moreover, the question of otherness is also central to ethics. Margueritte Cognet (2007, p.10), Otherness is inseparable from ethics because it invites us to reflect on the values and principles that should guide our actions towards others. For example, the question of otherness may arise in the context of social justice, where the aim is to ensure equal rights and opportunities for all, regardless of their origin, culture or social status.

The question of otherness also raises ontological questions about the nature of human beings, how they define themselves in relation to others, and the possibility of knowing and understanding others in their difference.

Finally, the question of otherness is important in political philosophy because it examines how individuals and groups can live together peacefully and democratically in a pluralistic society. It also raises questions about the relationship between the individual and the state, and how the state can protect the rights and freedoms of all, including minorities and marginalised groups.

In sum, the question of otherness is important in philosophy because it examines how we live together, how we treat others, how we think about difference, and thus our ability to build a just, democratic and ethical society.

## **3- Different Western philosophical perspectives on otherness**

### **3.1 Phenomenological perspective: Otherness as an encounter with the Other**

The phenomenological perspective, which has a prominent presence in Western philosophy, offers a unique reflection on the concept of otherness by seeing it as an encounter with the Other. According to this perspective, the other is not simply an external entity, but primarily an experience that one undergoes. This perspective emphasises that the other reveals itself to us through a sense of openness and mutual exchange, establishing a relationship between us and them.

The phenomenology of the absurd provides a framework through which this connection with the other can be realised. It does not seek to compare or merge with the other, but rather embraces an attitude of indifference that appreciates and respects the value of otherness (Enzo Loi, 2019,p39).

Phenomenology draws attention to the complex dynamics of our perceptions, emotions, thoughts and behaviours as they relate to our relationship with the other. By delving into the depths of our lived experience, phenomenology invites us to carefully articulate and elucidate our encounters with the other. It encourages us to pay close attention to the sensations, impressions and meanings that unfold in the context of our interactions with those who are different from us.

In the phenomenological framework, understanding otherness depends on our engagement with the lived experience of the other. This experience includes not only our connection to the external world but also our relationship to ourselves. Phenomenology emphasises the importance of the intersubjective dimension of our existence, in which we connect with others through the fusion of our physical bodies and cognitive faculties. It is in these interpersonal interactions that our identity takes shape, shaped by the complex interplay with the other.

Within the phenomenological framework there is a call to transcend abstract representations and preconceived biases that may hinder our understanding of the other. Phenomenology urges us to actively engage in genuine encounters with others, perceiving them as they present themselves to us through lived experience. It challenges us to move beyond generalisations and stereotypes and to recognise and honour the unique diversity of each individual's perspective on the world.

In essence, the phenomenological approach to otherness invites us to adopt a stance of reciprocity and openness in our interactions with others. It encourages us to embark on a journey of discovery in which we recognise and value the other in their singularity and multiplicity. This approach recognises the profound impact of our encounters with others on the formation of our own identities. It emphasises the importance of incorporating the experiential dimension of otherness into our understanding, enabling us to transcend preconceived notions and gain a deeper insight into the richness of otherness.

### **3.2 Husserlian Phenomenology: Otherness as absolute otherness**

Husserlian phenomenology offers a particular reflection on the question of otherness by considering it as absolute otherness, that is, as radical and irreducible otherness. According to Husserl, otherness can only be understood through a reflection on subjectivity, that is, our own experience of consciousness. "The perception of this table is, before and after, the perception of this table. Thus every state of consciousness in general is in itself consciousness of something, regardless of the real existence of this object and regardless of any abstention I

make, in the transcendental attitude that is mine, from positing this existence and from all acts of the natural attitude" (Edmund Husserl, 1947, *Cartesian Meditations* p.28). according to Husserl, consciousness is fundamentally intentional, meaning that it is inherently directed towards a specific object. The essence of my consciousness is the experience I have of something. Every instance of consciousness is a form of consciousness directed towards an object. This intentional nature of consciousness gives rise to a distinction or separation between the subject and the object, which manifests itself as otherness. In fact, the object is different from the awareness that is directed towards it, and this difference creates a sense of otherness between the awareness and the object.

This relative otherness can be transcended through phenomenological analysis, which enables us to understand how consciousness gives itself to the object. However, Husserl also acknowledges the existence of an absolute otherness, such as the absolute nature of the world. In his work "The First Philosophy" (1923-1924), Husserl firmly upholds the recognition of this absolute aspect of the world within phenomenology, which cannot be surpassed by phenomenological analysis alone (Éric Paquette, 1998, p.07). Indeed, absolute otherness becomes apparent when consciousness presents itself as its own object, that is, when it engages in self-reflection.

Through introspective reflection, consciousness becomes aware of an absolute otherness that creates a distinct separation from itself and reveals the contingent nature of its own existence. This absolute otherness is characterised as a profound and irreducible form of alterity that cannot be transcended or resolved by any phenomenological analysis.

Husserl's exploration of absolute otherness through reflection provides a critical examination of the conventional understanding of subjectivity, which often perceives it as an autonomous and independent entity. By framing otherness as absolute otherness, Husserl emphasises the fragility and contingency of subjectivity and encourages reflection on its interconnectedness with the alterity of the other.

In sum, Husserlian phenomenology introduces a distinctive perspective on otherness by conceptualising it as absolute otherness. This perspective challenges the limitations of traditional notions of subjectivity and encourages an examination of the complex relationship between subjectivity and the otherness of the other.

### **3.3 Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception: Otherness as the embodied experience of the other**

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception offers an approach to otherness that centres on the embodied experience of the other. According to Merleau-

Ponty, perception is not merely a matter of sensation, but involves bodily involvement and engagement with the world.

From this perspective, otherness is revealed as an inherent aspect of perceptual experience. The act of perceiving an object involves a distinction between the perceiving subject and the perceived object, which takes the form of otherness. Merleau-Ponty, in his work "The Phenomenology of Perception" (*Autrui et le monde humain*), addresses the challenge of perceiving the Other, which he first summarises as the paradox that arises when objective thought attempts to comprehend consciousness from an external standpoint (Merleau-Ponty, 1976, p. 401).

This otherness, however, is not merely an intellectual distinction between subject and object. It is experienced in an embodied way, through the subject's engagement with the world through the body. Otherness goes beyond a simple dichotomy between subject and object; it includes a dimension of corporeality and active engagement with the world. This embodied dimension of otherness is particularly evident in the experience of encountering another person.

Absolutely, when we perceive others, their presence is not reduced to that of one object among many. Instead, they are perceived as an embodied being, actively engaged in the world in a similar way to oneself. Both the other and oneself are beings whose existence extends beyond mere individuality; we are shaped and influenced by the world around us. Consequently, we have the capacity to transcend one another (*ibid*, p. 405).

This embodied experience of encountering the other involves an aspect of intersubjectivity that goes beyond mere cognitive understanding. It involves a lived relationship of otherness experienced through bodily engagement with the world. This means that the relationship with the other is not based solely on knowledge or intellectual understanding, but is fundamentally based on a shared bodily existence in which otherness is actively experienced and acknowledged.

In this perspective, otherness is not simply a matter of difference or distance between subject and object, but involves a dimension of bodily engagement with the world that reveals how otherness is embodied in perceptual experience.

In summary, Merleau-Ponty's examination of perception in phenomenology presents a unique perspective on the concept of otherness, perceiving it as an integral aspect of embodied experience. This perspective illuminates the ways in which otherness is encountered through physical interaction with the environment, and encourages a re-evaluation of the subjective nature of contingency. By critically reflecting on these ideas, we are invited to reconceptualise the involvement of intersubjectivity in the experience of the other.



### **3.4 The Existentialist Perspective: Otherness as a state of freedom**

The existentialist perspective on otherness centres on the idea that human existence is affected by the presence of the Other, and that the relationship with the Other is intimately linked to human freedom. Existentialist philosophers such as Sartre and Beauvoir argue that human existence is characterised by a constant interplay between individual freedom and the existence of others. Otherness is perceived as a state of freedom because the presence of others both limits our freedom and facilitates its exploration.

Otherness is indeed seen as a formidable challenge to freedom. In the same period, Jean-Paul Sartre discusses a new concept of humanism centred on human freedom. This concept confronts us with a profound otherness that leads us to reflect on our own human condition and forces us to make existential choices.

The existentialist approach also emphasises the importance of engaging with others, as it raises questions of responsibility and moral awareness.

In summary, the existentialist approach to otherness emphasises the interconnectedness of our freedom and our relationship with others. It encourages us to consider how the presence of the other can challenge us to confront our own human condition and lead us to make existential choices.

### **3.5 Sartre's perspective on otherness: Otherness as a potential for authenticity and objectification in the gaze of others**

Within Sartre's existentialist philosophy, otherness occupies a central position, encompassing both the possibility for each individual to actualise his or her true self and the potential to be objectified by the gaze of others.

According to Sartre, human beings are characterised by their freedom, which includes the ability to autonomously determine their own existence through choices and endeavours. However, this freedom is confronted by the gaze of others, which has the capacity to reduce individuals to mere objects by subjecting them to fixed and stereotyped images.

In fact, for Sartre, otherness is the possibility for each of us to actualise ourselves as being ourselves, while at the same time being confronted with the gaze of the other, which can reduce us to a mere object or thing.

Thus, in Sartre's philosophy, the concept of otherness is closely linked to the notion of the gaze of the other, which can be perceived as a threat to our freedom as well as a source of recognition and affirmation of our existence. The gaze, like the imaginary, requires the suspension of the attitude of perception. However, it is not enough to simply refrain from perceiving the eyes, since the gaze itself can also be perceived, as Sartre suggests at the beginning of his exposition: "By saying 'Pierre looked at his watch', 'Jeanne looked out of the window', etc., I am in fact

expressing an objective relation" (J.-P. Sartre, 2014, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 297).

In Sartre's work, the concept of otherness is revealed through a term he introduces in *Being and Nothingness* known as the For-Other (Pour-Autrui). This term denotes a specific aspect of human reality that is intertwined with the presence of the Other. Through the experience of being perceived and observed by others, it becomes possible to distinguish within ourselves what we are to ourselves from what we are to others (J.-P. Sartre, 1948, p. 276).

From this perspective, otherness is understood as an indispensable condition of human existence. It allows us to realise and embody our true selves, while at the same time presenting the gaze of others as a challenging aspect of our lived experience.

Indeed, Sartre's approach highlights how otherness is linked to the question of the gaze of the other and invites reflection on how this confrontation can be experienced as a threat to our freedom, but also as a source of recognition and affirmation of our existence.

### **3.6 Beauvoir's perspective on otherness: Otherness as a precondition for women's freedom**

In Beauvoir's philosophy, otherness occupies a central position within her feminist ideology, as she sees it as a crucial factor in women's freedom.

Beauvoir argues that women have traditionally been regarded as the "other" in relation to men, defined as inferior, passive and objectified beings of desire. This state of otherness results in women being seen as limited individuals, unable to fully realise themselves as free and autonomous subjects. Beauvoir states: "In this way, the woman is freed from the shackles of femininity; she is not comparable to a eunuch, for her vitality is intact; but she is no longer the victim of overpowering forces: she is at one with herself" (Beauvoir, 1949: I, 71).

According to Beauvoir, the emancipation of women involves the transformation of their state of otherness, which confines them as limited individuals, into beings who are free and self-governing. This transformation requires an acknowledgement of the oppressive circumstances in which women find themselves, as well as a struggle for equality and the recognition of their inherent worth and independence. "It is at this stage that she most acutely perceives her body as an alienated object" (ibid., 1949: I, 68).

In fact, in this perspective, otherness is perceived as a prerequisite for women's freedom. The recognition of women's dignity and autonomy requires a fundamental change in their state of otherness, which confines them to limited and inferior positions in society.



In summary, Beauvoir's perspective highlights the link between otherness and women's social circumstances. It encourages reflection on how the transformation of this state of otherness is essential to facilitate the fulfilment of women's freedom and autonomy.

#### **4- The political perspective: Otherness as a matter of justice**

The political approach to otherness focuses on the recognition of otherness as a matter of social justice and democracy.

From this perspective, otherness is seen as a fundamental aspect of human diversity that should be recognised and valued in democratic societies. The recognition of otherness can be pursued through diversity policies that seek to promote the participation of all social groups in public life and decision-making processes. Law, in this context, initially embodies otherness as it distinguishes interests in order to bring them together under its authority: the law applies to all while recognising specific interests. However, beyond its inherently conflictual nature, law also enables the convergence of different entities (Catelan, Nicolas. 2008, p.2. "Otherness").

Moreover, otherness can be seen as a matter of justice, as differences between individuals can lead to inequalities and discrimination. Recognising otherness thus becomes a means of addressing these inequalities by promoting equal opportunities and eradicating discrimination.

Indeed, the political approach to otherness also sheds light on the potential tensions and conflicts that can arise between different social groups, particularly in multicultural societies. Recognition of otherness plays a crucial role in facilitating peaceful coexistence between these groups by promoting dialogue, mutual understanding and respect for differences. By acknowledging and valuing different perspectives, cultures and identities, societies can strive to create an inclusive and harmonious environment where differences are not perceived as threats, but rather as opportunities for growth and cooperation.

This approach underscores the importance of fostering a culture of acceptance, empathy and open-mindedness to effectively manage the complexities of diverse societies. By cultivating these values, societies can better manage conflict and create pathways for cooperation and collaboration between different groups.

In summary, the political approach to otherness encourages us to consider how recognising diversity and otherness contributes to social justice and democracy. It involves promoting equal opportunities, combating discrimination and fostering peaceful coexistence between different social groups. By recognising and valuing different perspectives, cultures and identities, societies can strive for a more inclusive and just social order, where individuals have equal access to opportunities and rights. This approach underscores the importance of recognising

and valuing our common humanity, while embracing the unique contributions and experiences that each individual brings to the table.

#### **4.1 Otherness in Levinas: Otherness as Ethical Responsibility**

In the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, a 20th century Lithuanian philosopher, otherness occupies a central place in his ethical reflection. For Levinas, encountering the other is a fundamental experience that calls us to go beyond ourselves and assume an ethical responsibility towards others.

According to Levinas, otherness is manifested in the encounter with the other, which confronts us with a radical and absolute otherness. This otherness calls us to transcend ourselves and to assume an ethical responsibility towards the other that cannot be reduced to abstract categories or concepts. The experience of otherness is thus an experience of transcendence that invites us to go beyond our own horizons and open ourselves to the infinity of the other. All thought is subordinated to the ethical relationship, to the infinitely other in the other and to the infinitely other that I long for. Behind the arrival of the human, there is already a vigilance towards the Other. The transcendental self, in its nakedness, emerges from the awakening through and for the other. (Emmanuel Levinas, AT, Fata Morgana, 1995, pp. 108-109)

For Levinas, ethical responsibility towards others is the cornerstone of all ethics. This responsibility cannot be reduced to a mere moral obligation, but must be understood as a relationship of hospitality and generosity towards others. This relationship of hospitality involves being open to the other in his difference and recognising his intrinsic value as a human being. Levinas emphasises that this ethical responsibility precedes any will or choice.

We must be willing to accept others as they are, without trying to reduce them to our own horizons or interests. Similarly, the relationship of generosity implies that we are ready to give without expecting anything in return, recognising the dignity and worth of every human being.

In sum, for Levinas, otherness is a profound encounter that urges us to transcend ourselves and assume an ethical responsibility towards others. This responsibility goes beyond a mere moral obligation and involves a relationship of hospitality and generosity. Levinas' ethical reflections emphasise the importance of recognising the value and dignity of every human being, regardless of their specific characteristics or interests. This ethical framework provides the basis for an ethics of relationships that emphasises the importance of recognising and respecting the intrinsic worth of others.

#### **4.2 The ethical approach: Otherness as Recognition of the Other**

Otherness in Ricœur: Otherness as the ability to put oneself in the place of the other

For Paul Ricœur, a 20th century French philosopher, otherness is first and foremost the capacity to put oneself in the place of the other. This ability is fundamental to understanding the other and to establishing an authentic relationship with others.

Ricœur emphasises the need to go beyond the mere recognition of the other as different from oneself in order to achieve a genuine understanding of his or her perspective. This understanding can only be achieved through an effort to put oneself in the other's shoes, to understand their point of view and their motivations. Ricœur refers to this as the "goal of otherness", which involves an openness to the other, their words and their lives.

The recognition of otherness is of great importance in interpersonal relationships, which, according to Ricœur, are inherently characterised by reciprocity. Within this reciprocity, each participant is required to empathise with the perspective of the other. While the encounter with the face of the other is the primary ethical phenomenon, it is preceded by the affirmation of one's own freedom. Friendship adds to self-esteem without subtracting from it. What it adds is the idea of mutuality in the exchange between two human beings who each esteem themselves. (P. Ricoeur, 1990, *Oneself as another*, p220), This includes the willingness of individuals to be vulnerable and to expose themselves to others. Reciprocity involves both recognising the uniqueness of the other and being receptive to their words and experiences.

According to Ricœur, the ability to empathise and see things from another person's perspective is an indispensable aspect of being human. It enables us to transcend prejudices and stereotypes and to foster genuine connections with others. This capacity presents a significant ethical challenge, as it requires the recognition of the inherent dignity and value of every individual, regardless of their unique characteristics or interests.

In summary, Ricœur emphasises that otherness primarily involves the ability to empathise, to understand and to remain open to the words and experiences of others. This capacity is essential for understanding the other and for establishing an authentic, reciprocal relationship.

## **5- The political stakes :**

### **5.1 Otherness as a factor of recognition and inclusion**

Otherness is a crucial political issue in ensuring the recognition and inclusion of minorities. Minority groups, whether cultural, religious or sexual, have often been marginalised and discriminated against in dominant societies. Recognising their difference is therefore an important step towards their integration and inclusion in society. This means recognising their cultural identity, respecting their rights and addressing their specific needs .

Political recognition of difference goes beyond mere tolerance and aims to create inclusive societies in which different groups are recognised, valued and given equal opportunities. It requires the promotion of policies and practices that address systemic inequalities and promote social justice. By recognising and embracing otherness, societies can move towards a more inclusive and equitable future.

Political and social recognition of minorities has many benefits. It promotes cultural diversity, ensures equal opportunities and combats discrimination. It also promotes intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding between different groups, thereby strengthening social cohesion.

Similarly, the inclusion of disabled or vulnerable people is an important issue where difference is central. Recognising the unique characteristics and specific needs of these individuals is crucial to facilitating their full participation in society. This means taking into account their requirements and ensuring the accessibility of different places and services.

### **5.2 Cultural stakes: Otherness as cultural enrichment**

Otherness has an important cultural value in that it contributes to enriching cultural diversity and encourages exchanges between different cultural groups. Cultural interactions and exchanges promote openness, tolerance and mutual understanding.

The importance of cultural diversity and multiculturalism lies in embracing otherness. Recognising and valuing different cultural perspectives and practices creates a more inclusive and dynamic cultural landscape. Such an environment fosters creativity, innovation and the exploration of new ideas.

### **5.3 Cultural stakes: Otherness as cultural enrichment**

Otherness has significant cultural value in that it promotes the appreciation of cultural diversity and facilitates exchanges between different cultural groups. Cultural exchange can foster openness, tolerance and mutual understanding.

The importance of cultural diversity and multiculturalism is essential for promoting peaceful coexistence between different cultural groups. This includes valuing minority cultures, ensuring their preservation and promoting intergenerational transmission. The focus goes beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge about different cultures - it encompasses an understanding of the human experience in its unique and universal aspects. The experience of otherness is intrinsically linked to ethics (Martine Abdallah-Preteille, 2004, p. 58).

Promoting cultural diversity also means advocating for policies that support it in different areas such as the media, education and public life. This can include promoting diverse representations and perspectives in the media, implementing

inclusive educational practices that value different cultures, and creating public spaces that celebrate and respect cultural diversity.

#### **5.4 Ontological stakes: Otherness as a condition of human existence**

Finally, otherness has ontological stakes because it is inherent to human existence. The ability to understand and accept the otherness of individuals is crucial for peaceful coexistence. Dasein (human being) possesses a unique quality in which its own being is revealed by its very existence. Understanding the nature of being itself becomes a defining aspect of Dasein's existence (Martin Heidegger, 1986, *Being and Time*, p. 9). This openness allows prejudices and stereotypes to be challenged, facilitating greater mutual understanding.

Understanding the other and accepting differences are therefore fundamental to fostering peaceful coexistence among individuals. This involves developing intercultural and empathetic skills that enhance our understanding of others and their differences. By cultivating these skills, individuals can engage in meaningful dialogue, bridge cultural divides and foster a more inclusive and harmonious society.

### **6- The Limits of Otherness as Recognition:**

#### **6.1 The issue of minority groups and inclusion**

While otherness is often used as a means to address the recognition of minority and marginalised groups, it is important to recognise its inherent limitations. The quest for recognition of the other can inadvertently lead to the creation of new divisions and the exclusion of other groups.

The limits of political and social recognition of minorities lie in the potential creation of new social cleavages in which the concept of otherness is either idealised or stigmatised through its association with a collective identity. For example, identity claims can contribute to the essentialisation of the characteristics of a minority group, thereby reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices.

The limits of inclusion for people with disabilities or vulnerabilities: The inclusion of people with disabilities or vulnerabilities is a crucial issue in our society. However, inclusion cannot be reduced to the mere recognition of difference. It must also be accompanied by concrete action to ensure access to services and resources and to combat discrimination.

#### **6.2 The limits of otherness as enrichment: The issue of cultural domination**

While otherness is often seen as an opportunity to enrich our cultural experiences, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. In particular, the valorisation of cultural diversity can sometimes obscure relations of domination and power.

The limits of valuing cultural diversity lie in the potential creation of new social divisions, where minority groups are either idealised or stigmatised because of



their association with a particular culture or collective identity. This can happen when cultural claims lead to the essentialisation of a group's characteristics, reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices. It is important to recognise that the other is not primarily an object of understanding, but rather an interlocutor. These two relationships are intertwined (Levinas, E. (1991), *Entre Nous*, p. 18).

### **6.3 The limits of intergenerational transmission of cultures and traditions:**

The intergenerational transmission of cultures and traditions is an important issue for the preservation of minority cultures. However, this transmission can also lead to the essentialisation of the cultural characteristics of a group, which can reinforce stereotypes and prejudices and limit the ability of individuals to define themselves freely. Moreover, this transmission can sometimes hinder openness to cultural diversity and otherness.

### **7- conclusion**

In conclusion, the study of alterity in Western philosophy is a complex and multidisciplinary endeavour. It involves different theoretical frameworks and requires a thorough analysis of the political, cultural and ontological dimensions associated with the notion of difference and diversity. Despite the importance and depth of this research, several challenges remain, highlighting the range of doctrines and philosophical systems in understanding the concept of difference and plurality.

One of the major challenges in the study of alterity is the inclusion of the experiences and perspectives of marginalised individuals and minority groups who have been neglected, rendered invisible or excluded from dominant philosophical discourse. It is crucial to recognise the diversity of experiences and social positions in the analysis of alterity in order to avoid reproducing the biases and prejudices inherent in hegemonic discourses.

Another challenge lies in the complexity of power dynamics and influences in intercultural and interpersonal relations. The issue of cultural, economic or political domination cannot be overlooked in the study of alterity, and it is important to consider the limitations and unintended consequences of valuing cultural difference or recognising the other in a context of domination and injustice.

In conclusion, based on this analysis, it is evident that alterity has had a significant impact on Western philosophy. It has been a central theme in various approaches within Western philosophy. However, the study of alterity in Western philosophy should politically consider the application of the principles of the ethics of alterity in order to reduce logocentrism and respect human rights. Today many people suffer and become victims of racism and exclusion. It should also take into



account perspectives and knowledge from other disciplines such as social sciences, postcolonial studies, gender studies and cultural studies.

By incorporating these interdisciplinary perspectives, it will be possible to renew philosophical reflection on alterity and to gain a better understanding of the social and political issues related to the concepts of difference and diversity.

In summary, the study of alterity in philosophy is a dynamic and evolving field that requires ongoing consideration of minority perspectives, power dynamics, and interdisciplinary insights. By addressing these issues, philosophical reflections on alterity can contribute to a deeper understanding of the social and political complexities surrounding difference and diversity. Moreover, this engagement can contribute to the quest for a more just and inclusive society, promoting justice and inclusion for all.

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