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Book Reviews and Notices

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Book Reviews and Notices

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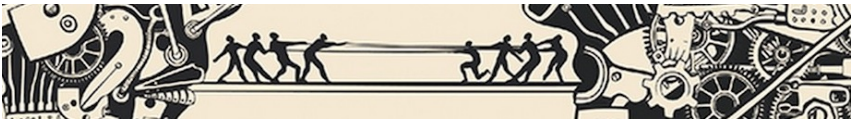
Reviews of Kreps (ed.), Gramsci and Foucault: A Reassessment, *Ashgate 2015, Routledge 2016; Zambelli,* Alexandre Koyré in incognito, *Olschki 2016.*



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David Kreps (ed.), *Gramsci and Foucault: A Reassessment*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2015; then New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 210. ISBN 9781409460862, $109.50.

The recent volume *Gramsci and Foucault: A Reassessment*, edited by David Kreps, addresses a crucial issue of recent leftist culture, namely the problematic cohabitation of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault under one theoretical roof, and the merging of their perspectives. This encounter can be observed in the most varied fields, from the history of knowledge to subaltern studies and from medical history to political studies. In the introduction, Kreps mentions several studies dealing with this double legacy that are of particular interest for social and political studies, which is the main field of investigation for the contributions to the volume. A more comprehensive account and assessment of Gramsci and Foucault is still desirable, although it is too early to draw up a complete and exhaustive treatment of this twofold reception as it is still a process a in the making.[1]

[1] The merging of Gramscian and Foucauldian influences in leftist culture is too broad to be exhaustively dealt with here. I will limit myself to a few references. In intellectual history, Edward

This publication is in line with a recent trend, aptly termed the 'Gramscian Moment' by Peter Thomas in the most up-to-date English treatment of Gramsci's philosophy of the last decade.[1] The increasing attention devoted to Gramsci in academia is not affected by the general crisis of the left. As a matter of fact, Gramsci is one of the very few Marxist thinkers who have survived the turn of the Nineties and the end of the short twentieth century (1914-1991), to use Eric Hobsbawm's periodization.[2] His concept of hegemony as a form of leadership co-opting subaltern groups without coercion, the attention he devoted to civil society as a space of political action escaping the direct control of institutional state politics, and his views of culture as a contested field, constitutive of historical emancipatory processes, are vigorously debated today. To be sure, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985) has strongly fostered this appropriation by bringing hegemony and Grasmcian thought to the center of leftist political debates and movements.

Foucault has emerged as another major reference point of leftist culture after the ideological clashes of the Cold War era. One can say that Foucault has greatly benefited from an *allegedly* post-ideological turn, as he is often perceived as a critical thinker offering adequate *non-Marxist*—perhaps, *post-*

Said drew heavily on Gramsci in his classic study on the geo-politics of the making of scientific disciplines, *Orientalism* (1978), but also proposed a rather Foucauldian reading of Gramsci, whom he saw as an outlier 'telling truth to power,' in his *Reith Lectures*, delivered at BBC Radio, in 1993. See `http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00gmx4c/episodes/player` (accessed on August 5, 2016). Furthermore, K. Sivareamakrishnan deals with the presence of the originally Gramsci-inspired *subaltern studies* in the essay "Situating the Subaltern: History and Anthropology in the Subaltern Studies Project", in *Journal of Historical Sociology* 8/4 (1995), p. 395-429. A similar shift from Grascianism to Foucaldianism has been accomplished by scholars stemming from the British *New Left* in the history of science and medicine. For a reflection upon this issue, see my review-interview "The Critical Intellectual in the Age of Neoliberal Hegemony," A discussion of Roger Cooter with Claudia Stein, *Writing History in the Age of Biomedicine* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), Review-Interview in *Journal for the Interdisciplinary History of Ideas* 4/7 (2015): p. 5:1-5:20.

[1] Peter Thomas, *The Gramscian Moment: Philosophy, Hegemony and Marxism* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

[2] Eric Hobsbawm most emphatically stressed the lasting legacy of Gramsci in *How to Change the World: Reflections on Marx and Marxism* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2011). See in particular Chap. 13, "The Reception of Gramsci", p. 334-343. For the periodization of the short twentieth century, the obvious reference is, by the same author, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century (1914-1991)* (London: Joseph, 1995).

Marxist—tools for a (non-reductionist, non-economicist) understanding of contemporary *disciplinary* society. His theory of governamentality, alongside an understanding of power as diffuse and the emergence of the self as a product of modern population control, normalization and biopolitics, has been seen as a break with the Marxist architectonic metaphor of *Basis* (base) and *Überbau* (superstructure) while pointing to knowledge (in particular medical knowledge) as a crucial element of societal structuring.

His view of power as all-pervasive calls for individual revolt or, better to say, *resistance* to power. However, the outcome of such opposition looks blind, or at least uncertain. Such a *deficit* of Foucauldian politics is stressed by several scholars contributing to the volume, for instance by Marcus Schutzke in a chapter on "Power and Resistance" (cf. p. 60): What is the *value* of resistance if it can only lead to another form of power that cannot be judged better or worse than the previous formation? Gramsci's *humanistic* emphasis on the collective construction of (counter-)hegemony is more suited to 'transformation' rather than to resistance alone, as pointed out by Efe Can Gürcan and Onur Bakiner in Chapter Eight, "Post Neo-Liberal Regional Integration" (p. 135).

The overall intention of the volume is to establish a Gramscian-Foucauldian theoretical foundation for useful approaches to socio-political studies. A criticism of disciplinary power, integrated by consideration of the constitution of historical collective subjectivities, should lead to "new patterns of emancipatory political agency," as Stephan Gill names them in the Foreword (p. xiii-xiv). Kreps indicates the potential integration of micro-physics of power (Foucault) and of institutional politics at a macro-level (Gramsci) as a productive direction of inquiry, the outcome of which is still unclear and could take the form of either a *Gramscian Foucauldianism* or a *Foucauldian Gramscianism* (p. 1-2 and 5).

The contributors to this volume do not aim at an exhaustive theoretical comparison between the two authors. They rather zoom in on issues that are suited to compare these *maîtres à penser* and apply their insights to special cases. As a result, the volume offers interesting—albeit scattered—conceptual clarifications and punctual assessments of the differences and convergences between the philosophy of praxis, on the one hand, and the archeological-genealogical approach, on the other. At once, the reader is offered a mosaic of heterogeneous studies, the minimum common denominator of which is the search for a theo-

retically grounded (new-)leftist perspective. One of the most challenging chapters from the viewpoint of theory is Alex Damirović, "The Politics of Truth". The author addresses the issue of the relation between truth and power seeing as he views it as an issue about which both Foucault and Gramsci have something important to say. Both were engaged in a critique of the power of knowledge and its history and both saw knowledge as a crucial element in struggles for emancipation. Whereas Foucault's approach could be better defined as an "ethics of truth", Gramsci rather envisages a "politics of truth," the former by focusing on the pair truth-power, the latter on science-ideology. Damirović illustrates through Foucault the political origin of the binding between *mots* and *choses* through discursive practices. Although Foucault encourages a struggle for a *new* 'truth politics', the inadequacy of his proposal lies in the lack of directionality (p. 16): "In the fight for truth [...] it is forgotten what is fought for". In Damirović's treatment, (a Foucouldianized) Gramsci comes to rescue the endeavor (p. 24): "Gramsci develops what we might—following Foucault—call a Politics of Truth of the subaltern aiming for the constitution of a new order of truth". In another chapter, Schultzke synthetizes the essential difference between the two approaches as the distinction between an anti-humanistic project and a humanistic outlook (p. 63): whereas power is unintentional for the *structuralist* Foucault, it is linked to interests and intentions for the *philosopher of agency*, Gramsci. Notwithstanding these evident differences, Damirović emphasizes their shared concern for truth as something that not only floats on the surface of history but also determines collective phenomena. Hence, he acknowledges (in a note that is reminiscent of early-Lukácsian Marxism) that "consciousness and collective action are organically connected" (p. 26).

Chapter Nine, "The Hegemony of Psychology" by Heather Bruskell-Evans is particularly relevant to epistemology. The author raises the question of whether the implementation of psychological medical treatments for children in post-invasion Iraq can be seen as a means to Westernize Iraqi society, although such a project is not intentionally embraced by the scientists and physicians involved. As she argues, this process can be read both through Gramscian lenses as well as through Foucauldian, either as the implementation of US American cultural hegemony or as the expansion of US domestic governance. However, the legitimate criticism of science in its link to power (in either perspective) should be circumscribed to a criticism of science in *its link to capitalism and its*

values (p. 168). Hence, she suggests that progressive Iraqi intellectuals should strive toward a transformation of science and its values as part of a wider political-cultural struggle.

In Chapter Six, "Subalternity In and Out of Time," Sonita Sarker reflects on the hegemonic relations inscribed in multiple narratives of time and history by drawing upon subaltern studies. The exclusion from *history* of subaltern classes, deemed to be trapped in (cyclical, ahistorical, natural) *time*—or fragmented *histories* only sporadically emerging to the surface of history - mirrors patterns of marginalization and exclusion. The exclusion from history makes a discursive pair with the ambiguous inclusion/exclusion from statehood enacted upon the (Gramscian) *subalterns* or, which is the same, upon the (Foucauldian) *subjugated*. Subalterns are here defined, following Gayatri C. Spivak's definition, as those occupying "a position without identity" (p. 92). The appropriation of history is a key element of the struggle towards the empowerment of the subalterns within "a dialectic of identity and position" (p. 92). While Gramsci helps Sarker to conceive of hegemonic relations as inscribed in historical narratives, the added value brought by Foucault to such an approach rests in an explicit reflection on the *constructed nature* of dominant history—a reflection which she sees as marking "the shift from modernity to postmodernity (p. 99).

I would like to briefly recount two case studies from the volume. In "Passive Revolution of Spiritual Politics," Jelle Versieren and Brecht de Smet deal with the Iranian Revolution and its consequences, which they regard as a historical case in which Islam served as an *articulation of modernization*. In their argument, the authors resort to the Gramscian concept of "passive revolution". The comparative case is modern Italy, where the bourgeoisie was unable to create a society permeated by its values, as happened in France through the revolution, and thus compensated its insufficient hegemony through alliances with other social classes and the support of their ideologies. In this manner, it negotiated and gradually introduced *modernizations* that would foster its corporate interests. *Pace* Foucault, who welcomed the Iran revolution as a non-Western way to do politics escaping Marxist analysis, it is here argued that *orientalist blindness* made him neglect the fact that the Iran revolution was a "deeply modernist" phenomenon (p. 123). Religious elites were the *passive revolutionary* agents of modernization, as they used modernization as a means to preserve their power while making concessions to the economic interests of other groups. As the

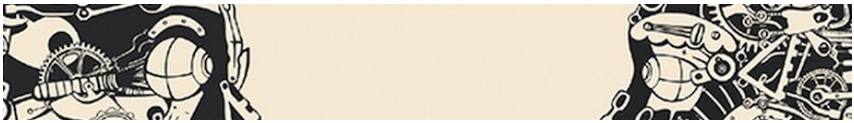
authors explain: "The passive revolution, by separating the leadership of allied and opposing classes from their organic base, deprives these social groups of their own political instrument and creates an obstacle of their constitution as autonomous classes" (p. 126).

Chapter Eight, on "Post Neo-Liberal Regional Integration" deals with another intriguing case study. The Gramscian (rather than Foucauldian) concept of hegemony is used to address the globalization *from below* of ALBA (*Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América*), a project of interregional integration of Latin American countries launched by Cuba and Venezuela in 2004. This is seen as a counter-hegemonic project running against "efficiency-driven market integration projects" (p. 121). By fostering the participation of institutions from civil society in the process, e.g. trade unions, and financing educational and welfare projects, ALBA should escape the pitfalls of integration processes decided and imposed *from above* and the resulting *deficit of democracy*, as has lamentably been the case with the history of the European Union. ALBA embodies at once an alternative model of economic growth, based on solidarity and economic support contrary to the policies of World Bank and International Monetary Found (p. 143), and a counter-hegemonic cultural project. The last aspect is most clearly evidenced by the creation of a Latin-American TV, *Telesur*, contrasting the communication monopoly of northern broadcasters.

In the concluding chapter, Kreps considers whether the Gramsci-Foucault interface could constitute the basis for a new approach to social studies which would escape reductionism. He sees an opportunity to develop this paradigm in a *complexity turn*. This is an approach to socio-political phenomena that looks at such processes as having emerging properties that cannot be explained by the reduction to their parts. Although this approach might be reconcilable with a revised (Foucauldian?) *structuralist* study of society, it seems rather unlikely that this could be suited to Gramsci's *humanism*, where the accent is rather set on collective agency. Kreps derives the concept of 'complexity' (as opposed to mechanical 'complicacy') from environmental biology. Again, such a (tendentially positivist and depersonalizing) paradigm does not suit Gramsci's criticism of scientism as alienating historical agents from their capacity to shape history and their world. Kreps' proposal of a Gramscian-Foucauldian path to complexity is not articulated in detail and its value rests more in the questions it raises than the answers it sketches out.

It is to be expected that more works inspired by Gramsci and Foucault in social, political, cultural and intellectual studies will really lead to a richer shared discourse oriented to the future. But this cannot happen within the isolation of a scientific ivory tower. As is amply shown by this volume, Gramsci and Foucault already constitute two points of reference for critical thought and social movements. However, connecting the elements that emerge from both thinkers is still an endeavor that is tentatively pursed. One should openly acknowledge that deep and enduring political-cultural transformations cannot be expected from academic exercises. Nor can a political legacy be reactivated in isolation from society. As Gramsci argued, no revolution of thought can possibly be separated from societal change, since "ideologies do not generate ideologies". Rather, it is "history, revolutionary activity, that generates the *new humanity*, that is, new social relations" (*Prison Notebook* 6, 733). To be sure, this volume is symptomatic of a shared concern among engaged scholars for the renewal of leftist culture. It sends an important signal: that closer connections should be established between academic culture and society. In the light of future developments it will be possible to fully assess the validity of today's manifold pursuit of a novel alliance between theory and praxis.

Pietro Daniel Omodeo



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Paola Zambelli, *Alexandre Koyré in incognito*, Firenze: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 2016, p. 288. ISBN 9788822264497, €32.00.

Aleksandr Vladimirovič Kojre, widely known as Alexandre Koyré (1892-1964), is mainly identified as an important scholar in the field of history of science and history of philosophy and as a historian who dealt with classical authors like Descartes, Galilei, Newton but also Anselm, Böhme, Paracelsus and early modern alchemists. He is also known as a disciple of Husserl and Scheler and he

is famous for his original contribution to the French epistemological tradition and for the importance of his historical approach in the philosophy of science. Many classical studies have contributed to this diffused image but, despite these widespread ideas, Koyré was more than a disciple of Husserl deeply involved into the history of modern science, and this new biography by Paola Zambelli elucidates some less known aspects of his life and work. In particular, Zambelli gives an overview of the previously unexplored youthful experience of Koyré in Russia, Germany, and France and of his life during the two World Wars.

Using a number of little known sources and documents, Zambelli tries to offer an account of the political life of the young Koyré, especially of his involvement in the subversive and revolutionary Russian environment in 1907-1914 and the European spy scene during World War I along with the *entre-deux-guerres* period. Concerning the first point, we learn that Koyré was arrested at least twice before 1907 and during this period he started to be monitored by the Tzar's political police because he was suspected of revolutionary terrorism. As Zambelli observes, it is curious that no one among Koyré's relatives or friends has ever mentioned his political background, except for an anecdotal reference attributable to Roman Jakobson. Koyré himself contributed, after the first World War, in covering up his own political past, concerned about his position as a foreign scholar without a permanent position in Academia. Probably for the same reason during his period at the New School for Social Research (New York), where many people considered him a 'gaulliste', he was not given any information about his socialist and 'revolutionary' past. One of the most original parts of Zambelli's biography is precisely related to Koyré's revolutionary activity in Russia (p. 11-26) and, in particular, to his work in publishing. New documents show that the role of Koyré in the Socialist Revolutionary (SR) movement was most probably in press propaganda activity. We don't actually have any assurance about how many articles or documents Koyré wrote in this period, but the fact he was involved in this kind of revolutionary propaganda allows us to read his works in the field of Slavic Studies—in particular, his essay on *La philosophie et le problème national en Russie au début du XIX siècle* (1928)—from a whole new perspective. It is exactly because of this activities that he was arrested for the first time, attracting the attention of the Tzar's police. After a second arrest, again concerned about his 'revolutionary' status and life, he decided to leave Russia and to go to study in Paris and in Germany, in Göttingen. Here

he spent some time (from the *Wintersemester* 1908-1909 to the *Wintersemester* 1911-1912) principally attending lessons by Husserl—courses on *Logic* (1910-1911) and *Ethics* (1911)—and by the Göttingen school of mathematics members: Klein, H. Minkowski, Carathéodory, Zermelo and, notably, Hilbert. In this period he developed a strong interest in the field of the philosophy of mathematics, especially in Russell and Frege, but Husserl rejected his proposal for a thesis on this subject. In Göttingen he also met Max Scheler and he attended his lectures at the Göttingen Philosophische Gesellschaft, where he found a stimulating philosophical environment. Zambelli particularly remarks Scheler's influence on Koyré during this period when the German philosopher was working on the draft of the later *Die Wissensformen und die Gesellschaft. Probleme einer Soziologie des Wissens* (1926): she suggests that Koyré's later interest in sociological and mental elements in the history of philosophy and sciences are in part a result of the Scheler's influence. After this period in Göttingen Koyré decided to permanently move to France, continuing his studies in Paris.

World War I found Koyré during his stay in Paris, where the young philosopher quickly decided to join up with the French Army. Officially he served in the French Army scarcely a year, but he was probably employed as a French informant in Russia after 1919. Zambelli states that some sources report that Koyré kept his political revolutionary convictions after the October Revolution but it is unclear if and when he cooperated with the Bolsheviks. In this part of the book (p. 27-54), Zambelli tries to assess the facts about Koyré's espionage activity between France and Russia during the period 1915-1919 and then, using a number of archive documents and trying to determine his real movements during this period. Actually, this reconstruction of the events is quite fascinating and compelling, but it is also relevant to the general intellectual history of the 20th century because it shows a genuine depiction of a young intellectual deeply involved in his political contemporaneity.

The second part of Zambelli's work focuses on the intellectual and philosophical education of Koyré in Germany and France. Even though this part of the life of Koyré is better known, Zambelli gives a new understanding of the role of some notable intellectual personalities of that period in Koyré's early life: Husserl and Scheler, and also Bergson, Levy-Bruhl, Meyerson, Gilson and many others. Even if the influence of Husserl and Scheler on the early phenomenological interests of Koyré still remains important, Zambelli finds a strong con-

nection between Levy-Bruhl and Gilson (who was himself a disciple of Levy-Bruhl) and Koyré's own work. In this respect, I find that Zambelli follows an important line of studies that have reconsidered the place of Koyré in a wider 'research program' in the French Epistemological tradition. In this context I am thinking for example of Cristina Chimisso, *Writing the History of Mind. Philosophy and Science in France, 1900 to 1960s* (London: Ashgate 2008), which investigated, among other elements, "Koyré's ambiguous place in French Post-War Academia" between history and philosophy and which clearly establishes the role of concepts like 'mentality' (Levy-Bruhl) or 'outillage mentale' (Febvre) in the development of Koyré's own approach to the historical research. Also Zambelli finds a consensus between Levy-Bruhl's use of the psychological notion of 'collective representation' and Koyré's aim to explore the metaphysical preconditions of scientific thought (p. 99). According to Koyré, the phenomenological method appears in fact close to Levy-Bruhl's analysis of primitive mind but, contrary to a traditional phenomenological assumption, Levy-Bruhl's approach tries to describe the 'pre-logical level' in its relationship with the logical one, without attempting to place them in a chronological and genetic sequence. According to Zambelli, the importance of Levy-Bruhl for Koyré's background is therefore comparable to the influence of Husserl and Scheler.

Another unfamiliar aspect Zambelli points out in the third part of the book is the role which Koyré played in spreading French philosophy in Germany and vice-versa. Even if Koyré is mostly know to have organized Husserl's Paris lectures on Descartes, he also contributed to the early reception of Bergson in the Göttingen Phenomenological Circle, where he spoke at a conference at the Philosophische Gesellschaft on "Bergsons Zeittheorie" in 1913. This is really remarkable, given that Scheler himself was one of the first German scholars to publish an essay on Bergson and his paper is subsequent to Koyré's speech. In the *entre-deux-guerres* period, Koyré also played a role in introducing German philosophy in France, giving a number of lectures and conferences on Hegel during the 1930s, organizing the lectures given by Husserl at the Sorbonne in Paris in 1929 and maintaining, in the following years, personal contacts with Jaspers, Arendt, Anders and also Heidegger. Zambelli dedicates an entire chapter of her book specifically to Koyré's interests in the 'Heidegger controversy'. Even if Koyré was one of the first intellectuals to draw the French public's attention to Heidegger's philosophy, he was also one of the earliest to be concerned

about his political position (p. 235) and even Emmanuel Levinas recognized that it was "the lamented Alexandre Koyré" who first drew his attention to Heidegger's sympathy for National-Socialism. Koyré was deeply interested in Heidegger's work between 1929 and the early 1930s, but then he interrupted his interest in the author of *Sein und Zeit* at least until 1946. On the basis of epistolary documents, Zambelli acknowledges that Koyré kept an interest in Heidegger's philosophy during this period, but he did not write anything about his thought, disappointed as he was for the political choices of the German philosopher. It was only in 1946 that he decided to write a contribution for *Critique* about the development of Heidegger's philosophy, but even if this short essay testifies to his attention to the German philosopher, afterwards he did not show anymore interest in Heidegger and he openly declared that he was bored by the never-ending debate on existentialism in France and in Europe.

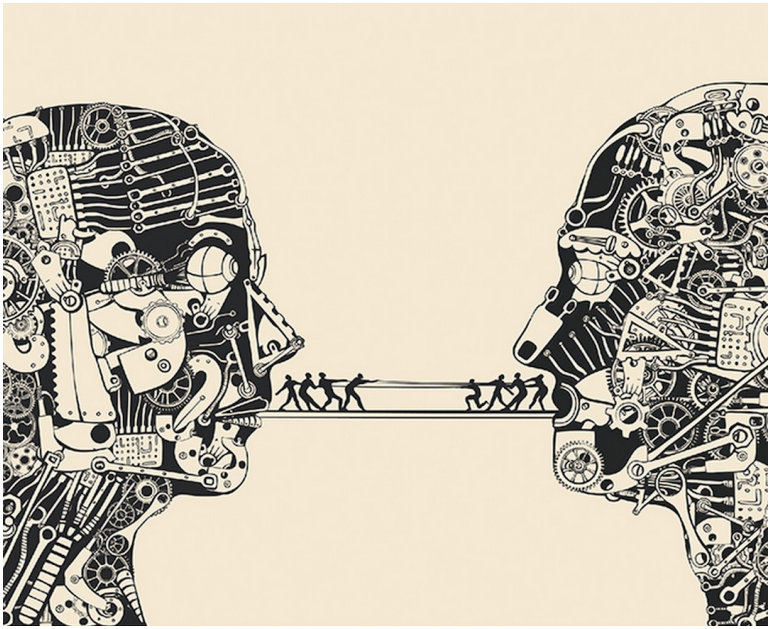
Even after his forced exile in the USA because of the World War II, Koyré played a significant part in the setting-up of the European intellectual community and its continuity in the United States and he kept a respected place in French Academia. He helped a number of German and European scholars to find a place in American departments during the war, even if his own position was insecure. It is unclear how much Koyré's political background influenced his life during the World War II and what his genuine political convictions were at that time, but undoubtedly his support for the French Resistance and his open *gaullisme* during the conflict raised some suspicion in the American Academia, as many documents of the internal academic staff of the Rockefeller Foundation can attest. A large part of the American university establishment was convinced that many French émigrés in the USA were actually using their positions to create gaullist propaganda with the purpose of gaining a good position in the post-war France and Koyré himself was unjustly accused many times of being an academic careerist, who was actually planning a brilliant 'émigré's career'. In any case, the marginal position of Koyré in the American, French, and German Academia was actually a problem for this 'between-two-worlds intellectual', but it is also the reason why he played the role of a 'cultural link' between different philosophical national traditions. In this last part of the biography, which covers World War II and the following years, we find a mature philosopher capable of building up a strong network of personal contacts and a scholar interested in the most up-to-date political and academic topics. In

the post-war period, we find Koyré commuting between the United States and France, between Princeton—where he was permanent fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS)—and Paris—where he taught with Lucien Febvre in the Cinquième Section and then in the Sixième Section of the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE), under the scientific direction of Fernand Braudel. In this period Koyré kept his between-two-worlds position: in the USA he was considered by a large part of the Academia as the initiator and founder of the history of science, he was in contact with important scientific personalities (e.g. J. R. Oppenheimer or E. Panofsky) and he influenced a number of important scholars of the following generation (Claret, Gillispie, Grant, Murdoch, Kuhn); in France he put all his energy into trying to develop the history of science as an academic discipline, firstly trying to obtain a chair at the Collège de France, and then founding in 1958 the Centre de recherches d'histoire des sciences et des techniques at the EPHE. This Center, which has been called 'Centre Koyré' since 1966, sealed the cooperation between Koyré and important members of the *École des Annales*, like Febvre or Braudel, who showed a deep interest in Koyré's approach to history of science, philosophy and techniques. In these years Koyré had no real need to travel and commuted between Europe and America but, according to Zambelli, he was unable to find his place in a permanent location. All his life had been spent traveling and he had spent a large part of his life as an exile and in his later years he intentionally chose to be a sort of nomadic intellectual, a type of scholar that would become a common status in the following years, but which was not so ordinary for his times.

Recently, a number of significant studies have been published on the French tradition in history and philosophy of science, notably some appreciable collective works, such as M. Bitbol - J. Gayon, *L'épistémologie française 1830-1970* (Paris: Éd. Matériologiques 2015) or A. Brenner - J. Gayon, *French Studies in Philosophy of Science. Contemporary Research in France* (Boston: Springer 2009). Other scholars like Chimisso have also tried to give a general account of the unique French style in the philosophy of science. There is a floating emphasis on Koyré's role in these different works but, generally speaking, the most recent orientation in this branch of the XX Century history of philosophy recognizes the critical relevance of Koyré in the fields of history and philosophy of science and in the birth of the tradition of historical epistemology [*épistémologie historique*]. A distinguished line of research specifically dedicated to Koyré

began in the 1980s with the work of scholars like G. Jorland (*La science dans la philosophie. Les recherches épistémologiques d'Alexandre Koyré*, Paris: Gallimard 1981) and there is today a little but lively debate around some aspects of his thought—such as, in recent times, the collective book directed by J. Seidengart, *Vérité scientifique et vérité philosophique dans l'œuvre d'Alexandre Koyré* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres 2017) or F. Capranzano, *Koyré, Galileo e il 'vecchio sogno' di Platone* (Firenze: Olschki 2014). An important *Bibliographie d'Alexandre Koyré* has been published by J.-F. Stoffel (Firenze: Olschki 2000) with an introduction by Zambelli herself. This valuable panorama of studies appears promising but many aspects need to be developed and this new biography could be a starting point for further research. At present, *Alexandre Koyré in incognito* does not claim to give a complete intellectual presentation of Koyré's philosophical and historical work. This biography rather aims to give us an unfamiliar profile of an 'intellectuel engagé' in a political and cultural background, which was very dynamic and vibrant, and the most remarkable merit of this book is to give a new acknowledgment about these underestimated aspects. Zambelli brings Koyré back to his own time and put him into his historical context, giving back the complex image of a philosopher deeply connected with some of the most influential philosophical and historical personalities of the first half of the 20th century. We also discover his path between different scientific and philosophical traditions, such as the phenomenological circle, the 'Annales School', the Levy-Bruhl entourage and the French tradition in epistemology. But above all, we figure out an unsuspected political profile, more intricate and difficult to define than expected and deeply involved in the tumultuous beginning of the short Twentieth Century. Zambelli clearly shows us a philosopher located at the meeting of different worlds, but it is still necessary to precisely determine how these diverse traditions and methods had impacted on Koyré's own original approach.

Gabriele Vissio



Detail from the cover of Kreps (ed.), Gramsci and Foucault: A Reassessment.