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“HOW TO MOVE FORWARD: POINTS OF CONVERGENCE BETWEEN ANALYTIC AND CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY”

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Abstract:

My aim is both theoretical and practical. By characterizing what I call points of convergence between analytic and continental philosophy, I offer suggestions about how to bridge the gap. I do not attempt to retrace the moment at which the divide occurred nor offer historical explanations of the rift, but instead discuss points of convergence, with reference to Kant. I summarize this discussion in two tables. I give theoretical and practical suggestions for moving forward. I conclude with some comments on the need for dialogue and reflect on the historicity of philosophy. I compare the current situation to that of ancient Greece and Rome, when there was also a plurality of schools. By comparison, philosophers today specialize more, making it difficult to converse with philosophers from other schools or even to other sub-disciplines within their own school. Moreover, there is an enormous quantity of philosophical texts to read, and contemporary philosophers are not very tied to the idea of philosophy as the love of wisdom. The paper's topic opens up the deeper queries, “How does philosophy differ from scientific and other disciplines” and “What is philosophy?” It includes a bibliography of the recent, growing literature on the divide.

Key words: analytic philosophy, continental philosophy, points of convergence, metaphilosophy.

1. Introduction

First, a confession: this piece is first and foremost a proposal. These ideas grew out of personal experiences while studying analytic and continental philosophy in the Americas (Brazil, USA) and Europe (France, Germany, Austria, Italy). In other words, I have something at stake.

My aim is programmatic and (if the term be allowed) pragmatic: by characterizing what I call *points of convergence* between the two traditions, and therefore building on recent analyses of the themes, problems, and methods of the two camps

(Critchley 1997; Critchley 2001; Levy 2003; Rorty 2003; Cutrofello 2005; Glendinning 2006), I wish to offer a few suggestions about how to move forward and achieve some rapport between them.

A word about what I will *not* do: I will not try to retrace the moment in which problems arose (though I agree with the general verdict: some time shortly after Kant), nor offer historical explanations for why the split occurred (for that, see Reisch 2005; Friedman 2000). I certainly won't be analyzing the philosophical arguments of border crossers such as John Searle, Hubert Dreyfus, Robert Brandom, John McDowell, or, more recently, Shaun Gallagher, Dan Zahavi, or Alain Badiou. But I will point out points of convergence.

This journal's issue is a timely one. There is growing interest in understanding and overcoming the analytic/continental divide (or, the continental/analytic divide). There has been interest for some time now (Cooper 1994; D'agostini 1997; Mulligan 1998), and there continues to be sustained interest in this topic (Braver 2007; Dolcini 2007; Christensen 2009; Chase and Reynolds 2010; Chase *et al* 2010). Still, problems persist. Scholars and other people interested in this “two camps problem” risk being the only ones who care about it at all, the only philosophers engaging in dialogue. The two schools risk remaining like a couple after a nasty tiff: silent, yet still somehow bothered by, and curious about, what the other person is up to. Little good is done if the go-betweens –you, me, readers of this issue – are the only philosophers doing the talking.

So I hope to encourage constructive dialogue. If, as the latest pop psychology magazine will tell you, talking through a problem is the first step to overcoming it, more publications like this issue will help solve the impasse. And then we can move forward. In accordance with the theme “The Dialogue

between Continental and Analytic Philosophy,” I would therefore like to characterize points of convergence between the analytic and the continental philosophical traditions, make some comments about how to move forward, and then make some concluding remarks about our situation in comparison with ancient philosophy as well as about the historical nature of philosophy in general.

2. Points of Convergence

As descriptions of two philosophical traditions that developed in the twentieth century, the terms “analytic” and “continental” are, at the very least, misleading. Whereas “analytic” literally refers to a method and style of argumentation (i.e., analysis), “continental” derives from a specific geographical region. To the unschooled, “continental philosophy” sounds like a bad breakfast conversation, like talking about the meaning of life over coffee and a croissant. Moreover, we have the noted problem that analytic philosophers such as Ludwig Wittgenstein and Gottlieb Frege grew up and were educated in the European continent.

Despite the confusion the terms can cause to undergraduates, friends, and family members, they are in fact widely used by philosophical institutions today in the United States: the American Philosophical Association (the USA’s main national society, to which even continentals usually pay dues) and the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (where analytics usually don’t return the favor). The labels are also used in European philosophical circles (e.g., Italian Society of Analytic Philosophy, European Society for Analytic Philosophy). For better or for worse, it appears that the appellations will continue to be applied for some time into the future. They are here to stay.

So, a clarification is in order: “continental philosophy” here refers to the philosophical views that developed in twentieth-century Europe and continue to be developed and defended today. Collectively, these views make up a tradition that includes the philosophical movements or schools known as phenomenology, existentialism (perhaps in decline), philosophical hermeneutics, structuralism (again, more passé), feminist philosophy, critical race theory, post-structuralism and deconstruction, and the Frankfurt school and critical theory. “Analytic philosophy” here designates the philosophical tradition

that originated in the philosophy of Bertrand Russell, G.E. Moore, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. It has its historical foundations in logical positivism, the Vienna Circle, and ordinary language philosophy (and the critics thereof, who were still playing the analytic game). Analytic philosophy today still persists. It consists in the analysis of concepts and propositions using the tools of logic, and it often uses thought experiments and other armchair methods, notwithstanding the recent rise of experimental philosophy. It maintains, or at least tries to maintain, high standards of argumentation and clarity, focuses on details, and often assumes or directly claims that philosophy is either continuous with science or somehow its assistant (cf. Leiter 2010).¹

Although neither camp refers to a discrete set of accepted doctrines or propositions, each school does have certain tendencies that I will try to characterize. Of course, there is not always internal agreement about methods or problems within schools: there is a fair amount of in-fighting. Moreover, it goes without saying that I am painting with broad strokes here; naturally there will be some exceptions to the following generalizations.

Continental philosophers tend to focus on texts, and they do so by paying careful attention to historical context and intellectual history. By contrast, analytics are inclined to focus on philosophical problems rather than texts. Likewise, continental philosophy emphasizes proper names and historical figures such as Nietzsche, Hegel, and Husserl, whereas analytic philosophy is more concerned with *problems* than with the entire philosophy of the author in question – consider James Van Cleve’s (1999) aptly titled *Problems from Kant* (cf. Jonathan Bennett’s analytic, verificationist study, *Kant’s Dialectic*, 1990). Continentals thus tend to put more emphasis on who or what makes it into their version of the canon of philosophy than do analytics. Unsurprisingly, which texts (or problems) are taken to be canonical differ in the two schools. However, there is some convergence here: Kant, Hegel, Brentano, et al., are common to both canons.

What of metaphysics? After the late Heidegger, continental philosophy tends to reject metaphysics altogether; its ontological orientation is therefore anti-metaphysical. Analytic philosophy tends to

¹ For another plausible, if biased, characterization of the two schools, see Brian Leiter, “‘Analytic’ and ‘Continental’ Philosophy” (Leiter 2010).

endorse a revised, linguistic-logical, post-empiricism. The latter still counts as a kind of metaphysics: analytics are thus still playing the metaphysical game, whereas continentals have given it up. Both camps, however, are anti-foundational. (In the case of continental philosophy, anti-foundationalism simply follows from being anti-metaphysical).

When it comes to epistemology, both schools are anti-psychologistic. Psychologism is here understood as the attempt to explain the normative discipline of logic and math in terms of descriptive psychology. Thus, they oppose the attempt (e.g., J.S. Mill's logical psychologism) to establish logical and mathematical principles upon psychological mental operations and psychological facts or laws. However, this characterization requires some qualification in the case of analytic philosophy: whereas Frege and Fregeans are clearly anti-psychologistic, with the emergence of experimental philosophy and neurophilosophy, allied with the cognitive sciences, there has been a recent resurgence of using empirical methods in philosophy and explaining normative principles (even morality) in terms of psychological facts. While continental philosophy is largely anti-realist (Braver 2007), analytic philosophy seems split between realists such as Hilary Putnam (and among neurophilosophers who are allied with the brain sciences) and anti-realists such as Michael Dummett (as well as philosophers like McDowell and Brandom, alike inspired by both Kant and Hegel).

Continental methods are manifold: the phenomenological method, the hermeneutic method, deconstruction of texts, even psychoanalysis. The methods associated with critical theory, feminist philosophy, critical race theory, and post-colonialism are also used. Each of these methods is of course closely allied with their corresponding sub-disciplines within continental philosophy. The methods (though perhaps not the positions) of analytic philosophy, by contrast, are more unified: analysis of concepts and intuitions through armchair thought experiments, sometimes with the formalization of arguments. Some analytic philosophy employs the methods of the social sciences, as in the case of experimental philosophy. (Indeed, critics of the latter sometimes charge that for that very reason, the new movement counts as psychology, not philosophy.)

When it comes to metaphilosophy, or a conception of the nature and aims of philosophy, the two schools reflect two sides of philosophy that can be traced back to Socrates: the critical, practical, ethical element (evident in Plato's Socratic dialogues) and the natural, scientific aspect (found in Aristophanes' Socrates, who gives a physicalist, mechanistic explanation of thunder in the *The Clouds*). Continental philosophy inherited the first strain: it tends to criticize worldviews, encourage social reform, and ask, "What, then, ought to be done?" It has a practical (ethical, political) orientation, even in areas that are not strictly ethics or political philosophy (e.g., the analysis of technology). Analytic philosophy, by contrast, for the most part inherited the second strain. It aims to clarify concepts and usually has a scientific orientation, attempting to contribute to our knowledge about the natural world and the human mind and so on. It strives to produce more and more accurate (or defensible) theories, and to assist the physical and social sciences. Although some sub-disciplines of analytic philosophy are devoted to ethics and political philosophy, and thus certainly have an ethical and practical dimension, even when these sub-disciplines (e.g., analytic feminist philosophy, ethics, political philosophy) turn to these issues, they employ the aforementioned analytic methods. They strive for clearly presented arguments, sometimes formalized.

When it comes to subject matter and what counts as worthy of philosophical investigation, continental philosophy has a large degree of variety. There is less agreement about problems, topics, and themes, as evidenced by the diversity of viable schools in contemporary continental philosophy. By contrast, analytic philosophy has relatively more agreement about problems, themes, and research programs, although even here total conformity is absent. In fact, both schools have a high degree of compartmentalization and specialization. For instance, it would be rare to find an analytic ethicist who closely follows the latest debates in contemporary analytic philosophy of logic. For members of both schools, but especially the analytics, it is a challenge to keep up with the enormous output of theories in the relevant academic journals.

Changing gears for a moment, there are also several features of the two schools that are not strictly philosophical yet still are interesting. Consider the conceptions of what is considered to be an acceptable form of writing, the different views of

how to present a philosophical argument. Continental philosophy has looser standards of what form philosophical writing must take: it is more open to literary texts, to narrative fiction, theatre, even to poetry, in addition to the standard academic essay. It does not consider clarity to consist mainly in short, academic articles or in the logical inferences contained therein, as analytic philosophy tends to do. The latter has, or strives to have, strict standards of written form, clarity, and argument. Although it surely welcomes formal logical notation to present arguments, it is possible for an article to omit it and still be acceptable or even influential. Continentals seem to esteem monographs more than do analytics, who seem to prefer the short academic article. Although analytics naturally write and publish monographs, the business of published philosophy is for the most part carried out via journal articles, reviews, discussions, and similar publications.

There is a primary language of research in analytic philosophy: English. Strikingly, this usually is true even in non-English speaking countries: Italian, Norwegian, Brazilian, and German analytics alike tend to write in English, especially when writing for international audiences. (This seems to be mostly because analytic philosophy was largely developed in anglophone countries.) In continental philosophy, by contrast, there is a plurality of languages: Italian, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, and so on, in addition to English. Continental philosophy often cites and analyzes the original language of a philosophical figure. This fact is not surprising, given the sensitivity to a text's literary qualities. In analytic philosophy, such attention to original language is less widespread or expected.

As mentioned, there are common philosophical origins between the camps (Aristotle, Plato, Descartes, Kant, Brentano), but there are also shared historical origins, insofar as both schools are rooted in European history.

As the latest Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy program will reveal, there are many viable schools in continental philosophy: Frankfurt school and critical theory, deconstruction and post-structuralism, philosophical hermeneutics, phenomenology, feminist philosophy, and post-colonialism, just to name a few. However, some previously thriving schools are now mostly relics for intellectual history (Existentialism, Marxism, Saussurean structuralism). Analytic philosophy also has its share of passé schools, e.g., logical positivism and

ordinary language philosophy. Nonetheless, analytic pragmatism, postanalytic philosophy, neurophilosophy, post-empiricism, and experimental philosophy are flourishing schools in analytic philosophy.

These aforementioned features are summarized below in Table 1 and Table 2, and points of convergence are presented in **bold** font.

I would like to focus on the points of convergence. It is evident that, despite many differences in key philosophical figures and history, there is some overlap in figures (Descartes, Kant, Brentano) as well as a shared history – European history. Consider also the reception of historical figures who are important to both camps, e.g., Kant. John McDowell's *Mind and World* (1994) attempted to redirect analytic philosophy back to Kantian themes of receptivity and sensibility. Further developments in the analytic reception of Kant include, as Günter Zöller (1993) points out, the shift from interest in a general discussion of transcendental arguments to the analysis and evaluation of particular proofs in Kant, and the emergence of a body of literature, from the 1990s onward, on Kant's philosophy of mind. The latter discussion centered around the idea of a 'transcendental psychology,' to use a term popularized by Patricia Kitcher (1990)². The continental reception of Kant, by contrast, seems to have been more sustained and to have had less ebb and flow, so I will not pursue it here.

So, what is a point of convergence? Consider Husserl's understanding of the a priori in relation to Kant's conception. To clarify his argument, Husserl uses Kant's position as a foil. Husserl's early writings on the philosophy of arithmetic contain his criticisms of Kant's concept of a priori synthesis. Moreover, even the later Husserl's genetic phenomenology as presented in *Experience and Judgment* (1975) criticizes Kant's a priori/a posteriori distinction and other Kantian dualities. By criticizing a philosopher who deals with many of the same problems, Husserl characterizes his own position more clearly. The concept of a point of convergence contains the idea of two entities aiming toward a single limit. In short: one philosopher deals with the same philosophical problem or theme as a predecessor, making explicit reference to the latter yet (possibly) arriving at a different conclusion. Such an intellectual junction is a point of convergence with

² See also Patricia Kitcher's forthcoming book, *Kant's Thinker* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Table 1. Philosophical Features of the Two Schools.

Issue	Question	Continental Philosophy	Analytic Philosophy
View of the history of philosophy	On what is the focus of the history of philosophy?	Focus is on texts in their historical context	Focus is on philosophical “problems”; less focus on texts in historical context
	Is there emphasis on proper names and historical figures (e.g., Hegel)?	Heavy emphasis	Less emphasis
	Is there an accepted historical tradition? A canon of philosophical texts?	Has an accepted historical tradition and canon (Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Brentano, et al.)	Has an overlapping, yet different, historical tradition and canon (Hume, Kant, Hegel, Brentano, Frege, Russell, Moore, et al.)
Ontological orientation	What are its ontological assumptions?	Anti-metaphysical (from late Heidegger on)	An updated, linguistic-logical, post-empiricism;
Epistemological orientation	What are its epistemological assumptions?	Anti-foundational It tends to be anti-psychologistic .	Anti-foundational i-psychologistic (Fregeans), mental philosophy and
			Split between anti-realists and realists.
Methodological orientation	What are its methods?	Tends to be anti-realist. Phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory, deconstruction, feminist philosophy, post-colonialism, psychoanalysis	Analysis of concepts and intuitions in thought experiments; use of formal logic; allied with cognitive sciences; use of social science methods in philosophical “experimentation”
Metaphilosophy	What is the task of philosophy?	To criticize worldviews; social reform; has ethical, political, practical focus	To clarify concepts; to assist the hard and soft sciences; has a scientific orientation; also contains practical philosophy (but even such sub-disciplines employ analytic methods)
Subject matter			
To what extent is there an accepted set of philosophical problems?			
Much variety concerning philosophical problems ³		More agreement about philosophical problems	

³ See below the large number of viable schools that are living options, under the row “Schools.”

Table 2. Not-Strictly-Philosophical, but Still Interesting Features of the Two Schools.

Issue	Question	Continental Philosophy	Analytic Philosophy
Writing style	What is the standard writing form?	More acceptance of literary forms; more emphasis on monographs than in analytic philosophy	Esteems the short, academic essay or article
	How should arguments be presented?	Arguments usually presented in prose, but can be presented in narrative or poetry; logical notation nearly always repudiated	Has strict standards of written form, clarity, argument; endorses formal logic in arguments, though not always used
Research language	Is there a primary language of research?	Plurality of languages: Italian, Spanish, French, German, English, etc.	Primarily English, even in non-English speaking countries
Language of citations	To what extent is the original language of another philosopher cited and analyzed?	Often	Less common
History	Are there common philosophical origins?	Yes: Aristotle, Plato, Descartes, Kant, Brentano, et al.	
	What are the common historical origins?		
Schools	What schools of philosophy are there within the tradition?	European History Past schools: existentialism Marxism structuralism	Past schools: logical positivism, Vienna Circle, ordinary language philosophy
		Viable schools: Frankfurt school and critical theory, deconstruction and post-structuralism, hermeneutics, phenomenology, feminist philosophy, post-colonialism, etc.	Viable schools: analytic pragmatism, postanalytic philosophy, neurophilosophy, post-empiricism, experimental philosophy, etc.

regard to a concept (the a priori). Such points are not limited to convergences in subject matter, theme, or problems, but can also be found with respect to methodological, ontological, or epistemological assumptions.

By looking at these meeting places between philosophers from both camps, we can better understand the two camps' themes, problems, tendencies, traditions, and figures. In fact, this is what I take Lee Braver to be doing in his exemplary book on anti-realism (2007). By examining the points of convergence that can be found in Table 1 and Table 2, one can better understand and bridge the gap between the analytic and continental traditions.

So, what are the points of convergence for the present purposes? As mentioned, the ontology of both schools is largely anti-foundationalist, and the epistemology non-psychologistic (at least if one puts aside the recent development of experimental philosophy and the incorporation of cognitive science and neuroscience into neurophilosophy and neurophenomenology).

Note that there can be much disagreement within a particular school. Within the analytic school, for instance, defenders of the analysis of intuitions via armchair thought experiments oppose the rise of experimental philosophy and the application of the methods of the social sciences to philosophical problems. Experimental philosophers, and other empirically inclined philosophers, in turn argue that the armchair method is inadequate by itself and at the very least needs to be supplemented, or even wholly replaced, by experimental methods.

Similar internal disagreement can be found within continental philosophy. Feminist problems and issues often are not aligned with those of phenomenology, and vice versa. Both continental feminist philosophy and phenomenology have different concerns than proponents of post-structuralist deconstruction. Some sub-schools have more affinity with each other than others. The methods, problems, and issues of continental feminist philosophy seem to overlap more with those of the Frankfurt school, critical theory, critical race theory, and post-colonialism. (It is worth noting that *analytic* philosophers, too, address feminist concerns. However, when they do so, they largely use the techniques cherished by analytic philosophy: conceptual analysis, formalization, and so on.)

3. What to do?

There should be more dialogue between the analytic and continental traditions today. Some philosophers are trying – in my opinion correctly – to move beyond using the labels as modes of pigeonholing and are attempting to make actual progress.⁴ How can we continue this progress? Here are some ways to improve the relations, from two perspectives. From a theoretical perspective:

1. Understand, criticize, and appreciate each other's philosophical orientation and methodological, epistemological, and ontological assumptions.
2. Discuss areas of agreement and disagreement.
3. Return to, and emphasize, points of convergence and overlap rather than disagreement.
4. Characterize how points of convergence came about historically, e.g., through the Frege-Husserl debate, the reception of Wittgenstein in anglophone countries, etc.
5. Acquaint oneself with each camp's vocabulary and terminology.
6. Understand what each school sees as its philosophical themes and problems.

From a practical perspective:

1. Read, study, and teach the texts of the other tradition. (No one said it would be easy!)
2. Provide translations of important primary texts and philosophical sources.
3. Create, and contribute to, more philosophical journals that appeal to and examine both traditions. (This issue is a case in hand.)
4. Publish monographs and articles devoted to the history, presuppositions, methods, problems, themes, styles, etc., of the two traditions.
5. Seek agreement on subject matter and problems by organizing conferences, creating online forums, broadening calls for papers, and carrying out collaborative projects.

⁴ For instance, see the well-intended forum (though some entries are quite heated), "The analytic/continental divide," moderated by Derek Allan. Available at <http://philpapers.org>. Cited 20 Dec 2010.

6. Encourage philosophy departments (especially ones with graduate programs that educate philosophers) to offer a more balanced representation of both schools, thus hiring analytic philosophers in continental departments and vice versa.

I limit myself to just one comment on these recommendations. Richard Rorty claimed that it is pointless to bridge the split because it is not a matter of the two camps addressing the same problems with different methods, but rather they are addressing different *problems* (1982: pp. 225-226). While I agree that the two schools are usually addressing different problems, I do not share Rorty's pessimism about the possibility of seeking a rapport. Both sides can, after all, understand each other's problems. I do not claim that it is easy to do so, just that it is possible – so long as there is some effort and enough good will and patience.

4. Conclusion

There should be mutual understanding and cooperation among philosophers from both the analytic and continental traditions. Stressing the points of convergence between these two schools is a step towards this desirable aim. Intellectual cooperation and coordination can not only bring about better theories but can also indirectly lead to tangible benefits by promoting cross-cultural understanding. It can even perhaps show to the wider public that philosophers of various stripes are able to overcome philosophical differences and provide intelligent and even useful arguments.

How does our current predicament compare with other situations in which there were rival schools? I wonder whether the current situation is in fact unique, especially when compared to that of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The schools of the Academicians, Stoics, Cynics, and Epicureans disagreed with each other on the goals and content of philosophy. One might suggest that there was more philosophical dialogue at that time than there is today. However, should one be tempted by this thought, consider the healthy exchanges and insights offered by Searle, Dreyfus, Brandom, McDowell, Gallagher, and Zahavi.

There are still some important differences between the two historical situations. The first has to do with the proliferations of printed and online texts and the specialization of academia today. Insofar as the current rift is unlike the ancient divide, it is because philosophers today are so specialized that it is hard to converse with philosophers from other schools. And there may be just too much to read. Moreover, for better or worse, we are less tied to philosophy as “love of wisdom” than the ancients – even those schools, such as the Epicureans, that put prudence before philosophy were, in demoting the latter, explicitly conscious of the ideal of philosophy as love of wisdom. Perhaps we should return to the original conception of philosophy and allow it to add to and complement our current conception of philosophy.

In addition, perhaps we should be more aware of the historical contexts in which earlier philosophers were writing. Even if, admittedly, several philosophers from both camps give exceptionally nuanced and insightful readings of the history of philosophy, on the whole we can do much better. I think this will improve the quality of our philosophical work. For, if we are overly ‘presentist’ in our interpretations of the past ideas, we might commit grave errors of anachronism; we might think past philosophers are saying or thinking something that in fact they are not. Moreover, like it or not, philosophy necessarily has a historical dimension: the philosopher always inherits underlying assumptions that are grounded in earlier intellectual developments. Many contemporary analytic philosophers would like to neglect the inheritance and history-ladenness of philosophical theory, with the hope that their own philosophical views remain wholly devoid of presuppositions. (Contemporary continental philosophers are generally less susceptible to the faults of subscribing to a-historicism and of believing that their philosophical positions lack presuppositions.) Insofar as philosophy requires the examination of hidden assumptions and presuppositions, this lack of desire to examine one's assumptions seems to be downright unphilosophical, an embarrassing mistake for a philosopher of any stripe to make.

In this short piece, I have inevitably left many questions untouched. Can, and should, the history of philosophy be considered a third approach? Can interesting and innovative philosophy be carried out in an a-historical manner? For reasons listed in the previous paragraph, I myself suspect that this cannot

be done. If it cannot, are analytics and continentals both in some sense doing 'history' of philosophy? If so, this implies that, strictly speaking, the history of philosophy is not some third way, but is simply assumed by doing any good philosophy at all. (For, if one's work turns out to be intellectual *history*, then it naturally cannot be philosophy – it could not say anything philosophically new or interesting.)

In short, our topic opens up the deeper queries, "How does philosophy differ from scientific and other disciplines" and, most fundamentally, "What, after all, is philosophy?"

These metaphilosophical questions are important in their own right, but answering them can also lead to desirable consequences. Having a clear view of the nature of our discipline can also help us overcome the continental/analytic divide, and it is healthy for both sides to try to answer these questions. Needless to say, we should not presuppose that one camp has exclusive access to reasonable and defensible responses to such questions.

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FRANCIS BACON, INITIATOR OF MODERN HEURISTIC METHOD

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Abstract:

The goal of this study is to provide arguments for the idea that Francis Bacon initiated the first modern theoretical programme of a heuristic methodologist strategy. This strategy has been developed by modern science in order to investigate nature and formulate general enunciations on nomicity, causality, connection and spatio-temporality.

Francis Bacon uses amplifying induction, induction by simple enumeration and especially induction by elimination. He thus initiates a new manner of thinking about the knowledge achieved in experience, of its reasonable interpretation and systematization.

Key words: heuristic methodology, amplifying induction, induction by elimination, The New Organon, Praerogative instantiarum, the substitution method, the definition of heat, table 1, table 2, table 3, deduction and reduction, certainty and probability.

For about 400 years, it has been said that Francis Bacon (1561-1626) developed the *Amplifying induction procedure* and that he initiated the first theoretical programme of a *methodological strategy*. Modern science has developed this methodological strategy and used it for a systematic research of facts, in view of discovering laws, causes and structures, with applicative value. The *methodic research idea* is one of the fundamental ideas of Bacon's work.

Lisa Jardine says¹ that "To understand *The New Organon* in the spirit in which it was written, we need to be clear that it is driven by a strong commitment to new technical scientific instruments and

the increasing variety of experiments on nature they made possible. *The New Organon* belongs to an early-seventeenth-century English intellectual milieu which included William Gilbert's work with magnetism and Harvey's on the circulation of the blood, which took into account technological innovation on the Continent, and which looked forward to Robert Boyle's and Robert Hooke's experiments with air-pumps in the 1650s. It is an extraordinary attempt to give formal shape to a rapidly emerging (but hitherto largely problem-driven and *ad hoc*) new experimentally based science."

Bacon's hope was for the *philosophy of nature* to express the direct contact between man and nature by means of an *inductive method* that should guide each step of the mind, just like an instrument needed to draw a straight line, or to draw a circle. "Almost always men take their experiences lightly, as if it were a game, making small variations on experiments already known; if the thing does not succeed, they get tired of it, and give up. Even if they take a more serious attitude towards their experiments, more resolute and prepared for hard work, they still devote their efforts to revealing some one experience, as Gilbert² did with the magnet and the Chemists with gold. Men act like this because their practice is not merely frivolous but also unintelligent"³.

A method was therefore needed that could "penetrate to the more inward and remote parts of

¹ Lisa Jardine, *Introduction*, Francis Bacon, *The New Organon*, edited by Lisa Jardine, Michael Silverthorne, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. XII.

² William Gilbert (1540-1603) develops a theory of magnetism that is subordinated to a fundamental idea: The Earth, as a whole, is a magnet; *apud* René Taton (ed.), *Histoire générale des Sciences*, tome II, ed. II, 1969, cap. V, A2.

³ Fr. Bacon, *op. cit.*, I, 70.

nature”⁴. It was the only possible way to achieve the restoration of the sciences and the organization of nature research, according to the principle: in order to be the master of the world, one must know its laws and overpower it.

Was there any method capable of achieving this ideal? Deduction, as it was known to Bacon, had proven, throughout the centuries, its heuristic limits. Aristotle had provided induction with the same syllogistic structure, its path from one particular to another, based on a complete enumeration of all cases, which would therefore limit its fecundity and its inventive virtue. This is why Bacon thought that “there are, and can be, only two ways to investigate and discover truth. The one leaps from sense and particular to the most general axioms and from these principles and their settled truth, determines and discovers intermediate axioms; this is the current way. The other elicits axioms from sense and particulars, rising in a gradual and unbroken ascent to arrive at last at the most general axioms; this is the true way, but it has not been tried”⁵.

Ever since *Preface*, Bacon explains his steps: “Our method, though difficult to practice, is easy to formulate. It is to establish degrees of certainty, to preserve sensations by putting a kind of restraint on it, but to reject in general the work of the mind that follows sensations; and rather to open and construct a new and certain road for the mind from the actual perceptions of the senses”⁶. This is how the *theorizing of the heuristic method* starts, based on the amplifying induction, on the one hand, and on the *induction operating by elimination*, on the other hand. Instead of instantly reaching to scientific principles, the Baconian method aims to climb each single step of generalization. Therefore, Bacon hopes to elaborate a new *manner* of thinking about the facts achieved in experience, a new manner of inquiry of experience in view of a reasonable interpretation and in order to control it.

The *procedures* of the Baconian methodology were practiced by scientists ever since the Renaissance, just as Bacon himself admits. At that time, there were almost all the ideas that would be subsequently helpful for the edification of the heuristic methodology, but they were fragmentary, dispersed, intermingled with errors and divagations. André Lalande (1867-1963), preoccupied by the existing theories on induction and the experimenting proc-

ess⁷, said in the third decade of the 20th century that Bacon had underlined the idea of *experience* and the idea of *method correction* – specified and qualified procedures, so that they might allow the elaboration of some researchers to constitute collective and progressive science. These procedures should have been efficient when used by less brilliant people too.

Francis Bacon says: “Having laid down the scope of our teaching, we proceed to precepts; and in the least awkward and unnatural order. Directions for the interpretation of nature comprehend in general terms two parts: the first for drawing axioms from experience; the second on deducing or deriving new experiments from axioms. The former is divided three ways, i.e. into three kinds of service: service to the senses, service to the memory and service to the mind or reason.

First we must compile a good, adequate natural and experimental history. This is the foundation of the matter. We must not invent or imagine what nature does or suffers; we must discover it.

A natural and experimental history is so diverse and disconnected that it confounds and confuses the understanding unless it is stopped short, and presented in an appropriate order. So tables must be drawn up and a coordination of instances made, in such a way and with such organization that the mind may be able to act upon them.

Even with these, the mind, left to itself and moving of its own accord, is incompetent and unequal to the formation of axioms unless it is governed and directed. And therefore, in the third place, a true and proper induction must be supplied, which is the very key of interpretation. And one must begin at the end and move backwards to the rest”⁸.

This is about an impulse to the methodic research of instances in order to elaborate inventories as completely as possible, in order to infer the subsequent evolution of knowledge and remove bookish scholastic reminiscences, erroneous discoveries, stereotypical phrases and formulas. Bacon’s ideas are not singular in the 17th century. They resemble the idea of *Mathesis Universalis*, which is characteristic to Descartes and Leibniz. The British physician Robert Hooke (1635-1703), in the paper *A General Scheme of the Present State of Natural Philosophy*, establishes relations between the schemes of inductive logic and *Mathesis Universalis*.

⁴ *Ibidem*, I, 18.

⁵ *Ibidem*, I, 19.

⁶ *Ibidem*, *Preface*, 2.

⁷ André Lalande, *Les Théories de l’induction et de l’expérimentation*, Paris, 1929, chapter V, § 1.

⁸ Fr. Bacon, *op. cit.*, II, 10.

Nowadays, the collection of facts (instances) has become a fundamental rule of the heuristic methodology. Moreover, it is underlined that the overstressing of facts may lead to cognitive dangers. Starting from Confucius's dictum: "Learning without thinking is useless, thinking without learning is dangerous", the contemporary scientist, Hans Selye (1907-1982), the author of the paper *Stress without Distress* (1974), says that "just as pure meditation, with no effort to assess the practical value of our concepts, often leads to dangerous mistakes, simple observation and record of facts are similarly useless, since they do not develop ideas about them."⁹

Although he underlines their heuristic importance, Bacon does not turn instance collection into a purpose of its own. He hopes that science may achieve an exhaustive synthesis of knowledge. Nevertheless, systematization of facts depends on the good choice of being included in the *three tables*. Therefore, certain prerogative instances are needed at the beginning (*Praerogative instantiarum*), which are different from the common instances, as they are instructive, efficient and have practical applicability.

"The privileged instances are twenty-seven in number; and are: solitary instances; instances of transition; revealing instances; concealed instances; constitutive instances; instances of resemblance; unique instances; deviant instances; borderline instances; instances of power; instances of association and aversion; accessory instances; instances of alliance; crucial instances; instances of divergence; instances that open doors or gates; summoning instances; instances of the road; instances of supplement; cleaving instances; instances of the rod; running instances; doses of nature; instances of struggle; suggestive instances; multipurpose instances; magical instances. The use of these instances, in which they surpass ordinary instances, tends in general either in the direction of information or in the direction of operation, or in both. In the informative aspect they assist either the senses or the understanding. In the case of the five instances of the lamp, for example, they assist the senses"¹⁰.

We will hereinafter resume a part of our logical and epistemic interpretations, by means of which we have tried to prove how Bacon develops the first

methodological instrument to approach nature¹¹. First of all, we shall underline the gnoseological importance and the logical structure of those prerogative instances that occur on the first stage of the nature explaining process, and we will focus on the other cases when we analyze the third stage. Bacon's language, especially in this part of *The New Organon*, includes terms that are taken over from various fields: law, politics, physics, common language, etc.; this is why we will translate them, as much as possible, into a logical language, appropriate to Bacon's intentions.

The researcher collects Unless the author specifically intends the masculine, standard usage would be the feminine.

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See note 4

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Her first information by means of the sense organs. "There follow five sets of instances which we have chosen to call in one general word instances of the lamp or of first information. They are those which assist the senses. Since all interpretation of nature begins from the senses, and runs by a straight, even, well-made road from perception of the senses to perception of the intellect, which are true notions and axioms, it is necessary that the fuller and more exact the presentation or exhibits of the senses themselves are, the more easily and successfully everything will go"¹².

As sixteenth of the privileged instances we shall place instances that open doors or gates;¹³ referring to instruments and devices that help the eyes perceive objects that are not visible (microscope), perceive them from the distance (Galileo's telescope), perceive them more accurately and more distinctly (measuring instruments). Although, at the beginning of the 18th century, there were still few invented instruments and devices, Bacon foresaw their importance in discovery, their role in increasing the precision and the power of senses.

⁹ Hans Selye, *From Dream to Discovery*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York Toronto London, 1964, chapter 8, § 4.

¹⁰ Fr. Bacon, *op. cit.*, II, 52.

¹¹ Teodor Dima, *Metodele inductive*, București, Editura Științifică, 1975, pp. 23-48.

¹² Fr. Bacon, *op. cit.*, II, 38.

¹³ *instantiae januae sive portae; ibidem*, II, 39.

The reduction of non-sensitivity to sensitivity (*summoning instances – instantiae citantes*) is another helpful aspect of sensitive knowledge. “Things escape the senses either because the object is placed at a distance, or because the senses are obstructed by bodies between themselves and the object, or because the objects are not capable of making an impression on the senses, or because the quantity of the object is not sufficient to strike the senses, or because the time is insufficient to activate the senses, or because the senses cannot stand the effect of the object, or because an object has previously filled and possessed the senses so that there is no room for another motion.”¹⁴

We think that Bacon inferred here the logical operation of *substitution*, which has been transformed into a methodological rule and is nowadays used in factual research and in the elaboration of scientific theories. For instance, psychologists measure the qualitative phenomenon of intelligence by means of quantitative procedures, as intelligence is difficult to be directly assessed; moreover, physicians establish the condition of the body by simply taking the pulse, or by laboratory tests, and so on.

In the nineteenth place among the privileged instances we shall put instances of supplement or substitution (*instantiae supplementi; sive substitutionis*)¹⁵; we believe that, by the set examples, Bacon anticipated, from a certain perspective, the *modeling method*, or *substitution by analogy*, being aware that “substitution by analogy is certainly useful but less sure, and therefore must be used with some discretion. It occurs when a non-sensible thing is brought before the senses, not by sensible activity on the part of the insensible substance itself, but by observation of a related sensible body; for example, if in an investigation of a mixture of spirits, which are non-visible bodies, some kind of relationship is apparent between the bodies and their fuel or nourishment”¹⁶.

In eighteenth place among the privileged instances we shall set instances of the road (*instantiae viae*), “which we have also chosen to call travelling instances and jointed instances. They are instances which indicate discretely continuous motions in nature. This kind of instance rather avoids observation than sense. Men are wonderfully inattentive here. In fact they observe nature only in a desultory

and casual manner and after bodies are finished and complete, and not in its working.”¹⁷

We will not insist on other preparing instances, which Bacon construed as helpful to the intellect, in order to develop natural history and the launching of the *tables* mechanism. By means of them, definitions and general statements were meant to be obtained. Aristotle had enunciated the logical conditions of connotative definition by *proximal genus* and *specific difference*. Bacon did his best, at the beginning of the 17th century, to enunciate the methodical procedures by means of which specific differences and generic notes could be discovered and detached from individual objects. We believe that the difference between Aristotle and Bacon resembles the difference between a logician and a gnoseologist – the former looks for the *correctness* of reasonable undertakings, while the latter couples the force of sense organs to the one of the intellect aiming to discover the *truth*.

Bacon was preoccupied with discovering essential truths, or *forms*; for example, discovering *movement* as a manifest form of *heat*. According to the *logical mechanism of tables*, we shall find out the very mechanism of the Baconian induction. *Tabula presentiae* includes the cases where the property whose form is looked for is present. *Tabula declinationis sive absentiae in proximo* includes cases, as similar to the first ones as possible, but which lack the quested property. *Tabula graduum sive comparativae* includes cases where a property presents various degrees of intensity.

Using Bacon’s example – to discover the form or the definition of heat – and some of T. Kotarbinski’s indications¹⁸, we will try to develop a quasi-formalization of what is referred to as the Baconian heuristic induction.¹⁹

[Table 1] – of existence and presence
Instances meeting in the nature of heat

- a₁ – the sun’s rays, especially in summer and at noon;
- a₂ –solids on fire;
- a₃ –animals, especially internally, where they are constantly hot;
-

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, II, 40.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, II, 42.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, II, 42.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, II, 41.

¹⁸ T. Kotarbinski, *Leçons sur l’Histoire de la logique*, PWN, Warszawa, 1965, pp. 331-340.

¹⁹ Vezi Fr. Bacon, *op. cit.*, II, 11, 12, 13.

[Table 2] – of divergence, or of closely related absences
Closely related instances which are devoid of nature heat

b_1 –the moon’s rays and those of the stars and comets are not found to be hot to the touch;
 b_2 –the body of the glow – worm or of the fly which they call “fire-fly” found notUnless the author specifically intends the masculine, standard usage would be the feminine.

I am not sure what is missing here. Maybe ‘facts’?
Standard usage would be the feminine, here, unless the author specifically means the masculine.
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to be hot to the touch.

b_3 – in vegetables and plants no degree of heat is perceptible to the touch;

[Table 3] – of instances in which the nature under investigation exists to a certain degree
Table of Degrees or Comparison on Heat

c_1 –Animals increase in heat from movement and exercise;
 c_2 –Motion increases heat, as one can see in the case of bellows and blasts of breath;
 c_3 –The anvil is much heated by the hammer.

Francis Bacon included 28 instances in *Table 1*, 32, in *Table 2*, and 41, in *Table 3*. Once the tables have been developed, induction must come to the fore. From a logical perspective, it mainly includes the *successive eliminations procedure* and *amplifying induction*.

If a_1 = presence of sunrays and A = heat, then the following elimination scheme may be developed:

(1)
present a_1 ----- *present* A
absent a_1 ----- *present* A
then a_1 and A are not constantly co-present.

If a_2 = presence of a flame and A = heat, then the following elimination scheme may be developed:

(2)
present a_2 ----- *present* A
absent a_2 ----- *present* A
then a_2 and A are not constantly co-present.

The elimination procedure continues to the last instance included in *Table 1*. The 32 instances included in *Table 2* will follow, characterized by the absence of the heat form.

If b_1 = moon rays and A = heat, then the following elimination scheme may be developed:

(3)
present b_1 ----- *absent* A
absent b_1 ----- *absent* A
then b_1 and A are not constantly co-absent.

If b_1 = the twinkling of the firefly and A = heat, then the following elimination scheme may be developed:

(4)
present b_2 ----- *absent* A
absent b_2 ----- *absent* A
then b_2 and A are not constantly co-absent.

In other words, the elimination procedure, applied in *Table 2*, does not lead, either, to conclusive results. One might compare instances from *Table 1* with instances from *Table 2*. Thus, comparing b_1 (the moon rays do not warm) with a_1 (the sun rays warm) achieves the result that the form of the heat does not come from the celestial bodies because in the presence of some there is heat but in the presence of others, there is not. The comparison between b_2 and a_2 eliminates brightness as a form of heat, because there is warm brightness and cold brightness, etc. It follows that neither the comparison between instances from the two tables is conclusive for the discovery of the form of heat or for its definition.

The intervention of *Table 3*, the table of degrees, suggests that the analysis of the *processes* could highlight the form or the essence of heat. The 41 instances ($c_1, \dots, c_{41}$) express the idea that the process determining the manifestation of heat is *motion*. “In each and every instance, the nature of which heat is a limitation seems to be motion. This is most apparent in a flame, which is always in motion. It appears in the intensifying or increase of heat

produced by motion; as by bellows and winds (c_{29}). And similarly with motion of other kinds (c_{28} and c_{31}). It is apparent once more in the extinction of fire and heat by any powerful compression which puts the brake on motion and makes it cease (c_{30} and c_{32}). It is also apparent in the fact that every body is destroyed or at least significantly altered by any fire or strong and powerful heat; hence it is quite obvious that in the internal parts of a body, heat causes tumult, agitation and fierce motion which gradually brings it to dissolution”²⁰.

Thus, Bacon obtained the genus proximum and the differentiam specificam: “heat is an expansive motion which is checked and struggling through the particles. And expansion is qualified: while expanding in all directions it has some tendency to rise. And the struggle through the particles is thus qualified: it is not completely sluggish, but excited and with some force”²¹.

The establishment, by means of tables, of *motion* as a genus proximus in defining the form of heat, along with all the naive additions of the specific differences, is the triumph of the Baconian heuristic method, based on the successive elimination procedure. Examining this procedure, von Wright estimated its value for the problem of justifying induction and formulated the general logical nature of eliminative induction²². Let us suppose that, in a number of n statements about the properties of a phenomenon x , *only one* expresses the property which belongs to it. In order to find it, we can proceed by elimination. We start from the *equivalence* established in the logic of propositions:

$$(5) \quad p \ \& \ q \equiv (p \rightarrow q)$$

we reject the implication:

$$(6) \quad x \ (Ax) \rightarrow Cx;$$

in a similar way we reject the implication:

$$(7) \quad x \ (Ax) \rightarrow Dx;$$

and so forth, therefore the conclusion:

$$(8) \quad x \ Ax \rightarrow Bx.$$

In other words, von Wright considered that induction through elimination is an inference in which one of the premises is a disjunction of singular or atomic sentences, the other premises falsify all the members of the disjunction except one, and the conclusion is exactly that member of the disjunction which was not falsified. If we refer to the nature of the connection between premises and conclusion, we find that it is formally necessary, because the conclusion follows logically from the premises and, therefore, from a formal point of view, what is called induction by elimination should be considered a deductive inference. As a matter of fact, this type of inference is deductive only on the syntactic-formal level and it is inductive and probable on the semantic and especially pragmatic levels.

If the eliminative induction is to get an epistemic justification, the following questions must be answered: 1) is it logically possible, only by means of elimination, to reject all the competing sentences, except one?; 2) is it possible, in an epistemic manner, to determine, in a given case, that all the competing sentences, except one, were eliminated?

In order for the eliminative procedure to reach certitude and, at the same time, the conclusion to be true, it is necessary and sufficient to have affirmative answers to both questions. The first question can be answered affirmatively, as von Wright has shown, if the induction by elimination takes the form of a correct *modus tollendo-ponens*, or of a *disjunctive demonstration*:

$$(9) \quad \begin{array}{l} Ax \text{ is } Bx \text{ or } Cx \text{ or } Dx \\ Ax \text{ is not } Cx \\ Ax \text{ is not } Dx \\ \text{Therefore } Ax \text{ is } Bx \end{array}$$

But the affirmative answer to the first question suggests, in the same time, that an affirmative answer to the second question is not possible because, in order for the disjunctive demonstration to be correct, the disjunction must be complete. But if the number of the initial possible sentences is big then it is impossible to decide if, in a given situation, all the competing sentences, except one, were eliminated.

Bacon seized this limit of using the eliminative procedure; this is why he formulated the three tables with a limited number of instances. Accordingly, in order for elimination to start, we must admit the *postulate of limited variations*.

However, this postulate is only logically and not epistemically sufficient, because, although with a

²⁰ *Ibidem*, II, 20.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² G. H. von Wright, *The Logical Problem of Induction*, Oxford, 1965, cap. IV, §3-§8, pp. 60-89.

view to elimination, a finite number of n competing sentences is considered, it is not epistemically certain that at least one omitted sentence still does not remain. Therefore the *postulate of complete knowledge*, in certain well-mentioned circumstances²³, must be formulated.

In order to formally ground the inference by elimination, we appeal to *reduction*, an operation opposed to deduction. In deductive inferences, the conclusion follows with certitude from the premises. Let us derive the premise (one of the premises, when there are many) from the conclusion. The inferences built by derivation of the premise from the conclusion are called *reductive* inferences, and the procedure is called *reduction*, and it is opposed to deduction²⁴. The reduction procedure is applied to deductive inferences based on the relation of implication, a relation which certifies the truth of the conclusion, if the premises are true. For instance, from a certain *modus ponens* we can build a *modus ponens* with a probable conclusion:

- (10) If A , then B
 B is true
 Therefore $M(A)$,

where M symbolizes “probable”.

In general, we can say that reduction constitutes a logical procedure of creating *probable inferences with probable premises*. Since the inductive inferences have assertive premises and probable conclusions, they may be considered reductive inferences, thus being inverse to the deductive inferences. Therefore, induction by elimination can be logically and formally grounded by means of the reduction of a *modus ponendo-tollens* to a *tollendo-ponens* which has as an additional condition the requirement that the disjunction must be complete. If not, the elimination is partial, and sentences that are not falsified still remain. In this case, the conclusion is probable.²⁵

²³ More detailed analyses can be found in Teodor Dima, *Inferența științifică*, cap. X, in Ștefan Georgescu, Mircea Flonta, Ilie Pârvu (coord.), *Teoria cunoașterii științifice*, București, Editura Academiei, 1982, pp. 280-282.

²⁴ W. St. Jevons, in *Elementary Lessons in Logic*, 1840, and Chr. Sigwart, in *Logik*, Tübingen, 1873-78, noticed, separately, that induction is a form of *reductive inference*.

²⁵ Teodor Dima, *Logica inductivă*, in Teodor Dima (coord.), *Logică generală*, București, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 1990, pp.190, 196.

In conclusion, Bacon’s predilection for the procedure of eliminative induction proves that he considered this procedure superior to the procedure of induction by simple enumeration; it led, in Bacon’s opinion, to *absolute certitude*. Since he was not preoccupied with justifying amplifying disjunction, Bacon believed sincerely that one of the distinct features of induction resides in acquiring absolute certitude in discovery and, consequently, that the problem of the relativity of scientific knowledge was excluded, since it was obtained by means of the methodology he initiated.

In our opinion, in connection with amplifying induction, the term *absolute certitude* has three acceptances:

a) in certain conditions it can be proved that a general proposition, obtained inductively, is the *only* generalization consistent with the facts. If the number of generalizations induced over a class of facts is n and $n = 1$, then we get absolute certitude;

b) we can also get absolute certitude when the inductive method is endowed with *premises* from which generalizations can be deduced according to the logical rules. It is an epistemological fact that the empirical laws formulated by generalization of facts can be considered certain only when they are integrated in a theory and deduced, in its framework, from more general theoretical claims. Unless the author specifically intends the masculine, standard usage would be the feminine;

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c) the two acceptances do not assume that certitude coincides with truth. For this to happen, we should know, in addition, if the premises from which we start are true. Hence the correctness of an induction depends on the same conditions as the correctness of deduction: we must start from truth and the logical operation must be correct. However, within induction, these conditions are difficult to fulfill.

Bacon believed that the eliminative procedure justified the establishment of the certitude, in all its three acceptances, for the sentence expressing *the uniform relation of coexistence* between the *nature* and the *form* of a given object. It was proven though that the nature of elimination allows only the estab-

lishment, with certitude, of the *falsity* for a (some) sentence(s); nothing can be concluded with certitude about the *truth* of some sentences which were not eliminated²⁶. Hence the Baconian eliminative procedure can *at the very most* establish the certitude in acceptance (a). “At the very most” because, in this case too, a minimal logical condition must be fulfilled: it must be possible to determine that all the competing sentences over a given field of facts, *except one*, were eliminated. Feeling this danger of elimination, Bacon implicitly supposed the number of sentences must be finite. He grounded this condition on “the opinion ... that it is possible to reduce all the phenomena of the universe to a limited number of combinations between simple elements”²⁷. R.L. Ellis, one of the prestigious exegetes of Bacon’s work showed that this is the central point of Bacon’s system, calling it *the principle of limited variation*.

This principle aligns with the context of Bacon’s ideas of compiling the complete and defined collection of all human knowledge. But this principle is only necessary, and not sufficient, in obtaining true inductive generalizations and, consequently, in justifying induction.

Bacon insisted on the idea that induction can perform the marriage between the human being and nature. Unfortunately, Baconian induction was engrafted in a qualitative naturalistic realism that required nature to appear before the human complex in such a way that *the uniformities of coexistence* established by the human being coincide with the relations established in reality.

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²⁶ von Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

²⁷ R. L. Ellis, *Preface*, to *Novum Organum*, în *The Works of Francis Bacon*, London, 1857, p. 28.

PHILOSOPHY IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURE'S AUTONOMOUS VALUES

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Abstract:

If culture is the whole of spirituality (of nation or mankind), philosophy is part of this whole together with the other spiritual values. Philosophy frees itself from this whole and, at times, rises over it by concepts. In this way philosophy is itself conscious of culture. Consequently philosophy is autonomous in the system of cultural values with which it has biunivocal relations.

Arising out of the signs of one culture (national or regional), philosophy, in its aspirations towards knowledge and truth, expresses the universal. Under the negativist pressure of the present which is prevalent through the utilitarian, philosophy cannot abandon its finality. It remains to catch its time in thoughts, as Hegel has argued.

Key words: Culture; Value; Philosophy; Universal; Truth.

It is not a useless approach to raise the issue of "philosophy emerging from culture", but a challenge derived from the contemporary world's concerns. The way it appears in its various expressions, the present issue utters a truth that is not to be taken for granted, since philosophy can be imagined neither beyond the reach of culture, nor deeply emerged in it. Philosophy remains, as conceived in the Greek classical period, the highest human pursuit, though leant upon the fertile soil of the entire culture. There is a relationship that emerges at this point, which I will try to explain further on. Yet let us first clarify the sense in which I employ the concepts of *culture* and *philosophy*.

The concept of *culture*, as a complex, multi-stratified phenomenon, has a long and well-known history of attempts to reach a general and unanimously accepted definition. Some

of these failed, but none of them were in vain. Apart from that, we cannot but agree that culture in fact has to do with human behaviour – from the simplest daily gesture, to the most elaborated products of mind; from our usual relationship to the world, to the most disturbing questions concerning the meaning of life¹. Culture makes up the whole that the reflexive mind is a part of. Accordingly, my starting point is the human being in his/her integrity, as a unity between reason and emotion expressed in a variety of acts, symbols, and values composing the world of culture. There is a first paradox that arises at this point: though biologically finite, the human being challenges the infinite through thinking and creation². It is out of this endless struggle that love, joy and hope, as well as the big questions and the tragic sense of life are nurtured; they are the spiritual energies from which the colourful web of culture is being woven. Culture, which represents the defining human way of being in the world, is broadly the same everywhere, which proves its universality and validity.

But if we switch the point of view to a temporal-spatial one, we would immediately notice the existence of a plurality of cultures, each shaped under the influence of history and cosmic agents. As a result, we deal with a large number of national cultures: Chinese, Korean,

¹ See: Marin Aiftinca, *Filosofia culturii*, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2008.

² Cf. Georg Simmel, *Philosophische Kultur* (Gesammelte Essays), Dritte Auflage, Postdam, Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, p. 236.

Egyptian, Greek, American, Russian, French, Romanian, etc. Each of these shelters in its core an assembly of spiritually and materially, intellectually and emotionally distinct features that account for the specificity of national/ethnic/regional communities. The ontological structure of each particular culture comprises – besides arts and literature – patterns of behaviour, as well as a system of values, customs and beliefs that make up its identity and let it participate in the richness and beauty of universal culture.

By understanding things from this standpoint, we can no longer deny the truthfulness of the idea that culture is essentially universal, but also particular according to spatial-temporal patterns of behaviour and creation. This is the truth that substantiates the current discourse on *culture* and *cultures*, deprived of the postmodernist tendency of overvaluing relativism in the forms of the individual, the local, and the fragmentary.

Besides the variety of its concrete aspects, culture as a whole is structured in distinct forms as language, myth, religion, art, science, morality, the state and so on³. These forms serve as a principle of order for cultural deeds and goods. As an embodiment of values, each of them is marked by an inward unity, though all of them are complete in a harmonious whole, conferring identity to national cultures. Among these forms, philosophy has a specific content and finality. This is how it has gained its own special position in the system of culture that nurtured it. Considering the way it has developed itself from the 7th century to present day, philosophy imposed itself as the highest expression of culture⁴.

Before determining its stand in the cultural universe, I would like to clarify the way I employ the term *philosophy* in this paper. The concept of philosophy itself, which is a funda-

mental one, is not without difficulties. Of course, I don't intend to review the entire history of its definitions, roles and values. I'll confine myself to mention the idea that Plato credited to Socrates, according to which non-utilitarian wonder is the reason man looks for wisdom⁵. This wisdom, understood as a science of primary causes, is nothing but philosophy.

Taking over this idea, Aristotle added: "... therefore since they philosophized in order to escape from ignorance, evidently they were pursuing science in order to know, and not for any utilitarian end"⁶. By knowledge, he didn't understand any kind of knowledge, but – definitely – the knowledge of the truth. That's why he considered himself entitled to assert further: "It is right also that philosophy should be called knowledge of the truth"⁷, or *epistēmē tes alētheias*. The truth we are talking about is neither the common sense truth of the manifest being, nor the truth of phenomena and things as objects of the particular sciences. Aristotle pointed to a prime truth that is equally grounded on Being and a fundamental quality of it⁸, that is, an absolute truth which is valuable thanks to its universality, as the contemporary philosopher Martin Heidegger used to say on a different occasion. Hence, a certain thing *participates* in Truth only as far as it *participates* in Being. Taking into account the Heideggerian "ontological difference", the truth is subject to an alteration as soon as it reaches the level of existence. At this point, the truth as "coming-into-presence" is conceived as *idéa*. It also could be understood as "correctness of representing existence"⁹. Becoming correctness through its submission to the Idea, the truth ceases to be the fundamental feature of Being, and becomes "the distinct mark of knowing the existence"¹⁰. Therefore, our permanent striving for "truth" –

³ See: Heinrich Rickert, *Grundprobleme der Philosophie*, Tübingen, 1936, pp. 169– 197; Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man. An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture*, Yale University Press, 1944, translated into Romanian and published in Bucharest at Humanitas Publishing House, 1994.

⁴ Mircea Florian, *Îndrumare în filosofie*, Bucharest, Editura Științifică, 1992, p. 27.

⁵ Plato, *Theaitetos*, in „Opere”, VI, Bucharest, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989, p. 199.

⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*. I, 982b.

⁷ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*. II, 993b.

⁸ See: Martin Heidegger, *Platon's Lehre von der Wahrheit*, translated into Romanian in the volume: „Repere pe drumul gândirii”, Bucharest, Editura Politică, 1988.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 202.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 198.

as an adequation of thinking to Idea – guides us to know existence. Thus we could generally say that “man thinks according to «ideas», and appreciates all that is real according to «values»”¹¹. From this standpoint, Heidegger maintains that, from Plato onwards, “thinking the being of existence” becomes “philosophy”. Having the features of what would be known later as “metaphysics”, thinking is understood as a raising of the eyes to the “Ideas”¹².

By developing this issue, we have imperceptibly reached the middle of the Heideggerian school – which is neither the only, nor the most relevant for contemporary philosophy. Contemporary philosophy goes beyond the boundaries of different schools and streams. On the impulse of its own reflections and under the influence of culture, generally speaking, philosophy structures itself around problematical patterns that compose its image. This image still bears the marks of last century's crisis. Beyond the multiple definitions assigned to it – science of truth, science of all sciences, theoretical explanation of the world, conception on the sense of the human being in the world, doctrine of values etc.; beyond its fragmentation caused by its actual specializations, that which divided it into *traditional*, *practical*, and *scientific* oriented philosophies¹³; beyond its understanding from the standpoint of one or another of the well-known paradigms – the ontological, the mentalist, or the linguistic –, philosophy can be defined as a “nonprejudiced science of prime principles or grounds through which knowledge and life gain their unity and meaning”¹⁴. To synthesize, let us say that philosophy keeps its scientific, rational character, and remains, at the same time, what it's always been: a science of truth and of the world's meaning. Under the influence of the contemporary crises, philoso-

phy is determined to focus its reflexive discourse on the present, to encompass its own age of thought, as Hegel would say.

Complex both in its content and evolution, philosophy is a fundamental form of cultural creation, its distinguishing marks being critical reflection, a profound analysis of existence as unconditioned, infinite totality, that takes placethrough thinking. Philosophy doesn't confine itself to grasp the luxuriant, overwhelming outer existence; her other equal (even higher) tendency is to gain knowledge of the inner reality of man, as spiritual being, a reality containing emotions, representations, ideas, aspirations, and ideals, all building together a spiritual existence which becomes manifest in culture. This is the reason why philosophy sees culture as a way to man and, at the same time, as a fertile soil for it's nutrition.

By questioning the wide material offered by mythology, religion, language, customs, ethics, law, technique, science, and art, philosophy discovers the rich sources of fundamental topics of reflection and metaphysical construction, as well as relevant suggestions concerning some trends of knowledge and conceptual elaboration. Mythology and religion, for instance, explain and interpret the world and human life in connection to the absolute and eternity, by giving a worldview. Not substance or matter, but the mythical imagination and thinking¹⁵ challenge the act of philosophising again and again. In its turn, language as a form of culture is not a mere means of communication, or a storage room for the experience that human beings gain through an unceasing endeavour to perceive, know, and interpret the world they live in; rather, it is both premise and condition of philosophising itself. The same could be said of science, which delivers the partial and concrete results of knowledge under the form of concepts and theories. It offers a causal explanation for observed reality, which philosophy takes over as a ground for its further theoretical elaborations. In addition, art, which is the most striking form of culture, brings in a sensitive perception of reality, ex-

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 202.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 199.

¹³ See: Helmuth Fahrenbach, *Zur Problemlage der Philosophie*, Frankfurt/M., 1975, Apud: Ekkehard Martens, Herbert Schädelbach, *Philosophie. Ein grundkurs*, 1991, translated into Romanian and published in Bucharest, Editura Științifică, 1999, p. 13.

¹⁴ Mircea Florian, *Philosophia perennis*, Cluj-Napoca, Grinta Publishing House, 2004, p. 71.

¹⁵ Ernst Cassirer, *Eseu despre om*, quoted edition, p. 105.

pressed by way of aesthetic symbols. In works of art, these symbols grasp the metaphysical harmony of beauty, maintaining together the world of matter and that of spirit. Thus aesthetic symbols reveal a truth that cannot be reached in any different way¹⁶, a fact that emphasises the philosophical significance of art.

The forms of culture, though interrelated, don't build up together an undifferentiated mixture. Each of them is an autonomous reality based on the embodiment of specific values of cultural goods. An autonomous reality as well, philosophy detaches itself from the rest of the cultural forms. Though emerged from culture and nurtured by its values and achievements, philosophy places itself higher than every other cultural form, inquiring into culture as a whole and trying to disclose its unifying elements, its points of convergence which it brings under concepts and principles of universal value. As Cassirer stated, "It is not a unity of emotions we are looking for in this case, but a unity of action; not a unity of products, but one of creating process"¹⁷. Against relativistic excess, philosophy attempts to emphasize the cognitive, creative, and normative unity of the human species. We have to underline that philosophy doesn't patronize any of the cultural fields, but shows the values that guide human life and, at the same time, identifies the meaning and the ideal of culture, whose vocation is to guide human beings in their striving at self-accomplishment through education.

By approaching the issue of "philosophy emerging from culture", we cannot avoid two important aspects. First, the general and individual evolution of cultural forms prepares the emerging of philosophy as a result of a spiritual need. This statement is based on the fact that man, once he attains self-consciousness, cannot live only for the ephemeral present. He deliberately seeks the essence and the universal, digs into the infinite, searches for absolute spiritual values in order to understand the sense of his

own existence. Strengthened by the spiritual dimension of culture, human thought transcends limited experience, becoming philosophy. In this respect, Hegel held that "a certain stage is requisite in the intellectual culture of a people in order that it may have a Philosophy at all"¹⁸. Philosophy, as a "doctrine of absolute truth"¹⁹, and therefore an autonomous form of culture, appears in different ages and only with certain peoples. It also penetrates into some other cultural spaces, where it has to be first appropriated by learning in order to become an autonomous form of culture. In this respect, history attests a number of otherwise valuable cultures that couldn't provide a written philosophy. This fact proves that philosophy requires special conditions to emerge. Among those conditions, language and tradition are the most important ones²⁰.

The second aspect mentioned above is linked to the following question: providing that culture is an expression of the ethnic/national soul, could we talk in the same terms of philosophy? Could the latter be described in terms of its own national character? There is not a simple answer to this question. The problem implies an extensive analysis that exceeds my intentions here. While postulating the emergence of philosophy from culture, we have to admit that philosophy has a special status among the other forms of culture, a position somehow comparable to that of science, which is essentially impersonal. Like science, philosophy is free of any restrictions, its object being neither the particular, nor the ephemeral, but the universal, the infinite, and the absolute. Therefore, we cannot talk of a national spirit in relation to philosophy. This type of knowledge is possible neither through immediate perception,

¹⁸ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Prelegeri de istorie a filosofiei* [Lectures on the History of Philosophy], Vol. I, translated into Romanian by D.D. Roșca, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 1963, p. 55, 56.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

²⁰ See: Alexandru Surdu, *Forma universalității în cultură*, in vol. *Teologie și analiză*, editor: Mihai Vasile, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2007, p. 14.

¹⁶ See: Marin Aiftinca, *Misterul artei și experiența estetică*, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2007, p. 53.

¹⁷ Ernst Cassirer, *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

nor through sensitive or intellectual intuition, but only through conceptual effort of thought.

But it is also true that philosophy hasn't been born under an anonymous sign. Plato's remark that "crowd would never become a philosopher" is still valid²¹. As with any other type of spiritual creation, philosophy means individual work of renowned thinkers belonging to a nation. No matter how much they strive to avoid subjectivism, they cannot entirely elude the traits of their national character as a particular way to relate to the world. In this respect, there are analyses that identify a correlation between philosophy and the spiritual condition of nations.

Accordingly, we talk of a rationalist French philosophy, of an idealist, speculative German one, of an empiricist English philosophy, of a pragmatic American one, etc.²² We could further assert that philosophy bears the mark of a national character, which provides it with a dominant feature. But the complexity of the national spirit and the phenomenon of cross-cultural communication make this dominant feature a non-exclusive one. The area of some philosophical systems goes beyond national boundaries. In Germany, for example, besides the local metaphysical directions there were other streams, such as positivism, materialism, and existentialism²³, which penetrated the spiritual life in all its fields. Such examples prove the universalistic character of philosophies, but also the fact that each of them expresses the spirit of its age. At the same time, any philosophy goes beyond its age. It turns it into an object of philosophical reflection, anticipating new forms of development by way of knowledge. Thus philosophies harmoniously complete each other, as complementary forms in a wide uni-

versal horizon, exerting at the same time a retroactive influence on the other forms of culture.

We come to the conclusion that a culture – seen in its spatial-temporal dimension – is the manifest form of a national spirit. Emerging from culture, philosophy bears to a certain extent the mark of a national spirit, which doesn't mean that we must deliberately subordinate ourselves to its influence. "The national dimension of a philosophy could be a fact, but never a plan"²⁴. Philosophy doesn't confine itself to "fatal heredity", to what is particular and relative. It is in search of the whole, of universal absolute values, by way of an endless rational effort, and not an emotional one. If we agree that philosophy doesn't stand above its age²⁵, we must also agree that it has the duty to reflect our own age, marked by a serious existential crisis, in order to envisage a new paradigm for future developments. We believe rationality could be such a paradigm, though it is not exempted from dangers. The fact is that only rationality can make the necessary differentiations and preserve these differentiations, to fructify the inheritance of universal culture, rendering human and cross-cultural communication possible, a major condition of any lasting development.

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²¹ Apud: Max Scheler, *Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos*, translated into Romanian by Vasile Muscă, Cluj-Napoca, Paralela 45 Publishing House, 2001, p. 103.

²² Cf. Ion Petrovici, „Naționalitatea în filosofie”, in *Opere filosofice* [Philosophical Works], eds: Gh. Vlăduțescu, Alexandru Boboc, Florin Frunză, Sabin Totu, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2006, pp. 904–906.

²³ See: Ion Petrovici, *Op. cit.*, p. 906, 907.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 908.

²⁵ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Op.cit.*, p. 58.

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ON TOLERATION, CHARITY, AND EPISTEMIC FALLIBILISM

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Abstract:

In this paper I examine some presuppositions of toleration and pluralism. I explore two models, viz. a deontological and a consequentialist model, respectively, which could support the view that rational agents should act in a tolerant way. Against the background which is offered by the first model I give two arguments in favor of the view that people are better off and more rational if they act in a tolerant way. The first argument draws upon a principle of charity which one usually makes use of in philosophy of mind and philosophy of language but which could work equally well with regard to this foundational issue in ethics and philosophy of action. The second argument is built upon the epistemic principle of fallibilism and it is meant to show that from this vantage point acting in a tolerant way is the rational thing to do.

Key words: toleration, charity, fallibilism, deontology, consequentialism, Donald Davidson.

1. Introductory remarks

It is very likely that the most difficult task of moral and political philosophy has been that of assessing comprehensive views which contradict each other not so much in regard to the interests expressed by individuals but in regard to what is considered to be of genuine value.¹ If individuals do not agree with each other about what constitutes a good and valuable life, then they will probably end up having dramatic conflicts, even if their actions are motivated by an honest altruistic attitude. Our deep beliefs about what is good and valuable for the life of all the individuals in our own community will prompt us to use the coercive mechanisms of the state in order to achieve our desiderata and ideals, not only for our own sake but also for those who do not share our values or vision of the meaningfulness of a good life. Of course, those who disagree with us

will try to make use of the institutions of the state in the very same way as we do in order to promote and support their own values and ideals. Unfortunately, as we know too well from history, deep disagreements concerning values can turn into very traumatic conflicts to a much greater extent than the mere conflicts of interests.

Now, some of our value disagreements can be resolved through political mechanisms triggered by public debates concerning the goals of our actions, debates which aim at giving strong support for the policies which promote those goals; however, some other disagreements which go more deeply cannot have usual political solutions. Here we can include deep religious differences and also certain philosophical beliefs concerning the value and the ultimate meaning of life.

But now, when the regular political mechanisms for acquiring social and political stability fail to produce the outcomes we wish, is there a more subtle mechanism which could keep the disagreements within reasonable and non-explosive bounds? Well, in such cases, people are supposed to learn to live in a rational way with differences, disagreements and profound alterity by refraining from using the coercive mechanisms of the state to place unreasonable limits upon the freedom and rights of those people who share values which happen not to be admissible by the dominant group in that society. In a few words, what people need in such circumstances is toleration.

Roughly, the whole spectrum of the concept of toleration unfolds against the background of a pair of presuppositions, namely *the discriminating identification of the alterity (of the other)* together with the decision to *recognize and accept this difference* through an active inter-cultural persuasive dialogue.

A very promising starting point for our discussion, albeit rather paradoxical, is the model of those social arrangements and constructions which are

¹ Cf. Thomas Nagel, *Equality and Partiality*, Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 154-168.

known as Utopia.² Leaving aside the intricate and rather exotic details of the narratives concerning Utopia, the general model which emerges here is that of something inconsistent and unachievable in the effort to aggregate all the features that we wish a Utopia to instantiate. It's a sad fact of life which is worth exploring that it is impossible to achieve simultaneously and continuously *all* that is considered socially and politically good. A perfect deontic and ethical world which complies with all duties, obligations and necessary normative constraints may be a very attractive representation and ideal, but it is not accessible from our own contingent world whose denizens we happen to be. Anyhow, in the best of all possible worlds, toleration has no point. The rationale for tolerant attitudes and behavior is given by precisely this deontic failure and imperfection and by the principled impossibility to achieve all the ideals that are to be praised from a political stand point.

But why, after all, are we supposed to act in a tolerant manner in our world which is not perfect morally, deontically, or politically? What is it that makes the imperfection of our own world impose the moral principle of identity discrimination and the recognition of the alterity of the other? What conceptual and logical connection operates between moral legitimacy and toleration, and between moral illegitimacy and lack of toleration, respectively?

If we go beyond the *prima facie* attractive moral position which urges us to be tolerant and embrace pluralism, then we have to acknowledge that both the conceptual analysis of deep cultural differences and the cultural and political practice of toleration lead us into paradox. For as Thomas Nagel very aptly puts it "liberalism asks that citizens accept a certain restraint in calling on the power of the state to enforce some of their most deeply held convictions against others who do not accept them, and holds that the legitimate exercise of political power must be justified on more restricted grounds – grounds which belong in some sense to a common or public domain."³

This is where paradox strikes and mystifies our common sense. For why should such a limitation placed upon justification be the standard form of grounding political legitimacy? After all, for all those who do not accept that relativism is the most attractive ball game in town nowadays, the argu-

ments *against* this limitation, imposed upon the justificatory basis of political decisions, could appear very convincing and as honest as one can get. And they could very well ask themselves, in a very proper way, the following questions, as Nagel himself does, in order to give the best chance to the argument in favor of liberal toleration: "Why should I care what others with whom I disagree think about the grounds on which state power is exercised? Why shouldn't I discount their rejection if it is based on religious or moral or cultural values that I believe to be mistaken? Isn't that being *too* impartial, giving too much authority to those whose values conflict with mine – betraying my own values, in fact? If I believe something, I believe it to be *true*, yet here I am asked to refrain from acting on that belief in deference to beliefs I think are false. It is unclear what possible moral motivation I could have for doing that. Impartiality among persons is one thing, but impartiality among conceptions of the good is quite another. True justice ought to consist of giving everyone the best possible chance of salvation, for example, or of a good life. In other words, we have to start from the values that we ourselves accept in deciding how state power may legitimately be used."⁴

2. Two justificatory models of toleration

Why are we, then, supposed, to be tolerant? Roughly speaking, we can give two answers which lead to two justificatory models for the virtue of toleration: one is deontological and the other is consequentialist. Let's examine them in turn.

3. The deontological model

According to the deontological model, toleration is a morally necessary virtue whose value does not follow, first and foremost, from certain desirable social and political consequences, regardless how important those consequences could be for the social and political stability of our institutions. A full grasp of the power of this deontological concept is facilitated by thinking counterfactually. Thus to think in a strong deontological sense that any value or any moral norm whatsoever should be followed in our actions means that we are committing ourselves to those norms even in those contrary-to-fact situations in which, if we acted according to them, we would

² See Robert Nozick *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, Blackwell, 1974, p. 297-334.

³ Thomas Nagel, *ibid.*, p. 158.

⁴ Thomas Nagel, *ibid.*, p. 158.

be in a worse-off situation compared with the actual state in which we are.

From where does this strong moral necessity to be tolerant with those who are different from us in a very profound and (maybe) non-reconcilable way follow? First, it is worth emphasizing that the background against which we place this strong moral constraint of toleration consists in a deep asymmetrical relation between those who tolerate and those who are tolerated; but then, again, the same relation, if looked at from a different angle, has a tendency to get symmetrical, which is nowadays one of the main sources of the contemporary crisis of the concept of toleration.⁵ A short explanation will help us here.

Toleration is required by the logic of the communitarian life when there are at least two groups which are positioned asymmetrically with regard to the normative center of political and epistemic power. In order to comply with the requirements of toleration the group which controls power in this asymmetrical relation should accept to restrain its coercive means, which may very well be rooted in the exercise of its political power, and to build, in an alternative way, strong argumentative strategies which are persuasive and rational (maybe even compelling).

We get thus to the key term for the understanding of the deontological concept of toleration. This term is “reason”. In his paper on the issue of toleration Andrei Pleșu gives a very clear and unequivocal account for this position: “We can be tolerant in the name of reason, establishing that everybody is entitled to have his or her own opinion and that the principle of this right is rationality, but we can also be tolerant in the name of our various failures in acting rationally, recognizing that we don’t have access to the absolute universal truth, and therefore to the ultimate certainty, and thus our claim to be always right has no grounds.”⁶

⁵ In a very suggestive and illuminating way Andrei Pleșu, in his *Cuvântul* conference, “Toleranța și intolerabilul. Criza unui concept” (“Toleration and the intolerable. The Crisis of a Concept”) (published by the journal *Cuvântul*, XI (XVI), no. 2 (332), February 2005, pg. 11-13), brings into discussion the dialectics of the rule-exception relation. What until recently has been tolerated becomes something legitimate today and is questioning the legitimacy of the tolerating instance: “The exception becomes tolerant with the rule, and the rule develops a guilt complex, and thus an inferiority complex in relation to the exception. The exception becomes militant, self-sufficient, and, eventually, discriminatory and intolerant!”

⁶ Andrei Pleșu, *ibid.*

What is implied here are two principles whose meaningfulness is crucial for a profound understanding of important philosophical principles which are recurrent in many quarters of contemporary systematic philosophy, such as philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, epistemology and ethics: what I mean here is the principle of charity and the principle of epistemic fallibilism.

4. Toleration and charity

If we follow closely the principle of charity we will see right away how the idea of toleration is essentially contained in our common mental and moral attitudes. To make this clear it is worth pointing to the highly influential remarks that Donald Davidson made on this subject in the context of his seminal discussion in philosophy of mind.

The stance that Davidson defends with regard to the mind-body relation is called the thesis of anomalous monism⁷ – roughly the view that there can be no psycho-physical causal laws which connect mental phenomena with physical phenomena. One of the crucial premises of this conception is that the practice of attributing intentional stances to individuals, mental states such as beliefs or wishes, is governed by principles of rationality, while the physical realm is not subject to such constraints; hence, as Davidson very aptly puts it, the principle of rationality and coherence “has no echo whatsoever” in physical theory, which makes impossible any causal connection of mental phenomena with physical phenomena.

These principles of rationality warrant that the total set of intentional states that we attribute to a subject, and through which one can interpret and predict her actions under normal circumstances, will be as coherent and as rational as possible. Of course, this doesn’t mean that we will make the unrealistic, and actually false, presupposition that those individuals whose utterances and actions are the object for our interpretations could not have false beliefs. Quite to the contrary, we know that what gives to our beliefs the philosophical bite that makes them theoretically interesting is the fact that they *could* be – and some of them actually *are* – false. The principles of rationality, which govern the attribution of intentional states, encapsulate the idea that “we can, however, take it as given that *most* beliefs are cor-

⁷ See Donald Davidson “Mental Events” (1970), “Psychology as Philosophy” (1974) and “The Material Mind” (1973), in Donald Davidson *Essays on Actions and Events*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980, pp. 205 – 259.

rect. The reason for this is that a belief is identified by its location in a pattern of beliefs; it is this pattern that determines the subject matter of the belief, what the belief is about.”⁸

What follows from this epistemic duty that we have toward others as interpreters of their utterances and actions is that we *should* be charitable in the interpretation of their intentional states and that we should refrain ourselves from attributing to them obviously contradictory beliefs, even when the sentences that they utter are incompatible with the beliefs that we share or even worse, when their sentences have the surface form of a logical contradiction.

Consequently, what is required from an interpreter, in order for us to accept her interpretation, is for her to come up with an account of the meaning of the sentences and actions of the interpreted individual that interpret them to be as coherent and as rational as possible. And when the interpreter fails to produce such a consistent interpretation it is very natural to blame the interpreter herself for the interpretive failure and not the interpreted person for holding unacceptable and inconsistent beliefs.

To sum up, the principle of charity will be encapsulated within the following thesis: the requirement of rationality and coherence pertains to the very essence of the mind – that is, it is constitutive of the mental in the sense that rationality and coherence make the mind be exactly what it is. And if, *per absurdum*, there are “beliefs” which would escape from the constraint of this principle, then these sui-generis “beliefs” can no longer be considered mental states.

Where does all this lead us in relation to our topic? If we appreciate properly the force of all those Davidsonian remarks we shall understand why the principle of charity occupies a central place in any serious attempt to explain theoretically how it is possible to understand the others’ utterances and actions in a rational way. Davidson is crystal clear about this: “Since charity is not an option, but a condition of having a workable theory, it is meaningless to suggest that we might fall into massive error by endorsing it. [...] Charity is forced on us; whether we like it or not, if we want to understand others, we must count them right in most matters. If we can produce a theory that reconciles charity and the formal conditions for a theory, we have done all that

could be done to ensure communication. Nothing more is possible, and nothing more is needed.”⁹

Summing up the deontological concept of toleration, the Davidsonian principle of charity requires us to prefer theories of interpretation which minimize disagreements. This is why making appeal to charity – and *ipso facto* to toleration – is somehow inevitable.

The current crisis of the concept of toleration erodes this principle of charity which is so generous. This crisis is also fed by a very feeble and incomplete application of the concept of toleration. For, as Davidson rightly emphasizes, “minimizing disagreements, or maximizing agreement, is a confused ideal. The aim of interpretation is not agreement but understanding.”¹⁰

Along the same general lines, Andrei Pleșu, in his essay, is worried by the radical distortion of the meaning of the concept of toleration. He deplores the degradation of honest dialogue with the other who is substantially “different”, a dialogue which gives genuine substance to the tolerant attitude; and it is this fact – says Pleșu – which “amputates the appetite for knowledge, for the real understanding of the alterity, and which undermines the necessity for having debates.”¹¹

We get thus to the point where we are trapped in a vicious circle which is very hard to get through. For, on the one hand, genuine debate is canceled because we are told, in a way which is irresponsible from an epistemic and ethic point of view, that there is no truth to find out and no reasoning to make. On the other hand, important truths have no echo in us and are ignored by us. Discursive reasoning becomes weak and is fallaciously degraded because authentic debate is canceled.

5. Toleration and fallibilism

We also have to be tolerant due to our epistemic fallibilism: we have no access whatsoever to absolute truth and certainty in what concerns those things which are of utmost importance for the moral, religious and political life of our own community. Since our own moral and political beliefs that we praise and consider, honestly and with some

⁸ Donald Davidson, “Thought and Talk”, in *Inquiries into Truth & Interpretation*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1984, p. 168.

⁹ Donald Davidson, “On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme”, in *Inquiries into Truth & Interpretation*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1984, p. 197.

¹⁰ Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth & Interpretation*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1984, pg. xvii.

¹¹ Andrei Pleșu, *ibid.*

grounds, right may nevertheless be wrong, it is reasonable to acknowledge that those who do not share our fundamental commitments are as entitled epistemically as we are, according to their own justifications, to contrary opinions.

6. The consequentialist model

Now, according to the consequentialist model, toleration appears as a political tool for alleviating dangerous disagreements or tensions which are a threat for the social order. If what we are looking for is a social and political stability compact then it is reasonable to not discriminate and accept things that we otherwise had might have strong reasons to disagree with and reject. In short, making a consequentialist calculus we see that there are by far more numerous reasons for being tolerant than for being fanatic and intolerant.

7. A “paradox” of toleration?

I shall finish by making a short remark on one of the sources of the current pathology of the concept and practice of toleration. This motivates what can be called a “paradox of toleration”: How should we react when confronted with intolerance? What are the limits of toleration in relation to fanaticism and to what is intolerable? Is it possible, and if so is it desirable, to find a rational ground for accepting what is otherwise unacceptable?

Thomas Nagel also sees the real problem and danger behind this form of unbounded and unreflected toleration when he speaks about the over-exaggeration of positive discrimination, better known today as affirmative action.¹² What’s all this about? Toleration plays, as it were, the role of the middle term between freedom of speech and opinion (according to J. S. Mill toleration is a necessary product of liberty) and political equality (according to J. Rawls, toleration is logically correlated to equality). It is a real challenge then to keep a dynamic equilibrium between individual and social justice, on the one hand, and the freedom of speech (and opinion), on the other hand. And basically the same kind of problem will occur when we look for equilibrium between norms and whatever deviates from norms or between rules and exceptions. The current tendency is to focus upon, sometimes even to over-emphasize, the value of equality. However, what the political

practice of positive discrimination shows, especially when one abuses it, is the difficulty in keeping a proper balance between equality and liberty: the requirement of equality threatens the requirement of free competition and free choice. If we push to the extreme the norms of positive discrimination we end up on a slippery-slope and we won’t be sure any more whether it is not fair that one should always prefer whomever is naturally worse-off than whomever is better-off, having in view a rather abstract and formal representation of the differences for which neither one has any obvious moral merit. The legitimate worry here is this: if we generalize this criterion for choice, shouldn’t we stick to the same logic and whenever we have to make a choice shouldn’t we always choose the worse-off, in order to correct her native lack of chance, for which, in any rate, she has no moral responsibility whatsoever?

Thomas Nagel’s remarks have the merit to awaken us from our moral slumber, as it were, and make us become aware that if we go down this slippery-slope we end up at the border of a moral Utopia. If we wish to accept something, which otherwise is unacceptable, we will have to make it be the case that one should produce what is impossible. Well, if this is what we really *wish* or *want*, then we see that we are likely to end up where we began this journey, in Utopia. However, as we already know, in Utopia toleration has no real point or moral merit.¹³

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¹² Cf. Thomas Nagel, *Mortal Questions*, Cambridge University Press, 1979.

¹³ I am grateful to Professor Andrei Pleșu for inviting me to comment publicly on his paper “Toleranța și intolerabilul. Criza unui concept” (“Toleration and the intolerable. The Crisis of a Concept”), which was published afterwards by *Cuvântul*. This kind invitation gave me the impetus to write a first draft of the paper that I am presenting here. I would also like to thank my colleague, Professor Adrian-Paul Iliescu, for his criticism which helped me to improve the paper. It goes without saying that I am the only one responsible for the contents and arguments that I am putting forward in this paper.

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THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY OF MARTIN HEIDEGGER AS A FOUNDATION FOR REDEFINING THE CONCEPT OF INTER- PRETATIVE APPROACHES IN THE THEORY OF HISTORY

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Abstract:

The paper examines the perspectives of an exchange between the phenomenological ontology of Martin Heidegger and a theory of history in the context of the problem of interpretative approaches in historical writing. The hypothesis is that the analyses offered by Heidegger in *Being and Time* and *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity* provide the foundation for mapping out new perspectives in the concept of interpretative approaches. The concept of interpretative approaches came to be actively used in academic texts relatively recently, since the 1980's, and has often been employed quite unreflectively. But its wide currency, its heterogeneous and unreflective usage turned the concept of interpretative approaches into a theoretical problem. This paper will present a possible answer to that problem by examining the conceptual foundations of a redefined concept of interpretative approaches, drawn from the lectures read by Heidegger in the summer semester of 1923, more precisely §§16–28, 21–26, and the relevant discussion in *Being and Time*, starting with §12 and focusing on Part I, Chapter 5 (mainly §§32 and 33).

Key words: Interpretation, Historical Writing, Heidegger, Phenomenological Ontology.

This paper is not specifically focused on contemporary perspectives on ontological thinking but rather on the possibility of using a specific ontological philosophy, the ontology of Martin Heidegger, for explaining contemporary theoretical problems in another field – theory of history.

The concept of historical interpretation has been an object of creative reflection for many theoretically minded historians and philosophers of history since the 19th c., and emerged as a fundamental concept in 20th c. theory of history.

The efforts to professionalize history as an academic discipline invited questions about the specific nature of its objects and practices, which

raised the problem of historical interpretation. (Droysen was the first to discuss the role played by interpretation in historiographic practices [Droysen 2009: 26-31]). The emergence of the problem of historical interpretation was also shaped by the decisive influence hermeneutics exerted on the German philosophical tradition.

Since that time the concept of historical interpretation – whether used with enthusiasm or doubt – has been an object of many examinations and critical reflections, which have caused its fundamental transformation. Recognized in the context of hermeneutics, rejected in the context of positivism, recognized again under the influence of reflections on historical narratives and on the social forces shaping their construction, interpretation has occupied a central position in the contemporary theory of history, as the concept of historical fact came to be questionable.

The transformation of the concept of historical interpretation consists in the shift from seeing it as a supplement to the facts, growing and elaborated from them – as 19th c. historians did – to considering interpretation as something more fundamental than the facts, in other words, considering the facts themselves as a result of interpretation.

However, the concept of interpretative approaches emerged from the 19th century understanding of interpretation as something supplemented to the facts. Ironically, it has been discussed more widely since the second half of the 20th century and become actively used in academic texts only relatively recently, since the 1980's, with striking unreflectiveness, which has turned it into a theoretical problem.

This theoretical problem has been caused by the transformation of the concept of historical interpretation, which undermined the concept of

interpretative approaches. If “history as it actually was” is under question, as is the case with the contemporary theory of history, and if interpretation can no longer be reduced to something supplemented to “history as it actually was”, then interpretative approaches can also no longer be reduced to frameworks or patterns supplemented to “history as it actually was”.

Is the concept of interpretative approaches relevant and applicable today? If so, how? How and to what extent is it adequate to use the term interpretative approaches in the context of historical writing, particularly if we take into account the changing ideas of historical interpretation?

Answers to these questions are more often negative than positive in tone. Transformations in the concept of historical interpretation and the problems surrounding the concept of interpretative approaches occasionally engendered a lack of interest and triggered claims that the latter should be de-emphasized or abandoned. [Chartier 1997: 3] There were also claims that although a theory of historical interpretation was possible, it would be unable to provide solid foundations for any concept of interpretative approaches. [Rüsen 1993: 181; 2006: 46] The identification of interpretative patterns has been criticized for being prescriptive and for blocking the detection of new ideas and phenomena, which often led to claims that the concept of interpretative approaches should be abandoned in favour of opening new research areas like the history of women, postcolonial studies, minority and ethnic studies and so on. [Southgate 1996: 8]

Rejections of the concept have concurred with its unreflective use as an indicator of a “specific method”, capable of mapping out new research areas and distinguished by its underdefined procedures, concepts and practices, allowing researchers to sidestep the more stringent requirements of adequacy and reliability customarily associated with what one usually calls ‘method’.

However, the current condition of the concept of interpretative approaches may motivate not only rejection and unreflective usage, but also attempts at answering the question of whether and how we can think using interpretative approaches. Is it possible to benefit from a reinterpretation of the concept in the light of the tradition which I have summarized? Is it useful after the enormous broadening of the meaning of interpretation in historiography that has

taken place? What would a state-of-the-art concept of interpretative approaches look like?

The importance of these questions stems precisely from the fact that today one can no longer plausibly claim to have reliable or trustworthy knowledge of ‘history as it actually was’, and cannot believe that there is any such solid foundation underlying historical narratives.

The conventional concept of interpretative approaches was designed to establish the difference between ‘history as it actually was’ and its varying interpretations. Today one clearly cannot use the concept in that way.

But one can read the concept of interpretative approaches to history otherwise, as a concept for use in the process of approaching historical narratives. Such a reading can have important theoretical implications because it will enable researchers to pose a question, looming over the discipline since the crisis of historical positivism: what is approaching, and are we approaching anything in our approaches to history, since we have lost faith in ‘universal history’ and as we have recognized that histories and stories are always manifold and can never be reduced to one? If one identifies interpretative approaches with the understanding of history and its enrichment [Boucher 1985: 61-62], what is it that one understands in approaching history, if it is not ‘history as it actually was’? In other words, if we cannot rely on the background of ‘history as it actually was’, if the only background we can rely on consists in our situation and our capability of interpretation, then how can we differentiate and analyze interpretative approaches? If interpretation is identified with historical narratives in general, how can we make a difference, how can we tell different interpretative approaches apart?

In my view, the situation of the discipline today provides two possible answers to these questions. The first one can be derived from discursive analysis, from the study of the ways historical narratives employ different discourses – a perspective I will leave aside in order to focus on the second answer. The second solution can be drawn from the lectures read by Heidegger in the summer semester of 1923, more precisely §§16-28, 21-26, and the relevant discussion in *Being and Time*, starting with §12 and focusing on Part I, Chapter 5 (mainly §§32 and 33). I will use John van Buren’s translation of *Ontology - The Hermeneutics of*

Facticity [Heidegger 1999] and Joan Stambaugh's translation of *Being and Time* [Heidegger 1996].

My starting point will be Heidegger's analysis of 'being in a world' (In-der-Welt-sein). The hypothesis will be that this applies not only to the conditions of possibility of the encounter with the world, but also to the conditions of possibility of more particular encounters and therefore that it is usable as a conceptual foundation for analyzing the conditions of the encounter with historical narratives. The analysis will try to demonstrate that the fundamental situation of Dasein describes the situation of every historian or historiographer.

In *Ontology - The Hermeneutics of Facticity* the fundamental question 'What does being in a world mean?' is fragmented into the questions 'What is meant by *world*? What does *in* a world mean? And what does *being* in a world look like?' [§18]. Heidegger develops the first question into 'What does 'world' as the 'where in' of being mean?', which leads him to the statement that "The world is something being encountered (Welt ist, was begegnet)."

The unusual usage of 'being encountered' (begegnet) puts equal emphasis on the passive and active moment of this encounter, and the German word has even less subjective connotations than the English.

It is important to take into account the difference between the problem of encountering 'narratives of before' and the essentially dissimilar problem of the historical and its discussion in the context of time, in the last part of Heidegger's most famous work: *Being and Time*.

The point of Heidegger's analysis in his early lectures on phenomenology of facticity is, in his words, "to provide an indication of the modes of the being-encountered and being-there of 'mere things.' [§22]

This analysis builds on a perspective opened by Heidegger to think historical narratives and their writing and reading as 'mere things' constituted by their 'being encountered' in order to provide a foundation for the effort of answering questions posed by the concept of interpretative approaches. This, in its turn, would give us the opportunity to explain the conditions for the possibility of historical narratives.

The explanation of the constitutive moments that make the encounter possible, the as-what and how it is being encountered, requires understanding the significance – the how of being, the categorical

dimension of being-there – and so requires understanding how significance constitutes this being-there-in-the-world, the phenomenal context of significance [§18]). In *Ontology - The Hermeneutics of Facticity* this explanation becomes visible in the phenomena of disclosedness, familiarity, the unpredictable and comparative, which should make explicit the ways in which signifying constitutes this being-there-in-the-world [Dasein]. I will claim that they make the constitution of the encounter with historical narratives explicit as well.

"Disclosedness shows itself in two basic characteristics: (1) the characteristic of availability in advance, (2) the characteristic of advance appearance of a with-world (i.e. bringing out the appearance of those with us in the world, holding them in appearance). ... Available in advance brings about the appearance of 'the others' in their being-there, a definite sphere of those with us in life which defines itself from out of everydayness. ... Whatever one's-self is, one is it in the world with others – it defines itself from out of and on the basis of what one in advance comes to appearance as, with the others and in contrast to *them*. The everydayness of Dasein has its Dasein there for itself and seeks on the path of heeding what the others say about it, what its pursuits look like to the others, how the others in advance come to appearance within its pursuits." [§21, 72]

The availability of with-world, the availability of the others in what Dasein seeks is of crucial importance to the encounter with the 'narratives of before'. This encounter never happens in a state of tabula rasa, in an empty space waiting to be filled - with the 'past as it really was'. The encounter with historical narratives is inescapably an encounter 'with others in this situation'.

The availability of with-world is intertwined with another exemplary phenomenon of signifying analyzed by Heidegger: familiarity. "The advance availability of what we encounter and the advance appearance of those whom we encounter in a with-world are well-known ... in the sense that they are the wherein in which *one*, corresponding to what and who is to be encountered, knows one's way around, one's self. Everydayness thoroughly dominates the definite relations in these contexts of reference. ... This being-well-known in the with-world is one which is average... This familiarity is not simply a characteristic of comprehension, but rather a mode of the being-encountered." [§24. *Familiarity*]

In our encounters with 'narratives of before', we also orient ourselves towards and are guided by familiarity, which makes possible the significance and signification of what we encounter. Familiarity is what we bring with ourselves into this encounter with the narratives of the past, what enables us to recognize the encountered.

The unpredictable and comparative become possible against the background of familiarity. "Only on the basis of this familiarity can something *strange* come forth within the initial givens of the there of the world which are closest to us - it is something unfamiliar, 'stands in the way,' 'comes at an inconvenient time,' 'is uncomfortable,' 'disturbing,' 'awkward', 'hindering'." [Heidegger 1999: 77]

This analysis makes explicit one of the characteristics of the encounter with 'narratives of before': the strangeness of the traces of the past interwoven with familiarity in ways that make its narration possible.

Heidegger's analysis of those constitutive moments of the "signification of what is encountered in a definite manner" – disclosedness, availability, familiarity, unpredictability and comparability – which are also constitutive of the encounter with the 'narratives of before', offers a promising starting point for an ontological explanation of the concept of historical interpretation that can be outlined in the following way:

An **encounter** essentially involves **being-there** and what is coming across, the **encountered**. Being-there is **in-the-world**, thrown into the world, and because of this inescapably **involved** (in the average/das Man). What comes across – the encountered – is **recognized**, grasped as something familiar, and therefore **understood**. Interpretation can be defined as the **process** of recognition, the process of **coming** to understand.

What we encounter when we are dealing with history are narratives of 'before', narratives about 'a past' that already no longer exists. It is precisely as narration of what already does not exist that makes them historical narratives, yet what is encountered in them is constituted by the encounter of before and now, by coming across now what was before, and therefore what is encountered in history is essentially structured as a trace.

If this is the case, then historical narratives are best understood as descriptions of encounters, not only with events but also with other narratives or with other descriptions of encounters; in that sense, historical narratives are **stories** about encounters.

Since encounter is made possible by the familiarity and so by the understanding of what is encountered, understanding is constitutive of historical descriptions. Thus historical narratives are founded on interpretation because interpretation is the process of coming to understand, the process of re-cognizing and construing what is encountered. In view of this, historical interpretation is understandable as an effect of encountering traces of what no longer exists, as a sequence of choices made in the process of building a narrative description of an encounter.

A constitutive feature of choice is that it makes differences. Since interpretation is a sequence of choices made in telling the story of an encounter, one can approach it by studying what makes differences in historical narratives. And this gives one the opportunity of redefining the concept of interpretative approaches to history as a study of choices constitutive of historical interpretations, aimed at detecting and describing what makes differences in describing encounters with what was before, and therefore at analyzing the different ways of describing such encounters. This allows one to answer the question 'what is it that we are approaching in our approaches to history' without reference to 'history as it actually was' and without treating historical interpretation as a supplement to the facts, by stating that what we are approaching in our approaches to history is the encounter with narratives about 'before'.

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GROUNDING ETHICAL NORMS IN HEIDEGGER'S *MITSEIN*

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Abstract:

While Heidegger didn't seem much interested in ethical norms in his *Being and Time*, more recently Frederick A. Olafson has argued that Heidegger's conception of *Mitsein* yields some fundamental insights for a grounding of morality. Olafson proposes an account in which truth as a partnership among people can establish a link between *Mitsein* and primary moral notions, such as responsibility and trust. My concern with Olafson's account is twofold: first, I am not convinced that *Mitsein* really grounds people's mutual commonality to the point he wants it to take – the point that seems to suggest that we conceive of ourselves almost as interchangeable with any other member of our "world", at least to the extent to which we value our own experiences and interests over those of others. My second worry has to do with the fact that *Mitsein*, even if it indeed does ground ethical constraints for those who share a "world", gives us no grounds to extend these same constraints to those outside it, and a lack of commitment to establishing moral duties that can be universalized seems to be a serious weakness in any moral theory – even in one that does not attempt to produce moral rules as objective and absolute.

Key words: Heidegger, *Mitsein*, Frederick A. Olafson, Ethical norms.

1. Introduction

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger is not interested in articulating issues that deal directly with morality; he shows interest neither in such concepts as standards of right vs. wrong, or good vs. bad, nor is he especially concerned with any resulting ethical constraints and obligations.¹ However, one of the notions he introduces in this book seems quite perti-

nent to ethics: this is the phenomenon of *Mitsein* or "our being in the world together with one another", which is discussed in Chapter IV of *Division One*. It seems that anyone who has attempted to talk about Heidegger's philosophical work in connection with moral issues so far has centered on this concept of our "being with others", as well as the surrounding notions of solicitude, authenticity, resoluteness, and responsibility.

Moral inquiry in connection with Heidegger is interesting for two reasons: first, an attempt at revealing possible normative implications of such a widely discussed and disputed text is certainly a reasonable enterprise to undertake, as much for a Heidegger scholar as for someone interested in ethical theory in a broader sense. Second, Heidegger's own life was overflowing with actions and beliefs that many today find morally problematic, to say the least – he was an avid supporter of Nazism, and the question has been posed many times whether any sort of connection can be found between Heidegger's philosophical writings and his political views. Do ideas in *Being and Time* propagate beliefs that are supportive of Heidegger's political behavior, or are they in sharp contrast to it? And, of course, there is the third option: can any connection between the two be drawn at all, considering that Heidegger did not address ethical questions at all in this most famous of his texts? Obviously we must first find out whether *Being and Time* can at least be interpreted as grounding any ethical norms, if the initial question is to make sense at all, and for this the notion of *Mitsein* or "Being-with" seems most appropriate.

In *Heidegger and the Ground of Ethics – A Study of Mitsein*, Frederick A. Olafson introduces an attempt to ground moral norms in Heidegger's no-

¹ All references to *Being and Time* are from Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1962, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson.

tion of “Being-with.”² Olafson’s project is to show that the concept of *Mitsein* understood as essential for our being yields a fundamental insight for ethics that Heidegger himself did not develop; his aim is thus to reveal ethical potentialities of the concept in question and to show that the resulting theory is compatible both with Heidegger’s writings and our own general conception of how moral norms and constraints come to play such an important role in our lives. Olafson’s central thesis is an analogy between the importance *Mitsein* has for our relation to the truth (or knowledge) on the one hand, and our ethical relationships on the other. He uses the term “truth as partnership” to direct attention to the fact that we do not gain knowledge of the world by ourselves, but rather through a joint project of disclosing the world and its entities together with other people who are in an important sense like us. Most of the implications of *Mitsein* rely heavily on the notion that we understand other human beings to be very similar to us – we do not perceive ourselves as separate from them, but rather as “one among many”. Only if we understand our relationship to others in this way can we make sense of the fact that we take other people’s experience of the world to be just as important to determining the truth as our own perceptions are.

Olafson proposes an account in which truth as a partnership among people can establish a link between *Mitsein* and primary moral notions, such as responsibility, trust, etc. The fact that we recognize Others as being very much like us grounds the experience of other people’s beliefs and perceptions as being of a similar kind as our own beliefs and experiences, and are as such relevant to our own knowledge. In a very similar way this experience grounds our awareness that other people have interests that are as important to them as ours are to ourselves. We are further aware that our choices affect other people’s interests, and that, given the specific character of *Mitsein*, we cannot think of our own interests as having a priority over the interests of others. For Olafson, our recognition of another human being as complementing our own being is prior to the definition of substantive normative rules that guide our relations with others.

My concern with Olafson’s account is twofold; first, I am not convinced that *Mitsein* really grounds people’s mutual commonality to the point he wants it to take – the point that seems to suggest that we conceive of ourselves almost as interchangeable with any other member of our “world”, at least to the extent to which we value our own experiences and interests over those of others. It just seems that, no matter how badly mistaken the dualist approach to personhood is, there is nevertheless a vital difference between my access to my own mental states as opposed to the access I have to the mental states of other people, and this regardless of how very “like myself” other people are. My second worry has to do with the fact that *Mitsein*, even if it indeed does ground ethical constraints for those who share a “world”, gives us no grounds to extend these same constraints to those outside it, and a lack of commitment to establishing moral duties that can be universalized seems to be a serious weakness in any moral theory – even in the one that does not attempt to produce moral rules as objective and absolute.

I will first introduce Heidegger’s concept of *Mitsein* as presented in *Being and Time*, and then proceed with a more detailed explanation of Olafson’s account. I will then present my concerns surrounding Olafson’s attempt at grounding morality in *Mitsein* more thoroughly.

2. Dasein and Mitsein

Before introducing the concept of *Mitsein* or “Being-with” in Chapter IV of *Being and Time*, Heidegger explains his understanding of human beings as essentially embedded in the world they inhabit – “Being-in-the-world” is the central concept in his thought. He uses the term *Dasein* (“Being-there”) in order to express the notion that human beings cannot be understood unless they are seen as existing “in the world”, i.e. “there”. *Dasein* (understood generally as ‘human beings’) is essentially grounded in the world: it is *thrown* into the world, and it thus finds itself in the setting of its experience. “Being-in-the-world” is therefore a basic state of our being, and as such co-determines its every mode.

Heidegger understands the world as an environment in which one dwells; rather than representing the entire universe of all human beings, it corresponds to the world of our everyday concerns in which we get familiar with the entities that inhabit it.

² Frederick A. Olafson, *Heidegger and the Ground of Ethics: A Study of Mitsein*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

In this world – our environment – we encounter entities that are either ready-to-hand or present-at-hand – depending on our dealing with them, namely whether we unreflectively use them merely as equipment (more basic relation to objects), or whether they become objects of contemplative investigation. These are objects or things whose mode of being is essentially *unlike* that of *Dasein*. However, in the world we also encounter entities that are rather *like* ourselves, namely other people. But others do not merely disclose themselves to us: our being is essentially *intertwined* with theirs. Just as *Dasein* is never without the world's physical objects, so it is never without its existential subjects – we always share our world with others: Being-in-the-world *involves* Being-with-others. To put it in more familiar terms: the essence of human existence is inseparable from the social and natural world which surrounds it.

What does this necessary presence of other human beings imply? Surely not only their *mere presence*: the way in which we perceive other human beings is essentially different from the way in which we perceive entities that are ready-to-hand or present-at-hand; we encounter the Others through their "*Dasein-with*" in the world. The Others are not understood as completely external objects, but rather as beings we relate to; we are together in the world with them in a mode of disclosing both them and other entities, and in this their (as well as our own) being differs from the existence of mere objects, while at the same time it makes us and other beings more similar to each other. The Other has the same kind of Being as *Dasein* which discloses it. Because of this important similarity, the sense of the 'other' includes ourselves – *Dasein* is essentially connected with others:

By 'Others' we do not mean everyone else but me – those over against whom the 'I' stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does not distinguish oneself – those among whom one is too.³

This kind of entity thus has the feature of turning up both as self (Ego) and as other (Alter). The Other is in some sense recognized as "a duplicate of the self".⁴ Like ourselves, these Others have a subjective

relationship with the same world we do, the phenomenon which is experienced as co-presence.

Heidegger proceeds with explaining that the Being of *Dasein* is to be interpreted in general through the phenomenon of care. *Dasein* reveals itself through care in its being with entities, as well as more generally in its Being-in-the-world; being with things thus entails being concerned with them or taking care of them. Given that the other human beings which we encounter and comport ourselves toward do not have the kind of Being which belongs to entities that are ready-to-hand, other people are not objects of concern, but rather of *Fursorge*.⁵ (*Fursorge* can be either authentic, i.e. one that liberates, or inauthentic, i.e. one that dominates.) Since *Dasein* is essentially "Being-with", its understanding of Being as such necessarily implies the understanding of the Others' Being as well. And because *Dasein* so understands others, it is concerned with them – it is not merely "with them" in some crude sense of people finding themselves next to each other in a limited space; rather, the entities that stand in this relation of co-presence are, according to Heidegger, "for the sake of one another". Everyday *Dasein* is not merely "I" myself – we are with others, therefore *Dasein* is essentially *Dasein-with*, and the world of *Dasein* is essentially a "with-world" (*Mitwelt*).

3. Olafson's Thesis

In *Heidegger and the Ground of Ethics*, Frederic A. Olafson draws on Heidegger's concept of *Mitsein* in order to show that the idea that human beings are essentially "being with one another" can make an important contribution to our understanding of the whole ethical aspect of our lives. For Olafson, a grounding of ethics depends essentially on the ontology of human nature: a ground of ethics is a distinctive relation between human beings rather than a supreme moral truth from which one can deduce rules of conduct. The mode in which human beings are in the world together with one another is, according to Heidegger, one of disclosing both other entities and themselves. This is a special character of

⁵ The notion of *Fursorge* means literally "caring for", and is translated as "solicitude" in Macquarrie & Robinson. Olafson, however, suggests "caring about", which supposedly encompass the phenomenon Heidegger had in mind more accurately.

³ Heidegger, p. 154

⁴ Ibid., p. 162

the relationships among individual human beings that is, for Olafson, of central importance for moral philosophy. His thesis is that “our being for the sake of others” follows from “being-with” which is a relation of co-presence, or, as he terms it, reciprocal presence. According to Olafson, a recognition of other human beings as complementing one’s own being precedes the definition of substantive rules of conduct; also, a philosophical account of *Mitsein* can help us achieve a better understanding of the sense in which human beings are said to generate the constraints to which they themselves are subject, and why incoherence results if we attempt to reject the rules to the formation of which we have contributed ourselves.

Mitsein and truth

Olafson’s aim is to show that there is a fundamental insight in Heidegger’s account of *Mitsein* that Heidegger does not develop, but it nevertheless contains promising potentialities for a grounding of ethics. Olafson starts his story by first introducing the special character of *Mitsein*, without trying to connect it to moral rules right at the beginning, but rather to present its importance for our process of gaining knowledge. The notion of “being-with” makes apparent the fact that we identify and understand other beings like ourselves in pervasively purposive terms. We see others as beings who are dealing with the same world we ourselves are dealing with, and through this we learn to understand ourselves as well. Furthermore, our relationships to others are characterized by dependence, since the beings with whom we are primarily dealing are “defined by their capacity to satisfy needs we cannot satisfy ourselves”.⁶

It is important to realize that we do not depend on others simply in a very direct sense, as if they were mere providers for our most basic needs: they also have access to experiences and facts we ourselves do not have access to. Since they are dealing with the same world as we are, but are familiar with the aspects of our common world we ourselves are not familiar with, we depend on them for information about our own world. As we encounter one another, we see in another human being someone whose observations are in principle just as relevant to the determination of truth and falsity as our own

observations are. We even learn to understand the kind of entity we ourselves are through this relation to other like beings. This understanding of the world which depends essentially on others who are very much like us is therefore a constitutive element in all our perceptions and thoughts about the world. It is thus exactly the notion of *Mitsein*, or “being-with-others”, which provides the necessary condition for all further understanding of the world we dwell in. The whole enterprise of any kind of knowledge thus depends on this sort of partnership with others.

Olafson explains this codependent relationship between us and others as a sort of balancing between identity (ourselves) on the one hand, and difference (others who are like us) on the other; as a pairing of Ego and Alter. When one so understands *Dasein* through *Mitsein*, it becomes clear that the lines separating ‘mine’ from ‘yours’ are not that well defined in this system of “prudential cooperation” but are rather abstracted from an underlying condition of “being-with”. Ego soon becomes aware that its actions affect the Alter and its world; also, Alter has the status of a co-discoverer of the truth, and as such cannot be consistently denied a role in the discovering of what Ego is doing. This reciprocal character of our presence between other beings which are significantly like us constitutes *the domain of truth*.

How is all this directly relevant to the project of grounding ethics? Olafson believes that the same line of thought that has led to the conclusion that the presence of other beings that are like us is a necessary condition for our being able to gain any knowledge of our world can be extended in such a way as to yield a characterization of the way we co-exist with one another. Namely, people do not turn to each other merely for information, but also for support in their active undertakings. We not only have cognitive abilities, but also volitional and active ones, and in this latter relation actions are means to the ends produced by one’s volitions. It seems that the kind of cooperation which involves such dependence among individuals would be impossible if there were no normative standards for actions that affect other people. But Heidegger’s writing leaves a void around the questions that concern the role of *Fursorge* in its ethical implications; the notion of “authentic responsibility” is another concept that has important implications for ethics, yet Heidegger does not address these. Olafson believes that an amplification of Heidegger’s entire account of *Mitsein*, as well as its surrounding notions, is needed if one is

⁶ Olafson, p. 23

to show their ethical import. For Heidegger, we achieve authentic responsibility by choosing "choice" as our governing modality; Olafson wants to show that "the choices human beings make can be subject to ethical constraints from which we cannot release ourselves simply by choosing to do so."⁷

Responsibility and trust

In Heidegger's account, a conception of responsibility derives from the fact that each of us must respond to the situations we find ourselves in by taking some action (inaction is a matter of choice just the same). According to Heidegger, in such situations one acknowledges that whatever action he takes it is his. Unless the author specifically intends the masculine, standard usage would be the feminine.

I am not sure what is missing here. Maybe 'facts'?

Standard usage would be the feminine, here, unless the author specifically means the masculine.

See note 4

This is my best guess at the meaning of this sentence.

Where does this quote end?

own and no one else's. We have a responsibility to choose, and taking this responsibility is a condition of achieving authenticity in one's actions and choices. The question Heidegger does not pose, but is of interest for Olafson, is whether it is possible to be responsible without taking into consideration anything except our own preferences. For Olafson, a negative answer follows simply from the nature of *Mitsein*. It is namely a fact that my choice represents my own interests, and both my choices and interests stand in some relation to other people's interests: a responsible person must therefore have a reason for the priority of his. Unless the author specifically intends the masculine, standard usage would be the feminine.

I am not sure what is missing here. Maybe 'facts'?

Standard usage would be the feminine, here, unless the author specifically means the masculine.

See note 4

This is my best guess at the meaning of this sentence.

Where does this quote end?

own interests over those of others. This kind of responsibility is, according to Olafson, implicit in the relationship in which we stand to other people simply at the level of co-disclosure of our common world. Just as is the case with the project of discovering the truth, we are concerned to produce an understanding of what is the case that we all can share when it comes to choices about our actions as well. But are the quests for "what is true" and "what is right" really that similar? Here is what Olafson has to say on the subject:

When we are trying to determine what is the case, that is, *true*, the outcome of such an inquiry must be the same for everyone. When it is a possible *action* under consideration, the consequences of that action will differ widely from one person to another. But if it can be shown to be preferable to any other in terms of the way it affects people's lives, then there is a sense in which consequences will be the same for all; and in that respect it will be like truth. [...] *Mitsein* commits us, in the field of action, to an attitude toward others that is in its essence comparable to that toward our partners in the search for truth.⁸

Olafson's thesis is, then, that although there is no preceding truth about what we are to do, we can use the disclosure of truth as a model for the disclosure of our actions and choices. "What makes this a valid parallelism is the fact that we are dealing with other human beings whose relation to what is the case as well as to what might be the case is in principle the same as ours."⁹

Responsibility is thus understood as the foundational concept for ethics. Furthermore, my "being responsible" entails responsibility *to* someone, therefore that someone must be able to rely on me. It is clear that what is disclosed in the world by human beings cannot become a resource for others in the relevant sense unless "there is a disposition to rely

⁷ Ibid., p. 49

⁸ Olafson, p. 54 (emphasis added)

⁹ Ibid., p. 55

upon it on the part of the human being to whom it is made available.”¹⁰ Since people’s interests may be affected by the truth or falsity of what they are made to believe, truthfulness is clearly an ethical disposition. So, the person I am responsible to must be able to rely on me; *trust*, coupled with responsibility, thus constitutes the partnership out of which specific modes of ethical relations (e.g. obligations) arise. So far it seems as if the only ethical obligation we have is to be truthful – but Olafson points out that there are other modalities of ethical relation that involve responsibility and trust: “What is required is help – one form or another of assistance that enables us to achieve something or to avoid some bad outcome that would otherwise occur.”¹¹

Olafson’s objective seems to be that there are worse and better ways to “be with others”, and that some implicit responsibility is assumed on the part of any member of a society to play by the rules that will enable an optimal level of cooperation. Promise-keeping is thus present both in direct cases where an explicit promise has been made, as well as in expectations that one will not harm others and will help them – and the practice of promise-keeping is possible only because the participants share a common understanding of what is required of them. Both truth-telling and promise-keeping (understood widely as a guarantee of behavior that will not harm others and possibly support them in their undertakings) have a character of the relations that are self-imposed, yet binding. For Olafson it is thus ultimately through *Mitsein* that our moral obligations to others arise. According to this view, it is an indisputable fact that our being is essentially “with others”; with other people we are, at least by default, in the relationship of mutual responsibility and trust. To deny this distinctively human commonality with one another by treating people as if they were not partners in *Mitsein* is fundamentally wrong: it is unjustifiable to treat a person as someone who has no claim to any considerations in decisions we make about how to act.¹²

On this view, an obligation to act in a certain way arises from the fact that we are in a relation to other beings that are like ourselves. *Mitsein* namely restricts our choices in fulfilling our own needs by putting before us constraints generated by other peo-

ple’s interests. Olafson argues further that there is an important correlation between the conditions of human happiness and ethical behavior grounded in *Mitsein*. As our being, our own *well-being* is also embedded in *Mitsein*, and is therefore as such pre-ethical. Because of this, “what is good for me” can only be constituted through my relations to others, and as such cannot be independent of ethical considerations – and this yields a further conclusion, namely that what is morally right is far from being necessarily against individuals’ own interests.

4. Shaky Grounds for Ethics

As noted above, I have two different sets of worries concerning Olafson’s approach to grounding ethical norms in *Mitsein*. While these two sets of worries apply to two distinct levels of Olafson’s account, they are nevertheless connected to each other. The first worry is more general and concerns my opinion that the implications of *Mitsein* are taken too far by Olafson; this concern has to do with what seems like an essential confusion about the relationship individuals have to their own interests, as opposed to the interests of others. The second worry deals with the suspicion that *Mitsein*, even if it succeeds in grounding moral obligations among people who share the same “world” in Heidegger’s sense, poses no obligation on us to expand this treatment to people who are removed from our world, so that it can be said that they do not really share the same world we do.

Other people’s interests

Olafson explains ethical constraints and obligations to others as originating from the fact that we recognize other people as being essentially like us in an important way – we learn about ourselves through understanding others, and vice versa. One of the constitutive elements of all our perceptions of the world is this kind of “pairing” of one’s own being with a real or a putative other – the Ego and the Alter. We perceive other humans as entities that share the same perceptions and experiences of the world that we do. Olafson’s thesis depends on a rejection of the dualist view of a human being as a compound of two disparate parts – a body and a mind. If one accepts a dualist premise, then one is committed to a view that we can only observe other

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 61

¹¹ Ibid., p. 65

¹² Ibid., p. 69

people's actions and behaviors (their bodies), but have no access to their thoughts and motives. By contrast, Olafson claims that accepting his view of a human being as a *unitary* entity yields the conclusion that the mode of Being of the "body" is the same as that of "its owner", and that we can therefore understand others' motives through their actions; we do not need an additional access to their "minds". Olafson's claim is that there really is no such thing as "the problem of other minds": we can understand others' thoughts and motives by observing their behavior. Even on many occasions where we actually cannot gain access to what is going on in other people's heads, the reason is *not* that "anything is hidden in the way the dualistic argument supposes."¹³

I do not intend in this place to propose an argument against Olafson's position on this specific topic; let me just note that his view about our access to others' mental states seems at least counterintuitive. Even if Olafson is right in rejecting the dualist perception of a human being, it is not clear why it should follow that the unitary character of our being entails that our access to other people's thoughts is not nevertheless essentially different from the access we have to our own mental states and thought processes. One of our earliest and most stubborn experiences seems to be that our relation to our own mental processes, such as thoughts, beliefs, desires, motivations, interests etc. is *direct*, while the relation to everyone else's is *indirect*, and as such much less reliable. While Olafson is not suggesting that the two experiences are exactly the same, he is certainly unwilling to grant the difference between them the significance it seems to bear:

[W]hile the privacy of certain thoughts and motives cannot be denied a certain role in our relations with one another, it is by no means the fatal barrier to understanding that it is sometimes taken to be.¹⁴

However, this is a task for the philosophy of mind. Yet, Olafson's account becomes pertinent to moral philosophy the very moment he makes an analogy between our access to others' thoughts on one hand and our relationship to their interests on the other. After posing the question of whether *Mitsein* would

even be possible as a phenomenon of "reciprocal presence" if everyone only considered their own preferences as feasible motivations for their actions, he appeals to the very nature of "*Dasein* which is essentially *Mitsein*". Since we are essentially with others, we cannot be simply ignorant of or oblivious to the fact that things matter to others just as they matter to us, although they might be different things:

To leave others and their needs out of the account in the choices we make would thus require either a pretense that we are not effectively making a choice for them as well as for ourselves or an attempt to justify the different weight that is given to one's own preferences over theirs by showing that the action in question serves their interest as well as ours.¹⁵

But to do the former is to deny the whole concept of *Mitsein* – we cannot be consistently aware of our own interests without being at the same time aware of the interests of others that will be affected by our actions. An authentic choice is supposed to represent the true interests of the one who makes the choice – but our interests always stand in some relation to the interests of others, and a responsible person will have to offer persuasive reasons for the chosen action's serving his interests rather than those of others, and it must be above all "compatible with some wider form of life in which there is a place for others that is arguably consistent with their interests."¹⁶

Now, if we accept Heidegger's concept of *Mitsein*, we truly cannot deny that we understand that others have interests as well; we might not share all those interests, but it would be difficult to maintain that we do not understand that fulfilling their interests is as important to them as fulfilling our own is to ourselves. Further, we also cannot but be aware of the fact that acting according to our interests might be going against those of others, and that we therefore also make choices for others when we seemingly only make decisions for ourselves. Yet, there seems to be a world of difference between being *aware* that others have interests (and even exactly what they are), and taking those interests into *consideration* as if they were our own. A claim that others' interests carry as much weight *for our-*

¹³ Olafson, p. 35

¹⁴ Olafson, p. 36

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 53

selves (that is, not only from the agent-neutral perspective, but also from the agent-relative one) as our own interests do seems to presuppose that, at bottom, “what works against your interests also works against mine”, and that we should thus – even for prudential reasons! – take everyone’s interests into consideration when making choices. Indeed it seems that this is a kind of mixture between utilitarianism and contractarianism to which Olafson’s ethical views are committed. But does the fact of *Mitsein* really commit us to this kind of moral theory? It just seems that *Mitsein* fails to provide us with motivation in the way Olafson wants it to.

On the other hand, if Olafson’s account does not rely on the premise that taking other people’s interests into account will also be best for ourselves overall (although this interpretation of his account is less plausible, since he refers to *Mitsein* as a system of “prudential cooperation”),¹⁷ but rather that we must take those interests into account simply in virtue of making responsible and authentic choices, then Olafson is presupposing what he is trying to prove: it is just not clear why making an authentic choice about my actions should depend in any way on how this will affect others. If the constraint is to be an ethical norm, it must *first* be shown why a chosen action would also be a *morally* right action to perform. Olafson’s account thus fails to provide a necessary normative link between “authentic choice” and “moral choice”, and as such fails to provide a convincing argument for his belief that “resoluteness” can be understood as Heidegger’s version of autonomous moral agency.

The limits of Heidegger’s “world”

My first concern with Olafson’s account was about whether *Mitsein* can ground ethical constraints at all. The other, which I am about to introduce now, is a worry that, even if we succeed in grounding normativity of conduct in *Mitsein*, it might yield undesirable results, or at least fail to prevent them from occurring. Namely, *Mitsein* does not presuppose that we are “with” *every* human being alive. Rather, we are with people who are, together with us, “in-the-world”, where the “world” pertains to our more or less immediate environ-

ment, not the entire planet. Olafson explains Heidegger’s concept of the world in a footnote:

The usual conception of what is meant by the word “world” makes it the totality of all the entities that exist. On this view, each of us would simply be one of those entities. By contrast, Heidegger understands the “world” as that in which one dwells as an entity that discloses other entities as well as itself. In this sense, the world is always an *Umwelt* – that is, that which surrounds the “clearing” that each *Dasein* constitutes.¹⁸

Mitwelt – the world we share with others – is a milieu common to the people who inhabit it and who exist in this world “with” each other. Since our environment is constituted only by a fragment of all the humans that live around the globe, it is only these people from our environment that we are “with” when we talk of ourselves as essentially “being-with”. What implications does this have for ethics, if our moral conduct is to be grounded in *Mitsein*? Taking into account that Olafson conceives of the motivation for cooperation with others that we are with as having a *prudential* character, the question arises about the norms which are to guide our conduct around those that do not really inhabit “our” world and/or cannot serve our interests in any way. Since there are no objective, absolute, “pre-*Mitsein*” norms for Heidegger, there would be no sense in supposing that we can refer to some “upper-level morality” which would help us solve these “inter-world” conflicts by suggesting what the morally right thing to do would be. Heidegger writes:

Being with one another is based proximally and often exclusively upon what is a matter of common concern in such Being. A Being-with-one-another which arises from one’s doing the same thing as someone else, not only keeps for the most part within the outer limits, but enters the mode of distance and reserve.¹⁹

¹⁷ See, for example, Olafson p. 26

¹⁸ Olafson, pp. 20-21, footnote 4

¹⁹ Heidegger, p. 159

Since there is no morality outside the totality of such worlds, we can conceive of separated communities among which prudential cooperation takes very different, possibly mutually incompatible, forms. This is by itself not a problem for Olafson, who criticizes the whole conception of “values” as objective criteria for the guidance of our lives. Values, as well as norms, do not “exist” in some mode that would precede *Mitsein*; rather, it is our “being-with” through which all further norms are ultimately constructed. Since there are no absolute norms of cooperation and co-existence, there is no external criterion for judging certain practices wrong – all we can take into account when making such judgments is whether those norms function properly *within* a specific community.

Because our own “world” that we share with others can be conceived as being utterly separate from certain other communities, a question (which is actually becoming more and more pressing in the era of globalization) arises: what norms are supposed to guide our conduct when we encounter people whose mode of being with others is utterly different from our own? If the ethical norms of my community have been established and are as such imperatively action-guiding for me, it would be naïve to suggest that the two communities should learn to establish a completely new reciprocal community, guided by norms that take into account everyone’s interests. I have already been shaped by the norms of my world, and repudiating them for the sake of prudential cooperation with someone else would be clearly against my ethical norms, and as such obviously wrong. Such a suggestion would also pose a problem of taking moral normativity all too lightly, and it would certainly not be in agreement with Olafson’s (and practically everyone else’s) understanding of moral rules as something that are imperative for us and that we cannot release ourselves from just because we want to.

Because of these considerations, we seem to only have two options when encountering a community whose ethical norms are utterly different from our own: we can either try to compromise with them in order to achieve mutual understanding and cooperation, but this might easily pose the above-mentioned problem of repudiating our own moral norms or expecting that others will do so for our benefit. The other option is, of course, to keep our moral norms and then try to impose them on the members of the other community. There is,

unfortunately, no way to determine who would be right and who wrong in the event of the imposition of foreign moral norms, since there are no objective moral facts one could refer to in order to solve the problem. And since there is no concept reigning over the area of moral conduct towards those who are not with us in our “world”, there are also absolutely no grounds for condemning those who impose their own ethical convictions upon others. This yields an undesirable consequence where norms have to be strictly followed within one’s own community, but carry absolutely no weight outside its limits. Olafson himself mentions this kind of phenomenon, referred to as “amoral familism”:

In such a system, everyone who stands outside a particular circle of kinship is deemed ineligible for any relationship that carries with it a moral claim that someone within the circle has to acknowledge. [...] Because that identity consists in members of the same family or clan, it is far narrower than, and very differently conceived from, the identity with one another that [is involved in *Mitsein*].²⁰

Interestingly, Olafson does not seem to be aware that his account of ethics, while perhaps not encouraging it, does nothing whatsoever to prevent such occurrences, although on a different level: not among families and clans, but among different “worlds”. This is my primary worry with theories that try to ground ethics in the fact that we identify with other people because they are similar to us in certain aspects, and should take this fact as a reason for treating them in the same way we would like to be treated. The main problem with such accounts is that they do not require a necessary standard for our identification with others which would encompass all human beings, and they therefore allow the possibility to identify only with those others with whom we share some arbitrary, but in our view essential, characteristics. Although it is obvious from Olafson’s text that this is certainly not the state of affairs he wants his theory to produce, it is indeed questionable whether grounding ethics merely in *Mitsein* can prevent it.

²⁰ Olafson, p. 75

As I mentioned in the beginning, one of the motivations for trying to find connection between Heidegger's philosophical texts and ethical theory is an attempt to shed some light on his open support of Nazism. Unfortunately, if this interpretation of ethical potentialities of *Mitsein* is accurate in the sense that it follows from Heidegger's ideas in *Being and Time*, then we must conclude that his own political views were not completely at odds with his philosophy.

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ONTOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE NEW: ON INDIVIDUALITY ONCE AGAIN

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Abstract:

The present paper is divided into two parts. The first one inquires into the ontological notion of what it is for something to be new in a strict sense, which opens a discussion on the difference between applying and creating ontologization. I am trying to show that the second case has a greater explanatory value. Such a differentiation between two ways of elaborating ontology allows for a demarcation between definitions created by categorization and an inquiry that seeks to understand the individual nature of what is investigated.

The second part concerns the problem of how individuality is to be defined. I start with a few classical topoi on the subject, and then continue with some comments on Alberto Toscano's idea of the individual as an anomaly. My main thesis, as opposed to his position, is that although individuation processes cannot be thought in one overall pattern, there is nevertheless nothing monstrous about individuals in general.

Key words: ontology, new, singularity, individuality, self-individuation.

I. What is "an ontologization of the new"?

The object of the present paper is the ontological investigation of the new. The first step one should take in such an investigation is to obtain a general determination of the new, to define the range of realities that are different from everything that is not new; to "arrange" it as one kind of being, different from all other kinds. However, a crucial problem arises at this point – something in the specific character of the object problematizes the investigation itself; namely, it problematizes the method. How do we investigate something new in the strict sense, so as to ensure the specifics of its particular nature? Accordingly, the question can be reformulated by asking what the appropriate method for ontologiza-

tion of the new is. Can we accomplish an ontologization by applying ontology or we should speak of a creation of ontology?

1. Applying ontology

In the first case, when applying ontology, the general strategy is to apply a ready-made ordering; to search for the place of the investigated item in an already elaborated conceptual scheme.

But for such a quest to be possible, one should know in advance what is being set in order. In this sense, nothing *new* is ontologized; the new is reflected in the light of the old knowledge. A ready-made categorization is applied, by which the new is considered as a multiplication, as a token of the present – which is already typified. One finds out what in the new can be correlated to the present, the first is reduced to the second, and present knowledge becomes more detailed. If we think of any human achievement in the arts or sciences – of any achievement, the nascence of which is possible by virtue of (meaningful) human knowledge and activity, it becomes obvious that these novelties cannot be adequately explained by "simply" categorizing them according to an existent *scheme*. Any new science, for example, not only renders the categorial order of investigated objects more elaborate – it does much more by inquiring into a certain reality in a way that has never been inquired into before. Even if the reality in question is a familiar one, it does not change the obvious fact that in expanding knowledge of it, scientists not only *discover* what is already there, but they also *invent* – things (not only or primarily tools, but mainly ideas) that have never existed before.

However, when applying ontology, two things may happen: either the investigated item is completely categorized, or one gets a "residue".

If the new is exhaustively categorized by the applied categorial system, it is reduced to the already known, the already present.

On the other hand, if it turns out that there's something in the new which does not allow for a categorization, then there are two alternatives about what to do with this residue.

First, it's possible to add a difference in the course of investigation, a new sub-category within the existing ones, in order to maintain the progress achieved so far. And this is constantly done in those areas where research objects have to be subordinated to a taxonomy. For example, when, at the end of the 18th century, the platypus was discovered, the Linnaean taxonomy was extended by a new subclass – the Monotreme mammals (Prototheria) – in order to cover this “new” creature. Umberto Eco eloquently reports the following story: “The first Australian colonists to see the platypus found themselves in the same quandry: they saw it as a mole, and in fact they called it the “water mole”, but that mole had a beak, and therefore it was not a mole. Something perceptible outside the “*mold*” supplied by the idea of mole made the *mold* unsuitable—because to recognize a beak as a beak we would have to presume that the colonists had a “*template*” for the beak.”¹ Then, in 1809, “Lamarck created a new class, the PROTOTHERIA, saying they were not MAMMALS, because they had no mammary glands, and were probably oviparous; they were not birds, because they had no wings, and they were not reptiles, because they had a heart with four chambers.”² The metaphors of *moulds* and *templates*, I think, can legitimately be translated into the notion of *category*. Another example here would be the range of activities which are known as “ontology” in information and computer science.

The second option is to declare the residue for something as unknowable, unique, unintelligible. If one uses a ready-made ontology to categorize the new and come to the conclusion that this “new” is a “residue” that can neither be reduced to the already existing system, nor be explained by a new sub-category, we are led to a situation in which, in an Aristotelian spirit, the unknowability of the individual is declared.

1.1. Reducing the new to the present: differentiation through characteristics

In Aristotle's ontology, every new item is arranged according to genus and species, as well as according to its essential and concomitant features and characteristics; and although there are only ten primary ones³, in their dieresis one may obtain many more differences. We might ask Aristotle, how do we know, how do we understand what are the essential characteristics of the new as such? How can we be certain that we have “hit” on the right ones?

One of the main aspects of the answer that we are going to provide is associated with the unknowability of the individual. We should somehow *already* know which features are essential and which concomitant, in order to “discover” them in the investigation; and what is more, these features are *common* and not *individual* (bones and flesh, and not *those* bones and *that* flesh, according to the standardized example). We should already know the genus and species of the investigated item. But we are only able to know these owing to our present experience. Moreover, when we come across a reality, the essential distinctness of which is not limited to its characteristics (they might be, as in Aristotle's case, form, material, quantity, quality, place, time, relation, position, state, action, and affection; but also any other group of characteristics that we decide to apply) we won't be able to know its essence. For example, we often speak of “properties of mind”, or mental properties. To name just one – “the property of being *in* (or *having a*) pain” is frequently mentioned as the one in which pain might be “de-

³ Cf. Aristotle, Cat., 1 b 20–25: “Each *uncombined word or expression* means one of the following things: - what (or Substance), how large (that is, Quantity), what sort of thing (that is, Quality), related to what (or Relation), where (that is, Place), when (or Time), in what attitude (Posture, Position), how circumstanced (State or Condition), how active, what doing (or Action), how passive, what suffering (Affection)”. In: Aristotle. Categories. On Interpretation. Prior Analytics. Loeb Classical Library No. 325, 1938. Italics mine. There are other English translations of the Categories, for example E. M. Edghill's, where the paragraph has a different translation: “Expressions which are in no way composite signify substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, state, action, or affection.” I explicitly use the first one, as it renders the “interrogating” of each individual thing more lucid; i.e. the questions that are expressed by an “uncombined word or expression”.

¹ Eco, Umberto. (2000). Kant and the Platypus: Essays on Language and Cognition. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, p.59. Italics mine.

² Ibid, p. 244–245

tached” from the pain itself, as if pain could be defined apart from the individual who is “in” it.⁴

Another relevant example here is that no matter how thoroughly we describe Columbus together with the features of the new found *shore*, nothing in this description would help us to recognize the new *continent*. The *idea* of a continent requires much more than the *intuition* or – to choose a more neutral term – the *image* of a large island. Moreover, it’s obvious that nothing in the elaborated categorization prevents Columbus’ land from being India, which is a good reason for insisting that not only the *universal* but also the *particular* and *individual* nature of the new reality might be lost for the categorizing explorer.

2. Creating an ontology

Now, as was mentioned in the beginning, a second way of approaching the *new*, the novel reality, as an object of ontological investigation, appears in the case when the limits and the nature of its being are directly inquired into, when the meaningful⁵ differences by which it is known are elaborated. But this means creating the ontology itself, through which the investigated item is rationalized, articulated. In this case, the ontological particularities of that reality which *inquires* turn out to be as objective as those of what is *inquired into*. In other words, the ontologist, as the particular reality capable of such kind of activity as an (ontological) inquiry, becomes an active part in the process, and not just a conductor, whose only task is, for example, to “recollect” – as if “all inquiry and all learning is but recollection”.⁶

Referring to the active part any inquirer plays in the process of ontologizing any reality is definitely different from the statement that all knowledge is subjective. Inasmuch as Immanuel Kant’s work is often interpreted in the light of such statements, it seems a natural move here to show the difference in his own case. If we read Kant not as an epistemologist but as an ontologist, who inquires into subjectness⁷, i.e. the subject’s own *capacities*, he appears to

be the first to create ontology from that point of view. Recalling the problem of the platypus here, we should take Eco’s words not only as a curious joke: “Kant knew nothing about the platypus, and that should not worry us, but if the platypus is to solve its own identity crisis, it ought to know something about Kant.”⁸ In the present context, this should be read in the sense that *how* the ontologist *inquires* is crucial for articulating the identity of the *investigated* reality.

Moreover, Kant actually works on two levels – he elaborates ontology while inquiring into a new ontological reality, a new “object” – the subjectness, and at the same time he explicates a new method: namely, the work of showing what the transcendental conditions, the objective laws, are by virtue of which it is possible for any being to create ontologies at all. In this sense, the Copernican Turn is not just a turn, but a discovery.

It is clear that if the new is ontologized in this way, we cannot help but create its very concept; and cannot stay within a listing of its features. Furthermore, the new is such a peculiar object that it almost immediately requires being inquired into in parallel with the creation of the method of inquiry. Otherwise, the very concept of the new weakens and what’s new is interpreted as the already present, the already understood, and therefore – as the old. We find ample cases in the history of philosophy showing how inquiry into new phenomena leads to the creation of new methods.

Ontologizing, understood precisely as a creation of ontology, can be interpreted as a commonplace between otherwise significantly different philosophical positions. For example, Kant, Heidegger and Whitehead’s ideas may be thought of in the light of this commonplace. Heidegger “discovers” *Dasein*; he explicitly talks about the irrelevance of classical metaphysical categories. New “categories” of being are needed – the existentials – for the understanding of *Dasein* to be meaningful. Whitehead, on the other hand, in developing the notion of actual entities as self-creating, tries to elaborate an ontology of nature that grasps the natural in its development and alteration, in its processuality; the new realities found in quantum theory and evolutionary hypothesis find their place in this ontology. The question is completely irrelevant here as to whether Whitehead truly grasped the idea of a *self-creating* entity, which is a

⁴ Wittgenstein has much more to say on this in the *Philosophical Investigations* and the *Blue & Brown Books*.

⁵ Here I maintain the differentiation between “reference” and “sense” (or “meaning”) as it is elaborated in Gotlob Frege’s work.

⁶ Cf. Plato, *Meno*, 81d

⁷ Cf. Andonov, A. (2001). *Islam, Christianity and Unbelievers: Ways of Mutuality*. In: *Islamic and Christian cultures: conflict or dialogue*, The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, Washington, pp. 81-86 (p. 86)

“Subject-ness: the ontological capacity of a reality to self-create and to advance self-creation”)

⁸ Eco, Umberto. *Op. cit.*, p. 7

common critique of his conception.⁹ The notion of a universal activity, which creativity is in his conceptual scheme, may suffer from a lack of concreteness; nevertheless, it is beyond question that it takes part in a successful description of a changing universe, constantly yielding novel occurrences.

It turns out that in an ontologization of the new, if one takes into account the difference between the use of ontology and the creation of ontology, nothing prevents us from applying ontology, but the results obtained will be more limited than those that can be reached if one creates ontology, while complying with the investigated item as well as with his or her capacity¹⁰ for ontologization. And here what is ontologically primary is not the categorial arrangement itself, but *the ways in which it is at all possible to create such an arrangement*.

II. The new as individuality

We can find a special feature of the question of the ontology of the new in harking back to Aristotle's unknowable individual. That is, to how it is even possible for the new – in its individuality – to be understood, to be thought of. There's no doubt that the question has a long history and it is constantly being reasked and redefined.

1. The individual/singular

There are many sub-topics lurking behind the label "unknowable individual". Each has its own history of thought, in different contexts and traditions. Here I am going to concentrate on the problem of the differentiation between *singularity* and *individuality*. Despite our habit of seeing the *singular* as the *individual*, or vice versa, the very possibility of discriminating them poses the question of how – in general – individuality occurs. I feel that the question of individuality is more "urgent", for it is just more natural to accept singularity as in a sense easier to define, although roughly – as what is different, separate, other, etc., as anything that we are able to point to in a gesture. I also suggest that any interpretation that follows an etymological path will not be of much use here. Realities, which are not divisible by their own nature, might serve as counter-examples: an individual ecosystem is actually a

"many", and so is not singular. Yet, it is not divisible – remove any of its elements and the system will either be destroyed or you are "simply" going to create another one. Quite the same can be said of any social institution – the elimination of any norm or social "role" has the same effect. The realities in these examples are intentionally chosen to show that the part-whole relation will not solve the case. Thinking of the first instance, it is easy to see that as far as an ecosystem is concerned there is hardly a good reason to define a living being in an in/organic compound as "a part".

2. Individuality and uniqueness

Should we decide to explain individuality by its being *unique*, another difficulty arises. In an article from the end of the last century, "Whitehead, Heidegger and the Paradoxes of the New" James Bradley¹¹ investigates some peculiarities of the topic of "radical novelty", inherent in the work of Whitehead and the later Heidegger. The question of individuals' uniqueness is presented as a paradox here. Whether we choose to discuss, along with Heidegger, the "event"; or with Whitehead, the "actual occasion", what is central for both concepts applies to acts of self-differentiation by which things become what they are. In this sense, the constitution, the "principle" of each reality is nothing else but the difference of its self-realizing coming into being.

But then, what is new in "new", do the *unique* and *unrepeatable*, and the new as such turn out to be incomprehensible and unintelligible in their nature? Does it not follow here, Bradley asks, that we are compelled to confine ourselves to negative elaborations of what cannot be philosophically analyzed? The paradox is that although we've recognized some kind of distinctness of the new, we are at the same time unable to positively describe its content.

To the question so asked, we can answer with another question: doesn't it turn out that Bradley identifies "uniqueness" and "unrepeatability" with individuality? And whatever ontology is applied to that individuality, a "residue" might always appear which does not admit of being understood. Of course, it is possible to call it the uniqueness and unrepeatability of the investigated item, but it is also possible, together with Aristotle, to declare it to be exactly that which is simply not worth dealing with in a quest for knowledge. Thus, when the new is

⁹ Cf. The Metaphysical Significance of Whitehead's Creativity by André Cloots:

<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=3024>

¹⁰ I suppose it would be better if "capacity" were read as "faculty" here, as it does not refer primarily to personal excellence or reputation.

¹¹ Bradley, James. (1991). Whitehead, Heidegger, and the Paradoxes of the New. In: *Process Studies* 20, no. 3 (Fall 1991): 127–150.

ontologized by applying an ontological system, one can reach two opposite conclusions regarding the “residue”. However, the conclusion of the limits of (philosophical) knowledge, leading to the establishment of the tasks, legitimacy, the end (as a goal, or later – as the completion) of philosophy, is a classical topic in the continental tradition, at least since the “Critique of Pure Reason”. According to some of the most famous philosophers of the 20th century, philosophy should be replaced by something else: for Richard Rorty, literature should be substituted for philosophy, for Gianni Vattimo and Stephen Toulmin – a certain kind of rhetoric, and so on.

On the other hand, if the commitment is to create the ontology of the new precisely as such, as a *new*, then it is exactly this uniqueness which grounds that commitment.

3. Once again: Individuality/Singularity and the Principle of Individuation

In a recent work investigating the problem of individuation, as it appears from Kant to Gilles Deleuze, Alberto Toscano notes that there is a historical and conceptual “shift” away from thinking of *individuality* to thinking of the *act of individuation*. Since I do not intend to present a detailed historical overview here, even of the most influential conceptions of individuality, I choose to follow Toscano’s line of thought, in searching for “the philosophers of individuality”. Another, more crucial reason for accepting his suggestion that there is at least one explicit common problem in Kant, Peirce, Simondon and Deleuze’s work stems from the above-mentioned reading of Kant. I find the key notion of self-individuation sufficiently sound in trying to ontologize a new reality.

According to Toscano, the Kantian distinction between auto- and heteronomy is just a “preliminary” answer to the question of the genesis of *individuation* itself; an answer that naturally collapses, even as early as in the later work of Kant (Opus Postumum): “...these late writings provide a novel avenue into Kant’s treatment of individuation... Kant contemplates the option that the organic – this exception to the sovereign and unifying determinations of the understanding – may itself be in need of its own *principle* of individuation.”¹² In any case, Toscano continues, there is “an impasse in Kant’s thinking, motivated by the impossibility of establish-

ing a causality of self-organization for natural systems within a fundamentally dualistic, anti-hylozoist perspective where matter and life are disjoined, with the former functioning as *principle* of individuation whilst the latter is but the inert or passive *material* of individuation.”¹³

Toscano sees alternative answers in Deleuze’s conception of the *difference*, supported by Charles Peirce’s and Gilbert Simondon’s notions of *habit* and *transduction*. Since I think that Toscano is in a bit of a hurry to include one more topic in the “fate” that Western philosophical thinking is doomed to, I would like to advance the idea that the *organic*, and better – to put it in more general terms – the *living, being* may indeed need its own *principle* of individuation, as still quite a reasonable one.

First, let us see in brief how Peirce, Simondon and Deleuze can help us in trying to understand individuality in its becoming.

3.1. Charles Peirce on nature’s habits. Chance vs. Determination

The “habits” of nature, as Peirce calls them, are all partial, changeable, relative regularities; they are *statistical* laws, as opposed to *deterministic* ones. What is more, they are “regular” to different degrees: from the almost total determinacy of planetary movements, in passing through almost spontaneous and free human imagination and thinking, to the nearly complete fortuitousness of the world of micro-objects. Peirce writes:

“If now I, in my turn, inquire of the necessitarian why he prefers to suppose that all specification goes back to the beginning of things, he will answer me with one of those last three arguments which I left unanswered.

First, he may say that chance is a thing absolutely unintelligible, and, therefore, that we never can be entitled to make such a supposition. But does not this objection smack of naïve impudence? It is not mine, it is his own conception of the universe which leads abruptly up to hard, ultimate, inexplicable, immutable law, on the one hand, and to inexplicable specification and diversification of circumstances on the other. My view, on the contrary, hypothesizes nothing at all, unless it be hypothesis to say that all specification came about in some sense, and is not to be accepted as unaccountable. To undertake to account for anything by saying boldly that it is due to chance would, indeed, be futile. But this I

¹² Toscano, Alberto. (2005). *The Theatre of Production: Philosophy and Individuation between Kant and Deleuze*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 51.

¹³ Ibid.

do not do. *I make use of chance chiefly to make room for a principle of generalization, or tendency to form habits, which I hold has produced all regularities.* The mechanical philosopher leaves the whole specification of the world utterly unaccounted for, which is pretty nearly as bad as to boldly attribute it to chance. I attribute it altogether to chance, it is true, but to *chance in the form of a spontaneity which is to some degree regular.*¹⁴

The second anti-necessitarian argument shows that the hypothesis of (pure) chance turns out to be inevitable if one wants to explain growth and complexity; the third one argues against the statement that “chance is not a *vera causa*, that we cannot know positively there is any such element in the universe.”¹⁵

It is important to notice here that according to Peirce nature has precisely a *tendency* for forming habits – which is the (hypothetical) account for each and any *regularity*. (Although the following is not of much relevance here, it is worth mentioning.) No doubt Modernity leaves many aporias unsolved. Most of them can be described as leaving large gaps between the knowing and the known, the living and the non-living, knowledge and faith. But there is no doubt that the same aporias – differently disguised and differently understood – are frequently referred to as the hardest philosophical questions. This is just one of the many possible solutions in resolving these problems by extrapolating notions like “habit”, “choice”, “feeling”, etc. to the *totality of ontic occurrences*.

In the last sentence I did not use “singular” or “individual” expressly, as it seems to me that there’s no sound reason to choose one of them, in following Peirce. In the same way there’s no reason to define Aristotle’s individual as something singular or something individual. To summarize, Peirce’s nature could both be said to singularize itself or to individualize itself.

3.2. Simondon’s *L’individu: The self-individuation of the individual*

Simondon’s “*L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique*” (1966), is, according to Gilles Deleuze, organized around two central topics. First, Simondon observes that *traditionally “the principle of in-*

dividuation relates to an already made, fully constituted, individual.”¹⁶ The second main point is that “*in truth, the individual can only be contemporaneous to his individuation, and individuation, contemporaneous to its principle: the principle must be truly genetic, not simply a principle of reflection.*” The individual is not only the result but the element [*milieu*] of individuation.”¹⁷

“Transduction” is the “mechanism” that drives individuation. Simondon defines it as follows: “a physical, biological, mental, or social operation by means of which an activity propagates itself from one location to another within a given domain, basing this propagation on a structuring of the domain operating from one place to another: each region of the constituted structure serves the following region as a principle and model, as a beginning of its constitution, so that a modification extends itself progressively at the same time as this structuring operation.”¹⁸

In his brilliant interpretation of the nature and limits of the hylemorphic model, Simondon uses the craftsman’s work with ‘clay and mold’ in constructing a brick. There’s an important passage there, which closely resembles Heidegger’s notions of the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand:

“The hylemorphic model corresponds to the knowledge of a man who remains outside the workshop and considers only what enters there and what is done there; to know the true hylemorphic relation, it is not enough even to penetrate inside the workshop and to work with the craftsman: one would need to penetrate inside the mold itself to follow the operation of the capture of form to the various levels of the dimensions of physical reality.”¹⁹

Simondon invites the reader to investigate the process of individuation from the inside, so to speak. He is at pains to show that such an investigation will

¹⁶ Deleuze, Gilles. (2001). Review of Gilbert Simondon’s “*L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique*” (1966). In: *Pli* 12, 2001., 43–49; Italics mine.

¹⁷ Ibid, Italics mine

¹⁸ Simondon, Gilbert. *The Physico-Biological Genesis of the Individual*. Chapter One. English translation by Mr. Taylor Adkins is available at <http://fractalontology.wordpress.com/2007/10/03/translation-simondon-and-the-physico-biological-genesis-of-the-individual/> (Retrieved on 29.09.2009.)

¹⁹ Simondon, Gilbert. *L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1964. Original Translation by Taylor Adkins.; <http://fractalontology.wordpress.com/2007/10/03/translation-simondon-and-the-physico-biological-genesis-of-the-individual/> ; Retrieved: 10.11.2009.

¹⁴ Peirce, Charles S. (1991). *The Doctrine of Necessity Examined*, In: *Chance, Love, and Logic: Philosophical Essays*, University of Nebraska Press, 1991, pp. 199–200; Italics mine.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 201.

convince us that “the true principle of individuation is the genesis itself taking place, i.e. the system in becoming, as its energy self-actualizes.”²⁰ There is no such thing as an external principle of individuation – form or matter, essence or an abstract object, if you prefer. And even if in the allegedly simple case of purely physical objects, the comparison may possess a descriptive value, when we come to think of living beings, it becomes obvious that “the living being is in itself partially its own principle of individuation; it continues its individuation, and the result of a first operation of individuation, instead of being only one result which gradually degrades, becomes the principle of a later individuation. *The individuating operation and the individuated being are not in the same relation except in the product of the technical effort.*”²¹

I find another passage in Simondon’s text crucial in the present context: “Adaptation is a correlative to individuation; it is only possible through individuation. The entire biology of adaptation, upon which an important part of the philosophy of the 19th century relies and that reaches us in the form of pragmatism, implicitly presupposes the already individuated living being as given. The processes of development are set aside: it is *biology without ontogenesis.*”²² The statement expressed here is definitely not just an outdated critique of an old way of doing biology; the obvious oxymoron “biology without ontogenesis” resembles Kant’s insight that living reality is in need of its own principle of individuation. Be that as it may, Simondon’s line of thought goes in a different direction, namely that the individual is not the only model of being; it is *only one of its phases*. So an important point here is that individuality cannot be said to refer to everything that exists.

3.3. Deleuze on difference

And finally, in following Toscano’s listing of the “individuality-philosophers”, we come to Deleuze. Here is a passage from the last part of “Difference and Repetition”: “The essential process of intensive quantities is individuation. Intensity is individuating, and intensive quantities are individuating factors. ... All individuality is intensive, and therefore serial, stepped and communicating, comprising and affirming in itself the *difference* in inten-

sities by which it is constituted.”²³ What is difference, then? It has nothing to do with negativity, as Deleuze often insists, and it is not subordinated to identity. Also, and more importantly, difference is not an empirical relation – it becomes a transcendental principle, which constitutes the sufficient reason of empirical diversity. It turns out that what is different is related to the different from itself through *difference* itself. In the end, differential structures, the Deleuzian “ideas”, turn out to be conditions of the genesis, of the creative transformation of things.

Returning to the problem of individuation, we are now able to see how Deleuzian difference is part of a sophisticated attempt at a genetical explanation of the becoming of individuality. It is no wonder that Deleuze reads Simondon so carefully. In fact, he writes a review of Simondon’s *L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique* wherein he insists that Simondon had set forth “a profoundly original theory of individuation”.²⁴ One of its main points is, to repeat, that the individual can only be contemporaneous with its individuation; and individuation, contemporaneous to its principle: the principle must be truly genetic, not simply “a principle of reflection”. What I would like to argue here is that Deleuze’s standpoint is especially relevant in investigating the individuation of a living reality. For example, a significant turn in social theory and psychology came with the acceptance that, as far as human beings are concerned, imitation is not a condition, but a result of the process of socialization. In other words, we would obtain a better understanding of that process if we stepped back from the idea that there is something like already “formed” individuals who mimic others.

3.4. Back to the Kantian observation

To summarize the last few sections, thinking of individuation can be seen as the movement from a reflective to a genetic explanation. Toscano himself is convinced that “in order to extract the real anomaly of individuation, the differential and preindividual field of production, from its concealment in extensity, philosophy must become, not a theatre of representation, but a theatre of multiplicities.”²⁵ Un-

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Deleuze, Gilles. Op. cit., pp. 45, Italics mine

²³ Deleuze, Gilles. (1994). *Difference and Repetition*. Columbia University Press, New York, p. 246.

²⁴ Deleuze, Gilles. Review of Gilbert Simondon’s “*L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique*” (1966), p. 44

²⁵ Toscano, Alberto, Op. cit., p. 201

fortunately, the last words in Toscano's investigation are in fact a sobering insistence that the individual should be understood "as (an) *anomaly*."²⁶ We recall that our departure point was Aristotle's unknowable individual; and at first sight it is not that satisfying to end up with the individual as an anomaly. In the case of the platypus, Eco does not hesitate in insisting that it is not an anomaly or a monster, and what is more, "given the platypus's very early appearance in the development of the species, I insinuate that it was not made from the pieces of other animals, but that the other animals were made from pieces of the platypus."²⁷

III. Conclusion

Finally, if we do not confine ourselves to describing individuals' natures as anomalous, perhaps we can continue working in a line of thought acknowledging that individuation processes and realizations do indeed play *different* roles when *different* ontic realities are concerned. Even if there are cases where it is not of crucial importance to distinguish individuality from singularity, quite the opposite might be the case with other realities. Even if there are objects that exist only as individuals, this does not mean that individuation is, for the cause, a phase, *a moment* of another's' being. Even if it is beyond question that living beings are the individuals *par excellence*, that does not mean that their individuality is something always present and predetermined, as far as ontogenesis in general is concerned.

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²⁶ Ibid, *Italics mine*.

²⁷ Eco, Umberto. Op. cit., p. 6

UNDERSTANDING PLATO'S THEORY OF JUSTICE AND CREATING SOCIAL ORDER

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Abstract:

Plato's theory of justice is central in philosophical discourse. The canon of this theory is that every individual has an innate ability that can be harnessed to contribute to national development. Plato is of the view that grounding human ability in departmental excellence will promote a division of labour and enhance productivity, efficiency and effectiveness.

Plato's defense of justice is an attempt to correct the position of the sophists that injustice is preferred to justice. The Republic (Ideal state), one of his greatest dialogues, demonstrates the necessity of adopting a universal notion of justice as an instrument of social and moral regulation.

Justice means one man, one job based on one's capacity and capability. Criticisms have trailed this theory as the forerunner of authoritarianism and despotism. The strongest criticism sees Plato's paradigm as the enemy of the open society as a result of the strict division of society into dominant classes.

Key words: Plato's theory of justice, social order, morality, political philosophy.

Definition of justice

When we talk about justice, the first thing that comes to mind is a just social order, because this is where justice can make sense. In an unjust social and political order, justice is likely to be misplaced and this might create tension resulting in political crisis. The emergence of justice as a philosophical theme in Greece in Plato's time is a result of growing tension between political reality and what we think politics ought to be. Plato was disturbed with the growing perversion of justice, especially with the trial and execution of Socrates who was seen as the wisest man of his days. Plato observed that the trouble in Athens was becoming deep as it affected property, well-being of life and the human condition. He was concerned with that 'humaness' in

man which is at stake. He felt that a philosophical transformation was necessary not only for the society but also for man. The existing political order was unjust and it favoured what Thrasymarchus called justice as the interest of the stronger.

Just and justice were mentioned in earlier Dialogues of Plato (*Hippias Minor* 375d–376b; *Gorgias* 483a–484C, Omoregbe, 1991). None of these Dialogues contains the explicit question: What is justice? From here we could conclude that the question of what justice is constitutes a Platonic philosophical problem. In book one of the *Republic*, justice is defined as keeping one's promise or the redemption of a debt (*Republic* Book 1 P.16). These definitions are criticized on the ground that some circumstances could make them inappropriate. Take, for instance, a situation where somebody gives you a knife to keep but comes back to take it when his mental disposition is questionable. Would you return the knife knowing what he is likely to do with it? Likewise, assuming somebody gives you some money to keep but by the time he comes back for the money he is already drunk, would you return the money to him in that mental state? It is obvious from these questions that to arrive at an acceptable definition of justice is indeed a problematic venture.

For Polemarchus, the son of Cephalus, one of Socrates' interlocutors, justice is to help one's friends and harm one's enemies. His definition appears to rely on the Homeric mentality. Homeric heroes come to the rescue of their friends and retaliate against their enemies in a political space where rulers or kings determine the limits of one's action, define transgression and call for punishment (Havelock, 1978; 189–192, Bloom, 1968:316–325).

For Herodotus, justice means fairness in judgment. The retributive dimension of justice is clearly expressed when it is divine and not human. For the gods, justice means balancing offences and punishments, while the agents of suffering or reward may be different human entities, individuals, families, cities or nations (Ophir, 1991:53). In fact,

neither human nor divine justice is as of much concern to Herodotus who describes the rise and fall of the agents involved in exercising justice and injustice as an aspect of precarious human happiness. Justice, whether present or absent, is a rather marginal characteristic of human affairs, and is an unpredictable, uncontrollable feature of divine intervention in the world of man (Immerwahr, 1966:21ff., 237). Herodotus maintains that justice still lies more in heaven than on earth; it does not interact with reason, and its political context is not fully appreciated. Justice is still confined to an act or to an individual by virtue of its action. It is irrelevant to intelligence, for many cunning and wise men appear to be unjust; and it may be a factor within a political system that is supposed to determine its nature.

In an attempt to examine the concept of justice, we have observed some of its characteristics, as well as the scope and validity of justice. These are made clear by such words as fairness in judgment and retribution. We also saw Plato's effort in preserving the humanness in justice. This compels us to examine the social and legal aspects of justice. What is the relationship of social justice to justice in general?

Social justice, in the opinion of John Rawls, refers to the distribution of benefits and burdens on a society, as it results from major social institutions, property systems, and public organization. It deals with such matters as the regulation of wages and where they exist, profits, the protection of person's rights through the legal system, the allocation of housing, medicine, and welfare benefits (Rawls, 1972, Miller, 1976:22). Legal justice concerns the punishment of wrongdoing and the compensation of injury through the creation and enforcement of a public set of rules (the law). Two types of issues are mainly dealt with. First, it stipulates the conditions under which punishment may be inflicted, adjusts the scale of punishment to fit the nature of different crimes, and, in the sphere of civil law, regulates the amount of restitution which must be made for injuries. Secondly, it lays down procedures for applying the law – the principles of fair trial and the right of appeal (Miller, 1976:22).

We have observed that although both social and legal justice are products of justice, certain criteria are applicable to each of them. It is equally worthy of note to observe that in analyzing the two concepts, certain moral inputs will be common to both. What is being said here is that legal justice will serve as a tool of realizing the concept of social justice. To this end, this research might be expected to focus on justice in general as Plato investigates it in the *Republic*. The reason for this is to achieve a more coherent analysis and to avoid technical

details. To this extent, effort will be made to examine and evaluate the angles of emphasis from the point of view of Thrasymarchus and Socrates.

In Plato's *Republic*, especially books one and two, Thrasymarchus, a strong member of the sophist school, maintains that justice is the expression of the will of the strongest men in the society. He is strongly of the view that injustice appears to have an upper hand in place of justice. His thesis is comprehended in a philosophical dictum "might is right." Plato's own conception of justice is stressed, thus "every one doing his duty without interference". Now, there is a disagreement between Socrates and Thrasymarchus. Thrasymarchus appears to be positive on what justice is in the context of Greek political and social experience. His position is a reflection of the moral bankruptcy that characterizes democratic Athens. His position should not be seen as trivial or empty verbiage. Thrasymarchus appears to give a clear picture of the practical dimension of justice.

Socrates analyzes justice from an ideal point of view. According to him, justice is giving everyone his due. A realization of this justice is possible in a well-organized, tranquil, political and social order. It may not be realizable where a few tyrants hijack the political process and unleash terror on their fellow human beings. From this point of view, a re-definition of social justice will make sense and relieve it of such issues of intellectual abuse and cover-up. Such cover-up obstructs the real intention of what social justice stands for. On this perspective let us listen to Barker (1925:176–177), who argues that

social justice thus may be defined as the principle of a society, consisting of different types of men... who have combined under the impulse of their need for one another, and by their combination in one society and their concentration on their separate functions, have made a whole which is perfect because it is the product and the image of the whole of the human mind.

If Barker understands the Platonic conception of justice, as allowing every man his best in a just society to promote not only productivity, but also the course of man's spiritual and social well-being, then cognizance must be given to men who have acquired a philosophic disposition through mental and intellectual excellence. We have argued elsewhere that such skills are scattered in various disciplines as a result of the eruption suffered by philosophy. What we are saying in effect is that such skills have been acquired by some scholars who have attained through rigorous education the spiritual power and

discipline of philosophy (Unah, 2002:26). From this point, these skills are not limited to those with philosophical training but is also available to all those who have, through research in mental excellence, contributed to the development of society, no matter the epoch. Emphasis here is on specialization through a separation of functions. If we put into use our different skills, there will be harmony and by extension peace in the society. Another definition of social justice is given by Ozumba (2001:64) where he looks at it from a utilitarian perspective. Utilitarianism as an ethical theory looks at social justice as providing the greatest happiness to the greatest number. Social justice in this context directly seeks the welfare of everybody. A just man, therefore, is one who in all circumstances and situations acts in matters of distribution of burden to accord others their moral rights.

Ozumba's position is premised on the fact that people know what is in their best interest. Is it possible for people to act in their best interest without some ulterior motive? Experience has shown that most people act from the point of view of self-interest. This finds expression in practical politics. The first book of the *Republic* is concerned mainly with a refutation of the Nietzschean theory, upheld by Thrasymarchus, that natural justice is merely the right of the stronger to grab what he can. This prompted Glaucon and Adeimantus, the younger brothers of Plato, to take Socrates to task in the opening paragraph of the second book of *The Republic* to defend the thesis that justice is better than injustice.

They observe, correctly, that unjust men wax stronger and have all the goods in society and that evil tends to have an upper hand. The reason for this is that what we call injustice is more easily carried out than justice because those who control power see it as a means to an end. And for this reason, injustice appears to be the foundation of a decaying political and social order. Those who come out for a radical reformation either pay through their lives or get kicked out of the system or follow the common dictum, "If you cannot beat them, join them." This is the foundation of corruption and its consolidation. As Edmund Burke observed, "The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing" (Ruch 1974: 19).

The question now is, who are the good men? Are they not part of the society? Granted that there are those we call the good men, are they not in the minority? Sometimes, detached from the crisis of society and overwhelmed by the triumph of evil in their societies, these good men sometimes become strong critics and as a result are subjected to

harassment and intimidation to the extent that they resign themselves to fate. What is to be done? This is where Plato stretches his philosophical horizon to more intriguing issues of justice.

Justice as morality

We have examined justice from the point of view of the sophists represented by Thrasymarchus, who argues that justice is the interest of the strong over the weak. We observed that there are some merits in this position as experienced in our various societies both developed and developing. Injustice appears to be the order of our political and social order. It equally shows the origin and nature of justice, including its scope. Plato argues that justice is not a means to an end but an end in itself, it is desirable in itself, it is an act of righteousness.

On this vein, More (1970:44) and Unah (2002a) state as follows:

But as the quality of justice, if it can be defined by any single term, it is by the word measure – the outcome of that last, undiscovered force within a man, which acts as a check and stay upon the restless, imperious, tumultuous impulses and desires, and emotions ever swelling out of the dark background of life, a force which, itself unseen, brings order out of disorder, proportions out of excess, balances out of discord, peace out of agony, out of the unmeasured measure.

From here we could see justice as the inner law of measure, balance and health. It is a force that regulates human actions in a stable social order. It is the disposition which makes a man refrain from an act recommended by desire or by his apparent interest through obedience to a belief that he ought not to perform it (Foster, 1942:37). The concepts of justice and injustice as they relate to morality are qualities displayed in the exercise of human actions. For example, a man is said to be a just judge when he is impartial in a matter brought before him. An unjust judge is one who not only perverts justice but also twists a case brought before him to favour a particular party. For that quality of fairness to be exhibited, one must possess that philosophic disposition which will elicit that force of justice in man to be fair to all parties. At this stage, one can be proud to say I have done justice to this case.

Plato's doctrine of justice, therefore, is a philosophical compendium of the results of what Greek thought had come to be not only in the pre-Socratic epoch but also as the foundation of Aristotle's systematic ethics as expressed through the law of the golden mean. Plato's contribution here

confirms the notion that one who is a product of disorder is likely to make a meaningful contribution in the process of legislation. The reason for this is attested to by his experience in the crisis that rocked the political ship of the Athenian society. There seems to be a paradox here for an individual to accomplish the task of a system that is sustainable within the confines of a moral order. Unah, (2002b:23–24), makes this clear when he states that he who must introduce order must himself be a product of disorder, he who must guarantee stability must himself emerge from instability, he who must give law must himself be familiar with lawlessness, and he who must give security must know insecurity.

This paradox, as Unah observes, is the root cause of our intractable conflict at all times. The reason is that most of those who propagate peace, order and good governance have not witnessed any experience to prepare them for this task. In terms of recommendation, most of the issues to be used are either an average understanding or in some cases vague. This happens because without this foundation, concrete and holistic solutions might not be in sight. Our environment unfortunately, has witnessed the recycling of leaders whose track records are questionable in proffering solutions to our social problems. These leaders have been found wanting in terms of moral standards to keep a society free from unjust actions. This is the reality of our political and social condition and seriously calls for a reversal. Without this reversal, there is no moral law and the notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice are but empty names. We live under clouds of confusion and ignorance beyond which rides no sun (More, 1970:45).

For Plato, justice belongs to that highest class of goods, which are desirable to possess for their consequences and still more for themselves. This class of goods is like seeing, hearing, wisdom, health and whatever else is virtually good in its own nature rather than in appearance. Justice is a light that illuminates our thought, actions and decisions. The result of Plato's position is seen in various transactions between individuals, groups and states. In every transaction, we expect a level of fairness, equity, transparency, accountability and equality. Justice becomes the object and standard of law, a fixed and abiding disposition to give every man his due (Ndubuisi, 2005:44).

This aspect of justice exposes the moral integrity of parties in the exercise of justice. In our day to day activities, people have cried out from being denied justice, a situation which shows a high level of injustice and also a high level of falling moral standard. What this means is that the higher our level of moral standard the higher we dispense a

high sense of justice. Morality in this case becomes the foundation of justice and its sustenance. Unfortunately, our societies have suffered from a high incidence of low moral standard which has also affected the level of justice. It is for this reason that justice has been brutalized, cannibalized, vulgarized and banalized, a situation that has affected the human psyche. It has become more fashionable to do injustice than justice. The position of this research is that it is still profitable to practice justice because it has a long-term benefit. Injustice is temporal, mutable in space and time. Justice is eternal and highly rewarding. The problem is our inability to project beyond justice in the physical realm. To analyze this scenario, Plato, following the Pythagoreans, postulates the immortality of the soul. Justice, for Plato, resides in the soul. The soul is divided into three parts, namely the rational, which is the seat of wisdom, the spirited, which embodies courage or fortitude, and the appetitive, which is the level of emotions. The importance of this classification is the fact that each part of the soul should specialize and contribute to the whole for harmony. If each conforms to this requirement, then division is enhanced and justice is enthroned. A contrary application of this principle is a recipe for social disequilibrium and, by extension, instability. It shows that the principle of justice has been negated and thus morality has been truncated. When this happens there will be no peace.

We agree with Plato in this regard because it appears to us that the principle of allowing people to bring in their skills in their areas of specialization has not been fully utilized, especially in developing societies. Most societies that have applied this principle have benefited immensely in various spheres of social, economic and political developments. The effect is mostly seen in political appointments. Such appointments are not made on merit but on party patronage. The result is a high level of corruption and an ineffective discharge of services. Such appointments are not only negations of justice, but are attempts to make non-sense of moral standards expected of a society. People have different skills and if these skills are identified and tapped, the results could be amazing. It is important to make appointments based on such resourcefulness for the benefit of man and society.

Societies that have given primacy to this principle have derived unimaginable benefits and we believe that much is still to be tapped in the area of services to people so as to feel the impact of government. Our governments in the developing world still adopt the master-servant relationship. Those in government know more than the ruled. This is not good enough. Policies are formulated and

implemented without the consent of those who the law is meant to serve. For any policy of government to succeed and produce good results, consultation should be adopted as a matter of urgency. This will give the governed a sense of belonging and by extension an effective participation in governmental policies.

Brecht (1959:146) mentions some postulates of justice which are crucial to the survival of a society. These postulates are expressed in terms of some desired state of affairs. They are equality, liberty, security and order or obedience to God's will. Plato's theory of justice rejects some of these postulates and accepts some. For example, equality and liberty run counter to his principle of specialization of individuals based on their natural abilities. They amount to injustice if they are promoted. The postulates of security and obedience are necessary in his ideal state to achieve harmony, peace and concord. Any opposition to these postulates will result in injustice and instability.

Social justice as virtue

Plato's central thesis in the *Republic* is that justice is a part of human virtue. The word virtue is translated from the Greek word 'Arête,' otherwise called excellence. Virtue came to mean the quality which entitles any thing or any person to be good. In this connection, things may be good as well as persons. For example, a knife may be good or bad, a school may be good or bad, a horse may be a good horse or a bad horse. What we are emphasizing here is that for a knife, school, or horse to be good is to have the virtue or the proper excellence of any of these items. It is the ability of any of the listed items to perform creditably a particular task assigned to it.

On the other hand, we can say of men who are better or worse as compared to others. In this regard, we look at virtue as the quality which the better man possesses in a higher degree than the worse. A man may be good in such professions as carpentry, boxing, arts, medicine or even in public speech. What makes a man good in the performance of these things we have mentioned may be referred to as virtue and it does not appear to be difficult in each case to specify what the virtue is. For instance, that a carpenter is good could be as a result of his capacity to make a good furniture from wood, a doctor may be said to be good because of his ability to carry out a diagnosis for an illness or in the case of a surgeon for carrying out a good surgery. It is possible at any point in time to specify or identify what the virtue in a man consists of.

From a philosophical point of view human virtue goes beyond these departmental excellences

that we have enumerated. Human virtue, therefore, is what makes a man good. These kinds of excellences make those who possess them a good doctor, a good carpenter, a good boxer, a good orator but not necessarily a good man. The question arises as to what sort of capacity makes a man a good man? A man is not called a good man in terms of superiority in any departmental accomplishments such as medicine, sports, carpentry, etc. He can demonstrate this superiority in a higher degree. A person could be well specialized but still be called a bad man. Assuming a man combines some of these departmental excellences to the extent that he demonstrates a good sense of proficiency, can we say that he is a good man? According to Plato, such a man is still outside the purview of being a good man. If this is the case, it means that we may have to interrogate Plato further to list or establish the characteristics of what makes one a good man apart from the departmental excellences we have been analyzing. If this is not done, we may deny the reality of human virtue. Consequently, it will be correct to ascribe to men superiority in departmental excellences. In other words, we may continue to posit that A is a good carpenter and B a better doctor than C, but there is no real sense in which A can be said to be a good man or B a better man than C. Our conclusion here, therefore, is that if human virtue is a real thing, it must be possible to itemize its elements or constituent parts.

In the *Republic*, Plato identifies four moral virtues. They are courage or fortitude, reason, temperance and justice (Forster, 1942:38). Following this, Plato divides virtue into four main constituents. They are wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. The possession of any these is what makes a man good and if one has all of them, he is said to be a wholly good man. One may be lacking in any of the departmental excellences and this might not attract a reproach. For example, one might be a good carpenter but not a good boxer. This is a factual situation, not a derogation of the person. On the other hand, if a man is deficient in courage, wisdom, temperance or justice it is enough not to describe him as a good man no matter his quality in a departmental excellence. We can see that these qualities or virtues occupy a pride of place in Plato's socio-political philosophy.

Plato recommends these virtues for leadership and personality development. According to him, they play a tremendous role in effective administration, policy analysis and implementation so that decisions which arise out of these virtues will have a critical and philosophical direction for the benefit of man and society. For Plato, government is a science and that as a science it should be left to

experts. He urges and sincerely believes that it is as absurd to govern by popular vote as it would be to conduct medicine or navigation by popular vote. The error of democracy according to him is that it denies the possibility of science in government and his fundamental political demand is leave government to those that know how to do it (*Republic*, 1997, Robinson, 1969:82–83). A lot of us may not agree with Plato in this regard but it is the opinion of this essay that government business demands skill manifested in education and training for its effective administration. Most governmental departments the world over are crumbling because they neglect Plato's prescription. Experience has shown that many of those who handle government affairs have no business being there because they lack the skill and vision required for effective administration. The motivation of those who seek government positions seems to be based on financial gains rather than contributing to the welfare of the government through an efficient and effective policy. To this extent, Plato's theory of virtue as what makes the dispensation of justice possible is imperative and contributes to the welfare of men in society which ultimately promotes human well-being.

Among the enumerated virtues, Plato gives primacy to justice (Forster, 1942:38). Why does Plato give such primacy to justice? His reason is that justice is architectonic in relation to the other excellences. Another way to put it is that justice is related to the other excellences as the work of an architect or master builder is in relation to the construction of a house. In such an activity, you have different skills from masons, joiners, wood carvers, sculptors, etc. All these people work under the direct supervision and co-ordination of the architects. The architects use the skills we have enumerated through supervision to make sure that what ever is installed is fit and proper. For example, a carpenter can design a door but this has to pass the test of the supervisor who will make sure that the design of the house is not distorted. From here, we can see a check and balance as a way of maintaining balance and stature which imposes a kind of restraint for order and stability. The architectonic nature of justice accounts for that element of restraint which is the first thing apparent in it. Just as the authority of the architect touches the subordinate craftsmen as a restrictive force, curbing the exuberance of their production, confining their scope and limiting their freedom in the interest of the design as a whole, so justice operates as a restraint upon a man's particular capacity, restraining him from many things which he has both the design and ability to do (Foster 1942:42). Justice is given a pride of place among the various virtues because of its ability for co-

ordination and moderation in human conduct. This appears to be the focus of Aristotle in his ethics.

Aristotle describes justice as the greatest of all virtues and defines it as "what is lawful," or what is fair and equal. He distinguishes between two kinds of justice, namely, universal and particular justice. Universal justice is synonymous with virtue. He who possesses it can exercise virtue towards his neighbour as well as himself (Aristotle, 1962:112, Omoregbe, 1993:166). Remedial justice deals with fairness in human transactions, both voluntary transactions (such as making promises, taking or giving loans) and involuntary transactions (such as stealing and killing). Aristotle also adds another type of justice called commercial justice (166). The concept of justice as fair and equal is a pointer to the basic problem experienced by man in various areas of human transaction. Our inability to practice justice is traceable to our inability to adopt the principle of transparency and accountability. Our transactions should be open in such a way that others can make a follow up. When this is lacking, we begin to assume certain things detrimental to the success of our transactions. According to Aristotle, universal justice enables us to exercise virtue not only to ourselves but to our neighbours. This, in our view, leads to harmony, peace and progress and by extension, development. Its absence is the cause of friction, misunderstanding and, above all, cheating, which can lead to war among societies or assassinations among individuals. Justice is also a strong bond in societies.

Justice as the Bond of Societies

Hadley Cantril (1961) makes an observation which today reflects the violation of justice by man in our environment, a violation that has catastrophic consequences. He summarizes this observation thus,

The turbulence of our times is basically a turbulence in the human spirit. The situation men and women find themselves in today of course, is a recurrent one in human history. They are seeking as they have sought for centuries the opportunity to live in peace with one another, to have a chance to get the satisfactions out of living that make living worthwhile according to the common consensus of people everywhere. But the situation now has a new sense of urgency because of the unprecedented frustrations and dangers created by unprecedented opportunities and hopes inherent in man's new artifacts and his new interdependence. What is required today, just as it was required at other critical times in history, is a self-conscious awareness of this human

situation so the turbulence can be somewhat calmed and its component forces better controlled (Cantril., 1961: IX–X).

One will be correct to title this submission by Cantril as an alarm. At the time this alarm was raised, there was a threat of nuclear weapons to humanity. The restraint of international law was not adhered to. In this situation, the need for a revitalization of the law which is the product of justice becomes imperative. If the law is to be reformed does it mean that it can no longer cope with the regulation of man's conduct in society? This is a serious question.

A similar voice recorded this trend in the 18th world congress of philosophy held in Brighton in August 1988. The theme of the congress as edited by P. Fedoseyer was, *The problem of man as philosophy*. The congress was of the opinion that a new political thinking should be evolved. According to them, the modern world is complicated, diverse and dynamic, shot through with contending tendencies and contradictions. It is the world of most difficult alternatives, anxieties and hopes. Never before have our homes on earth been exposed to such great political and physical stresses (Fedoseyer, 1988:45). In his submission to this congress, Fedoseyer suggests a practical step to be adopted which lies in the total overhaul of our political system through a philosophic creativity of both ethical and intellectual orientation towards our socio-cultural values. The reason for this is the concept of unity in diversity in our social and political composition. This makes it imperative to adopt a new method for evaluating our political ideologies for accommodation, tolerance and solidarity. We agree with this position because our modern world and its humanistic political culture is at a cross-roads: injustice has become the order of the day. At this point in time, we need, as a matter of urgency, a critical evaluation of our political system through a philosophical creativity through which a more radical justice system for our tomorrow can be assured.

Scholars of various persuasions have noted a difficulty that has trailed Plato's theory of justice: is his theory feasible and realistic in a global contemporary society? How practical is this theory in present day political economy and its mode of governance? This is the contemporary relevance of this paper.

Plato's theory of justice is motivated by the moral and social carnage that characterized democratic Athens. His contribution, therefore, is an attempt at moral and social reformism. But in doing this he overlooks human nature and envisages an ideal society free from the imperfections of human

beings. Plato's theory of justice is therefore deficient in coping with the crisis of modern political economy and, especially, the crisis in leadership and governance. Plato rejects democracy on the ground that it is undemocratic and constitutes a mob rule. The global community has embraced democracy as having the prospects of promoting global peace and harmony. This is against the backdrop of Plato's authoritarian, undemocratic and impositional system of leadership selection and mode of governance. These are the fundamental flaws this paper identifies in Plato's theory of justice. These flaws notwithstanding, Plato's theory of justice, if critically observed in its ideal framework, can contribute to a healthy society. This is because the ideal is a perfect model which we can look up to for the transformation of a bankrupt society. This position is made more explicit by Zolberg, (1966), as he discusses the need for creating a social order for the stability of society. The kind of harmony Plato envisages is not likely to be realized in a world where our aspirations are not only diverse but also competitive. To this end, one will not but agree with Zolberg that the creation of social order is necessary for progress and the development of society.

Conclusion

If it is possible to unify all that we are saying here, one will point out one fundamental problem. This problem is the absence or lack of justice in our dealings with individuals, states or countries. This accounts for frequent crisis between different people and countries. It means that there is an urgent need to restructure the existing social and political order on the foundation of justice and fair play. Plato observes in the *Republic* that justice is not only a part of human virtue, it is also that quality in men which makes them capable of entering into political relations with one another, and so creates a stable and orderly political society. Societies are therefore made possible and stable when each person that makes up the society is able to restrain himself and obey certain rules and regulations that promote peace and stability in society. What it means here is that peace is possible when each individual exhibits a high degree of co-operation in various endeavours in society. In this way, the bond that unifies society is made possible. This bond is justice. It is an identical quality which makes man good and social. This identification appears to be the first and fundamental principle of Plato's political philosophy.

The task now, and a serious one for that matter, is how to consolidate this bond for an enduring peace and stability in human societies. It is worthy

of note that the Sophists recognized and admitted that justice or morality was essential to the existence and survival of political society but they denied that it constituted human excellence. They also admitted that a man had to limit his individual desires and obey the regulations of his community to enable him live in society with other persons. The argument of the Sophists was that justice is necessary to the existence of society but that it does not make a man better. We think they are right if our experience in human society is anything to go by. A simple way to make what we are saying clearer is that is to note that injustice appears to get more popular than justice. But our position here is that in the realm of what is on the ground the Sophists are correct. This is because they are describing justice as it operates in the society of men. On the other hand, Plato's conception of justice is in the realm of the ought, that is, what justice ought to be.

The question now is, which is better to observe in the long run? Is it justice or injustice? Our response here will determine to a large extent our conception of a better society.

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THE NEOPOSITIVIST TREND IN THE FINNISH SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract:

Ars cogitandi is not the monopoly of a school, a people or an age, but it has crossed over the centuries and cardinal points, from the Platonic Academy of Athens to the Finnish University set up at Turku in 1640 and set down for good and for all at Helsingfors (the ancient name for Helsinki) in the year 1828. *Ars cogitandi* as philosophy got here as a distinct brilliance following the classical Anglo-Saxon tradition of empiricism, represented at that time by Edward Westermarck (1862–1939), who was professor of practical philosophy in Helsinki and professor of sociology at London School of Economics from 1907 until 1930¹. The Finnish School of Philosophy acquired its decisive acknowledgement by Eino Kaila, great scholar and chief of the school, who brought over to Finland the modern logic and the philosophy of the Vienna Circle

Key words: empiricism, neopositivism, the Finnish school, *ars cogitandi*, Eino Kaila.

Eino Kaila (1890–1958) is one of the essential members of Finnish philosophy, as he is the one who directed it to a new direction. Although he made his first appearance as a psychologist, Kaila was interested by the vanguard sciences, such as physics and biology, and on account of this was sympathetic to the Vienna Circle and to the logical neo-positivism that adopted a mathematical logic as an instrument for philosophical analysis². Kaila's work is characterized by an unceasing endeavor towards philosophical syntheses. His first papers in

epistemology dwell on probabilities, work that will become the reference topic for the Philosophical School of Helsinki. He considered the contingency principle as central to the philosophical problem of reality and an integrant part of the two coordinate principles, probability and causality, with the same importance in the metaphysical construction of reality³. Under these circumstances, human cognition finds its appropriate expression in the form of scientific theory, understood as a system of rational and idealized invariables, governed by the principle of the maximum "economic"⁴. The main element of the scientific meta-theory is, according to Kaila, the empirical and formal theory of truth. The influence of logical empiricism is obvious in the philosophical theses formulized by Kaila about *reality* as an object of scientific research, namely:

a) the assertions "the statement L is analytical" and "the statement L is a *priori*" are equivalent;

b) the observation principle such that every statement on *reality* must have a real content, *i.e.*, must have as consequence a knowledge of reality, either this knowledge can be or cannot be verified or falsified;

c) the real description principle for defining the notion of physical reality: the real description of a certain field is the description of the highest degree of invariance, *i.e.* the highest degree of generality.

As it can be observed, the measurement theory is the essential element of the scientific meta-theory, drawn up by Kaila on empiricist grounds, because

¹ T. Stroup (ed.), *Edward Westermarck: Essays on his Life and Works*, in: "Acta Philosophica Fenica", nr. 34, 1982, The Philosophical Society of Finland, Helsinki.

² Ilkka Niiniluoto, *Eino Kaila and the scientific realism*, in: "Acta Philosophica Fenica", vol. 52, 1992, p. 103.

³ Eino Kaila, *Reality and Experience*, (ed. by R.S. Cohen), Dordrecht, D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1979.

⁴ Carl G. Hempel, *Eino Kaila and Logical Empiricism*, in: "Acta Philosophica Fenica", vol. 52, 1992, p. 49.

the measurement presumes, from his point of view, certain empirical regularities⁵.

As a founder of a philosophical school, Kaila was supported by a number of scholars: e.g. Uno Saamio (1896–1977) proving special results in classical and modern logic; Erik Stenius (1911–1990) providing valuable works on logic, epistemology and philosophy of language; Oiva Ketonen (1913–2000) who was remarkable for his work on the mathematical foundations and the philosophy of nature. Among all of them, Georg Henrik von Wright (1914 – 2003) has come to be one of the most prominent representatives of contemporary philosophy as he is now considered a logical mastermind.

Von Wright studied at the University of Helsinki where he got the titles of *master* and *doctor* of Philosophy under Kaila's guidance⁶. In 1939, in preparation for his Ph.D. dissertation, he studied at Cambridge with Ludwig Wittgenstein with whom he became lasting friends, becoming his nearest scholar and the successor of the philosophy chair after Ludwig Wittgenstein resigned.

Thus is established the most important and the most renowned philosophical triad of the century: Bertrand Russell, the initiator of logical positivism through his monumental work *Principia Mathematica* (in co-operation with A. N. Whitehead), who had as his scholar and successor Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* constituted the theoretical groundwork for the Vienna Circle, who had as his scholar and successor Georg Henrik von Wright, whose *Essay in Modal Logic*, published in 1951 and merely 90 pages, has been the basis of the work of a host of philosophers from then until now.

G. H. von Wright got his doctorate in 1941 with the topic *The Logical Problem of Induction*. After his appointment as *Docent* in 1943, he was asked to become holder of the professorship at the chair of

philosophy in Helsingfors University (1946–1961) and chairman of the philosophy department at Cambridge University (1948–1951). After 15 years of professorship, he withdrew from university education and dedicated himself to fundamental research as a professor researcher at the Academy of Finland. From 1960 until 1970 he was *visiting professor* at several universities in the United States of America, especially at Cornell University. In the period 1963–1965, he was the President of the Section of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science within the framework of the International Association of History and Philosophy of Science. In 1971 he visited Romania as a guest of the Bucharest University at the IVth International Congress of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science (Bucharest, on the 29th of August – 4th of September, 1971), where he gave a lecture entitled *On the Logic and Epistemology of Causal Relation*, in the Vth Section: General Problems of Methodology and Philosophy of Science, chaired by Wolfgang Stegmüller.

After Wittgenstein's death (1951), von Wright was charged, together with two British colleagues E.G.M. Anscombe and R. Rhees, with the legacy of the unpublished manuscripts of the dear departed. In over 50 years of research, professor G.H. von Wright succeeded in making the texts speak, restoring and writing down facts about lives that are present in so many legends.

Von Wright's main fields of research are: the theory of induction; the probabilities calculus; modal logic; the influence of logic on ethics and law; inquiries on the concepts of time, change, causation, action, purpose, preference, explanation and understanding.

The starting point of von Wright's philosophical investigations is the language distinction between many different kinds of sentences. The philosopher is not concerned with many of these distinctions. The philosopher is concerned only with those distinctions among sentences which are associated with distinctions between kinds of facts expressed by the sentences (this is the main principle of the Vienna Circle). Thus, e.g. the philosopher is not concerned with a classification of sentences into direct, indirect, subjective, predicative, Romanian or English. Some distinctions among sentences are very important to the logician and even to the philosopher, because some distinctions among sentences are associ-

⁵ Raili Kauppi, *Theorie de la connaissance et la logique mathématique*, in: *Les grands courants de la pensée mondiale contemporaine*, ouvrage publiée sous la direction de M. F. Sciacca, premier volume, Paris, Fishbacher & Marzorati, 1964, pp. 518–519.

⁶ *Intellectual Autobiography of Georg Henrik von Wright*, in: *The Philosophy of Georg Henrik von Wright*, ed. by Paul Arthur Schilpp and Lewis Edwin Hahn, Southern Illinois University, Open Court, 1989, pp. 3–55.

ated with distinctions among the kinds of facts expressed, as for example, the Kantian distinction between analytical and synthetic, *a priori* and *a posteriori* sentences. Further, some distinctions among the kinds of words which make up sentences are important to the philosopher, namely those which are associated with different fictions among the elements of the fact expressed, because these sentences are proper for science which is concerned with natural facts covered by natural laws. But every scientific law is concerned with causation and we cannot define a scientific law as a fact concerned with causation. For a fact about a particular event that is caused by another particular event is not a law of science. This is because each of two facts, though causal, is not universal. Each is particular since each is concerned with the causal relations between one particular event and another. An event is always particular in that it involves the state of certain things throughout a certain region of space, throughout a certain period of time and the subsequent poverty involved in the observation by a particular people (usually named “scientist”) at that particular time and place.

On the other hand, a law of science is universal. For, though it governs events, it never mentions any particular event, any particular thing (or person), any particular place or time, but only classes of events, of things, of places and times. A law of science is a universal causal fact. A universal causal fact is a fact to the effect that every event of such and such a kind, no matter what particular thing, time, place or observer it involves, always causes an event of such and such another kind. A law of science is a generic universal causal fact. Even when the scientist has learned a number of universal causal facts, he is still dissatisfied, because he wishes to find generic universal facts from which special universal facts may be predicted. A law of science is an exact general universal causal fact and the scientist who has found causal facts which are not only universal but also generic can express in a scientific theory the highly generic universal causal fact that material things, *e.g.*, approach one another, only as an approximation to the exact law that material things approach one another.

It is to be noted also that there are two importantly different kinds of scientific facts. First, nothing can be red without having size (this is the first

dogma of empiricism); and second, every particular sized scientific fact is able to be mathematically quantified (and this is the second dogma of empiricism).

G. H. von Wright is conscious of the problem of whether or not the fundamental laws of nature are real ties or mere conventions, but as a realist he thinks of fundamental laws of nature as truths (or, in view of change theory, as at best approximately true). They are generally supposed to explain a heterogeneous multiplicity of phenomenological laws (“phenomenological” is here used in the physicist’s sense, in which a phenomenological law is empirically based but need not relate only to directly observable entities). As a realist, von Wright bases his belief in the truth of the fundamental laws of nature on the argument to the best explanation. Further, he observes that to notice a natural scientific fact is a mental fact which contains a material fact. It is not itself a material fact, since it is not in itself something that has an extensive quality, lacking temporal, spatial and observable quality.

There is a good deal of explanation for those who have concerned themselves with analytic philosophy, because they have mixed up historical, scientific and analytic problems to a shocking degree. This has given the impression that they believe all their analysis to be a necessary preliminary to the establishing of scientific laws, connected with the analysis of the self, of the perception of material things, of the relation of the mind with the body. They believe that these are problems of philosophical analysis quite necessary for the philosophy of science. It is quite certain that facts are expressed with the help of words and that these words must not be ambiguous so that any hearer may know quite well what fact is being expressed by any speaker who uses the words. All that is needed is provided by analytic definition, *i.e.* the setting out of the connotation of an expression able to bring about the understanding. Thus, the analytic definition of scientific knowledge and belief *e.g.*, removes ambiguity, and at the same time, when the words defined present to the mind several facts at once, presents them separately.

Thus analytical philosophy is, as a matter of fact, a language clarifying investigation and the first linguistic distinction important for the philosopher is that between complete and incomplete sentences.

For the moment, von Wright has ignored incomplete sentences and incomplete facts. Complete sentences are those which are made up of: (1) proper names and demonstrative pronouns; and (2) adjectives, verbs and prepositions. The relation expressed by words can be dyadic, when it requires two terms, or triadic, tetradic or more complex relations, all ruled by Bertrand Russell's theory of types.

Amongst the many relations between matter and mind, there is one which is studied for the first time by von Wright: the relation of knowledge about deontology, especially the human action in the terms of "truth" and "false".

No discussion of the normative structure of science of human action can begin without immediate reference to the work of von Wright. It is common knowledge that von Wright provided the first systematic and the most influential attempt to identify the main norms operative in a theory of human action and to show how these norms contribute to the advance of scientific knowledge. At the same time, several attempts have been made to argue that the customary analyses of norms is based on misleading assumptions, that its empirical foundation is weak and that it is in need of radical conceptual revision. The central issue which von Wright tried to address is that of the relationship between norms or rules and human action. It seems that one of the crucial errors prevalent among the analytic philosophers, whether they have supported or criticized von Wright's position, has been to assume that this relationship is relatively unproblematic. Unfortunately, in so doing, they have failed to notice a fundamental point made by Wittgenstein, namely, that no rule can specify completely what is to count as following or not following that rule.

Von Wright is the founder of the deontic logic that he constructed for several axiomatic systems, starting from the genius idea of a modal similarities table which can progress *ad infinitum*:

The modal-logic similarities Table⁷

<i>alethic</i>	<i>epistemic</i>	<i>deontic</i>	<i>existential</i>
necessary	verified	obligatory	universal

⁷ G. H. von Wright, *An Essay in Modal Logic*, Amsterdam, North-Holland Publishing Company, 1951, p. 2.

possible		permitted	existing
contingent	undecided	indifferent	–
impossible	falsified	forbidden	empty

This table must be understood in a further way: logical modalities mean the way in which a proposition can characterize the truth of another proposition. *E.g.*, it may assign to a proposition *p* a logic alethic modality saying that it is necessary, or possible, or contingent or impossible that *p*. Saying that *p* is true for a certainty (*i.e.* verified), or undecided, or falsified, it is assigned to a proposition *p* as a logic epistemic modality. The statement that it is obligatory, or permitted, or indifferent, or forbidden that *p*, means that it defines a logic, moral or deontic modality. Finally, but not least, it may assign to a proposition *p* a logic existential modality which "*is sometimes called quantification theory and is usually not regarded as a branch of modal logic*"⁸, *e.g.* stating that all *p* are *q* (universal existential modality), or that there is at least one *p* that is *q* (existing existential modality), or that there is no *p* that is *q* (empty existential modality).

Accordingly, the following types of modal logic are generated:

a) the alethic logic or the truth-logic that discriminates (according to Thomas d' Aquino) two cases:

1. *de dicto*, when a proposition is true or false; and
2. *de re*; when a property is (or is not) in an object, in which case the property is called necessary, possible, contingent or impossible in that object;

b) the epistemic logic, or the "to know" logic, that specifies the modality when it is known about something that it is true for a certainty (verified), or false for a certainty (falsified), or undecided;

c) the deontic logic; and,

d) the existential logic.

There are many other groups of concepts and logics, in addition to the aforementioned, which could be called "modal". *E.g.*, a proposition *p* can be assigned a logical modality, saying that *p* is true now, or that *p will be* true, or that *p was* true, which defines a tense logic modality and generates conse-

⁸ Ibidem.

quently a logic of time. “*Though modal concepts are different from truth-concepts, the two realms of categories are not logically totally disconnected. If a proposition is true, it is possible. This cannot be converted: not all possible propositions are true. If a property is true of a thing, the property exists.*”

*There are not only important similarities but also significant differences between the various kinds of modalities. (If there were no such differences, modal logic would be trivial relatively to quantification theory)*⁹.

In 1963 von Wright elaborated an original version of tense logic or logic of change by the fusion of the norm category with that of action. He refined the similarities table and the logic of action by developing a logical theory of preference relations (1963) and he initiated the first researches on formal axiology. His late investigations concerned the philosophy of mind on issues of the progress in cognition and in mind. In brief – as he argues in his late book *The Tree of Knowledge* (1993) – the idea of progress maintains that humankind has advanced in the past from the condition of primitiveness or barbarity to human community, and it is advancing at present, and will keep on advancing towards a predictable future. Expressed by a metaphor, the idea of progress is a synthesis between the dead fact in the past and the prophecy of the future, *i.e.* a synthesis between history and Utopia. The idea of progress is inseparable from the outlook of physical time which is passing straight, one-dimensionally, involving both the historical process in general, and its prevailing manifest tendency. The consequence of this way of conceiving the historical process is the widespread belief in the inherent tendency of nature and man of crossing over a regular sequence of developing stages in the past, at present and in the future, the late stages being – maybe with circumstantial regressions and/or delays – superior to the earlier ones. This historical outlook necessarily also involves assumptions of continuity, gradualness and naturalness in the development of the historical process of stages. The progress outlook involves a diagram of things and events both at the scale of the universe and of society, a growth from the inferior towards the superior as real and certain as any law of nature.

The essential and controversial problem of the ideology of progress is the definition or the explanation of the terms “advancement” or “passing from the inferior to the superior”. The tradition starting from Greek antiquity and lasting into the XX century involves two distinct, however connected, classes of outlook. The first class describes human history as a gradual, slow, cumulative process that enriches the cognition, developing knowledge in the arts and sciences. Man follows in his own way the natural processes endeavoring to copy them as best as possible in order to live in groups and communities that are as harmoniously as possible, where the social harmony copies or repeats the natural harmony. It is available, with rare interruptions, from Hesiod, especially in Plato, in Lucretius and Seneca, in St. Augustine and his successors, the whole myriad of Protestants and Puritans from the XVI and the XVII centuries but also after, until the great prophets of progress from the XIX and the XX centuries: Saint Simon, Comte, Hegel, Marx and Herbert Spencer. All held to the firm belief that knowledge of nature in itself – *objective knowledge* as it is found in science and technology – is growing, enriching, becoming ever and ever more perfect.

The second class of philosophical outlook organizes human history around the idea of *a moral or spiritual progress* and conditions the happiness and freedom of man on earth, his deliverance from the torments of nature and society, by obtaining the moral qualities of calm, quietness, and peace of soul. The purpose of progress is in this advancement of mankind is to achieve on earth these moral and spiritual virtues, able by themselves to lead to an ever and ever greater perfection of the human nature

Between these two classes of philosophical outlook about the essence of humanity there is and will be a relation of reverse correspondence. Thus, the acquirement of spiritual substance and moral perfection, requires, as a necessary condition, *not* to obtain or to grow in knowledge – about the world and man – *but* to repudiate such knowledge. To know means to sin, or to set up a sure beginning to sin. The Greeks have their legend about Pandora’s box in order to illustrate that all moral evil on earth has sprung from the unrestrained, irrepressible wish of Pandora to know the content of the shrine, which she has been forbidden to open. When she opens the shrine, the worst diseases of avarice, cupidity, brutality, cruelty,

⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 2–3.

strife, war, exploitation, etc..Blew blow up. The most famous story of sin arising from knowledge, the history of the Garden of Eden in the *Old Testament* shows the innocent and primary pair, Adam and Eve, tempted by the same and unextinguishable *wish for knowing*, which is their downfall, leading them to be chased and banished from Paradise. It is fairly certain that in the history of Western thought no philosophical or other outlook proposes a different reading of the reverse connection between knowledge and happiness. Unless the author specifically intends the masculine, standard usage would be the feminine.

I am not sure what is missing here. Maybe 'facts'?

Standard usage would be the feminine, here, unless the author specifically means the masculine.

See note 4

This is my best guess at the meaning of this sentence.

Where does this quote end?

Through the consequences of the philosophy of mind following techno-science philosophy, von Wright opens a new gate to philosophy.

His main works published in English are: *A Treatise on Induction and Probability* (1951); *An Essay in Modal Logic* (1951); *Norm and Action* (1963); *The Varieties of Goodness* (1963); *The Logic of Preference* (1963); *Explanation and Understanding* (1971); *Causality and Determinism* (1974); *Freedom and Determination* (1980); *Wittgenstein* (1982); *Philosophical Papers* in 3 volumes: I. *Practical Reason* (1983); II. *Philosophical Logic* (1984); III. *Proof Knowledge and Modality* (1984); *The Tree of Knowledge* (1993).

The following papers have been translated into Romanian: *Notes on the epistemology of the subjective probabilities*, transl. by Sorin Vieru, in: *The Logic of Science*, ed. by dr. Gh. Enescu and Cornel Popa, Bucharest, 1970; *The Logic of practical discourse and Deontic Logic and the general theory of action*, transl. by Sorin Vieru and Dragan Stoianovici, in: *Norms, Values, Action*, ed. by Sorin Vieru and Dragan Stoianovici, Bucharest, 1979; *Norm and Action*, transl. by Dragan Stoianovici and Sorin

Vieru, Bucharest, 1981; *Explanation and Understanding*, transl. by Mihai D. Vasile, Bucharest, 1995.

His work *Explanation and Understanding* generated, from its first edition, a fecund debate among both analytic philosophersticipation of well-known names in theand continental philosophers such as Manfred Riedel, Rüdiger Bubner, Jaakko Hintikka, J. N. Findlay, Peter Winch, Alisdair MacIntyre, Frederick Stoutland.*et a.* To all his commentators, in his book *Essays on Explanation and Understanding*¹⁰ professor von Wright answered, without exhaustion, *Essays on Explanation and Understanding*¹¹, defending the “anti-positivist” outlook and underlining the decisive distinction between *Geisteswissenschaften* and *Naturwissenschaften*, arguing that the understanding of deliberate action is different from the nomological or causal explanation of natural events. In the thought of von Wright, his book *Explanation and Understanding* represents a crucial moment because it crosses over the limits of the neo-positivist tradition and opens new philosophical horizons on human action and its explanation, as can be seen in his later book, *Freedom and Determination* (1980).

After Kaila expressed the meta-theory of quantum physics in 1950 in a neo-positivist manner¹², Finnish Philosophy gave much more attention to topics connected with the scientific method. One of them refers to the nature of explanation in the humanities, and another concerns the nature of probability and inductive inference. Both of these concerns are found in von Wright’s work. The Finnish School of Induction, represented by von Wright, was continued by Jaakko Hintikka, Risto Hilpinen, Raimo Tuomela, Ilkka Niiniluoto, Gabriel Sanduet *a.* In the 1970’s the structure and dynamics of scientific theories were the central topic in Finnish Philosophy, expressed especially in the work of Tuomela, Niiniluoto, Matti Sintonen, who worked a

¹⁰ *Essays on Explanations and Understanding*. Studies in the foundation of humanities and social sciences. Edited by Juha Manninen and Raimo Tuomela, Dordrecht, Boston; D. Reidel, 1976.

¹¹ *Essays on Explanations and Understanding*. Studies in the foundation of humanities and social sciences. Edited by Juha Manninen and Raimo Tuomela, Dordrecht, Boston; D. Reidel, 1976.

¹² Eino Kaila, *Zur Metatheorie der Quantum-Mechanics*, Helsinki, in: “Acta Philosophica Fenica”, nr. 5, 1951.

long time on the progress of scientific knowledge, searching, in the spirit of scientific realism, for the characteristics of the change performed in the field of science and the nature of explanatory arguments¹³. The Finnish Philosophy of science also involves work of some young philosophers, such as Unto Remes (1942–1975) on geometrical analysis; Hannu Nurmi (b. 1944) on causation; Pekka Lahti (b. 1948) on quantum-mechanics; Patrick Sibelius (b. 1949) on physics; Bengt-Olof Qvamstrom (b. 1941) on linguistics; Veli Verronen (b. 1941) on Th. Kuhn; Vesa Niskanen (b. 1952) on fuzzy concepts; Martti Kuokkanen (b. 1948) on structure in the humanities; Paavo Pylkkanen (b. 1959) on the interpretation of quantum-mechanics in view of the cognitive science sketched by David Bohm. As a matter of fact, the problem of cognitive science and mind prompted several philosophers such as Leila Haaparanta (b. 1954) who is distinctive for her original and phenomenological outlook on cognitive anthropology. Markus Lammenranta (b. 1954) investigated the problem of epistemic certainty in Alvin Goldman, and Sami Pihlstrom (b. 1969) proposed an opening of philosophical realism to contemporary forms of pragmatism¹⁴.

Of von Wright's successors, the most famous is Jaakko Hintikka (b. 1929) who turned out to be very efficient in philosophical research, cheering it on by introducing new openings towards analytical thought. He also produced original works on logic and epistemology, which have become well-known in the whole world because he has worked as visiting professor at the Helsingfors University, Stanford University, Florida State University, and, from 1990, at Boston University. Hintikka is one of the most influential editors of philosophical works in the world, being book monitor at D. Reidel Publishing Company's/Kluwer's (Dordrecht, Holland). He is also one of the founders of possible worlds semantics for modal logic. His work *Knowledge and Belief* (1962), has become a classic, and his *Models for*

Modalities (1967) develops in an original way von Wright's modal-logic similarities table. Applying the idea of *normal distributive forms* to the semantic information theory and to inductive logic, Hintikka developed a new semantic theory on natural language, called the semantics of the theoretical game. Combining the epistemic logic from von Wright's table with the semantics of the theoretical game, Hintikka created a new approach to the logic of questions in his work *The Semantics of Questions and the Questions of Semantics* (1976), extending this idea to the logic of interrogation and scientific discovery. In his work *The Principle of Mathematics Revisited* (1996) he develops a new logic of the "amicable independence". His influence on the young generation of philosophers and logicians is obvious in the works of Veikko Rantala (b. 1933), Ilkka Niiniluoto (b. 1946), Gabriel Sandu (b. 1954), Tuomo Aho (b. 1957) et al. The chief-work *Game-Theoretical Semantics*¹⁵, by Jaakko Hintikka and Gabriel Sandu, yields a novelty in infinite logic and the existential quantifier, connected with the propositional attitudes and dialogues.

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¹³ Ilkka Niiniluoto, *Conceptual Enrichment, Theories and Inductive Systematization*, Helsinki, Suomalainen. Tiedekatemia, 1973, p. 10.

¹⁴ Ilkka Niiniluoto, *Philosophy in Finland — Opening Words of the LLP. Entretiens in Helsinki*, 1995, in: S. Knuuttila and I. Niiniluoto (eds.), *Methods of Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, "Acta Philosophica Fennica", vol. 61, Helsinki, 1996, pp. 7–12.

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EMPIRICAL REALITY OF PHILOSOPHY IN SCHOOLS, BETWEEN EAST AND WEST – CASE OF SERBIA AND CROATIA –

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Abstract:

Reports on the empirical reality of educational systems in other countries can be useful. In this article, data on how philosophy has been taught in Serbia and Croatia are presented and compared. Because this educational development was partially common for both countries, it is interesting to see differences today. The Croatian initiative has been greater, both then and now. The question is: *What is the essential difference?*

Key words: Philosophy, educational system, Yugoslavia, Serbia, Croatia.

Changing context

In a relatively short period of time, from 1918 to 2003, Serbia, Croatia and Yugoslavia have been transformed several times. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was formed in 1918, and its successor, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, existed from 1929 until its collapse in 1941. The socialist state of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was formed in 1943 and was officially proclaimed with a constitution in 1946. This state was renamed the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1963, and existed until 1992. The Federal United Republic of Yugoslavia, which consisted of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro, lasted from 1992 until 2003, at which time it was renamed Serbia and Montenegro¹.

Serbia is the last of the six former Yugoslav republics that gained independence. Serbia celebrates Independence Day and Armed Forces Day² on the

major religious holiday – the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple, which is also when the First Serbian Uprising against the Turks started (February 15, 1804). This day also commemorates February 15, 1835 when the first Constitution of the then Principality of Serbia was adopted. The session of the Assembly was held on this major Christian holiday in the courtyard of the Orthodox church in Kragujevac, the capital of the Principality. The National holiday has been observed on the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple since 2002; and after Montenegro's separation in 2006, Serbia began celebrating it as an independent state for the first time.

Croatia celebrates its independence from October 8, 1991, when the Parliament unanimously decided to terminate all legal ties between Croatia and the former Yugoslavia.³ Changes in Croatia occurred very quickly, such as religious homogenization of the population, desecularization of society and the re-introduction of religious education in public schools.

The first program of catholic religious education was drafted in 1991. "Unless the author specifically intends the masculine, standard usage would be the feminine.

I am not sure what is missing here. Maybe 'facts'?

Standard usage would be the feminine, here, unless the author specifically means the masculine.

See note 4

This is my best guess at the meaning of this sentence.

Where does this quote end?

¹ Kuburic, Zorica, "Serbia and Montenegro", *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Religious Practices*, Volume 3. Thomson Gale, 2006, 307–312.

² Information taken from the Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) website
<http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/9/Srbija/44666/Srbija+slavi+Dan+dr%C5%BEavnosti+i+Dan+Vojske.html>.
Accessed on 3.11.2010.

³ Information taken from the Radio Television B92 website:
<http://www.croportal.net/forum/politika/dan-nezavisnosti-zivila-nezavisna-hrvatska-42942/> Accessed on 3.11.2010

The Croatian Conference of Bishops in 1990 formed a special working group for religious instruction in secondary schools, which prepared a Program of religious instruction for secondary school, approved by Croatian bishops in 1991. Then, the Ministry of Education decided to introduce religious instruction in Croatian secondary schools. The difference from primary school is that secondary school has an alternative subject, Ethics. Both subjects are taught one hour per week.⁴

"Ethics is an elective subject taught in single weekly lessons, i.e. 35 lessons per year for four years. The syllabus for the subject stresses that it does not prefer a single worldview or a single philosophy, and it aims at ensuring respect for multiculturalism and a philosophical openness to dialogue. Within each lessons pertaining to multiculturalism, coexistence, human rights and universalism, while one unit is allocated in the fourth grade to the differing approaches to morality, including the religious approach."⁵

Confessional religious education was introduced in the Serbian public school system (but not in Montenegrin schools) as a multid denominational and optional subject by a governmental regulation published on July 27, 2001.⁶ Religious Education was launched in Serbian schools in November 2001 as an optional subject for students of the first grade of elementary school and high school. Pupils could choose between two subjects, Religious Education or Civic Education.

Meeting between East and West on the territory of the former Yugoslavia

The empirical reality of philosophy courses in the school systems of Serbia and Croatia has a turbulent history. This history has been written both in Cyrillic and Latin script in a single country that has fallen apart after an unsuccessful attempt to integrate. The dividing line between these two nations has its specific geographical borders, but in this article an emphasis is placed on the spiritual separation of East and West.

The basic premise, as the starting point, is that the territory of the former Yugoslavia was the meeting point of East and West. The border line of

Western culture reaches the Croatia-Serbia border. Also, East approaches West in the same place. The difference is marked by the obvious religious identity of the Croatian population, which is very homogenous and Roman Catholic. Serbia, in its religious heterogeneity, is in the north, an Orthodox country which creates its identity in relation to Western Christianity, while Islam is dominant in the southern parts. This is especially noticeable in the religious education in public schools, which is confessional and pluralistic.

According to the 2001 census, 87.83% of people in Croatia are Roman Catholic, while 4.42% are Orthodox. In Serbia 10% of the population is Catholic and 67% is Orthodox Christian (according to the 2006 results of Balkan Monitor poll; if religious affiliation of parents is taken into account). According to the 2002 census which does not include either Kosovo and Metohija or Montenegro, the Serbian population is 85% Orthodox Christian and 5.48% Catholic.

Another significant difference is the fact that Serbia has kept both Cyrillic and Latin script in its educational system, while Croatia has omitted education in Cyrillic script. This results in increased distance and reduced mutual influence. Furthermore, it can be recognized that the population of Serbia does not identify itself either as Eastern or Western.

One of the characteristics of Serbian spiritual space can be expressed in a single word: discord. This spiritual discord is present in such a manner that half of the society holds an opinion that is in opposition to the opinion of the other half. using the words of Isidora Sekulić, as This discord is presented by Višnja Ćirić in the journal "*Pravoslavlje*", in a discussion of Isidora Sekulić:

"There is a great secret between East and West, which only an agile mind can grasp, and only a comprehensive soul can explain. Isidora debated with those who mystified it deeper, or made it more apparent, while acting worried over conflict and the difference. East is, according to Isidora, preserved its uncorruptedness, whiteness, dew – West: strength, power, technology, and mind. The connection is above, in realms above the mundane, in the spirit. She saw this connection during the Middle Ages in St. Augustine, a man of eastern passion, emotions, mystical religious spirit, but with western erudition, mind, and conventions. *His concept of cosmopolitan government is an idea of both sides – the whole world in one state, an idea of East, under the government of one Church – of West*, noted Isidora."

⁴ Marinović-Bobinac and Marinović-Jerolimov, In: Kuburc Zorica and Christian Moe (eds.), *Religion and Pluralism in Education*, CEIR, Novi Sad, 2006, 59.

⁵ *Ibidem*, 60.

⁶ Kuburc and Vukomanović In: Kuburc Zorica and Christian Moe (eds.) *Religion and Pluralism in Education*, 107.

Whether the unity of these sides lies in spirit, as in art or in light, is a question that can be asked any time, and it might sound strange and unanswerable today, but it is certain that it is not difficult for a wise person to take the best from both sides. Isidora creates her artistic expression right on this borderline, remarks Višnja Ćirić. "The wealth of both East and West is gathered in her, but her expression is always within the tradition of her own culture, empowered by knowledge and cosmopolitan beauty, characterized by marvelous language, beauty and wealth of the most admirable Serbian expression. Her essayistic works, seen as a voyage through spheres of wideness and height, across meridians from East to West, from the deepest gaze to the highest values, find a prominent place in Serbian literature and culture."⁷

Philosophy course at secondary school

A centuries-old cultural heritage, based on the tradition of the Eastern and Western Churches, has its influence in different areas. In this article, it is significant for us to observe the lecturing that is passed on through generations within educational systems.

There are several secondary school types in Croatia. Four programs of secondary school education⁸ are conducted in different types of schools. *Vocational schools* carry out an educational plan and program of from one to five years (at the end of which pupils receive a secondary professional degree) and programs of a basic professional degree (programs of from one to two years). *Art schools* are four-year schools at the end of which a secondary professional degree is received. *Gymnasias* are a special type of secondary school institution. A wide division of gymnasias includes general and specialized gymnasias. Gymnasias include the following types: *general gymnasium*, *Language gymnasium*,

Classical gymnasium, *Science and mathematics gymnasium*, and *Natural science gymnasium*. About 30% of all secondary school students are gymnasium students. Gymnasias make up one fourth of all regular secondary schools.⁹ In Serbia, there is three- and four-year secondary school education. General four-year education is acquired at gymnasias, and vocational education is acquired in three-year and four-year secondary vocational school programs. 22% of students attend gymnasias, while the other 78% attend other secondary schools (59% of them attend four year programs).¹⁰

Logic and philosophy are the two philosophical subjects taught in Serbia. Logic is taught in the third grade at gymnasias, and philosophy in the fourth grade of gymnasias and four-year vocational schools for all professional profiles. The 1990 Regulations on education for common subjects in vocational schools¹¹ determines that philosophy is taught in the fourth grade – 60 classes during a year (twice a week). The 2003 Teaching plan and program for gymnasias¹² determines 72 classes during a year of logic (twice a week) in the third grade, and the same number of classes of philosophy in the fourth year for students of science and mathematics gymnasias (that makes 64 classes during the school year, which is finished earlier because of final exams). General and language gymnasias students have 3 classes of philosophy per week (96 during the whole year). Philosophy and logic have been taught like this since 1965/66, when logic was separated from psychology.¹³

⁷ Ćirić, Višnja, "Isidora Sekulić – Poetika od Istoka do Zapada", *Pravoslavljje: Novine Srpske patrijaršije*, Nr. 984, 5.03.2008, available in the electronic form at:

<http://pravoslavljje.spc.rs/broj/984/tekst/poetika-od-istoka-do-zapada/print/lat>.

⁸ *Secondary school diploma programs, Secondary profession degree programs, Basic professional degree programs, and Qualification and training programs*. Secondary school diploma, secondary professional degree and basic professional degree programs provide the knowledge and competence needed to enter the work force and to undertake further education. Qualification and training programs complement existing knowledge, capabilities and skills for work in a profession.

⁹ Information for the period 2006/07 according to Comparative analysis of gymnasium and high school education in the Republic of Serbia and foreign countries: France, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia, Switzerland, Finland, and Ireland, Ministry of Education, the Republic of Serbia, Project Center, Mart, 2008.

¹⁰ Data for the 2004–05 school year, taken from the website of the Center for Education Policy, on 5.11.2010

¹¹ The Regulation of the education plan for common subject in vocational schools and program of education in the first grade, *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – Education Gazette*, 6/1990, 98–99.

¹² Teaching plan for philosophy (and logic), *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – Education Gazette* 6/2003, 49–51.

¹³ In the Teaching plan and program from the year 1965/66, p. 9, the need for certain changes is discussed, and on page 160, this change is explained. We find out on this page that logic is separated from psychology, and that it is planned to be taught in the third grade of gymnasium, twice a week.

The 2003 Teaching plan and program for gymnasias¹⁴ determines 72 classes of logic during a year (twice a week) in the third grade, and the same number of classes of philosophy in the fourth year. Philosophy and logic have been taught like this since 1965/66, when logic was separated from psychology.¹⁵

However, a school reform has been carried out in Serbia since 2003. The website of the Ministry of Education informs us that the reform entered its fourth phase in October, 2009, which would last 30 months.¹⁶ The proposal for changes in the philosophy and logic curriculum is expected before the end of December. Due to the gradual changes of secondary vocational education, some schools do not carry out philosophy courses, while they are still organized in unreformed schools.

The Croatian 1994 Teaching plan and program for gymnasias¹⁷ explains that the teaching programs for school subjects have been created gradually since 1990, when gymnasium was brought back into the Croatian education system. Gymnasium was brought back in Serbia that same year as well.¹⁸ Logic is taught in all types of gymnasias in Croatia once a week during the third year. Philosophy is taught twice a week during the fourth year. Ethics can be chosen during the whole four year schooling period instead of religious education and is taught once a week. Statistical data show that 77% of secondary school students and 92% of elementary school students choose religious education courses.¹⁹ Logic is not taught in vocational schools, although it can be chosen in some schools as an optional subject, for example at dance school. Philosophy is generally not taught at vocational schools, but it is given as an

optional subject to some educational profiles, while it is taught at music schools, following the teaching plan and program for gymnasias.²⁰

The goals and aims of logic and philosophy courses are unchanged since 1987.²¹ The teaching plan for gymnasias was designed in 2003, and vocational schools follow the plan from 1991.²² The introductory teaching points of logic courses from 1991 were changed so that the introduction is more directly aimed at the content of logic, and there is no historical overview of the development of logic and its establishment as a discipline. The connection between logic and philosophy is loosened, and the connection with mathematics is made stronger. On the one hand, we can perceive the changes of logic courses in relation to philosophy and the initial concept of logic as a propaedeutic of philosophy. On the other hand we can perceive the update to contemporary logic. A teaching unit that has been introduced is propositional calculus, and in the instructions that come with the program it is stated that instead of mere analysis of truth functions through truth tables – that is, in correlation to mathematics courses – analysis should be elaborated in relation to better understanding the implication, significance and use of logical calculus, and especially the technique of *reductio ad absurdum*. However, the greatest part of the curriculum is still based on traditional logic. The teaching program in Croatia deals with the relations between contemporary and traditional logic, and introduces them both to students.²³

¹⁴ Teaching plan for philosophy (and logic), *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – Education Gazette* 6/2003, 49–51.

¹⁵ In the Teaching plan and program from the year 1965/66, p. 9, the need for certain changes is discussed, and on page 160, this change is explained. We find out on this page that logic is separated from psychology, and that it is planned to be taught in the third grade of gymnasium, twice a week.

¹⁶ Project „Secondary Vocational Education and Training System Modernization“

¹⁷ Teaching plan and program for gymnasias, *Ministry of Culture and Education of the Republic of Croatia Gazette*, Zagreb, 1994

¹⁸ Bojović, Snežana D., „Gimnazija posle Drugog svet-skog rata – s naglaskom na prirodne nauke“, *Pedagogija*, 2004, Nr. 4, pp. 82–98.

¹⁹ Source: <http://dnevnik.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/biskupi-traze-vise-vjeronauka-u-srednjim-skolama.html>

²⁰ The Agency for Vocational Education and Training website offers Teaching plan and programs for specific educational profiles:

<http://www.aso.hr/default.aspx?id=201> Teaching plan and program for music and dance schools is available on the website of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports: <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=3061>.

²¹ This is concluded from Mirko Aćimović's article „Prilog metodici nastave logike“, where he compares 1987 and 1991 programs. We have also compared programs from 1991 and 2003.

²² The plan for gymnasias is Teaching plan and program for philosophy (and logic), *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – Education Gazette* 6/2003, 49–51, and for vocational schools: The Regulation on amendments supplements on the Regulations of the education plan for common subject in vocational schools and program of education in the first grade, *Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – Education Gazette RS* 4/1991.

²³ The website of the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education gives the Teaching plans and programs for gymnasias and vocational schools for logic and philosophy courses.

The teaching program for philosophy courses in Serbia follows the historical concept, but some departures from the chronology are expected so that the connections between and development of certain philosophical issues are presented. The major part of the content is also grouped into thematic units that correspond to philosophical issues. Therefore, we have both an historical and a problem-oriented approach. There are three teaching programs in Croatia, and one of these is an historical and problem-oriented approach, like the one in Serbia. The other program consists of two methodically different parts. The first part is a combination of a systematic and historical approach to philosophical issues, and it deals with problems of classical philosophy. The second part deals with issues chosen from contemporary philosophy. This kind of program is offered in the belief that, on the one hand, philosophy cannot be understood without the understanding of its classical formulations, and, on the other hand, it is necessary to present contemporary debates in philosophy as a discipline and as an orientation of thought to students. The third program consists of three parts. The first of part is a short introduction. In the second part, students are expected to acquire factual knowledge about certain philosophers and the issues they were occupied with. The third part is an elaboration of certain issues from different philosophical disciplines, and which of them is to be emphasized is chosen according to the type of school, interests and skills of students.

Textbooks that are given for the philosophy and logic courses show also the quality of courses in these two subjects. An indicator is also the number of textbooks that are approved by the Ministry, the number of the textbooks that exist as an alternative regardless of approval, and the number of translated foreign textbooks.

The current Teaching plan and program in Serbia states that there is no textbook that covers the whole curriculum. The textbook of Gajo Petrović is recommended²⁴, because of its suitability regarding the previous knowledge of students and the capability in relation to the age of students. The list of approved textbooks also contains the textbook of

Mihailo Marković.²⁵ There are two textbooks that are approved for the philosophy courses, and both of them follow the historical sequence; the older one is written by Veljko Korać and Branko Pavlović, and was approved in 1983; the newer one is from 2001, written by the group of authors Savić, Cvetković, and Cekić.²⁶

The Catalogue of mandatory textbooks²⁷ for gymnasias in the 2010/2011 school year for the philosophy course in Croatia gives two books to choose: *Povijest filozofije s odabranim tekstovima* (History of Philosophy with Selected Texts) by Boris Kalin and *Filozofija* (Philosophy), which follows a problem-oriented approach, by Tomislav Rašković. If we take into account which textbook is chosen by which number of schools,²⁸ we can conclude that the problem-oriented approach is less frequently used.²⁹

There are also two textbooks for the logic course, written by Srećko Kovač and Gajo Petrović. According to the reported decisions, the textbook *Logika* (Logic) by Srećko Kovač is used by the majority of schools instead of the textbook by Gajo Petrović. In the preface to the eighth edition, in December 2002, commenting on the changes he made from the previous editions, Kovač said that the material for traditional logic was reduced, while

²⁵ *Logika*, Mihailo Marković, was first published in 1956, but it has many additions through many editions. Zavod za udžbenike has published it since 1962, and the last time it was published was in 2008.

²⁶ Korać, Veljko and Pavlović, Branko; *Istorija filozofije za srednju školu*, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Belgrade, the first edition 1983, (1994). Savić, Mile, Cvetković, N. Vladimir, Cekić, Nenad, *Filozofija za IV razred gimnazije i stručnih škola*, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Beograd, the first edition 2001.

²⁷ Catalogue of mandatory textbooks and additional teaching aids for elementary schools, gymnasias, and secondary vocational schools in the 2010/2011 schools year, is available at:

<http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?art=9994&sec=1933>.

²⁸ Schools in Croatia have an obligation to report to the Ministry on the decision which textbooks are chosen for the current year. Schools that did not inform the Ministry about the chosen books and teaching aids must use textbooks that are most commonly chosen in the county to which the school belongs. More information on this, as well as the *Final list of the chosen textbooks and additional teaching aids according to the professional assets of schools* for 2010/2011 is available on the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia: <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2354>

²⁹ The philosophy textbook by Boris Kalin, which follows an historical approach, is used at a majority of schools (102), while the problem-oriented approach of Reškovac is used in only 13.

²⁴ The textbook *Logika*, Gajo Petrović is used in Croatia. The first time it was published was in 1964 in Zagreb by the Školska knjiga. Since the 1990s it has also been published by Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva in Belgrade. Both publishers are allowed to publish school textbooks.

attempting to preserve the material on contemporary logic, and that the aim of these changes was to align the content with the current state of logic in the world. *Elementi simboličke logike. Uz udžbenik 'Logika' Gaje Petrovića* (Elements of Symbolic Logic. Addition to the Gajo Petrović's Textbook "Logic") by Davor Lauc appeared in 2004 with additional material on symbolic logic and the use of contemporary logic in logic, mathematics and linguistics.

When discussing teaching methods for logic solving logical problems is singled out as an important part of developing critical thinking as well as understanding the lessons taught.³⁰ Scientific researches have been done examining these issues, and workbooks with logic exercises have been printed in order to help students acquiring and teachers assessing the acquired knowledge.³¹ Along with the logic textbook in Croatia, there is also a workbook that can be found in bookshops. A workbook that is available was first published in 1993 by a group of authors (Grogerek, Majorinc, Turk) under the title *Logika. Vježbe, zadaci i rješenja* (Logic. Exercises and Problems, with Key) There is also a book with the same title by Ante Vlastelice from 2001, which is recommended in the Teaching program for gymnasias in 1994.

If the ethics program lasts for one year with a smaller number of classes, there are three themed units: Searching for identity, which explores the

problems of growing up and maturation; a person as a citizen, which explores personal and political rights; an individual, society and country, which explores issues that deal with basic bioethics and ecoethical concepts through the concept of *society*.³² If the program lasts for two years, the last unit is further divided and extended. However, there are more differences for the two year courses in ethics for secondary school education for general health care technicians and nurses.³³ They learn the same material that is taught in the four year program during the first two years. Namely, the first year is dedicated to *meaning and orientation* on the individual level, and during the second year they deal with *a human in the community*. The third year follows *a person in the world of nature*. The fourth year offers two programs, and both are aimed at forming ethical knowledge out of the already acquired understanding. Religion also becomes an issue, as a different approach to morality.³⁴

³² This can be seen from the teaching plans and programs for a one year course for secondary vocational schooling. As an example: The teaching plan and program for maritime transport, vocation: transport worker in ports, pp 32–33. For two years program: Teaching plan and program for the field of electrotechnics, vocation: assembler of electrical machinery and equipment, pp 51–53. Teaching plans and programs are available on the website of the Ministry of science, education and sports of the Republic of Croatia: <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=3061>

³³ Part of the general education for vocational curriculum for medical nurses and technicians of general medical care, pp 122–126. It is available on the website already mentioned before.

³⁴ The following is the list of textbooks following such a program, along with data on their usage in schools. For the first grade, the majority of schools has chosen the textbook authored by Ćiril Čoh, Ksenija Matuš, and Marija Lamot, *Etika I* (865), then Čehok Ivana, *Etika i čovjek – biće susreta* (268), and in the end Vesna Šipuš, *Etika I* (43). Among the textbooks for ethics in the second grade of secondary school the book *JA, MI, ONI...* authored by Bruno Ćurak and Dunja Marušić Brezetić (838) is significantly more in use than *U potrazi za istinom: religije svijeta* by Ozren Žunec (159). Also, the majority of schools (786) has chosen Tomislav Rešković's *Bio-etika* for the third year, and minority (174) has taken Ivan Čehok's *Etika 3*. Approximately the same number of schools has chosen Vesna Šipuš's *Etika 4* (159) and Ivan Čehok's *Etika* (198). This has been counted out of the *Final list of the chosen textbooks and suitable additional teaching aids according to the choice of professional committees in schools* for the following 2010/2011 school year, which is available on the website of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia: <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2354>

³⁰ In his PhD thesis, *Nastava logike u srednjoj školi: Funkcija nastave logike u oblikovanju kričkog mišljenja*, p. 71, Boris Kalin *Nastava logike u srednjoj školi: Funkcija nastave logike u oblikovanju kričkog mišljenja*, p. 71, when dealing with the impact of exercises, says that exercises do not contribute to fulfilling the functional tasks of the teaching of philosophy, but they do help students to be conscious of the content of the material taught up to the point of acquiring concrete knowledge. Special attention is given to the choice of the exercises and examples, because this determines efficiency.

³¹ See: Knjazeva, Svetlana, *Logika u praksi*, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Beograd 1977. Janda, Dubravka, "Prijedlog jednog tipa zadataka za provjeravanje znanja iz logike", *Marksističko obrazovanje*, Zagreb 1979, br. 4, 314–316. Janda, Dubravka, "Prijedlog nekoliko tipova zadataka za ispitivanje kategoričkog silogizma", *Marksističko obrazovanje*, Zagreb 1979, br. 4, 322–325. Kalin, Boris, "Zadaci iz logike i zadaća nastave logike", *Marksističko obrazovanje*, 1978, br. 4, 258–261. Kalin, Boris, "Uzorci zadataka za provjeravanje i ocjenjivanje", *Marksističko obrazovanje*, 1979, br. 4, 311 – 313. Kalin, Boris, *Nastava logike u srednjoj školi: Funkcija nastave logike u oblikovanju kričkog mišljenja*, Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Filozofski fakultet, 1980.

Serbian law defines that philosophy can be taught by people with a university diploma in philosophy or philosophy and sociology.³⁵ The same professional qualifications are necessary for teaching at any secondary vocational school.³⁶ It is the same in Croatia, with the only difference being that those who did not attend courses in pedagogy and psychology need to pass those exams, and everyone has to pass the state exam after an internship. Ethics in Croatia can be taught by a person with a university diploma in philosophy, theology, or catechism.³⁷

The Question of the empirical reality of philosophy as a school subject

Josip Marinković's text "Teorijska pitanja filozofskog obrazovanja" (Theoretical questions of philosophy education) offers a view on who is qualified to ask theoretical questions concerning the teaching of philosophy and within which science (philosophy, pedagogy, or something else) this is possible. The conclusion "that the questions of philosophy education are substantially philosophical questions, although that does not make them significant philosophical questions" leads us to a further consideration: to what extent is philosophy aware of its "interference" with education? Namely, the history of philosophy testifies to the large number of explicit and implicit viewpoints on methods and meaning of philosophy education, as well as the fact that philosophy has always been interested in the ways it would explain itself. That is why the silence of institutional philosophy concerning the philosophy education, its tacit position out of the sphere of interest, which Marinković perceived in 1978, and which is still valid today (as we read in the preface for *Tradicija filozofije I (Tradition of Philosophy I)*³⁸, 2008),³⁹ should not be considered as a part of the essence of philosophy itself. The principle of division of

philosophy into scientific and research activity and educational activity (which have different positions in the hierarchical scale of labor organization) should not be presented as a philosophical principle. It contains philosophical implications, but it has never been reflected as a philosophical principle.⁴⁰

The question of empirical reality also contains the question of the extent to which the philosophical community and the faculty of philosophy are involved in developing methods of teaching philosophy as a school subject. Furthermore, it also contains the question of how future philosophy teachers are trained for their teaching positions. Do philosophy teachers attend professional meetings to discuss their experiences and ideas? In what way does the Ministry cooperate with those institutions where philosophy is taught and do the regulations make a good practice possible?

The Croatian Parliament founded The Education and Teacher Training Agency in 2006, which is a legal successor of The Institute for School Education of Croatia, founded in 2002.⁴¹ Among other activities, the Agency organizes professional examinations, professional trainings for teachers and conducts the proceedings of their professional career advancement in rank of mentor or advisor.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia founded the Institute for Improvement of Education⁴². Within the Institute there is a Center for Professional Training of Teachers, as one of three organizational units of the Institute.⁴³ This unit is responsible for professional training and advancement in rank of pedagogical adviser, mentor, inspector, or high pedagogical advisor.⁴⁴ We believe that the possibility of promotion at work increases the motivation for improvement. Since 2004 mandatory trainings for all teachers are required; the pro-

³⁵ According to the current Regulations on changing the Regulations on professional qualification of teachers, professional associates, and teaching associates in gymnasias, published in *Education Gazette*, Nr. 1/92

³⁶ Regulation on the type of professional qualification of teachers, professional associates, and teaching associates in vocational schools, published in *Education Gazette*, Nr. 5/91

³⁷ This information is given in every Teaching plan and program.

³⁸ *Tradicija nastave filozofije I*, Arhe, Edicija filozofske literature, PROPALIDEIA, Novi Sad 2008.

³⁹ *Tradicija nastave filozofije I*, Arhe, Edicija filozofske literature, PROPALIDEIA, Novi Sad 2008.

⁴⁰ Marinković, Josip, „Teorijska pitanja filozofskog obrazovanja“, *Marksističko obrazovanje*, Zagreb 1978, Nr. 2, 77–81.

⁴¹ Article 27 of The Law on Education and Teacher Training Agency, *Narodne novine*, 85/06 abolished the Law on The Institute for School Education of the Republic of Croatia, *Narodne novine*, 153/02

⁴² "The Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Basic Systems of Education" was adopted in June, 2004.

⁴³ The other two are the Center for Development of Programs and Textbooks, and the Center for Professional Training and Education for Adults.

⁴⁴ "Regulations on continuous professional development and obtaining title of teacher, counselor and professional advisor", *Official Gazette RS*, Nr. 14/2004, 15

cess for promotion is initiated by a teacher, who submits an application and proof of eligibility.⁴⁵

One of the provided forms of professional training for teachers is attending conferences that are approved by the Center for professional development of the employees in education, and organized by a coordinator whose project has been accepted.⁴⁶ A teacher is obliged to attend at least 100 conference hours during a period of five years, with at least 60 hours of programs from the list of mandatory programs, and 40 hours from the list of optional programs. At the end of a conference an attendee receives a certificate, which is needed as proof for the evaluation of meeting the educational goals.

Professional development in Croatia is organized somewhat differently. 108 high advisors – employed by the Agency – organize professional training for teachers of each school subject. An advisor or a group of advisors organize several-day conferences on the national level once or twice a year on each school subject, and at least four times a year single-day conferences are organized on the level of a county or region. A chief of the professional committee of a county is also involved in the organizational process of conferences; he or she is proposed by the Agency advisor for a particular subject, and is named by the director of the Agency.

The 2010/2011 Catalogue of conferences⁴⁷, whose target group includes philosophy teachers, shows that there are three proposed conferences⁴⁸ with titles: *Philosophy with Ethics*,⁴⁹ *Dialego* –

*Philosophy in Secondary School*⁵⁰, *For, Against, and How – The Skill of Holding Reasoned Discussion in Class*.⁵¹ There are many conferences that are not aimed specifically at philosophy teachers, but they are indirectly included in the target group as teachers of social sciences. These conferences tend to implement contemporary ideas, methods and approaches in teaching. But there is a lack of competent discussion on specific contents of logic and philosophy, and these are not possible in mixed groups of teachers coming from different fields. It is apparent that there are even fewer programs for developing the teaching of logic and solving problems within it than there are for teaching philosophy. According to the reports from conferences, published in magazines for teaching methods, *Bulletin for teaching of philosophy* and *Marxist Education* from the period of Yugoslavia, more attention appeared to be given to discussing practical issues of teaching philosophy and logic, and there was a tendency to maintain the continuity of these discussions. The part that follows is set to demonstrate the possibility of exchanging such experiences with teachers from other countries, as well as of other possibilities to overcome the situation of being closed within the framework of a single country.

It is interesting to mention that a national contest in logic began in 1998 in Croatia, organized by the Institute for School Education of the Republic of Croatia. A student with the best results has additional credits when applying to a university. In 2001 the then minister approved a contest in philosophy as well.⁵² Problems that are given at the

⁴⁵ “Regulations on continuous professional development and obtaining title of teacher, counsellor and professional advisor”, 14–23 is valid with the Regulations on Amendments and supplements on the regulations on continuous professional development and obtaining title of teacher, counselor and professional advisor, *Official Gazette*, 56/2005, 54–55.

⁴⁶ The call for proposals is open to everyone and published in the gazette *Prosvetni pregled* and on the Center’s website. Conditions for program accreditation are stated in the mentioned Regulations on continuous professional development. Programs that show positive results are also used the following year. The number of attendees has the key role in the region.

⁴⁷ The Catalogue of programs for professional development of teachers for the 2010/2011 school year, Institute for Improvement of Education, Belgrade 2010. The first Catalogue was published for the school year of 2004/05

⁴⁸ All of these were also held the previous year.

⁴⁹ The description implies lectures on different current ethical topics.

⁵⁰ The description implies the further discussion on better implementation of teaching programs.

⁵¹ This is a program for which the target group is expanded to include all teachers of elementary and secondary schools. The program, beside rhetoric and debating, includes topics of dialectic argument and techniques and methods of teaching.

⁵² On national competitions in logic and philosophy: Grgec, Goran, “Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov– Nastava filozofske grupe predmeta u srednjim školama”, *Filozofska istraživanja*, 2008, Nr. 3, p. 532. and Čurko, Bruno, “Philosophy and Logic in Croatian High Schools”, *Philosophy pathways electronic journal*, Issue number 81, 4th April 2004. Reports from the competitions can be found in: for the first competition in the magazine *Logika 1*, which gives a description of the course of the competition in logic in 1998, after that in Dunja Marušić Brezetić’s “Natjecanje iz filozofije 2009 godine”, *Filozofska istraživanja*, 2010, Nr 4, 809–812.

contests in logic are based on the teaching program, but they are mostly based on mathematical logic.

One kind of international conference is The International Philosophy Olympiad for secondary school students, which is organized by the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP) and UNESCO. The Croatian philosophical society became involved with the organization in 2007 (when it became a member of FISP).⁵³

In the same year the Board for Teaching Philosophy, Logic and Ethics was initiated as a permanent body of the Board of directors of the Croatian Philosophical Society. Different activities for improving the teaching of these subjects (organizing conferences and consultations, publishing, contacts with relevant republic and national bodies, and so on) were coordinated by the Committee of Secondary School Teachers. There are no similar initiatives in the Serbian Philosophical Society; there are only single cases of people who are occasionally named by the Ministry to make decisions on issues of the teaching of philosophy.⁵⁴

According to Maja Uzelac's writing in 1986, there was no association of philosophy teachers in Yugoslavia, nor a section or a society for teaching philosophy within the Yugoslav Federation of Philosophical Societies.⁵⁵ There are committees of philosophy teachers in certain regions in Serbia today, but there is no society which gathers all teachers in the Republic of Serbia (Teacher society). There are committees on the school level that are formed by teachers of related subjects (philosophy, sociology, psychology, religious education, and civil rights education). However, we believe that being a mixed group, and being a group on a school level, these relate to specific problems of teaching in that particular school, but do not attend to the specific problems of teaching philosophy and its development. Philosophy teachers in Croatia are gathered both on the national level and the regional level (that is usually made of three counties). Regional meetings are always dedicated to questions concerning teaching, dealing with teaching methods for a particular topic, interpretation of topics,

evaluation system, and so on. These conferences are generally mandatory for renewal of a teaching license (which is to be renewed every 5 years). National meetings usually do not deal with teaching but rather with current professional issues in philosophy. In this way the Ministry tends to assist the further education of philosophers.

In 1986 Maja Uzelac was the first representative of Yugoslavia during the fifth congress of the International Association for Philosophy teachers (AIPPh), or the tenth congress if the European Committee for Teaching Philosophy is counted, which was founded in 1959 and whose work was continued by AIPPh. The International Association for Philosophy teachers was founded in Brussels in 1975. Writing for the magazine *Marksističko obrazovanje* Uzelac informed philosophy teachers on the conditions and proceedings of becoming a member.⁵⁶ AIPPh still exists today, and its work is presented to the public on their website.

Literature for philosophy teaching methods

The theoretical literature intended for philosophy and logic teaching methods is not extensive. Marinković Josip is the author of three books: *Prilozi metodici nastave filozofije* (Contribution to teaching methods of philosophy) from 1968, which follows the contents of classical didactics related to teaching philosophy;⁵⁷ *Metodika nastave filozofije* (Teaching methods of philosophy) from 1983, which is essential for philosophy students who have this subject at university. In the introductory chapter, in addition to other considerations, Marinković argues that the methodology for teaching philosophy is not only a philosophical discipline but is also a philosophy of method. Furthermore, he grasps the importance of introducing students to philosophical thought as well as the actions that incite the interest and curiosity of students: scandal, problematization, actualization and philosophical dialogue. The third chapter refers to the ways of provoking analysis in order that curiosity should not be the only subject of

⁵³ Grgec, Goran, "Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov", 532. O Međunarodnoj filozofskoj olimpijadi više nalazimo u tekstu Bruna Ćurka, "Međunarodna filozofska olimpijada", *Metodički ogledi*, 2008, Nr. 1, 115–135.

⁵⁴ Grgec, Goran, "Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov", 531

⁵⁵ Uzelac, Maja, "X međunarodni kongres o nastavi filozofije", *Marksističko obrazovanje*, 1986, Nr. 1, 29.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, 28–30.

⁵⁷ Topics covered: philosophy as instruction and the possibility of its method, the problem of teaching philosophy in high schools, the relationship between philosophy and other subjects, problem and historical approaches to teaching philosophy, teaching methods, group work, the application of textbooks in teaching philosophy, extracurricular activities, film, radio and TV as additional devices in teaching philosophy, revision of the older curriculum, assessment, extracurricular activities and organization in teaching philosophy.

study. Also, an important issue of assessment is emphasized together with the issues that have already been mentioned. The last book, *Filozofija kao nastava* (Philosophy as teaching), published in 1990, deals with the relationship between pedagogy and philosophy.

Although Ivo Despot's book is dedicated to Marxist and modern civil philosophy, the fourth part provides us with a valuable structure.⁵⁸ Not so long ago, Slavka Gvozdenovic, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić, the University of Montenegro, published *Metodiku nastave filozofije* (Teaching methods of philosophy) in Serbia. The aim of his work is to provide a basic insight into the theoretical studies and issues of organization and planning of teaching. In 2001, Dragoljub Živković wrote *Kako učiti? (posebno filozofiju)* (How to study?: (especially philosophy)). In 2006, Đurđica Crvenko published research on the possibility of applying modern teaching methods in philosophy, i.e. the application of monologue, dialogue and discussion methods, as well as the method of working on the text itself.

In all the literature mentioned so far, there is little specialized discussion dedicated to teaching logic. *Logika u praksi* (Logic in practice) by Svetlan Knjazeva represents a reference book of exercises, first published in 1964, and republished as new editions. *Logika i oblikovanje kritičkog mišljenja* (Logic and forming critical thinking) by Boris Kalin, published in 1982, represents an adaptation of his PhD thesis. It is not written as a typical logic teaching method, although the greater part of it can be defined as such. The study is based on two basic topics: the essence of modern teaching, and the role of teaching logic in light of defining such teaching, i.e. the role in the development of critical thinking which is emphasized in modern teaching. Let us point out the chapter which is about teaching methods, which takes into consideration both a modern concept of teaching and the particularity of teaching logic. This chapter is related not only to the method

of verbal presentation and conversation, but also to the methods of dealing with the text and the text-book, including the method of writing and drawing, as well as the use of additional teaching devices. Kalin especially puts a stress on the effect of exercises and examples from the field of logic on the development of critical thinking. In 2003, *Priručnik za nastavu uz udžbenik 'Logika'* Gaja Petrović (Handbook for teaching from the textbook of G. Petrović) was published.

In the past, teaching philosophy was encouraged by means of magazines. The following part of the text refers to magazines related to philosophy and logic teaching methods. Furthermore, it lists specialized magazines which offer articles about philosophy of education, philosophy and logic teaching methods, but theoretical issues in the teaching of philosophy and logic. Finally, such articles can be found in pedagogical magazines like *Nastava i vaspitanje*⁵⁹, *Misao* and *Pedagoška stvarnost*⁶⁰.

From 1953 to 1958, the Serbian Philosophical Society published the magazine *Filozofski pregled*. In 1954, in the issues no 1–2, Z. Pešić published an article *About some problems in philosophy teaching* in order to encourage the Serbian Philosophical Society to take problems in teaching philosophy into serious consideration.⁶¹ In certain situations in the past, philosophical societies did not take part in the problems of secondary school teaching, or some of them simply did not show enough engagement in this issue.

The magazine *Bilten za nastavu filozofije* was initiated with the aim of supporting continuous methodic work since there was a lack of systemic effect on the improvement of teaching methods in philosophy and sociology in Croatia and its neighboring countries.⁶² This magazine was published from 1969 to 1976. After that, its role was

⁵⁸ Despot, Ive, *Nastava marksističke i savremene građanske filozofije u gimnaziji – Interpretacija programa sa metodskim napomenama*, Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, Sarajevo 1965.

IV chapter is about "Philosophy teaching method" and it deals with verbalism in teaching philosophy, the use of original texts, students' essays, discussion, research on teaching philosophy, as well as revision and knowledge of the subject matter, tackling the problem of students' difficult understanding of philosophy. It also deals with the insecurity of teachers of philosophy. Therefore, it provides specialized literature related to teaching methods.

⁵⁹ *Nastava i vaspitanje: časopis za pedagošku teoriju i praksu* Pedagogical association of Serbia has been publishing it from March 1952 till the present day.

⁶⁰ *Misao* is a magazine of school, scientific and cultural workers of Vojvodina. It was first published in 1975. Pedagogical magazine in Vojvodina is also *Pedagoška stvarnost*.

⁶¹ Pešić is also an editor for another of the Serbian Philosophical Society's magazines.

⁶² Kalin, Boris, "Uz desetogodišnjicu časopisa za nastavu naših predmeta", *Marksističko obrazovanje*, 1979, br. 4: 273.

taken over by *Marksističko obrazovanje* – from 1978 to 1989.^{63,64}

The initiator of *Bilten* was Josip Marinković, who founded it as a ‘newspaper’ of philosophy teachers⁶⁵ and defined its conception.⁶⁶ It was published by the Committee of Philosophy Teachers from Zagreb⁶⁷ with the financial support from the Association of Gymnasias of Croatia and the Agency for Improving Professional Education of Croatia.⁶⁸ As long as *Bilten za nastavu filozofije*⁶⁹ existed, 22 issues, 133 articles on 783 pages were published.⁷⁰

Marksističko obrazovanje, to celebrate 10 years of *Bilten* (which wasn’t published at that time), dedicated its issue no 4 to questions of teaching philosophy in 1979. The issue presents the contents of all issues of *Bilten*. Important texts were published again, especially because most of them were unavailable to *Bilten*. A special emphasis is put on the text “Uz desetogodišnjicu časopisa za nastavu naših predmeta” (For the ten year anniversary of the magazine for teaching our subjects) by Boris Kalin, which summarizes the entire work of the magazine. The magazine represents a pioneer work of systemic research on the improvement of teaching methods of a philosophical group of subjects and sociology (as well as the basis of Marxism and the theory and practice of self-managing socialism) in Croatia and

neighboring countries.⁷¹ The magazine was very useful to teachers because it offered a workout of curriculum, examples of teaching methods, assignments and consideration of certain teaching methods, including the use of textbooks and text analyses.⁷² What is unique about this magazine, showing the initiative to inform and provide teachers with specific ideas and materials, is that it contains texts about the Committee of Philosophy Teachers, its activities and its communication with foreign countries.

The introduction of the first issue of the magazine *Marksističko obrazovanje* points out that the magazine itself represents an addition to *Bilten*. During the period of twelve years, 50 issues of the magazine were published (4 issues per year and two extra issues), i.e. about 3,500 pages of text. The magazine’s work was summarized by Boris Kalin in the fourth issue in 1989⁷³, in the text “Unapređivanje metodike nastave filozofije” (Improving teaching methods of philosophy). The text provides review of articles (about 30 theoretical ones, 100 and more supplements related to teaching practice) as well as a brief summary of progressive ideas of teaching methods. Most of the additional material is related to Marxism as a subject, self-managing socialism and sociology. About 20 supplements regarding teaching practice are related to philosophy, whereas 10 refer to logic.

The exchange of ideas about teaching methods was possible only in specialized magazines for a limited number of subjects. Such magazines were *Bilten* and *Marksističko obrazovanje*. These magazines left enough space necessary for dealing with the details of curriculum. Therefore, a multitude of suggestions related to teaching methods improved the development of teaching itself. Certainly, any initiative towards the issuing of teaching material would represent the recognition of such work, as well as its support and motivation. Since there is no magazine in Serbia today which has the effect on logic and philosophy teaching it is questionable

⁶³ Kalin, Boris, “Unapređivanje metodike nastave filozofije”, 274.

⁶⁴ Kalin, Boris, “Unapređivanje metodike nastave filozofije”, *Marksističko obrazovanje*, 1989, Nr. 4, 275. Boris Kalin “Uz desetogodišnjicu časopisa za nastavu naših predmeta”, and Gorana Grgeca, “Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov”.

⁶⁵ Kalin, Boris, “Unapređivanje metodike nastave filozofije”, 274.

⁶⁶ Grgec, Goran, “Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov”, 531.

⁶⁷ Grgec, Goran, “Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov”, 531.

⁶⁸ Grgec, Goran, “Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov”, 531.

⁶⁹ “From issue no 13 to issue no 19 (1972–1974) *Bilten* is named *Bilten za nastavu filozofije i sociologije*, whereas issues no 20–22 (1975–1976) are completed with topics related to the subject of the basis of Marxism and theory and practice of self-managing socialism; therefore, it is under the name *Bilten za nastavu predmeta: filozofija, sociologija, osnove marksizma, teorija i praksa samoupravnog socijalizma*” from: Grgec, Goran, “Pola stoljeća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov”, 531.

⁷⁰ Kalin, Boris, “Unapređivanje metodike nastave filozofije”, 275.

⁷¹ Kalin, Boris, “Uz desetogodišnjicu časopisa za nastavu naših predmeta”, 174.

⁷² Ibidem, 278.

⁷³ The magazine was suspended by the decision of the board IRO “Školska knjiga”, which was the publishing house together with the Institute of Educational and Pedagogic Service of Croatia; namely, with the abolition of Marxism and self-managing socialism in 1990/91, the magazine 1990/91, *Marksističko obrazovanje* lost its meaningful purpose. Further engagement in social science and humanities is possible in the form of a new magazine.

whether there is any exchange of ideas on teaching methods within the Committee of Philosophy Teachers, including theoretical considerations. In Croatia, it can be said that this exchange happens in committees which are established at the regional level. They hold their meetings separately for each subject – philosophy, logic and ethics, regardless of the fact that these subjects have the same professor.

Recently, the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad initiated a specialized edition of propaedeutic literature under the name PROPAIDEIA, within the publishing work of *Arhe* magazine. The preface of the book's first edition points out that the lack of work related to secondary school teaching originates from the assumption that questions of propaedeutics, methodic and didactics of teaching philosophy belong to the field of the so called philosophical infrastructure; therefore, they cannot initiate any livelier and deeper philosophical Eros. The aim of the magazine is to pay more attention to these issues that are neglected and to improve high school teaching which represents the beginning of philosophical education. Accordingly, it starts with the reconstruction of philosophical events on the high school level of education. The first two books, *Tradicija nastave filozofije* (Tradition of teaching philosophy, 2008 and 2009) represent the result of work within the scientific-research project "Tradition of philosophy teaching in the first Serbian gymnasium (Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad)" which was subsidized by the Ministry of Science and Environment.

Philosophical magazines with articles about philosophy and logic teaching methods are published by the Serbian Philosophical Society. To be more specific, these articles are published in a magazine that has changed its name three times since its inception in 1957. It was first published for 10 years under the name of *Filozofija* (till 1966.); from 1967 it was published under the name *Filosofija* (Philosophy), – until 1973 (year 17); from 1976 (year 19) it continued to live under the third name *Theoria*. From 1984 to 1986, in the column, "Filozofija u školskom ključu", Bogdan Delić published 5 articles related to different philosophy curriculums. In 1990 he got an M.A. degree on "Sokratovski dijalog kao metoda filozofije i mogućnosti njegove primene u nastavi" (Socratic Dia-

logue as a method of philosophy and possibility of its use in courses).⁷⁴

In 1980, the Croatian Philosophical Society established the magazine *Filozofska istraživanja*. The magazine reached a great number of issues after 4 years and it is published every three months.⁷⁵ It follows the conception of philosophical and interdisciplinary dialogue, i.e. openness to all philosophical and non-philosophical directions, enabling the interaction among them.⁷⁶ Occasionally, there are articles about teaching logic and philosophy published in it,⁷⁷ and in 1990, the Croatian Philosophical Society published the first issue of the magazine *Metodički ogledi*, with written works in all fields, providing they open new insights into the philosophical background of education. The editor in chief is Milan Molic, who is also the initiator of the magazine⁷⁸. In 2000 and 2001, the Croatian Philosophical Society published five issues of the magazine *Logika*, whose editor was Ivan Bekavac Basić, containing about 20 articles. The magazine was intended for high school teachers and students. It had detailed reports and assignments in the field of logic that were given at students' contests in 1999. It also had articles about teaching logic and well-known logists, as well as a column with internet addresses related to logic.⁷⁹ The text by Bruno Ćurko "Odgoj i nastava u aktivnostima Hrvatskog filozofskog društva" (Education and teaching in activities of the Croatian Philosophical Society) is a detailed study, with statistical data, of texts dealing with the issue of education published in the magazines *Filozofska istraživanja*, *Metodički ogledi* and *Logika*.

⁷⁴ Delić, Bogdan (1990). Socratic dialogue as a method of philosophy and possibility of its application in teaching, Belgrade.

⁷⁵ From 1991 to 2005 there was a break in libraries.

⁷⁶ Grgec, Goran, „Pola stoleća Hrvatskog filozofskog društva kao istraživački izazov“, 526.

⁷⁷ Every fourth section provides a bibliography; the bibliography of the magazine *Filozofska istraživanja* from issue no 1 to issue no 99 (1980–2005 god.) as *Filozofska istraživanja*, 2005, no. 5.

⁷⁸ Milan Polić was twice chosen as the editor – from 1990 to 1994 and from 2001 until today. In the meantime, Kruno Zakarije was the chief editor from 1995, when two issues of *Metodički ogledi* were published. After that, the magazine stopped being published until 2002.

⁷⁹ Ćurko, Bruno, "Odgoj i nastava u aktivnostima Hrvatskog filozofskog društva", *Filozofska istraživanja*, 2008, br. 3, 665–695.

Conclusion

Borders dividing the East and the West are flexible in some periods, whereas in others, they are rigid and closed. The period that we have researched is related to the second half of the 20th century, when Serbia and Croatia were both a part of Yugoslavia through the period of their reaching their independence until the present. In the period of Yugoslavia, besides the unique organisation of the state, the position of philosophy was better in Croatia. The contribution of Croatian authors was more important for teaching philosophy in the whole education system. The borders between the Catholic West and the Orthodox East in Yugoslavia were flexible and there was an exchange of experience. However, the initiative was greater in the western part of the state.

After the disintegration of the state, the borders between Serbia and Croatia were closed, while the Croatian education system chose the Latin alphabet and Catholic religion. On the other hand, Serbia chose the Cyrillic alphabet and Orthodox religion, where all traditional churches got the right to have their own religious education within the state's education system. The order of returning to religion first happened in Croatia in 1991. Catholic religious education had an alternative and that was ethics. Since the subjects are equally available to philosophy teachers and theologians, we can conclude that the influence of the Catholic Church is very important; therefore, philosophy and theology are closely related in Croatia. In Yugoslavia, religion didn't have such a big influence on education system. After the dissolution of the state, there was a reestablishing of religious education which has been less accepted by students in Serbia than in Croatia. The alternative to religious education is civil education. These two school subjects have been at war since an 'either-or' position was established, which has caused arguments among children themselves. In contrast to ethics, civil education represents a form of political organization as an alternative to religious instruction.

The empirical reality of an education system opens the door to the future in which Serbia hasn't yet caught up with Croatia, both in the sense of reforms and changes and devotion to teaching philosophy within the education system. The root of this problem lies in the political situation in the country as well as the lack of proper conditions for the development of the education system. In Serbia, more attention is paid to teaching the Serbian lan-

guage and Serbian literature in order to cultivate a national identity and the culture of the Orthodox East.

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Discussion

Pro and Con Discussion Regarding the Tenets of the Hermeneutic Philosophy of Science

Since the late 1960s studies in the hermeneutic philosophy of science have been gaining currency. In looking at this development from a historical perspective, one can today recognize an independent philosophical tradition. Scientific research is committed to the universe of interpretative phenomena – so the tradition's guiding tenet goes – since it is itself a hermeneutic process. To put it in an extended formulation, those phenomena which philosophical hermeneutics unveils in the being of history, language, and art can also be identified in natural science as a particular mode of being-in-the-world. This is a radical claim that provokes a double confrontation. On the one hand, the hermeneutic philosophy of science opposes the mainstream philosophical picture of science which is spelled out predominantly in terms of objectivism, epistemological representationalism, and cognitive essentialism. On the other hand, a conflict with traditional philosophical hermeneutics is inevitable. On this traditional

enterprise, a constitutive view of interpretation might be integrated into a theory of scientific communication, but by no means into a theory of scientific research and knowledge. Due to this double confrontation, the hermeneutic philosophy of science brings into play several interesting debates of general philosophical importance. This tradition is a target of criticism from positions as different as neo-scholastic ontology and neo-positivist epistemology. The publication of Professor Arvin Voss's article documents our desire to initiate on the pages of the *Balkan Journal of Philosophy* an ongoing pro and contra discussion regarding the tenets of the hermeneutic philosophy of science. To be sure, Professor Voss's elegant criticism of the hermeneutic view about the status of science's theoretical objects as well as his rehabilitation of essentialism concerning the constitution of scientific knowledge will meet a counter-criticism devised by the exponents of an interpretative turn in the philosophy of science.

ON THE STATUS OF THEORETICAL OBJECTS IN SCIENCE ACCORDING TO COGNITIVE EXISTENTIALISM

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In recent work Prof. Dimitri Ginev has been developing a view of the nature of science which he calls "Cognitive Existentialism." These subtle and detailed analyses call for much more extensive comment than I could possibly make here. Accordingly, I am going to limit myself to examining a single, fundamental issue: the status of theoretical

objects in science. As Ginev states, the "doctrine about the status of science's theoretical objects constitutes the kernel of cognitive existentialism" (Ginev 2009, 382). Again, he elsewhere states that his goal is to describe "the 'immanent transcendence' of science's theoretical objects" (Ginev 2006, pp. 124–131). Both the immanence and the transcendence of

theoretical objects are significant: the *immanence* because it is Ginev's means of countering essentialism and *transcendence* because it is necessary to account for basic features of scientific research.

My comment will have three parts: first, a brief account of the nature and status of theoretical objects in Ginev's account of science; second, an account of some difficulties that I find with Ginev's account of "theoretical" objects; thirdly, it will be argued that these difficulties have their source in the fact that implicit in Ginev's position is an understanding of knowing that is essentialist with the result that he eliminates significant features about knowing in order to avoid essentialism. Finally, I will argue that there is an alternative account of knowing which avoids the problems of essentialism and is more adequate in accounting for the facts of knowing, specifically the role of theoretical objects in science. This claim will be argued first by sketching briefly an alternative conception of the origin, nature, and role of theoretical objects. Secondly, it will be shown that this alternative approach has the capacity to resolve the issues that remain puzzling in Ginev's account of the constitution of science.

In short, I shall argue that Ginev has failed to break cleanly with the fundamental assumptions about knowing on which essentialism is based and the result is that his own account of the role of theoretical objects in science is insightful, but ultimately not fully satisfying.

I. On Science's Theoretical Objects

Cognitive existentialism aims to give an account of theoretical objects in science. The problem, as Ginev sees it, is to give an adequate account of the role of theoretical objects as they function in science without lapsing into some form of essentialism. Positively, for Ginev this means describing the role of theoretical objects in science purely in terms of scientific practices. Negatively, it means avoiding all implications that theoretical objects are cognitive essences: "There is no 'essence' behind or beyond the interrelatedness of practices" (Ginev 2009, 366).

How is meaning constituted? Or, to ask the question in another way: how do theoretical objects arise? Ginev's answer is that it is through "appropriating (actualizing of) possibilities through interpretation." Again, it is said that scientific research, a mode of being-in-the-world, "projects its existence upon possibilities." How does this occur? It is through this appropriation that "an ongoing articulation of a domain's research objects comes into be-

ing" (Ginev 2009, 381). *Appropriation* and *articulation* are two ways of describing how a scientist applies a theoretical object to a new situation, a new context, to another instance or instances of what was before only a possibility, something not yet known. An added aspect is that theoretical objects are "constantly undergoing small changes in normal scientific research due to their 'recontextualization' in new configurations of practices" (*ibid.*). In other words, the range of data to which a theoretical object is applied constantly expands. These statements document Ginev's sensitivity to the contextual nature of scientific reflection and the incremental development that is characteristic of normal science.

But what is appropriation? How does it occur? According to Ginev scientific research is "a mode of being-in-the-world" through which Dasein projects its being upon possibilities. Also, through appropriation "a domain's research objects come into being". Both aspects are significant and will need to be examined in more detail. However, in this context Ginev is quick to affirm the anti-essentialist nature of his position: "the ongoing hermeneutic restructuring of [a] domain's cognitive structure is not behind or beyond the interrelatedness of practices" (Ginev 2006, pp. 135–139). The very fact that Ginev feels the need to reaffirm the anti-essentialist character of cognitive existentialism suggests that the matter is not entirely settled in his mind. In any case, the denial of essentialism does nothing to explain the origin of this cognitive structure, its dynamics, or its organizing principle.

Why such explanation is needed can be seen from the fact that Ginev adds an account of the nature of this cognitive structure. He notes that "a domain's research objects are always related to theoretical objects that are not present at hand in normal scientific everydayness" (2008, 237). The problem is to explain how research and theoretical objects are related. For Ginev a domain's "research objects" seem to be the individual instances or the materials that are found in the laboratory or are the things being studied in a research program. In other words, research objects are the particular chemicals, even the individual sample, which a chemist uses in his work, or the particular plants which the biologist studies when studying the growth of wheat for example, etc. In contrast to these specimens "theoretical objects...are not present at hand." Rightly, it is recognized that they have a different status. Ginev goes on to explain that "the theoretical objects always already transcend the actual configurations of

practices.” This fact leads Ginev to conclude rightly that there is a “‘content’ of these objects that cannot be exhibited by the models constituted by the configurations in progress” (Ginev 2009, 382).

What is this “content” and how does it arise? For Ginev there is no simple answer. What seems to concern him most is to explain that this admission of a “content” does not open the door to admitting “‘cognitive essences’ which are...independent of the dynamics of practices of normal scientific research [and which] even determine this dynamics”. Research practices, we are told, do not serve the function of “‘operationalizing’ theoretical objects” (Ginev 2009a). The Platonism (and hence essentialism) of this rejected position is readily apparent.

But clearly it is not enough to say what theoretical entities are not; one must say what they are, how they arise, and how they function. And so we need to follow Ginev’s account closely. Instead of being essentialist in character, “theoretical objects do not exist *per se*...” but have a “potential being.” This potential being stems from the fact that they can be identified “through the ongoing actualization of possibilities from the horizon of projected possibilities” (2008, 234). Another way in which the potential character of these entities is described is in terms of having “both a ‘visible existence’ (actualized theoretical possibilities under certain experimental conditions) and ‘invisible existence’ (possibilities that might never be ‘appropriated by the configurations of scientific practices)’” (2009, 382). Again, science’s ‘theoretical objects’ have potential being because they “project its [science’s] existence upon possibilities” (2008, 236.). For Ginev this potential-being claim about the nature and role of theoretical objects in science is the fundamental claim of cognitive existentialism.

Ginev explains the status of theoretical objects in more detail. Science’s theoretical objects are “predicated on a double status”—as “embedded in the hermeneutic fore-structure of scientific research and in the structure of a scientific domain” (2009, 380). The latter claim is fairly obvious, for theoretical objects – here I would prefer “theoretical terms” – constitute the conceptual structure of every field of science. The first point is both more significant and more difficult. What is meant by the “hermeneutic fore-structure of scientific research?” Ginev states that theoretical objects are “‘partially’ present at hand and ready to hand in research practices.” His explanation of this status is that they exist “through

(2006, 137). Why theoretical objects are only “partially” present at hand and ready to hand is not explained.

A further clarification concerns the means by which theoretical objects are grasped. It is asserted that a transcendental reflection is required in order to grasp the status of these theoretical objects. The situation is parallel, according to Ginev, as reflection on the hermeneutic circle. The status of science’s theoretical objects is “revealed by the same transcendental reflection that unfolds the hermeneutic circle between fore-structure of interpretation and explicit structure as the very circularity is mediated by the interrelated practices of normal scientific research” (2009, 383). This last claim is the heart of Ginev’s position. Through a transcendental reflection he believes it is possible to show that the practices mediate the relation between a scientist’s anticipations, expectations, and orientations and the explicit structure, the theoretical objects, of his field of research.

The result, according to Ginev, is a situated transcendence. Situated transcendence is not “empirically given, but it conditions the empirical dynamics of scientific research” (2009, 383). Such reflection reveals the self-referentiality of scientific research, “that one understands oneself with respect to the possibilities...already projected in one’s practices” (2009, 384). Again, if I engage in scientific research “the choice and appropriation of possibilities” are my actions, so have “reference to...[my] being-in-the-world” (2006, 51). Thus, “a structure of self-referentiality” coincides with the “structure of meaning constitution.” Because the same will be true for other researchers, self-referentiality is a “trans-subjective phenomenon,” because of the situated transcendence in which each finds oneself.

Finally, for Ginev this way of treating self-referentiality leads to a “double hermeneutics”—“the process of interpretative constitution of meaning on the level of the empirical dynamics of practices,” and the “moment of situated transcendence in this dynamics” (2008, 235). Opposing what he sees as an insurmountable dichotomy in Heidegger’s onto-ontological difference, Ginev insists that there is no “autonomous transcendental-ontological knowledge.” The only adequate account is based on “contextual transcendental knowledge” (2009 a).

II. About Theoretical Objects

Ginev’s subtle and nuanced account invites thoughtful response. Two concerns dominate his

discussion: on the one hand, there is his concern with avoiding any hint of essentialism; on the other, contextualizing all constitution of meaning in practices is seen as the way to accomplish this goal. I find myself in agreement with Ginev's goals. I agree that essentialism has many problems and must be rejected. And I also agree that the constitution of meaning must be contextualized. While agreeing with Ginev's goals, I have reservations about his solution, for it appears to me that Ginev has not broken completely and cleanly with the basic assumption in the essentialist account of knowing. While he rightly rejects the results of an essentialist view of knowing, rejecting the metaphysics, epistemology, and conception of objectivity found in this view, he fails to identify and critique the fundamental misconception that is the source of the many problems in essentialism. As a result he remains caught in a number of issues that are found in the essentialist framework. What Ginev fails to critique are the essentialist's assumptions concerning the nature of knowing. This failure has multiple consequences, especially for his account of the status and role of theoretical objects. It appears to me that because Ginev fails to discover a more adequate account of knowing, he is forced to account for theoretical objects in science by focusing solely on practices. Or to put the point in another way, he insists that in his view the theoretical objects of scientific research have only an immanent transcendence, but he fails to show how this is not a kind of essentialism – in spite of protestations that his view is not essentialist. In short, in order to avoid essentialism – the view that in some way ideas exist apart from mind—he describes theoretical objects purely in relation to practices. In this section I will note some of the problems that it seems to me remain unsolved in Ginev's account of science.

Practices have a significant role in science, and so Ginev rightly focuses on them but nowhere does he indicate how practices give rise to theoretical objects. To say that theoretical objects arise in the context of practices is not enough. One wants to know why they arise in this context and how? The question cannot be avoided because clearly such objects are necessary to account for the generality of scientific knowledge. To put the point in another way, they are required to explain both understanding and interpretation, both that they are generated in a particular research situation and that they identify a range of possibilities that can be actualized in an indefinite number of other settings. It is awareness

of these factors that lies behind Ginev's affirmation that, unlike research objects, theoretical objects are not present at hand.

A second question also relates to theoretical objects, but here the focus is on the fact that they go beyond "configurations of practices" (Ginev 2006, pp.75–92). When one reads that a theoretical object goes beyond configurations in progress, one immediately suspects that a theoretical object is "an invariant theoretical object," which is precisely what the essentialist claims. How is the situated transcendence of these theoretical objects different from the essentialism that Ginev is opposing? If theoretical objects are not "present at hand" and in this way are different from research objects, and they "transcend the actual configurations of practices," is this not exactly what the essentialist is also claiming? Ginev does not tell us how he avoids this conclusion. To say that they are discovered in the context of practices is not enough. Even Plato in the *Meno* asserts the same. Plato underscores the need for inquiry (86b), but insists that what is discovered is a form or idea that is known in a prior life. It is not enough to say, with Plato, that theoretical objects – *forms* or *ideas*, call them what you will – are discovered in the context of inquiry or research. It is necessary to explain how this occurs.

Thirdly, scientists set themselves the goal of discovering something that is general, that is, of arriving at a result that is not limited to "configurations in progress." The goal is to arrive at a single formulation which will account for all similar cases. Consequently, the peculiarities of individual objects do not concern them. This explains the practice of selecting specimens for research which are, so far as possible, free from confounding factors. Thus the water used in research will not be from the local river, but distilled water, the chemicals 99.9% pure, the population surveyed selected with regard to specific criteria, etc. The rationale for this selection is that a researcher wishes to discover something that remains the same in all instances of the kind of thing being studied. To isolate such a factor requires excluding the peculiarities of particular cases, so far as this is possible. In scientific research one is interested in a particular specimen only in so far as it is representative of an indefinitely large range of instances of the same thing. In other words, scientists are interested in finding a theoretical object that will account for an indefinite number of individuals. The significance of the theoretical object is that it can be used to identify an unlimited number of instances of

the same kind of thing, an indefinite number of possibilities in other words. The goal of reaching an object that identifies a class or set of things seems to be a fundamental part of all scientific work. Does this mean that scientists themselves are essentialists? Other than pointing to the context of practices, Ginev does not clarify why this is not the case.

A fourth concern is that the reflection on the status of science's theoretical objects is like the problem of the hermeneutic circle. In a rather turgid sentence we are told that "the status of science's theoretical objects has to be revealed by the same transcendental reflection that unfolds the hermeneutic circle between the fore-structure of interpretation and explicit structure," because "the very circularity is mediated by the interrelated practices of normal scientific research" (2009, 383). The key question is this: What is the meaning of "mediated?" The parallel may be instructive, but now one faces dealing also with the problem of the hermeneutic circle.

Finally, a more general comment. While Ginev's account of the constitution of meaning is nuanced, noting the changing configurations characteristic of even normal science, and again the progressive articulation or appropriation of possibilities, nevertheless one is left with the impression that this account of science is from an external point of view, an account of it as a phenomenon spread out in space and time, and in terms of results, rather than seen as arising though some inner dynamic found in each and every scientist, and whose shared questions are the basis for cooperation in a field. No doubt there are references to scientific research being a mode of being in the world of Dasein, many references to "self-referentiality," and even mention of "the interpretative nature of human beings" (Ginev 2009a), but what this interpretative nature is and how it operates is not explored.

III. An Alternative Account of Theoretical Objects

Ginev asserts that theoretical objects arise in the context of practices. While true so far as it goes, this is not saying enough. It is more accurate to say that theoretical objects arise in the context of inquiry. To inquire is to ask a question, to ask *what?* or *why?* or *how?* Inquiry is an activity of an inquirer, of a subject; it is a mode of being of Dasein. Also, a question is a response to some experience, something which one has seen, heard, or noted in some way. The "ready-to-hand," to borrow a phrase from Heidegger, ceases to be just familiar, but also becomes

strange, or puzzling. What was merely there as a familiar object is now "seen afresh" and recognized to have aspects or elements which have not previously been noted. In short, we begin to wonder, and if time and energy allow, inquiry follows.

Beyond the genesis of inquiry, it should be added immediately that we never just question, but that our questions arise in a context. Certainly this is true with regard to the present discussion, scientific research. And so, it must be added immediately that we do not just inquire, but we inquire with certain presuppositions or expectations, what Bernard Lonergan has called "heuristic structure" (1992, Chap. 2, "The Heuristic Structures of Empirical Method," 57–90). Modern science has a long tradition that is unified by such expectations. One illustration will suffice. In the context of scientific research, we investigate only hypotheses which have some kind of sensible consequence which can be observed. Hence, a hypothesis which has no observable consequence is excluded from science. In other words, if there is no way to test an idea or hypothesis, then it cannot be a part of empirical science, for there is no possible relevant research. To put the point in Ginev's language, there would be no empirical practice to relate to such a theoretical object. Hence, theoretical objects with no testable consequences are excluded from empirical science. A second, related point is that it is not sufficient for a hypothesis to have empirical consequences, but these consequences must be confirmed in scientific research. Those whose consequences are not confirmed by observation are discarded (Cf. Lonergan, 95–96).

The above two observations about theoretical objects illustrate the contextual nature of all theory. A theoretical object does not appear without prior conditions. There must be some event or thing, and a person who is alert enough to note, to identify, to attend to an aspect of familiar experience which she has not yet understood, *wonder* as Aristotle called it. So two conditions must be met for research to occur: without the experience or a thing there would be nothing to inquire about; and without the person being intellectually aware, being curious, the experienced would simply remain a familiar object, something ready-to-hand.

One might conclude from the reference to experience that practice is prior to theory, but this would be a mistake. Some kind of experience is prior, for without this there would be no occasion to begin to puzzle, to wonder, and it is wonder that is the genesis of the process of inquiry. And when we

wonder we naturally seek and try to discover, to grasp a possible correlation among the elements in the experience. And we follow up that possibility by formulating what we have discovered. Discovery leads to the formulation of hypotheses which are composed of theoretical objects.

What is the goal of inquiry? One who inquires seeks to understand “something as something,” to grasp the already familiar in a new way. Or one might say, the goal is to give an alternative account of the thing that is already familiar. Thus a physicist gives an account of light not in terms of color but of wave length, etc. But to give an account one must articulate one’s grasp of some possibly relevant correlation. And so it is that a hypothesis and theoretical objects generally are a response to inquiry. A hypothesis is generally the identification of some correlation that has the potential to be relevant or significant—significance and relevance being understood in relation to the question that has been raised.

This aspect of the matter needs some elaboration. The significant is what is relevant, as opposed to what is incidental. And it should be added that significance is determined by the question that has been asked. For in any situation, there are multiple questions which might be asked, and depending on the question different aspects of the experienced object are relevant. To borrow an example from ordinary experience, by virtue of their habits and interests a logger and an ornithologist walking into a forest will observe very different things and so inquire very differently into what is present in the environment. Each will observe some elements and equally will ignore others.

If it is true that a hypothesis is formulated only in the context of experience, the fact is that formation of a hypothesis (theoretical objects) is just one stage of the cognitional process. What a scientific researcher seeks is to determine whether the hypothesis can be applied to all similar situations. This is what we mean by verification. It is assumed that the particularities of a situation, place and time for example, can be ignored. So, for example, whether I run a given test in Bowling Green or in New York is regarded as incidental, as irrelevant. Equally, whether I run the test or someone else is also incidental, so long as both of us follow appropriate procedures. What each scientific researcher is seeking is to describe the significant differences. And what constitutes a significant difference is determined by one’s hypothesis.

Another element of theoretical objects as they are found in hypotheses must be highlighted. They are provisional. When one speaks only of “theoretical objects” this aspect is obscured, but the very term “hypothesis” indicates that its content is to be tested, that it is a provisional formulation needing to be confirmed by appeal to experience. Note that there is a double relationship. It has already been said that without experience, there would be no inquiry, and so prior to the formulation of a hypothesis some experience is required, and this experience rouses one to seek to understand. But now it must be added that formulating a hypothesis is also not enough. Reflection follows. A hypothesis is the formulation of an insight; it is the grasp of some possible explanation. Reflection by contrast asks: “Is this what is going on?” – *this* referring to the content of the hypothesis. And how is this question answered? By a return to the data, by checking whether the hypothesis accounts for the data, or whether there remain relevant aspects unaccounted for. If there is a remainder, one revises. Only when all relevant aspects of the data have been accounted for does one affirm the hypothesis. Theoretical objects are initially hypotheses that, once formulated, require confirmation which is accomplished by a return to the data.

Even this way of describing the provisional character of theoretical objects is not sufficient, for the process of checking whether one’s hypothesis is adequate is repetitive and progressive. No sooner has a researcher confirmed a correlation in a study, than she is likely, given the opportunity, to test the same hypothesis in a slightly different situation, varying the object or the procedure in some manner. Thus a method successful in one area may be extended to another, and even eliminate a long familiar approach to a problem, as Ginev illustrates from the study of the phenomenon of florescence (2009, 378–380). In sum, a hypothesis may be adequate in a particular context, but the larger field in which it stands may come to be questioned, and even discarded.

Enough has been said, perhaps, to set forth the implications of this discussion for the discussion concerning the status of theoretical objects. (It seems more natural to speak of hypotheses, explanations, or correlations, but since Ginev formulates the problem in terms of theoretical objects, I will use this language here. Since hypotheses and explanations are combinations of theoretical objects, the relevant points can be made using either formulation.) A first

point to be made is that theoretical entities as they have been described are not *essences* in the sense that Ginev rejects—“something independent of the dynamics of practices of normal scientific research” (2009, 382). As noted they arise in the context of inquiry, are a result questioning. They are a product of a person thinking about something; they are experienced as a discovery, even it is recognized as a provisional discovery which will be open to revision or even reversal.

The last point needs more elaboration. It is recognized in many, if not most, cases that a hypothesis, even when confirmed, is provisional. Clarification may be needed; more precision in measurement required; discovery of an unexpected complication may require reformulating what constitutes the relevant factors, and in consequence a revision in one's understanding of what dimensions of the object are relevant or irrelevant. Because of these kinds of issues, a field of inquiry develops and expands. Later researchers build on the work of earlier researchers, and so gradually a body of knowledge results.

The mention of cooperation among researchers raises a new issue. Two points need to be made with regard to this development. Development results from collaboration and yet is advanced by individuals. The possibility for these two dimensions must be noted. Every hypothesis is an identification, or better, specification of some set of conditions. Verification of a hypothesis is a confirmation that the specified conditions are actually found in experience. Both formulation and verification are activities carried out by researchers; they are products of the development of understanding in individual persons – a mode of Dasein's being in the world. How is it then that what is discovered is not a private possession? In so far as a hypothesis is a formulation of a certain way of understanding a situation, it is a specification of criteria for its being affirmed. Both the criteria and the conditions are open to others. The criteria are grasped by anyone who understands the hypothesis, for to understand a hypothesis or correlation consists precisely in grasping its empirical conditions. Secondly, for anyone with competence in the field, anyone familiar with the relevant practices, the conditions are available for inspection. Hence there is the possibility of grasping to what extent the predicted conditions actually pertain. While verification is a judgment which is a personal achievement accomplished by each and every researcher, the result of such verification is open to

every other person who grasps the meaning of the hypothesis and has occasion to examine the relevant experimental evidence.

Implicit in the above account is an anti-essentialist account of theoretical entities. There are a number of features of this account which are anti-essentialist. First, according to this account theoretical objects are the product of inquiry. They are the result of a researcher responding to a particular object or event by grasping some correlation that appears significant and then formulating what is significant or relevant. So it is the product of a “thinking out,” an expression by a researcher about what is important or significant in an experience, or body of data, and by implication what can be ignored, because it is incidental to the inquiry at hand. Typically, as was noted, one thing which is incidental is the “here and now” character of each experimental object. What one is interested in is not that some X occurred at some place or time but some difference in what occurred at the particular place and time. To put the point in another way, a physicist studying the oxygen atom or a chemist studying water is not concerned with the specific atoms or molecules selected for study, but only that the sample is free from impurities. The incidental character of time and place makes it possible to generalize from a small experimental base. In addition, it makes scientific collaboration possible, since within limits, time and place are irrelevant. This account is a description of what Ginev calls “meaning constitution.”

Theoretical objects are so significant, because once one has grasped a meaning, then every other situation which is the same in the relevant respects can be understood in the same way. No new insight and formulation is necessary, and after a few repetitions, what we have previously understood soon becomes obvious and familiar. Once this is the case, typically we are able to attend to new matters. To illustrate, having learned letters, we can attend to words, and having mastered words we can focus on sentences, etc. It is also the basis for what Ginev characterizes as the everydayness of scientific research. Yesterday's discovery becomes today's assumption.

Secondly, the provisional nature of theoretical objects has been noted. This point strikes directly against the essentialist conception of theoretical objects. If theoretical objects are a product of a person “thinking out” in response to experience, then they are also merely a possibility, a thought which is being entertained by someone. The key aspect is that

inquiry does not stop here. It is not enough to come up with a theoretical object, the whole point of formulating a hypothesis is to be able to test it. Testing or verification is a response to a different requirement of mind. Every idea or theoretical object or hypothesis must be confirmed. If not confirmed, it is only a possibility that may turn out to be “a bright idea,” speculation, a fiction, etc.

One might say that the first stage of scientific inquiry results in the formulation of a theoretical object or hypothesis, an answer to the question *what? why? or how?* that can be tested. Answering this question is not the end of inquiry, but leads directly to a different concern, the critical question, *Is it so?* It here refers to one’s formulation, the content of one’s hypothesis. Verification is one name for this second question and resulting process. For it is a process, another kind of “thinking out.” If the first result of inquiring into experience is discovery of some correlation which is fixed by means of formulating a hypothesis, then the result of having formulated a hypothesis is that a new question arises: Is the proposed understanding, the hypothesis, correct? From trying to understand one moves to determining whether one’s understanding is correct. As naturally as experience gives rise to inquiry, so in inquiring we shift from trying to understand – *What is it?* – to answering the question, *Is it so?* For inquiring is a complex process, where we are not satisfied with acquiring some understanding but we also want to know whether our understanding is correct.

How is this new question answered? Either by *yes*, or *no*, or by *perhaps*, *possibly*, *probably*, and the like. We have a large number of ways in which we indicate that no definitive answer is possible. What is going on in verification? To name the process is not enough, especially since so much puzzlement results from not being clear on this element of knowing. How do we answer the question, *Is it so?* In other words, when is it permissible to affirm a hypothesis? Here it is relevant to begin by noting that a hypothesis arises as a result of some grasp, some insight, into a particular set of conditions. Hypotheses have their origin in experience and in an inquiring mind. A hypothesis is the formulation of what is significant in the experience, of some relevant correlation in it, etc. Now, having formulated what is relevant, we turn to checking, by returning to the data to determine whether it is really so, whether the specified conditions are present in experience. (There is, of course, also the question whether the hypothesis has been formulated correctly, that is

consistency in terminology, etc. In other words, logical concerns must also be met, but I am not going to elaborate on this aspect here.)

A hypothesis is a formulation of a set of conditions. As already noted above, a hypothesis can be part of empirical science only if the conditions specified can be detected in some kind of experimental setting. (The critical phase in knowing is equally apparent in everyday living, as when we question the claims of others: “You said such and such but are you sure it is so?”)

Verification, then, consists of raising the critical question, *Is it so?* But what is the basis for an answer? Recognizing that every hypothesis is a statement of conditions supplies the clue to an answer. A hypothesis is a conditioned; it can be affirmed only if its conditions are fulfilled. And so it is that after having formulated our question, we answer the critical issue by returning to the data on which our hypothesis was based. Formulate a hypothesis about water and one will return to water to determine whether the specified conditions are fulfilled. How, then, are we to understand the way in which the critical question, *Is it so?*, is answered? An initial observation is that we affirm and deny or express some modality of probability only after we have reflected. To reflect is to survey the data with regard to whether it reveals the conditions which are specified in the hypothesis which has been formulated. Negatively, reflection is not a new attempt at understanding, but rather a movement of mind in which one asks whether the conditions which have been specified are manifested in the relevant data.

At one level this answer is correct, but at another level it is so incomplete that it is likely to be misunderstood. A preliminary clarification is found by observing the actions of a researcher. After coming to a conclusion that some specified conditions have been observed and all ambiguity removed, there is no further point to repeating the operation and to do so is even considered a sign of stupidity. Thus well-established findings in a field need not be repeated. Rather having satisfied ourselves on a particular point, we turn to a new issue. And so having discovered that salt can be analyzed into chemical elements, one might turn to apply a similar technique to another crystalline substance, etc. So it is that Galileo’s measurements of acceleration on an inclined plane could be extended to freely falling bodies, etc. And so after verifying a hypothesis in one instance, one may turn to replicate the results in a new situation or apply similar techniques to other

materials, etc. And so it is that individual judgments that flow from answering the critical question are not just individual occurrences, but stand in complex relationships to one another constituting what we call fields of knowledge.

A more satisfactory account must explore some of the complexities flowing from various possible answers. Two possibilities exist – that the data conforms to expectations or that it does not. The second case is the easier one: if the conditions specified by the hypothesis are not found in the data, then the hypothesis is discarded. In the first case the response is more complex. In the simplest case a hypothesis relates to a limited body of data which can be inspected exhaustively, and then a conclusive answer can be given. Ask “Are you in your office?” and the answer requires only that one be aware of where one is. Admittedly, doubts could be raised about whether one is deluded, etc., but note that this would result from raising other questions and not really be an answer to the question in the context in which it was asked.

There is, however, a more complex case that is typical of an affirmative answer to the critical question – that only a part of all possible relevant data has been examined. Then, the affirmative answer brings one sequence in knowing to a conclusion, but inasmuch as additional data is available, the process can be repeated, indeed almost begs for new inquiry to be undertaken. And so it is that each individual judgment or verification stands in the context of others. The fact that each individual judgment stands in the context of many other judgments has important implications, a few of which need to be mentioned here. In each field of knowledge the relationships among judgments differs, and so here I will note only a couple of characteristics as found in the empirical sciences.

In the empirical sciences the answer to one question assumes the answer to a multitude of previous questions. So complex previous ways of understanding a particular phenomenon are assumed and it is only to the extent that such understanding is assumed to be correct that one can go on to make a new affirmation in the present context. For example, to talk about wave length, one needs to assume a theory and practice of measuring. A conclusion, then, may be affirmed as long as the assumed system of measurement is accepted, but in fact systems of measurement are subject to revision. New technology may allow more precision or on the theoretical side a new theory may require correcting for what

was before thought to be incidental. Enough has been said, perhaps, to make the point that an affirmative judgment with regard to a hypothesis may be regarded as merely probable, because in fact the hypothesis being considered stands in the context of a much larger set of conditions. So it is that even what is verified may be regarded as merely probable insofar as it is dependent on techniques and theories that are open to revision.

Prof. Ginev has argued for the immanent transcendence of theoretical objects. I have preferred to frame the discussion in terms of hypotheses, but since hypotheses are made up of theoretical objects, what applies to hypothesis is applies to theoretical objects. In the above analysis I have tried to elaborate on “the immanent transcendence” of theoretical objects, for a theoretical object is a single content which has the potential to be applied to an unlimited number of instances. That potential range is often characterized as a *horizon*, or in classical language a *universal*, a single content which has the potential to be applied to an indefinite number of situations of a specified kind. Something more needs to be said with regard to how this account avoids falling into essentialism, but this is best treated in a separate section.

IV Beyond Essentialism

In the previous section I have given an alternative account of the “immanent transcendence” of theoretical objects, focusing on locating theoretical objects in the context of inquiry rather than in terms of practices. The implications of this shift have been only partially examined. Also, additional comment is needed to clarify some of the assumptions in this alternative account. Contrasting these assumptions with those embedded in essentialism will also aid in clarifying how this account differs from Ginev’s account where he does not break completely with essentialism.

First, theory has been set in the context of inquiry rather than of practices, as Ginev prefers. Without doubt there is a close relationship between theoretical objects and practices. Ginev is right to note the “changing configurations of scientific practices” (2006, pp. 110–123). Practices gain their significance in relation to one’s theoretical framework, and so their status depends on the theory which they exemplify. The co-dependence, as it is described, is certainly the case. But it is an asymmetrical relationship. The theory gives significance to the data, but the data supplies the conditions so that the theory

may be affirmed. In this regard there is a kind of priority which accrues to theory, for theory specifies what becomes relevant and it is in relation to theory that the data of experience provide confirmation or disconfirmation, so that what was entertained as a hypothesis is either affirmed or denied.

There is another role for experience, but it is prior to theory. Experience is a source of meaning. It is the material on which intelligence works or with which it works both so that questions arise and as that which is examined when one is questioning. Understanding is not a free creation, but rather theoretical entities or ideas are a response to the materials supplied in experience. Since experience is variegated and variously significant in different respects, different ranges of experience are relevant for different theories. (The opposite situation where idea is prior and instantiation of the idea follows is found in the work of an artist, who works to bring what was only a sketch or suggestion into existence.)

This role of experience as source of meaning precedes and complements the other, and reveals that theory is both a response to experience and confirmed by experience—a double relationship exists. This fact supports the view that inquiry is a process, an ordered process, in which each of the parts must occur in the proper order. Without experience, the presence of data, there is nothing to understand; and experience alone is without understanding, like Aristotle's man of experience who may act effectively, but is unable to explain. Similarly, understanding by itself is not enough, for by itself it is merely a possibility, a possible correlation. What is desired is not just an idea, but the confirmation that what one has conceived is adequate to experience. So understanding is naturally followed by reflecting and judging. Finally, as already noted, as human beings we attend to one thing at a time, and every judgment is a limited account of all that can be known, and so our single judgments stand with others both before and after and so coalesce into fields of inquiry.

To focus on inquiry rather than practices in an account of theoretical objects is significant because it places them in a larger context, in the full sweep of our experience of knowing. It opens the door to a fuller exploration of the dynamic of our quest to understand.

Another way to get at the differences between the above account of inquiry and cognitive existentialism is to observe that Prof. Ginev is developing his philosophy of science in context of the program which Heidegger outlined in *Being and Time*. In this

conception the *ready-to-hand* is objectified in the *present-at-hand*: through the process of interpretation meaning is constituted. For Heidegger there are three moments in this process. Ginev describes them in this way: there is "meaning we have in advance (a fore-having of possibilities), meaning we see in advance (a fore-sight of possibilities), and meaning we grasp in advance (a fore-conception of possibilities)" (Ginev 2009, 381). Each of these requires clarification.

"Interpretation," writes Heidegger, "is grounded in *something we have in advance*—in a *fore-having*" (B&T 191). In elaboration Heidegger states that "the interpretation operates in Being towards a totality of involvements which is already understood" (*ibid.*). *Fore-having* appears to be an account of the ordinary, everyday world that is familiar to us, the lived world, the world of common sense, however one wishes to identify it. The point is that there is given in experience that which can become a source of meaning; the empirical is something which potentially can be understood. Since it is what precedes interpretation, it provides the materials about which an inquirer can come to question. It is another way of identifying experience as a source of meaning.

Just as the response to inquiry is the formulation of some hypothesis (theoretical objects), so "interpretation is said to be grounded in *something we see in advance*—in a *fore-sight*" (B&T 191). According to Heidegger, *fore-sight* "takes the first cut" out of what has been taken into our fore-having, and does so with a view to a definite way in which this can be interpreted (*ibid.*). What Heidegger seems to be describing here is the fact that when we inquire, we formulate our discoveries – that "towards which we set our sights 'fore-sightedly', becomes conceptualizable" (191). Again there are notable similarities between Heidegger's account and one focused on inquiry. All inquiry is, as I have noted, in terms of a particular question and so can be said to be "with a view to a definite way." In addition, formulation is an identification of what is relevant, significant, or essential to the insight which has been gained; this is what is "conceptualizable." However, if some aspects of experience are relevant, it is also the case that others are irrelevant, at least for the moment, in relation to the question which is being asked. In this way inquiry also "takes a first cut" out of what is present in the *fore-having*.

In addition, this meaning is rightly said to be "something we see in advance," for every theoretical object is an articulation of a content which is poten-

tially found in an indefinitely large number, if not infinite number, of situations. The point is that once one has made an interpretation in one context – experimental setting, in the case of scientific research – the same understanding has the potential to be employed in other situations similar in the relevant ways. So it is that theoretical objects can be described as something “seen in advance.” More precisely, their openness to repeated employment is cast into language which describes the range of possible instantiations as a horizon. The visual metaphor implicit in this account is satisfactory if it is understood that what is being described is the fact that a single understanding, one theoretical object, has the potential to be employed in an indefinite range of instances. In other words, it is, as found in the mind, a universal.

Finally, fore-conception is said to be “*something we grasp in advance*” (191). In clarification of this dimension of meaning constitution, Heidegger states that “the way in which the entity we are interpreting is to be conceived can be drawn from the entity itself, or the interpretation can force the entity into concepts to which it is opposed in its manner of Being” (191). Here, Heidegger’s account of the constitution of meaning diverges significantly from the account of inquiry given above. No doubt Heidegger is right to observe that interpretation can be drawn from the entity itself or it can force an entity into concepts that are opposed to its being, but what the reader wants to know is this: how do I determine which one is occurring in each particular situation? Am I giving an account of what is present in fore-having or am I misconstruing its nature? Heidegger is raising the critical question. This is clear from the fact that he speaks of the interpretation being decided “either with finality or with reservations” – with certainty or merely some modality of probability. On what basis are interpretations decided with finality or with reservations? Nothing is said at this point. What is lacking is any reference to reflective understanding and its product, judgment.

Here lies the most significant difference between Heidegger and the account of inquiry sketched above. Without an account of the critical dimension of understanding one raises the issue of the hermeneutic circle and the issue appears insoluble. Here it is not possible to do justice to this complex issue, but an elaboration of the implications of the above account of inquiry can indicate where the solution lies. How do we know when we have arrived at an interpretation which is “drawn from the

entity itself” and is not “forcing an entity into concepts opposed to its being?” The key is to realize the progressive nature of the process of learning. There is no doubt that my current understanding stands in relation to other concepts and supporting evidence, such that the part gains its meaning in the context of the whole and the whole gains its meaning from the parts. This mutual dependence or circularity, however, is not that of a closed or vicious circle. The reason is that individual judgments stand in the context of other judgments based on related aspects of experience. Having examined one area of experience, the intellectually aware researcher will naturally seek further evidence from other related ranges of experience. So long as the theory being employed is adequate to explain the new ranges of data, no revision is required; however, if some aspect of the data cannot be explained using the old theoretical framework, then a new account will be necessary. So it is that theoretical objects are progressively redefined even in the course of normal science, and a major shift in one’s scientific theory occurs when a new way of organizing the data in a field is the only way to account for all the data. Again, think of Ginev’s account of the history of the study of fluorescence serves as an example of the latter phenomenon. In other words, the process of learning involves successive judgments, each of which stands in the context of others. In the case of empirical science all judgments remain provisional, because there will always be the possibility of additional data or new ways of grasping the data of experience. (For more details, see Lonergan’s analysis of probable judgments, *Insight*, 324–329).

Another implication of the account of reflective understanding and judgment relates to the gap that Ginev identifies between the ontical and the ontological in Heidegger, roughly the results of specialized inquiry as opposed to being itself. According to the account of inquiry given above, scientific research proceeds to answer the question, *Is it so?* An affirmative answer, *yes*, is an affirmation of being, not merely some entity; or if one prefers, the theoretical objects, things, or entities that are affirmed in science are a part or aspect of being. In so far as a scientific question is only one of a number of ways in which we can question our experience, the answer is limited to an expression of one dimension of being. Other questions asked in different ways with different criteria abound. One only need note our common, everyday way of dealing with particular things for a relevant example. And so it is that sci-

ence is only one way of grasping what is, for other questions with different criteria are possible. Our desire to know, our capacity for inquiry, is not limited to scientific research; rather scientific research – admittedly an enormously influential question in modern and contemporary times – stands in the context of the many questions that we human beings struggle with both individually and collectively. Indeed, all science ultimately has its source in everyday experiences and its discoveries result in applications which equally find their place in the everyday world of common sense.

As noted in the beginning, Ginev's account of science is both subtle and detailed. The primary way in which the account of inquiry which has been outlined above differs from his view is in sketching the complexity of human knowing, that we proceed from asking what something is to reflecting on what we think we have discovered to determining whether *it is so*. As experience leads to discovery and is followed by the formulation of understanding, so understanding leads to asking whether our understanding is correct. Recognition that every hypothesis is a formulation of conditions, and every judgment an affirmation that the conditions specified in the hypothesis are present in experience, clarifies the respective roles of theory and data. To be a part of science, theoretical objects (terms) must have empirical consequences; determining whether these consequences are actually present in experience is the task of reflection, the critical question. For every hypothesis is a formulation of conditions, and unless those conditions are found in experience, the hypothesis cannot be affirmed. For Ginev the fore-structure of interpretation and the explicit structure of science are "mediated by interrelated practices" (2006, pp. 135–144). While this account includes a reference to both theory and practice, it fails to articulate the dynamic clearly. The contextual nature of theoretical objects is reflected in this account, but their provisional character is not recognized. The provisional nature of theoretical entities becomes clear only when one recognizes that beyond understanding, beyond grasping *what is*, there lies the further question, *Is it so?* Without this clarification, there is the tendency to regard theoretical objects as essences. With this clarification both their generality and their provisional status has been described. And so the tendency to essentialism has been accounted for and corrected.

In addition, when the role of reflection and judgment are noted, then the problem of the hermeneutic circle is replaced by the process of learning rooted in our desire to know all that beckons in experience. Experience rouses inquiry, and inquiry seeks understanding, and provisional understanding seeks confirmation, grounding of the understanding. And far from ending there, once satisfied on one point, we turn to inquire about a related issue or new data in experience which has the potential to call our hypotheses into question and so trigger the quest for a more adequate understanding. And so it is not appropriate to think of inquiry as a circle moving from experience to understanding and back to experience, but rather as an ever expanding quest for a better understanding grounded in ever greater ranges of data. In this framework essentialism is no longer a concern, for the provisional nature of all theoretical objects is clearly recognized and the generality of theoretical remains. The immanence and transcendence of scientific thought are both recognized and accounted for.

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