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Philosophical conversations with the Other as a way of questioning one's own perimeter

I wish to investigate how philosophical practice as a professional activity intermingles with my personal striving for a philosophical life. I will base my reflections on two theoretical pillars: The first is Ran Lahav's conception of philo-sophical conversations as aimed at modifying our perimeters- how philo-sophia in its essence is about "going beyond our platonic cave, indeed beyond all caves towards a larger reality". The second pillar is the Italian-French tradition of post-structural aesthetics, particularly the philosophy of Mario Perniola. Analysing and deconstructing our western concept of rationality are useful when I am confronted with the task of investigating my perimeters. Perniola's concept of "transit" will be discussed in a dynamic process toward a new understanding of our cognitive categories and the role of our senses. Wonder and openness to the phenomena of life will be stressed as necessary conditions for questioning one's perimeters.

This will be my theoretical background. I will then use some examples from my own experience as a philosophical practitioner working in jail to show how these conversations have made me go into an investigation of my personal life in a philosophical point of view. How do my encounters with serious criminals affect my perimeters, my usual way of thinking, my concepts, my rationality, my understanding of feelings, in short my predetermined ways of thinking?

Important questions will be: How do we understand criminals? Is it functional to try to understand their crimes within the perspective of their perimeters? When do we make real progress in the philosophical practice conversations? When does progress end?

I will show how this work has influenced my conceptions of life and death and of how to live a good philosophical life.