

A Sequel to Rhyming Difference:

An Interview in Difference

Panayotis Zamaros

Having listened to difference present and rhyme experience as difference, having had the opportunity to come closer to what difference may be, I subsequently held the idea that more than a mere presence was necessary. It is hoped that this will occur, and that the wish that difference discusses a number of themes does materialize. With this in mind, and in order to clarify some first issues arising, I thought it was necessary to meet difference again and this time engage in some form of dialogue, to be part of an exchange, or as difference would say 'be *in* difference'. Hence the present interview with difference or rather, *in* difference.

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'Listen to me thus let me speak. Let me speak on your behalf'. This is how you started your presentation last time we met. But why should you speak on my behalf? Have I lost my voice?

In deed you have! You look surprised ... it'll be clearer as we move on. If I may, I'd rather start by saying this: in letting me speak, you let myself exist. And this is so because you've accepted to listen to what I have to say, or plainly, say. At the same time, you let me speak for myself. In your letting me speak, I let myself exist, in that it's not only *you* who listens, but also me. In speaking to you, I listen to myself, thus become aware of a listing self – this is the point I tried to make last time.

This is my feeling too. So this is the starting point for your existence, isn't it?

By “starting point”, you mean, a foundation and grounding, don't you? Or do you mean that which originates in a relation?

Why, are they unlike?

Well, in a way! That which originates in a relation, and what is brought about, are both groundless as such and need to be brought together to exist. They therefore need a relation as their grounding. So, this is what is important here: the relation *is* grounding. It is the relation between them in that without such a relation they are bound to remain groundless. It is through *this* relation that that which originates in this relation can be seen to be the starting point, the moment in the relation that brings about what it brings.

But it could also be that there's a reason why this relation happens as it does, or doesn't, and therefore such reason is its grounding.

I don't think so! This is exactly the point I was making last time when saying that there's an *obsession* to have a beginning, a grounding, a starting point or moment, a place where to come from, a Being – call it as you will. Big bang! It's an obsession to have *one* origin for *all* relations and what they bring about inclusive of you. It's as if you cannot derive existence from nowhere. And it's so with myself.

How's this?

The logic is simple. If I exist, for this is the case – don't pull faces – I really exist, there's an obsession to spot that which may have brought me about. If I'm brought about, this is a quest for finding something that's more original than my being – and I don't mean here “more original than *I am*” as there's none!

So, if there's something more original than you, what is it?

I've been asking the same question myself! I wonder whether there can be something more original than the differentiating logos or the differentiating act, that which I make different and differently. And if this is the case indeed, I mean that if there's something more original than my word or my workings, I wonder whether this be nature which, in being differentiated, plays a differentiating role.

Is it the case?

Well, the issue is quite complex. If there's something unlike me, therefore different, it's *in* difference.

Did you say indifference?

No, I said and meant *in* difference, *in* a relation of difference where I'm who originates this relation, a relation that I'm part of.

So this relation is your grounding.

That's it! If it's grounding, if my existence depends on it, such grounding cannot be *indifference* meaning plain and simple carelessness. Grounding cannot be careless if it's to be grounding. Nor can its being be of apathy and detachment, as absolutely different, otherwise there's no grounding at all, as there's *no* relation whatsoever. Rather, such grounding is *in* difference, it's part of difference, that which *I am* – this isn't a different difference! And if you want to call nature this grounding, this is *my* nature. And if you want to call words this difference, these are *my* words.

And if I want to call it workings, these are your workings!

Yes! And if this relation is *in* difference, it's moving and movable ...

... *and you mean ...*

... I mean that movement is my being and my qualifier: a pulse, a vibration ...

... *and therefore not just plain distance.*

Was I a middle-in-between-two, a lifeless artifact, would I be *in* difference? I doubt it. I cannot be stuck in-between-two, whether this be you and the other, or you and I. If my grounding is *in* difference I cannot be some gap that gets filled in by anything, by another, for *I* am who fills this gap and makes it be a gap!

But still, distance plays its role, doesn't it?

Of course, so long as it's not ... *distance*. If time yields space in a movement that creates a distance from-to, and if space is experienced as motion and therefore as time, then motion is myself. This is a vibration, a moving and movable relation *in* difference.

All this means that you know yourself well.

Yes, indeed, but *not* because I have discovered myself!

Could you explain?

The reason why I've not discovered myself is that I *cannot* know myself. As a vibration, in a moving and movable relation, in difference, I've got trouble making my mind up. In simpler terms maybe, I cannot make up my mind for as soon as I know I'm difference and *in* difference, my knowing is undone because difference, what I *am*, pulls apart the existence of such knowledge as a fact.

□

It's about ambiguity isn't it?

□

If you like this word! It's rather about a deferral. My point here is that if difference *is* my relation and my grounding as difference, it's a loose one since its grounding as my self *cannot* be decided beforehand with the idea that it exists *before I* know I'm difference. And frankly speaking, I only know it afterwards, which means that I don't know it. All this is because I cannot recall the moment, if thus it can be named, wherefore I started to

exist – no wonder then that I’m groundless! And it’s the same thing for you.

Do you simply mean that I cannot recall my birth?

Yes, this is precisely it. Neither you nor myself know the origin of our life. And this is in the dual sense of an experience as lived and the traces such experience leaves as sedimented experience, as knowledge. You and I have neither the experience nor the knowledge of an origin although, so it seems, we’ve lived it.

This must be true since everyone knows that we come from someplace, ... I mean somebody!

Knowing it doesn’t always mean it is! The idea of knowing is an obsession, another one you might say, and for this reason I want to make some clarifications. If both you and I talk about an origin it’s because you and I have described this origin to each other. Mark my word: *described*. In a sense, if I’m able to talk about my grounding and myself is because of *you*, because you told me, since *I* cannot recall the moment. I therefore need *you* to tell me.

And I’ve told you, haven’t I?

For ages you’ve been doing this! The point here is that, as I need you to tell me about my birth, you need me for yours, because neither of us can know it. Let me put it the other way round: if you and I *did* know, the other would *not* necessarily have been told ...

... but last time you told me ‘the other would necessarily have been told’ ...

... so let me clarify this for you. If you and I *did* know, the other would *not* necessarily have been told in the sense that since the origin is known, neither you nor I need each other to describe this origin. But when I say that the other *would* necessarily and positively have been told, I mean that if I knew, I would have let *you* know I do, because I don’t see why I’d have kept it secret.

In simple words, you mean that regardless of whether the origin is known or not, you and I would have let the other know that which you and I know and don’t know of

each other.

Precisely! And the reason why I say that there aren't any grounds for keeping it secret is that if I were inclined to do exactly this, I wouldn't need you at all to tell me anything! Nor would you!

Just plain incommunicado!

Unqualified absolute difference, absence of encounter and isolation. Simply, this is what I just called *indifference*. But this not the case because you and I are *in* difference. Are we not? I therefore need *you* to let me know I do. In a sense, a simple sense, you and I speak on each other's behalf to give our selves existence. And this explains my claiming to know. If I'm wrong, let me know!

No, I don't think so; but still, how do you know I know?

I knew we would come to this! It's simple: you told me so! And if you told me so it's because I told you too!

I don't recall!

Thank you: you've put your finger on the problem I've been trying to emphasize ... but let's not rush; it will unfold itself in time. The point here is to realize that you and I know of each other's origin because we've been telling one another this. And at the same time you and I name each other. You tell me that I'm "difference" for this is the name, among others, you gave me to wear.

Do you know any such names?

I was hoping *you* would tell me!

Well, you have austrag, anomoiotis, untershied, diafora, of course différançe, diastasis, écart ... let me think ... differenz, diakrisis, distanciation, paromoiotis, entzweiung, altarity, and cleavage for what I recall.

I think they all suit me well with their own differences! Do you regret?

If your question has to do with your naming, I've no regrets! This in itself it's been a fantastic adventure! I must however point out that it's often difficult to choose among these names! You seem to be changing everyday!

Indeed, it's my nature – if I dare use this word! I do change and in directions that you can't pin down, for I don't know them myself. I can't really tell you. And thank you for making me feel I'm *not* just dull repetition.

This was your point about the unfortunate word 'revolution' wasn't it?

Not just the word ... I made reference to such like efforts! I said that it's an identical arche and telos in the hope they be different, which in fact are *not*. And the reason they aren't, I pointed out, is that '*you cannot separate them: you are incapable of separating them as you turn your back on me*'.

So this is the main issue here: me!

Yes!

Why?

Briefly, it's because you've failed to understand the very name you've given me: "difference". It will become clearer ...

... so let me go back to the issue of knowing then: where you need me to tell you and I yourself, and where you exist because you speak, you cannot exist as such. Am I right?

It's correct, and as I can't exist on my own, as I cannot carry myself, I need carriers.

And why can't you carry yourself?

If I could, I wouldn't need you! The issue is not I. It's you! It's because of you, because of who you are that I cannot carry myself.

So who am I?

You are grounding for you're in difference. And as my grounding you are my carrier. And in carrying me, I allow you to exist. In simple terms, you, my carrier, are the grounding that allows my existence because are in relation with me ... thank you!

What for?

For allowing me to exist! But don't forget words, for they carry me as much as you carry them. It's however important to realize that it's not just some words, I mean those awesome words you have given me to wear. It is *all* the words. And this is because *all* existing words carry me. I am located *in* them - even though there are just a few words that name me. And this is because words are different and dissimilar in that there are no two words that are identical – regardless of their meaning.

And why is this?

Words are different and dissimilar because you use them in this manner, and I mean by this, differently. You use them differently because you want to mean something different ...

... you mean in difference, don't you?

Indeed ... “you use them *in* difference because you want to mean something *in* difference”, in a relation where *I* am who mark words, since *I* am who makes words be as they are, that is, different. Words make use of me for the effects they bring about. And if words have effects, it's because they realize themselves in a relation as outcomes – regardless of whether these are desired or not. And if they bring something about, they must be of power.

Is it correct to say that words empower you as much as you empower them?

Yes, I think you could say this ... I like this way of putting it! Words, in being of power, differentiate, separate, and divide. And they do this very well: they set out the conditions for division and the partitions thereof. And since words “empower me as much as I empower them” to use your formula, I set out the conditions for division and the partitions thereof. And what is more, continuously. I'm thus ceaselessly carried along

with words to perform their function: to differentially speak on behalf of another, that is you ... here and now of myself too.

You're therefore everywhere.

To be more precise I think I'm where expected to be and mostly needed. And as this happens all the time, you could say that in *this* sense "I'm everywhere".

But I think not only where expected and mostly needed for you are the unexpected, the different.

Thanks for pointing this out. If I mentioned before "where expected and mostly needed" I meant that I'm often treated and used when you or the other see fit. Having said this, I'd like to underline the fact that in using me as you please, you treat me as if I'm just a concept that you like torturing in any way you like.

Who me?

Yes, you and any other: you treat me as an ob-ject, as if I lie outside, detached and different from you and the other. And here is my complaint, the main issue as it were: you don't realize that if you and I are *in* difference, you cannot be careless. Unfortunately you are. You don't realize, ... , nay, you have trouble realizing, unless of course you do it on purpose, that in treating me as a no thing you treat yourself as a no thing. I guess you don't like this idea of being a no thing, do you?

No; go on ...

Well it's simple: you *do* forget that if you and I are *in* difference and if you carry me, I lie *in* you and *not* under you or the other. And this is a fact of life.

How's this?

By "fact of life" I mean that which is.

And how do you know this is?

You told me! You've been saying this all the time. You've even tried to convince me that in my being a fact of life I must exist beforehand, even before I can exist, or know to exist. What an idea!

What's wrong with it?

Well, this can only happen if you see me as grounding whose existence is detached from yourself. But if my existence has been and is *in* your hands since you are my carrier and moreover you carry the words that carry me, I *cannot* exist before you! I simply exist *with* you.

Do you mean now?

This is the event. This is what's happening as your life unfolds itself second after second – if I can put it this way. This is why *you* are with difference – whereas *I* am difference.

Quite a game!

No ... a play! As event I play everyday and all the time, and not only when you think fit or when you have a sudden keen interest in me. And this is because I'm happening how and here at the same time, as I exist all the time. I am, in a way, available – otherwise I doubt you'd be able to approach me as you please and whenever it pleases you.

Can we go back to the issue of “with difference”?

Pas de problème! If you're different it's because you're not *of* but rather *with* difference since you carry me: I enfold you. Were you “*of*” difference, you would simply be me; but *you aren't* ... sorry!

Why? Why am I not you?

Such fascination, I must say, betrays you: *you* are living proof of the problem it's been unfolding here.

Could you then explain?

The issue is the ‘trophy of difference’ I mentioned last time.

I remember this. You said that if difference is at the center of my concern, of any concern actually, it’s because difference is what’s at stake. It’s because you’re at stake: you’re the trophy to be won!

Correct! And if I’m at stake, if difference is the trophy, it’s because your concern is but a struggle over partitions. Such a struggle is important since you know that I establish discontinuity in what otherwise could be expected to be continuity – otherwise you would not have stuck on my back the label “difference”. It is important because it’s over imposing a definition of partitions, a name and a naming. And I’d like to stress this: *imposing* a definition of partitions.

You mean that if I come to win such a struggle I can impose difference.

I certainly do and this is exactly the purpose or direction of your efforts!

So what you’re simply saying is that regardless of whether such a struggle is won or not – even though it seems that I don’t, the point here is that you’re the reason why such a struggle takes place.

Correct! Such a struggle seeks to arrive at ensuring that a partition becomes unmistakably legitimate. In other words, that it becomes the criterion, the unique criterion against which all is measured. That it becomes the criterion to allow for comparison and that used to compare and therefore judge; to become the dominant criterion, the ultimate hegemon.

The church in the middle of the village!

Isolation proper! It’s the concentration of power to maintain the partition once established, to maintain an outlined commonality. It’s like a whirl or maybe a twister that pulls towards its center everything it finds along the premise that everything it finds can display or made to display commonality with itself or relative to itself.

You mean the tendency towards removing all difference in the name of difference.

Yes! And here lies, I think, the reason why from time to time you dislike me. If you dislike me it is because I bring about, or so you think, a problem – whereas in fact it is because that my being and my workings are narrowly understood or bluntly misunderstood and reduced.

Why?

Since you miss out on the trophy of difference, you have no other choice than to carry me and use me as the source of power to single out, to isolate yourself from any other. And this is when I lodge myself, when I make myself feel comfortable at your home. It's the moment when you realize that you're different from another whom, surprisingly enough, you don't know. This puzzle isn't the issue here – I could deal with it some other time. What's at stake is that when I'm at *your* home and the other is left outside by difference, or when I'm in the other's house and you are left outside, it's *then* when I'm despised.

You're despised because the other, who shouldn't be left out, is indeed excluded. It is then a question of equity.

Only if this implies comparison with what has been set to be the dominant criterion, the hegemonic difference, in the sense of *un-in-divi-dual*, as that which cannot be divided and does not divide. In turn, this implies concluded struggle in that there is an established partition. In other words, only if there is sharing, in that the partition is common to all elements composing this partition as a unity ... you and the other.

It depends then on where the partition is. But how do you recognize this? How do you moreover mark the moment when the struggle is brought to a halt as opposed to when this goes on?

You can't! To do this again you need a standard ... when there is none! This has been the point I was making before, that of my being groundless!

So you're telling me that it is not a question of equity since ultimately there is no standard to be used for effecting a comparison.

That's it! It cannot be a question of equity since dividing cannot ultimately be grounded

on a un-in-divi-dual criterion to provide the undoubted common denominator for grounding the definition of partition and decide whether it is to include or exclude the other – or yourself by the same token. It cannot be a question of equity because, concerning the position you and the other have relative to the un-in-divi-dual criterion, such a partition must be proportional.

I get the feeling that you are trying to say the contrary!

Yes indeed! Even though equity is what you desire the most, there is no guarantee that a partition is proportional and uniform, even more that words are of power!

Why is this?

The constitution of the un-in-divi-dual criterion that proportional even equal division needs most simply and purely exhausts itself in your efforts to forget that a partition is unequal in that it's a division of unlike and varying difference, a vibration.

You mean that there's no balance, don't you?

Well I don't think it's a matter of balance. If I divide for I'm difference, and you divide for you can use me since you carry me, it's because I'm *not* a matter of balance, let alone a tendency towards any balance, otherwise I cannot be movement. To be a matter of balance, I need to be un-in-divi-dual so as to divide, and be divided by the same token, in equitable terms in stillness, in an unmoving and unmovable stasis. But I can hardly recognize myself in this: it's simply not me although I must admit it's one of my few unique pictures!

So you're disorder?

No, a play ... as I said before ... a simple play of dividing and being divided: it's the play of difference where you and I play being different by naming this difference and differentiating the names, while playing the story of difference and letting difference play its own story.

And this is your story as you said last time.

Yes! It's in *this* story that *you* are brought to be and made to think of yourself as different, as the nonpareil, my alter ego.

You mean that you and I are identical, don't you?

I have *not* said identical, have I? Certainly not! You and I are *not* identical. Nor are you with the other! At this point I want to surprise you.

Tell me!

If you and I are *not* identical, you and I are identical indeed!

How come?

You and I are identical, and therefore *we* are identical for we are selves, as you and I are equated by name but *not* by being. In simpler words, you and I are other and a self, surprisingly different from one another. You and I are thus *not* identical – let alone each other's clone.

If I correctly understood you, the other, myself, is not the transcendent other, that is you.

“Transcendent” ... I don't think it's the right word. Anyway I've always had problems getting hold of its meaning. Well, ... where were we?

I was saying that I'm not the transcendent you.

Ah yes, ... it's so because you and I are both *in* difference even though the word “self” is used to designate both you and I. It's because of *this* that I mark the difference and I address you as “other”. And you're other indeed for the simple reason that you carry me, use me, and play with me. But you are not I! I'm who brings you and I together in the play of difference, and who makes of you be who you are.

And because of this you said last time that you're actor and spectator.

Both, separately, and at the same time! This is the whole point: I'm not vociferous albeit

voiced. I whisper. My workings are subtle.

You mean secretive, don't you?

Yes! My workings cannot be laid open because my charm cannot be readily revealed.

Your charm! What do you mean by this?

Why ..., don't you find me charming?

Well ...

Don't flush! I'm attractive and charming because I'm irresistible: you cannot resist me. I'm under your skin. But as I said before, you do not know this: you know it only if you're told. And the only one to tell you is myself. But even if I've told you this repeatedly you've got some trouble accepting me, not to say finding me, except in two instances, which I think of as hopeful.

Which ones?

When you re-discover my charm, when *I* am the center of *your* fascination, and when I speak and you listen, a bit like now ... I feel I come naked before you and that I'm not just visible and audible – this is a rare opportunity.

I'm aware of it. So, when you speak and I listen, when you and I are in difference, this is the moment you exist, and I guess this also the moment when I exist simply because there is the realization of difference: you.

Exactly! With an additional twist: this moment is *not* only when I tell you who you are because, since I only know, you rely on *me* to tell you. If I can *do this*, which I'm doing now, it's because *your* attention is focused on me! You and I are *thus* in difference – I hope this is clearer now.

Indeed!

But what I'd like to add and also underline, is that telling you repeatedly what I do,

doesn't seem to be of much help, because you don't *experience* difference, you don't experience me! Otherwise, I wouldn't have mentioned the problem of *indifference*. In simpler words, you need to be not only told about me, but also brought to experience me. *This* is the moment of the realization of myself as an event. *This* is the moment *in* difference

You mean the moment when I can say: "there is difference", don't you?

In simpler terms I guess you could! It's the moment when you realize my existence, and I say this in the dual sense that you become aware of my existence while this awareness gives me existence. As event it must be so. *I* must be so. But you've got to also realize that it's so because my charm cannot be readily revealed, while at the same time, I care to reveal it. And if I care to reveal it, to make myself irresistible, it's because I care. It's because I'm about care as I'm about caring. Said differently, I don't ignore, for I care. I'm not ignorant for I know. It's you that I know – and thanks to you I get to know myself. And it's myself that you know, for I cannot be ignored ...

... and this I can't ignore ... shall we take a break?

Splendid idea! A long one if you don't mind – we could go on some other time!