

Analecta Husserliana

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Phenomenological Research

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Phenomenology/Ontopoiesis
Retrieving Geo-cosmic Horizons
of Antiquity

Logos and Life

Edited by

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka

 Springer

PHENOMENOLOGY/ONTOPOIESIS RETRIEVING GEO-COSMIC
HORIZONS OF ANTIQUITY

ANALECTA HUSSERLIANA
THE YEARBOOK OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH
VOLUME CX

Founder and Editor-in-Chief:

ANNA-TERESA TYMIENIECKA

*The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning
Hanover, New Hampshire, USA*

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LOGOS AND LIFE

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ANNA - TERESA TYMIENIECKA

*The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning,
Hanover, New Hampshire, USA*

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We present this volume to the public with considerable pride. The title: *Phenomenology/Ontopoiesis Retrieving Geo-Cosmic Horizons of Antiquity: Logos and Life* plans to bring to light the long chain of fragmentized issues along which we have retrieved the full Greek intuition of man, earth, cosmos which has been in its entire horizon, forgotten since. The horizon of the cosmos called to be retrieved. It is in the onto-poietic foundation of the logos that “the soul is in the cosmos, and the cosmos is in the soul”.

Papers collected here were read at the 60th International Congress at the University of Bergen, *Logos and Life: Phenomenology/Ontopoiesis Reviving Antiquity*, held August 10–13, 2010. We owe sincere thanks to all the authors.

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A-T.T.

INAUGURAL LECTURE

INSPIRATIONS OF HERACLITUS FROM
EPHESUS FULFILLED IN OUR NEW
ENLIGHTENMENT

Prologue

Nihil sub sole novum.

A B S T R A C T

Reviewing with a keen eye the history of philosophy, we would be struck by the continued filiations of contradictions between the adverse perspectives on issues that repeat themselves, albeit in novel formulations. In these latter they are amplified by fresh insights, approaches, and refinements that bring about fuller and clearer visions of the real. These new soundings of old themes do not proceed from comparisons of concepts but, rather, from genuinely new pursuits that contribute the benefits of the progress of knowledge.

The great question striking the human mind from the beginning of reflection, one which in its numerous interpretations still remains open, is the question of flux and stasis as it concerns the deepest nature of reality. As raised over some six centuries by Greek thinkers, the question has been expressed in three essential differentiations: in considerations of the media of becoming, of the first generative elements, and of composition amid everlasting transformation. From these root understandings in the classical Greek thinkers there has been transmitted a fascinating puzzle pondered throughout the entire history of Occidental philosophy down to the most recent times. It is through interpretation of the striking teaching of Heraclitus of Ephesus that it has found expression in most of history's great philosophical systems.

Heraclitus' penetrating and prophetic style, having informed and fascinated innumerable minds, penetrates even now the metaphysical imagination. Though interpreted variously in the advancing avenues of Occidental thought, today the great advances in contemporary science, our penetrating probing of reality, is answering the mental quest inspired by Heraclitus and so variously expressed.

Already at the initial phase of formulating the main lines of our New Enlightenment limning the web of discoveries, insights, dynamisms at work in forming the new spirit of humanity, I was struck by the points of contact Heraclitean inspirations, insights, and wisdom have with our new reality.

In the present study I will in turn attempt to show succinctly how my *phenomenology/ontopoiesis of life* is reformulating the questions emerging from this ancient

inspiration and offering an ultimate answer to perennial questions.¹ In this brief study, I will concentrate on unraveling the stream of my reflection in its innermost affinity with the main Heraclitean insights, retrieving them through the millennia of progressing thought in the New Enlightenment, as stated above.

If we may say that what is sought ever anew is to reach at its deepest level the all-underlying unity of life, man, and the cosmos, we can attain this only in our unique enlightenment by tortuous paths, step by step, advancing by jumps in one or the other direction and thus retrieving the hidden key. The three doors spoken of above will open forthwith.

PART ONE: FLUX VERSUS STASIS

HERACLITUS. THE PRIMOGENITAL PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES OF FLUX VERSUS STASIS

We may say that the first Greek philosophers, in arriving at the basic insights into nature, reality, knowledge, arrived basically at insights revealing flux versus stasis to be the ground issue of reality. Philosophers such as Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, etc. pondered three main questions. First of all, there was the question of what might be the first generative elements of reality, with the stress here on flux followed by stability. The second great question concerns the composition or arrangement of elements in ceaseless transformation. Third, there is the question, given that flux is the principle of becoming, by what media is the flux brought to a stability?

Heraclitus, as we know, in flourishing at the end of the Fifth Century, was naturally introduced to these three enigmas at the origin and heart of reality by his contemporaries. But unlike his contemporaries Anaximander and Anaximenes, his was not simply the scientific attitude of the School of Miletus but also a flair for poetic artistry and a seer's wisdom.

Strongly influenced by Anaximander, who pioneered in viewing the cosmos in terms of the play of natural powers, forces, and qualities, with these being involved in the constant interactions of the "aggression" and "counter-aggression" of opposites, Heraclitus, while following this intuition, apprehended it in symbolic terms. And unlike Parmenides, who emphasized the "being" that the cosmos manifests, Heraclitus emphasized the everlasting change in which the cosmos is caught up. In contrast to his contemporaries, who attempted to grasp the order in the indisputable flux, change, and transformation by basing the cosmos in more fundamental elements such as earth, air, water, and fire, he symbolically singled out fire as the fundamental element—in contrast to Thales, who had chosen water, and Anaximenes, who had chosen air, with both of these seeing these as physical elements.²

As a matter of fact, with the first sentence opening the scant collection of the fragments preserved in his only book, Heraclitus comes out as a seer issuing a call to all human beings, "**Listen to the Logos!**"

- (a) Now, Heraclitus' understanding of the "logos" was strikingly different from that common among his contemporaries. "Logos" was seen by him as the rational, the "true *account* of the nature of things," but this account in his understanding calls for the *discovery* of what things are, because "nature likes to hide itself." That is to say, discovery of the *logos* means the revelation of an *independent, objective state of affairs*. This account/report is a language, or a speech, and the author has to formulate it for himself, *according to his enlightenment*. What Heraclitus seeks is, in fact, an inherent *state of affairs*. What is meant in the linguistic garb is that which is *independent of any account*. Only when in an *enlightenment* do these two understandings come together, do we reach the complete sense of the logos.
- (b) It is this view on "true nature" that strikes the stringent chord in the harmony in the disharmony of All. Flux remains an everlasting state of All, but this harmony perdures in this transformation. The most striking expression in Heraclitus' philosophical milieu, one characterizing his teaching universally is *panta rei*: all things.

"One cannot step into the same river, nor can one grasp any mortal substance in a stable condition, other and still other waters flow upon them"; "nor can one grasp any mortal substance in a stable condition. But it scatters and again gathers; it forms and dissolves, and approaches and departs." (So quoted in Plutarch.) In brief, "It rests by changing."

In these fragments is stated the crucial insight into the nature of everything. Countering the fleeting nature of everything is a universal order that captures it (whether this order be derivable from the physical forces of the "opposites"—as it was for earlier Greek philosophers of nature—or by a symbolic permanence in the changing fire). It is the logos which sustains the order of change and repose.

- (c) *Heraclitus conceives of the logos*, and of the illumination that it yields for the recognition of the deepest level of things and nature, *as the underlying unity of the life of the cosmos and human life*. Deeply influenced by the Milesian philosophers involved in astronomical investigations, he apprehends the question of the nature of the logos as a question concerning man and the cosmos interchangeably.

Traversing the entire Heraclitean quest, the axis passing through the entire enterprise of this vision is Heraclitus' teaching of the correlation of the individual human soul (psyche) with the wider realm of the entire cosmos. Beginning with the disclosure "I found in myself the universal logos, the cosmic law," we see him emphasize that the search for oneself, for "self-knowledge" when extrapolated brings understanding of the universal logos.

In these insights we find, indeed, that the human soul which grows "without limits" in its logos is a microcosm interchangeable with the all-engulfing macrocosm.

The human soul, understood by Heraclitus as the center of personality and as caught in elemental transformation is essentially the measureless logos. In seeking one's own self one finds one's identity with the universe, for the logos of

the soul goes so deep that it coincides with the logos that structures “everything” (cosmos). It is cosmos.

- (d) This vision of Heraclitus takes in human conduct—moral, psychological, social—and ascends to final tie of the universal picture by referring to the cosmic “wisdom” who orders the continuance of the entire edifice: god.

*HERACLITUS’ TEACHING BEQUEATHS
US THE OUTLINE OF A UNIVERSAL APPROACH
FOR SEARCHING OUT THE INNERMOST DEPTHS
OF REALITY IN THE LOGOS*

- (1) In its dominion the logos embraces: the human being, earth, the cosmos;
- (2) The logos is present in the innermost bearing of all and so explicates irresistible change, constructive and transformatory becoming, and stasis in flux;
- (3) Logos is the transmitter in the interchangeable communication of nature, man, and the cosmos.

Heraclitus’ insights, these striking metaphysical as well as prophetic claims, had, as we know, a profound impact upon his contemporaries and successors in Greek philosophy. But even more widely, they have had influence through history through innumerable channels of reflection down to the most recent times. Their profundity and vigor have arrived at the crux of the human quest after truth and are in one or another way inherent to Western and World-Wide Philosophy.

It is my intent in this paper to show the pervasive inheritance of Heraclitean insights into the nature of things embedded in the conception of the logos as they come to light in our *mathesis universalis* of the phenomenology/ontopoiesis of life. They are exfoliated in my onto-poiesis of logos along these major lines:

- (i) *The quest after the true nature of things.* This quest has to be reported/expressed in accord with an appropriate experience/illumination and only in the accord of both is reached the discovery of the logos as the innermost depth of the All.
- (ii) Logos manifests itself through the transformative measures of the ever flowing flux, through the operations of all beingness as becoming, in differentiation and coalescence, in a strife of opposites that issues in an irresistible change of All, manifested in the subjacent oneness of all things that are one.
- (iii) Logos sustains the underlying unity of human life and the cosmos.

PART TWO: THROUGH LIFE TO TRUTH

*THE NEW ENLIGHTENMENT IN THE PRESENT
PHASE OF PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION*

The development of culture and the sciences through the centuries has not only corroborated the unfolding of human wisdom in its successive foci, but has also unfolded the understanding of the great questions we reviewed above. We could

say that it is the enigma of reason, of rationalizing, of discerning cause, of measuring, extrapolating, simply cognizing that has been and remains at the center of scientific and practical inquiry. As I have discussed in my various studies, scientific inquiry has at various periods differentiated various approaches to the real, which variety raises the question of reason to an enigma and brings that question to a culminating point in inquiry into the real, *to a new critique of reason* in the new post-Kantian and post-Husserlian period, one in which the quintessential faculty of creativity leads the way, the creative faculty being indispensable for disentangling the knots by which human cognition, scientific experimentation, rationalizing, etc. have tied reality.³ Our new critique of reason enters the vortex and the context of the Human Condition opening the vast dimensions and realms into which contemporary science has expanded its reach and so allows for grasping together their otherwise dispersed results.

In fact, the expansion of scientific rationalities and in particular their corroboration has imminently extended into a sphere of wonder and troublesomely dispersed queries carried on throughout the centuries, a sphere that in our age has been recognized as an existential counterpart of human reality, namely, the skies, that is, the heavens. The advances in the different branches of astronomical research have made them a central focus of our attention.

We enter into a new phase of the understanding of the world of life, of our earth, and of the cosmic completing counterpart of life. This apprehension is the dawn of *a New Enlightenment of Reason*—an Enlightenment allowing reason to emerge as an *all-illuminating logos*.

LIFE. THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUEST AND ITS RADICAL BEGINNING

Descartes' original starting point for philosophy was the apprehension "cogito ergo sum." Three centuries after him, Ortega y Gasset reversed that and declared, "I live, therefore I think." My new starting point declares: "I live, therefore I am." From the beginning of human times men caught in crisis, thrust to the very edge by various predicaments, seeing that life itself is at stake, have pondered about life. But, in fact, human life is at stake in each and every instant, in each and every concern of our existence. "To be" is to be living, to be alive. No speculative metaphysical category like existence or being can substitute for the unique experience of life's inward/onward orientation, the streaming rays of life's emotions from its the incipient "existence" to the last exhausted release of breath. Our physiological, psychic, intellectual propulsions, function to subtend the stream of the most complex self of the living agent that carries and individualizes living beingness, organizing and directing it, while being involved in its functioning in the processes of circumambient beingnesses that struggle to initiate or maintain life. Growing into a creative potency as a human mind, the life experience embarks upon a fantastic circuit of imaginative undertakings in constituting the circumambient world in what becomes its intimately "own" embodiment in life, oneself.

Our feeling alive—feeling we are ourselves—elicits “everything there is alive,” our life-experience and its concomitant spheres. I live, therefore, I am!

The living being at all levels of development is ceaselessly concentrated and constantly attentive. This is the crucial all-penetrating experience of being oneself, of living one’s identity. One is constantly aware of and fixated upon one’s vital, psychic, spiritual needs and on the evaluation of their validity, concreteness, nature, reasons. One scrutinizes the situation to find out whether one’s subjective experience corresponds to the facts as observed by others—that is, to their objective “truth”: *the truth of facts*. The truth of facts, which may appear differently from varied valid perspectives, points of view, and which might play a decisive role in pragmatic and utilitarian matters of life.⁴

Our first and foremost, urgent and immediate commitment to advance our living at every instant—to act—is bound precisely to the eventful circumstances of the truth of facts. Only rarely, and in special attunements of our mind, do we query beyond the truth of facts, after the *truth of things*—the truth of life.

The philosophic, metaphysically inclined mind will ask just how the matter in question is, how apart from the circumstantial evidences, it is “in itself.” What is the truth of things, of life? Leaving to the side personal, pragmatic, objectively valid, circumambient demands, prospects, and expectations, we seek the mere facts that account for the naked truth of things, what is life per se? Why do we seek the “true” validity of things in life in depths to be uncovered, if not to find the ultimate reason of everything, the *logos* of each and all.

This “truth” we seek in life’s proceedings, in its networks and avenues as such is, in fact, unwittingly one our perception is making, or creating. In its interconnections it is molding their sense, their intrinsic reason, their logos: the logos of life. The truth of life is the logos of life.

The logos of life carries the continuity of life’s incessant flow, with transformation in becoming onwards pouring all its forces into the sense of becoming, its underlying truth.

*ILLUMINATING TRUTH ALONG THE WAY: THE
INTRODUCTION OF THE CREATIVE SPIRIT IN
THE NEW CRITIQUE OF REASON*

To prepare our way, we propose a fundamental critique of reason. Through cognition of the vital order of our existence we acquire/constitute the common knowledge of the world and of things—but their true nature is hidden—and only through further recognition can we gain truth, only through the fullness of human experience in creative insights that illuminate reflection.

The access to the ultimate truth of things cannot proceed through the singular channel of sentient and intentional consciousness with its intellectual operations and its corresponding vital, empirical, and constructively reduced lines. It is the specific creative condition of humans that opens a wider horizon allowing communication with realities beyond those that our narrowly structured intentional schemata reach. The human creative act emerging *sua sponte* within the setup of the human

mind enters into the fulgurating flux of individualizing becoming. We pursue backwards the trajectory of the genesis of that flux's objective aim step by step down to its incipient level in the mind. There, at the origins of our experience as such, where the genesis of being and becoming is initiated, we find the platform from which the ontological-metaphysical-poietic level of true beingness emerges. This level emerges in the *self-individualizing* of beingness. *Self-individualization* moves along with both force and order, step by step, as prompted by the generative *logos of life*, emerging thereby in the flux of its formative becoming and appearing throughout the broadening stream that ties together the cognitive links through which the mind proceeds in structuring its circumambient milieu. Immersing ourselves in this stream, we are open to all the horizons of the human creative condition, and it is by plunging into its intricacies that we see emerge revealing rays of light: the Logos of Life which surges from the gyres of the Human Condition through the onto-poietic process of life.

THE INDIVIDUALIZING - ONTOPOIETIC PROCESS OF LIFE: SENSE AND ORDERING

It is the ontopoiesis of life that is *life's individualization, accomplished through the intrinsic ordering of all that is and by the processing of sense* that carries on the relative stabilizing of spheres into becoming from the anonymous flux. It is the spine of progress' individualization, establishing a simultaneously perduring as well as fluctuating condition by which the ontopoietic advance proceeds *measuring out* life's flux into a constructive becoming.

The underlying stream of the ontopoietic logos carrying the constructive becoming in an individualizing schema by its going beyond the anonymous flux on the one side answers the perennial issue of flux versus stasis that provokes all the previously mentioned questions about beingness and reveals on the other side the spine of the primordial truth of everything that is otherwise hidden to the ordinary sight of humans. The continuity of the first order of things is given in this discovery of the ontopoietic origination of reality and the processes of its genesis. This unveiling of the ontopoietic logos, which we have discussed above while speaking of the phenomenology of the critique of reason, brings together as well as sunders all the generic elements that flow together or coincide in a formative progress in which the logos acts simultaneously as the *prompting force*, energy that continues the coherent progress as well as that progress' formative differentiation. That is to say, the coalescing cooperation of the elements arrived at by a step by step selection and directed formatively by the ontopoietic sequence is revealed. The ontopoietic sequence acts as the principle of the logos of life prompting, carrying, and directing the self-individualization of the living beingness.

It is, indeed, by constructively ordering *becoming* in its primal force that the logos of life conducts the otherwise anonymous flux into significant fragments of sense, that is, into *an ontopoietic sequence* simultaneously differentiating and coalescing previously anonymous elements toward a progressively shaping telos of

individualized becoming; flux and stasis are grasped as aspects of an everlasting stream of transformation that draws all available resources into becoming.

Panta rei (nothing lasts—all flies), *and yet all passes away in measured transformations in which the constructive/creative flux is reconciled with stability as the ontopoietic logos expands, it being the crux of life, a pipeline which binds flux and stasis throughout reality—life, earth, and the cosmic spheres.*

*THE HUMAN-CONDITION-IN-THE-UNITY-
OF-EVERYTHING-THERE-IS-ALIVE AND ITS
COROLLARY*

This flux operates within logos' field of forces and not *eo ipso* but in close cogeneration amid the circumambient situations that participate in the human condition-in-the-unity-of-everything-there-is-alive and its corollary, the cosmos. Thereby, an infinitely extensive network is projected by the ever self-transforming logos of life in its ever changeable senses. Thus, the constructive, converting transformative becoming of the life process energized and instrumentalized by the logos brings in the ordering and the sense of individualizing becoming. Flux and stasis appear then as abstract notions that hide the coalescing and dissipating game of the generative/regressing process of life.

- (a) *The logic impulse of the forces converting life in its singular ordering and individualizing sequence* draws into its constructive/generative network of logic energies a circumambient array of elements that are then transformed into coalescing proficiencies that as they are drawn into the constructive network extend into the circumambient generative potentialities of the individualizing beingness. Thereby, the individualizing life is immersed in its generative course in the entire network of the unifying logic links progressively unveiled, within which the living individual unfolds and passes away.

It is the logic spread of the Human Condition that comprises all of reality—the existential reality in all its perspectives, but also the realm of the vital conundrum of generative cycles, and the psychic, social, and communal cycles of coexistence among all living beings, and which lift the logos to its intellectual and spiritual heights.

- (b) *The Fullness of the Human Soul Fashioned by the Human Condition*

Having discerned the life factor's encirclement of the human agent / living agent, constituting the existential circumference of the human condition, we turn to focus now on that inner, specifically human expansion, in which the logic rays penetrate into the vital conditions of individualizing life in one direction and into the spiritual outgrowth of the human soul in the other. These rays center the expanding powers of the mind as the soul's crucial constitutive faculty. It is, indeed, in this imaginative, creative, and governing faculty that the living individual centralizes its entire existential spread in this condition.

The human soul, having the mind, consciousness as its instrument, projects and negotiates with the life horizons. And so the living agent, with the influx into individualizing life of the specifically human inventive/creative/imaginative system through which the human mind operates, projects not only necessary links for the vitally expanded functioning of onto-poietic becoming, but also and foremost unfolds in tandem innumerable morally, aesthetically, emotionally, imaginatively evaluative threads as well as other lines of sense through which the living agent progressively acquires a human mind. The human mind continues the work of the vegetatively-vitally subservient agent now unfolded in a self that imaginatively projects, in a determined, self-selective, and self-decisive human individual. The intentional system of consciousness directing this entire apparatus of life and compassing its full extent—from primitive sensing, feeling, desiring, evaluating to constituting the world, to esoteric longings to escape all that existentially binds and to transcend it—that is, the living agent who incorporates the prerogatives of the human mind amounts to what we call the “soul,” in whose fulgurating symphony of life’s becoming, the entire course of life resounds into infinite realms.

(c) *The Soul in the Cosmos and the Cosmos in the Soul*

Through its innumerable ramified rays the human soul reflects her entire horizon: her originary ties are reflected in the “passions of the earth,” the earth that is her ground and from which her subtending forces come, but reflected as well, it is presumed from time immemorial, in the “passions of the skies,” are her psychic and spiritual forces and propulsions.⁵ We can say that in this way the self-prompted and self-oriented human soul reflects the universal ordering of the All: from her originary ties to the earth’s soil, to the congenital influences exerted on life on earth by the firmament.⁶

Proceeding from our generic roots in the earth’s soil, the logos of life upon which the entirety of ordering and vital sense is suspended traverses intentional-creative-onto-poietic becoming *within* and expands into an unconfined horizon of becoming *without*, and so the onto-poietic becoming of life finds a completion. The generic system of the onto-poietic design of life finds correlative logico support from above—in the skies. Earth, our womb of life, is itself linked in its existential conditions to the dynamic architectonics of an orderly cosmos.

The great developments of the New Enlightenment have led to an essential transformation of the positioning of life and human constitution.

Transcendental intentional consciousness has lost its dominant role, which has now been accorded the dynamic architectonic of the cosmos.

This Copernician turn of the present day philosophical orientation due to our onto-poiesis of life marks the cosmic integration of a too long neglected path of metaphysics which we now pursue (Note 6).

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NOTES

¹ In my quintessential work, *Logos and Life, Impetus and Equipoise in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, *Analecta Husserliana LXX* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000), pp. 291–322, I have presented some traits of my phenomenology of life as a new onto-poietic answer to the perennial questions by its unfolding of the logos in a manner having affinity with the Heraclitean intuitions.

² Quotations and direct references to Heraclitus' utterances are taken from *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus, an Edition of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary*, Charles H. Kahn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

³ See by the present author, *Logos and Life, Book 2: Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, *Analecta Husserliana XXIV* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1987).

⁴ *Analecta Husserliana*, 2006, pp. 109–123.

⁵ See A-T.T. Editor, *Analecta Husserliana*, Volume 107, *The Passions of the Skies: Astronomy and Civilization in the New Enlightenment*; and *Analecta Husserliana*, Volume 108, *Transcendentalism Overturned: From Absolute Power of Consciousness Until the Forces of Cosmic Architectonics* (Dordrecht: Springer).

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

SECTION I
PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE IN THE CRITIQUE
OF REASON

WAS PLATO A PLATONIST?

A B S T R A C T

My paper will pose the seemingly rather trivial question – was Plato a Platonist? and it will demonstrate that it is possibly not as trivial as it first appears to be. Thus, the definition of “Platonism” becomes an issue – particularly as regards the understanding of the concept of “idea” and its constitution: is it to be understood in a realistic manner giving the idea (or quite generally, the object) total independence of the subject conceiving it? Or is some other conception possible? And then we have Plato’s metaphor of re-remembering getting into the core of what philosophizing means. As memory and all the functions of consciousness related to it thus come into the field of interrogation, this might give rise to a phenomenological interpretation of what happens in the constitution of the idea-object. This might, of course, seem problematic in regard to the traditional conception of Plato, but the traditional conception might also be questioned, and my paper will do exactly that. In this way the phenomenological field of problems and possibilities – the constitutional together with history and the understanding of history – will come into focus so that the problem of Platonism and Plato becomes “originally” reflected and interrogated upon this grounding.

The question “Was Plato a Platonist?” might perhaps cause surprise; it might seem puzzling and even provocative to pose this apparently trivial question in front of a highly scholarly audience such as you are – probably all of you having spent much time in intellectual company with Plato. But perhaps we should not consider the surprise and puzzling only in a negative manner not even as regards the so called trivial and obvious, particularly not in a context in which the philosophy of Plato is an issue. Some would even view the genuine beginning of philosophizing as generated by amazement, wondering and surprise.¹ The answer to the question – Was Plato a Platonist or a Platonic, is perhaps not that obvious after all.

The fact that we here have two different words or concepts at our disposal might indicate this, but I will not be considering this in our context here. I will only consider the concept of “Platonist” and even then find different meanings and interpretations that might be provided thus grounding different answers to the question. If for example the concept of “Platonism” is understood as “the major characteristics of the philosophy that the ancient Greek philosopher Plato developed 3–400 years before Christ, which afterwards became a major movement of thinking that deeply influenced our scientific-philosophical tradition”, then fairly trivially – if this is the definition grounding the answer – Plato was a Platonist. But if we choose another definition, for example this: “Platonism is the manner of philosophical thinking developed after the death of the historical Plato (but) inspired by and based upon his

achievements”, then the answer would not be that trivial – or rather, it would be trivial the other way around; if Platonism regarded as an “-ism” came into history after the death of Plato, he could scarcely have been a Platonist – at least not if you are not plainly unhistorical. And it seems we can say this even without entering the core substance of Platonism and what it means to be a Platonist. Maybe therefore it is not only the answer that has more depth to it than it first appears – maybe also the question has!

Let us look a bit closer at what is commonly regarded the core or the philosophical substance of Platonism, particularly as it is associated with and also is regarded as some prototype for philosophical realism. One definition might then be the following one: “attempts to supply concepts, mathematical and other abstract entities with an autonomous status and existence independent of our knowledge of and our interaction with them”. This definition is then delimited to what is ontological-epistemic, and it tells us nothing about what might be the ethical-moral, aesthetical or political aspects in the philosophy of Plato. Nor does it say anything about the dialogical-communicative or pedagogical-educational aspects it might entail. And this might very well represent a delimitation that causes problems.

Of course, other interesting definitions might be provided, but let us now stick to this one exposing some philosophical realism – after all it hits one core of what is most often labeled Platonism. And it is not only by incident that it is so – Plato himself seems to be nourishing such a conception as he in many of his Dialogues uses metaphors and speaks of the forms or ideas which timelessly or all-timely exist in a world for themselves. That means that they are not here or there in any concrete space-sensing meaning, but they are “really” present in some pre-existence and then given to the soul’s or the inner eye’s “pure” intuition of them – so that when the soul has become incarnated in a sensing and sensible body within the existence of time and space, it is able to conceive of these forms only by remembering or by “re-calling” them. Thus remembering becomes one major epistemic function that dwells in our mind’s depth. Everything depends on the ability for memory so to speak, and Plato even seems to extend the ability for memory back into the time before we – each one of us – are born! This might, of course, appear pretty fantastic – but we have to remember that Plato expressed himself in a mythic-metaphoric, or even poetic, language and that an explanation given in such a language is not necessarily inferior to one given in a more objectivistic language. It is also by this manner of reasoning that we are able to recognize (and really understand) the possible power the forms possess for constituting actuality. As cognition and dialectical thinking thus becomes remembering the principles and the forms for the constitution of actuality, it will at the same time have genuine educational, ethical and even political implications. And again by this we also get a grip on what is the broader field for Plato’s philosophical interests and actions; it entails fairly detailed thoughts about the good life, justice, the organizing and governing of society etc. But let us once more remind ourselves that to Plato the stories about pre-existence and re-remembering are metaphors and pictures that scarcely can be taken literally. Due to the quite ingenious manner Plato uses them these metaphors have, however, obtained respect and admiration within a great and leading European tradition, which, motivated by this

theme, has continued doing critique for more than 2000 years, dedicatedly following Plato and further developing the field.

Before getting more specifically into this, let us first return for a while to the definition of Platonism we already have been discussing – and particularly look at its internal consistency. It entails something which might give rise to both wondering and critique; as it is an attempt to supply concepts and abstract entities with an autonomous status and existence which are to be independent of our knowledge and interaction with them, then at least I find that I face a problem here – because I cannot really understand how to conceive of the expression “attempts to supply . . .” as it – the attempt – is done by humans themselves thinking and attempting by such attempts to seek knowledge – not either in this regard always with success. If the concept-mark “attempt to supply” is an essential part of the concept “Platonism” so that the tentative, or even the “experimental” – thus the process-character of it all that constitutes the autonomous status becomes explicit, then I will have problems in regard to *understanding the independence* of such general, abstract entities and forms from our knowledge of and interaction with them. It seems to me an inconsistency, at least in tendency, embedded in this position which would have me think (at least) twice before I became a “Platonist”.

But perhaps the “genuine” Platonist would say – talking of “attempt” is only a manner of speech that represents a view from the outside; and that may in some respect prove correct. If, however, you view it as the genuine Platonist does – from inside, then it is something more like some revelation, pure intuition – in which what is intuited (by itself) marks itself onto the intuiting consciousness and thus becomes independent from my own act of cognition and other things I might draw from it and make use of. Consciousness is in this regard a pure and passive subordinating receptor and as regards the constitution of actuality (including the forms), it is nothing further. It receives the mark from the reality of forms, and whatever else might interfere such as preconditions provided by the actual, historical situation – also embodying the depth of a tradition – do not matter at all as regards truth and universal validity.

Thus might, of course, the Platonist attempt to defend his position, taking action to convince others to accept the forms with their presumed or stated independence from our knowledge of them and otherwise how we act and relate towards them. But exactly as he is attempting it in this manner, he also demonstrates – at least in the eyes of us who are able to view what happens in the space between humans – the dependence upon an activity of arguing and understanding; and this he does in his attempt to prove the opposite, namely the presumed essential independence and autonomy of the forms. What the forms could appear to be without such activity (and Platonism happens to be correct with the only passively receptive re-membering function) is known only to the souls not yet born or to the dead, or finally, perhaps, “only the gods know”.

What we attempt to demonstrate by this exposition is that either (a) we are confronting a contradiction – at least in tendency, or (b) we are confronting a (presumed) universal objectivity which only the gods are able to know and we as humans living and acting, sensing, being sensed, thinking, communicating, seeking and always

again attempting . . . , cannot reach and learn to know that objectivity concretely in our capacity as humans. The question I now would like to pose by putting more stress upon our question in the beginning, is plainly to ask if Plato ever could have held such a position. Because of his enormously broad orientation, his intelligence and logical genius he could not have overlooked such a contradiction in tendency and could not have located the grounding of knowledge so far beyond the living human field for activity. It is more likely he knew what he was doing – even though he did not know it all and he knew this: Plato never pretended to be God – not even in the *Timaeus*, cf. the line: This is “only a likely story”.² And this is likely because Plato knew very well what knowledge can mean in the space of human existence – in which each and every one of us is struggling for the right and for the good and is seeking knowledge that enables us to reach it as far as our life permits. I believe this is more what his major concern was all about. Therefore I think of Platonism such as it is here exposed in its realistic form or in its more naïve idealistic form, as a construction which might appear natural if you only take half of Plato and otherwise built on preconditions that are not really his.³

But would not this in an extreme manner misjudge a large, in a way dominating and utterly well documented tradition; in this regard I am now perhaps, as we say in Norwegian, about to “banne i kjerka” which means that I am “swearing in the Church”? And how could I provide documentation for my thesis here? Of course, I can not – and will not even try to provide substantial documentation in this short paper, but I will only suggest a possible strategy for an argumentation and interrogation of the issue. Roughly I will (a) point at what might be viewed as one core of the philosophy of Plato, namely the importance of the dialogical, interrogating and seeking character – the knowing of the not-knowing – as it at the same time provide commitment in regard to the human life and its social context, and (b) point at the tradition of mediating which encompasses problems and elements that might make opportune the half-cutting that makes Plato into a Platonist; this is also part of the picture that requires a critique from the ground – whatever it may be.⁴

Let's start in this context, then, by reminding ourselves about the fact that at least Plato himself in using metaphors speaks of re-membering (or re-calling) as a conscious process in which time and some time-consciousness are preconditions. And he also uses Socrates in a manner that embodies persons situated in dialogs seriously carried out by logical communication, but then entailing concrete ethical problems and a whole world which commits the participants to their own concrete lives. Or should we rather say are (teleologically) meant to commit – because there always seems to be an open end to it all? All this which has now only been indicated makes me doubt that Plato would have committed himself to the Platonism we have been speaking about. He was not that naïve, dreaming or logically blind. On the other hand, I would say we may find crystallizing in his philosophy two opposite directed tendencies. The one of them which in a way sustains the Platonism and partly makes it correct, is the tendency toward the pure intuiting, receptive “theoria” in which the subject as precondition in a way forgets itself as founding functioning field for cognition and knowledge. The other is the one in which the subject not only learns to know itself but also is able to view itself in a community with others – particularly

as regards ethical and practical affairs pertaining to human life. And finally, it is this functioning and living “totality” which might provide and sustain the genuine community and universal truth in their interweaving.

Given this, the question which more particularly comes to the fore is if these two tendencies are able to intertwine in an interpretation and understanding of Plato that does not make him a Platonist in the sense we have been criticizing. And starting from and leaning on the second tendency I would say this is possible. For even if we lower the significance of “the one” and of pure intuition and, conversely, increases the significance of plurality (and even relativity), it is possible to think – and maybe also to live – the common, the universal objective and true with some form of independence. I am of course not referring to my private inclination for meaning, my private doxa – even as it may be an expression for some community (some ideology) which, often based on narrow self-centered interests, excludes others and seeks domination on that basis. When confronting such particulars you may sometimes have to make the independence “absolutely” independent in a mythical or dogmatic manner – and maybe this was Plato’s point and situation (in the ancient Greece where he lived). But as regards another kind of subject, the subject I believe both Socrates and Plato were seeking, then the independence has to obtain an other character – which is quite the opposite from both the mythical and dogmatism. What it is all about is a subject who is reflectively able to know and to commit itself within an open community which is headed for the universal life exactly as this may both motivate and define the subject in its particularity. And is it not this subject Plato with his Socrates is leading us into community with – those of us who seriously wish to seek in order to realize community “in itself”⁵?

But now we have to stop for a little while – has not this become an all too modern way of expression? To speak of “subject”, “universal community in tendency”, “communication” etc., are not these modern concepts and constructions which would be strangers in the ancient context? Maybe that is the case. But would we at all be able to understand Plato if we did not understand him within our own horizon for understanding? And is not this actually also the only manner of finding and understanding what he “really” meant? I will say so – and ground that upon the premises laid by Plato such as they are provided by that tradition in which he meaningfully may be present in our situation – as a genuine partner for communication. I therefore stick to the Socratic Plato, the one so eloquently practicing dialogue between live persons who both wonder and are motivated by the problems provided by the situation they are living – asking questions and seriously seeking answers which morally embody commitment in regard to action and personal life. In other words, I will focus on this aspect in order both to understand the “ascendance” up to that universal objectivity so that they appear with their original appearance as “patterns” or ideals which are *morally motivating* – and thereby the kind of “independence” it thus takes on is a historical teleological independence.

But how is it possible to demonstrate this more concretely? Let’s provide some suggestions, firstly by looking at Socrates who had been an active practicing philosopher and was a person Plato got acquainted with before he had formulated his own philosophy. What Plato does in his dialogues is to display what Socrates

in the eyes of Plato had seen and represented – so to speak lift it up in a new and (more) permanent form. Socrates had first and foremost performed his work by his speech and, as is well known, he terminated his life by drinking the cup of poison. By transforming what Socrates had represented – such as Plato had experienced it and then remembered – maybe even “recollects” it – into a more solid form (the written Dialogues), Socrates is still alive, perhaps even more so than in his actual life. The story and history of Socrates does thus not end with the cup of poison, it begins there – by showing the spiritual power provided by the consequent faithfulness until death with regard to the always ongoing search to know justice and truth; this yields the permanent form (of this history) provided by the written dialogues. It radiates a carrying power and the distinction between appearance and essence appears with historical ideal leading power which people in the generations afterwards may relate to and participate in for themselves.

Over and above the admiration we may have for Plato’s logical and limitless intellect – it is probably here his genius is located: no matter how it may in fact have been with regard to the historical Socrates – was he a seducer, a silly martyr or was he the genuine seeker of truth and justice – in either case Plato let us realize that life has one primary foundation for value and meaning within the serious commitment in the search for correlating knowledge and action as an always living, struggling unity of theory and praxis that never becomes finally completed. The death of Socrates was of course not a universal ideal for others, but others can, grounded upon the example of his, realize the need for a historical, thus permanent foundation, which, appears in the form of community. This community is genuinely and universally valid by grounding my own rightful freedom to think and act so that it does not limit and obstruct the freedom of the others in doing the same.⁶ Thus the road opens for understanding how ideality becomes constituted within the dialogical interrogations presented in Plato’s many dialogues. The destiny of Socrates was of course more than the story of the termination of one person. It was an example which also mirrors an entire society’s situation of crisis entailing depression, inner disintegration, fighting against both inner and external enemies, plague and all together a situation in which brutal power and egoism defines what is right. Plato relates to and engages with all this as he is also engaged in the tradition that was present at his time, both what was philosophy and what was the historical situation more generally. In my perspective of historicity which I have presented in this paper, all of these elements will be of substantial interest. And this again will certainly constitute a veritable break with the understanding provided by the realistic – or the mythic-religious Platonism. If Plato is still to be living among us, we have to leave those behind.⁷

What we have been doing is really not more than to indicate and to some extent to explicate a horizon for understanding and a perspective for interpretation that could be helpful to an interrogation into the sense in which the Platonic forms and ideals might obtain objective character and status. And we have thus taken the historical aspect into this in a manner much deeper than what is commonly done: ideality does not transcend this historical grounding, but obtains its universal objectivity within it.⁸ Then also such elementary phenomena as for example the writing which, of course, might be regarded as something without philosophical significance and

“only” obvious, becomes essentially philosophical particularly the way Plato fills it with his powerful content which extends beyond and between generations. With a modern expression we can now say it is the historicity of ideality that has become our field for understanding. My point is that this provides a better and more adequate grounding than to understand the ideal objectivity in some sort of mythical or religious analogy to physical objects provided by nature. And this is the case not only because it is in better accordance with modern thinking; my bold thesis is that it will also be better in accordance with what we find in the dialogues of Plato. But, of course, then we have to relate to a very long and powerful tradition of mediation and interpretation in which strong elements of both mythical-religious and objectivistic transcendence-thinking have been at work.

This also has consequences in regard to the prevalent understanding of tradition and history. In regard to what I have been arguing, someone certainly will object that this cannot pass simply because it does not fit in with the facts of history and the ancient spirit as it “really” was. It is far more likely that Plato “really” thought in an ahistorical and quite naïve objectivistic manner which clearly proves that it is the realistic or the mythic-religious interpretation which is valid. And this is of course something that might be discussed on the preconditions which we actually want to base our interrogative argumentation upon. But if one wants to argue this way, one had better also realize that one has entered the *historical field of thinking* – exactly thus making what might be *historical facts the grounding field for the definition and judgment of the Platonic ideality*. I would not protest against this – it is what my paper actually has been dealing with! But I will in that case hope we do it in a manner which understands both what philosophical and historical facts are – as they at the same time are reflected upon this grounding and seeks to level with that which constitutes the core of Plato’s philosophy.

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NOTES

¹ This is, of course, true for both Plato and Aristotle; in the *Theaetetus* Socrates says the following: “This sense of wonder is the mark of the philosopher. Philosophy indeed has no other origin, and he was a good genealogist who made Iris the daughter of Thaumas” (155D). But it is also true for modern phenomenological philosophers such as E. Fink who questions the obvious and makes the wondering something starting philosophizing but also a measure for the quality of it as he says: “The degree of the wondering’s creative power does finally decide about the rank and the result of a philosophy [...] The draft of the problem, the essential fundamental action of a philosophy, is not, however, the posing of the question – rather it is the actual living out the wondering question. The ‘radical character’ of a philosophy is entailed in the radicalization of its Problem.” My translation from E. Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie 1930–1939*, Martinus Niehoff, Den Haag, 1966, p. 184.

² Speaking of the creation of the physical world Timaeus says (to Socrates): “Don’t therefore be surprised, Socrates, if on many matters concerning the gods and the whole world of change we are unable in every respect and on every occasion to render a consistent and accurate account. You must be satisfied if our account is as likely as any, remembering that both I and you who are sitting in the judgment on

it are merely human, and should not look for anything more than a likely story in such matters.” And Socrates agrees on this. *Timaeus* p. 41/29, now quoted from the Penguin Books, translated by Desmond Lee, 1976.

³ I am here thinking about the influence from the Neo-platonic and Christianity and upon that the dominating objectivistic manner of thinking having invaded the spiritual climate in Europe as the modern research on Plato’s philosophy developed during the 1800’s.

⁴ I am perhaps expressing myself a bit cryptic here, but the “ground” of which I am speaking will finally be that historicity (of our existence) which the later Husserl speaks of. The concept of historicity per se will, however, not be explicitly developed in this context – it will only be developed implicitly or indirectly by the discussion of major lines in the philosophy of Plato, thus making it an “example” for phenomenological analysis.

⁵ This is in a way literary meant and even though it is ambiguous: “in itself” means, on the one hand, in the individual, integrated in the person – something with which the person may identify him/her-self; on the other, it is the philosophical “in itself” – the essential, the “real thing”, the plurality of individuals etc. As regards community in itself, the point then will be that these two aspects have to be present and functioning together so that there is harmony both within and between the persons.

⁶ This is what also Kant says about Plato as he in his *Critique of Pure Reason* discusses the philosophy of Plato, especially the *Republic* but also meaning this is the core of his whole philosophy of which Kant seems to be in full agreement. Kant says: “A constitution of the greatest possible human freedom according to laws, by which the liberty of every individual can consist with the liberty of every other (not the greatest possible happiness for this follows necessarily from the former), is, to say the least, a necessary idea, which must be placed at the foundation not only of the first plan of the constitution of a state, but of all its laws.” *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 220, translated by J. M. D. Meiklejohn, J.M. Dent & Sons LTD, London, 1974.

⁷ In her book *Postmoderen Platos* Cathrine H. Zuckert develops the perspectives of five (post)modern philosophers onto Plato’s philosophy. Those are Nietzsche, Heidegger, Gadamer, Strauss and Derrida each one holding different and more or less radical views on this philosophy. Neither Husserl nor Fink is among these and my modest contribution in this context is to provide a “supplement” which in at least some major lines exposes a way of looking which is inspired by these two. Analogically, as the philosophy of Plato – viewed in a phenomenological perspective – will be about the constitution of ideality, it is perhaps “The Origin of Geometry” which comes closest and now have been used as a “model” because in it Husserl (in collaboration with Fink) develops the constitution of the ideality of geometry actually, then, exposing a strategy for the constitution of ideality quite generally.

⁸ This actually is the essence of “The Origin of Geometry”. In it Husserl says – as he is speaking of a “ruling dogma”, the following: “The ruling dogma of the separation in principle between epistemological elucidation and historical, even humanistic-psychological explanation, between epistemological and genetic origin, is fundamentally mistaken, unless one inadmissibly limits, in the usual way, the concept of ‘history,’ ‘historical explanation,’ and ‘genesis.’ Or rather, what is fundamentally mistaken is the limitation through which precisely the deepest and the most genuine problems of history are concealed.” *The Crisis of European Sciences and the Transcendental Phenomenology*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, IL, 1970, p. 370.

THE LIFE OF BEING REFOUND WITH THE
PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE OF ANNA-TERESA
TYMIENIECKA

A B S T R A C T

In the heart of the more objectivistic line of Rationalism, Leibniz planted an ontological seed of vital spontaneity that would bear fruit three centuries later in the reflective conversion of Husserlian phenomenology into the one subjective/objective field of research of the *Erlebnisse* and of the *Sachen selbst*. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka carries out and gives structure to these ideas of philosophical solidarity between spirit and life, both pursuing the subjective road in empathizing with the profound intentionality of her masters, Leibniz and Ingarden *in primis*, and applying herself to the objective level to give rise to a phenomenology of phenomenology, through which she intends to realize an intuitive re-seeding of phenomenology itself. The surprising result of this phenomenological work has been the discover of the on-topoietic logos of life, which runs through and pervades every sphere of being, from the physical to the metaphysical level, with its expansive and evolutive dynamic of *impetus* and *equipoise*. Thus Tymieniecka threw open the ancient Parmenidean concept of being as a “mass of well rounded sphere” to the spectacle of being that gushes and runs in history, as if surging from an inexhaustible spring.

T H E L I F E O F B E I N G M A R G I N A L I Z E D

As Hans Jonas teaches us, Modernity was inaugurated with the intention of unchaining itself from the limitations that the recognition of the teleological order of life imposes on the analytical dominion of scientific and mechanistic reason.¹ According to Jonas, this happened in connection with the XVII century rise of astronomical physics, the science “of inanimate masses and forces,” to the dominant and leading epistemological position, and because of the concomitant affirmation of a mentality that held that in order to guarantee the best and most correct scientific observation, it was necessary to bring the uncontrollable dynamism of the living being to the state of masterable immutability of the dead. In the passage to Modernity, therefore, “from the physical sciences there spread over the conception of all existence an ontology whose model entity is pure matter, stripped of all features of life.” Thus it was that “also in terms of ontological genuineness, non-life [was] the rule, life the puzzling exceptions in physical existence.”²

The same inquiry, undertaken by Descartes, for a method “of rightly conducting the reason” moves from the dissatisfaction about the cognitive results of his living

experience during the years of formation. His youthful was spent in deference to tradition, first of all studying under the guidance of the tutors of the La Flèche college³ and later thumbing through “the great book of the world,” gaining bit by bit greater reflexiveness and critical aptitude but without ever managing to respond adequately to the “excessive desire to learn to distinguish the true from the false, in order to see clearly in [his] actions and to walk with confidence in this life.”⁴ From his disappointment with the meager opportunity for rational self-determination implied by the spontaneous teleology of immediate lived experience of tradition and sociality, Descartes decided to apply himself to establishing his own method of theoretical research that, in imitation of “those long chains of reasoning, simple and easy as they are, of which geometricians make use in order to arrive at the most difficult demonstrations,” would enable him to intercept and lay in founded logical sequence, and therefore rationally controllable, the succession of “all those things which fall under the cognizance of man,” provided only that “we abstain from receiving anything as true which is not so and always retain the order which is necessary in order to deduce the one conclusion from the other.”⁵

In his enthusiasm at the possibility of establishing on the basis of his own reason a *mathesis universalis*⁶ that would take the place of worn-out scholastic metaphysics, more adequately accomplishing the task of giving a rational foundation to the empirical sciences and the experience of all of life, Descartes relaxed the theoretical vigilance that up to this point had pervaded his work and, almost without realizing it, made ontologically permanent the condition artificially produced in the existent by methodological suspension (*epochè*) of its validity through questioning. Passing through successive reductions of his concrete subjective experience, Descartes came to the point of exhibiting *cogito* as adequate principle of being, starting from which to rebuild with a geometric method the entire ontological field. Once having reached the indubitable *ego cogito ergo sum* (“I think, therefore I am”),⁷ Descartes went on to protect and consolidate it by examining attentively the essence and existence of his “I”, first of all observing “that [he] could conceive that [he] had no body and that there was no world nor place where [he] might be;” later showing “that [he] was a substance the whole essence or nature of which is to think, and that for its existence there is no need of any place, nor does it depend on any material thing;”⁸ and finally reaching the conclusion that his “I” was *res cogitans*,⁹ inasmuch as: “this ‘me,’ that is to say, the soul by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from body, and is even more easy to know than is the latter; and even if body were not, the soul would not cease to be what it is.”¹⁰

Through this proto-phenomenological road of inquiry into the meaning of lived experiences through doubt and suspension of their ontic validity, Descartes found himself inaugurating a sort of metaphysical reform in which the multiplicity of substances of Aristotle and Scholasticism was substituted by the fundamental duality of the thinking substance and the extended substance, which in these terms translated the dual dislocation of existence, which belongs, on the one hand, to consciousness and on the other, to a world external to consciousness, even if now entirely submitted to mechanistic-causal rationality of consciousness’ science, founded in God.¹¹

In doing so, however, Descartes, working “to drain the spiritual elements off the physical realm”¹² and to reinforce the supremacy of the *res cogitans* by strengthening the separation from the *res extensa*, also reduced the chances of success of the longed-for *mathesis universalis*, by which he intended to restore metaphysical unity and therefore overcome the just emerged polarity of the *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, making it “absorb into a higher unity of existence from which the opposites issue as faces of its being or phases of its becoming.”¹³ In fact, as H. Jonas notes, the living being itself was crushed between the two reigns of “consciousness” and the “extended world,” in which the ontological whole as immediately lived was split by Descartes in order to reconstitute it on a scientific-rationalistic basis: since then the organism and the living body, as places of encounter of animate/thinking being and inanimate/extended being, represented “a problematical specialty in the configurations of extended substance” and, because of their exceptionality, were reduced to the inorganic “general being of the world” and stripped of their peculiar characteristics. “Precisely this,” continues Jonas “is the task set to modern biological science by the goal of ‘science’ as such.”¹⁴

Even if interpretable as a transition phase in the pursuit of a scientifically rigorous ontological reunification, the dualistic form of metaphysics therefore produced the paradoxical effect of marginalizing precisely that form of being that was instead crucial for Descartes’ objective of the *mathesis universalis*. In fact, the living being, inasmuch as carrier at various levels of the actuality of coexistence and the synergy of consciousness and world, is the unavoidable ontic place of investigation of the adequate reasons for the hoped-for reconstitution of the ontological whole; and this even more so if, like Descartes, one wants it to be modeled on the new geometrical analysis, by which, unlike the practice in classic mathematics and Eleatic philosophy, the properties of the figures are shown in their generating according to the rational law of construction deposited in consciousness.¹⁵ More in particular, our living body is the only form of being that documents to us the spontaneous convergence of the two spheres of the *res cogitans* and of the *res extensa* and we constantly experience that “our living body constitutes that very self-transcendence in either direction:” it “must be described as extended and inert, but equally as feeling and willing – and neither of the two descriptions can be carried to its end without trespass into the sphere of the other and without prejudging it.” Thereby – Jonas clarifies – it is the experience itself of our living body that “makes methodological *epochè* founder on its rock,” every time we wrongfully attribute ontological consistency to the reductions produced by it. “The fact of life, as the psycho-physical unity which the organism exhibits renders the reduction illusory” and “the actual coincidence of inwardness and outwardness in the body compels the two ways of knowledge [knowledge of consciousness and knowledge of world] to define their relation otherwise than by separate subjects.”¹⁶

Perhaps for this reason, the reference to a naturalistic background of living forces, even if one claims to outdistance it, represents a constant in Rationalism. Christian Wolff, for example, is not satisfied with showing the rational self-evidence of the principle of non-contradiction, by which it is impossible for the same thing contemporaneously to be and not to be (*impossibile est, idem simul esse et non esse*).

Regarding such a source of every certainty, inasmuch as setting it one places certainty in human knowledge, removing it one takes away all certainty (*fontem omnis certitudinis, quo posito ponitur certitudo in cognitione humana; quo sublato tollitur omnis certitudo*),¹⁷ Wolff wants to add as further foundational factor the datum of psychological experience according to which “we experience such a nature of our mind, that, while it judges that something exists, it cannot at the same time judge that it does not exist” (*eam experimur mentis nostrae naturam, ut dum ea iudicat aliquid esse, simul iudicare nequeat, idem non esse*).¹⁸ In the same way Wolff proceeds with the principle of sufficient reason, according to which “nothing is without sufficient reason because it exists rather than does not exist” (*nihil est sine ratione sufficiente, cur potius sit quam non sit*);¹⁹ in fact, “we experience such a nature of our mind, that in the individual case not easily someone admitted that something is without sufficient reason” (*eam experimur mentis nostrae naturam, ut in casu singulari non facile quis admiserit aliquid esse sine ratione sufficiente*).²⁰

And what is to be said about I. Kant? The critical conclusion about the impossibility of a metaphysics as science and the consequent use in the merely regulative sense of the ideas of reason is drawn from the basis of the preliminary acknowledgment of metaphysics as natural disposition/ tendency of reason (*Naturanlage des Menschen, seiner Vernunft hinsichtlich der Metaphysik*).²¹

Truly, as Jonas observed, “the organic body signifies the latent crisis of every known ontology and the criterion of ‘any future one which will be able to come forward as a science’;” “this body is the *memento* of the still unsolved question of ontology, ‘What is being?’ and must move beyond the partial abstractions (‘body and soul’, ‘extension and thought’, and the like) toward the hidden ground of their unity and thus strive for an integral monism on a plane above the solidified alternative”.²²

But there is more: the contraction of life from the whole of nature into its distinct singularity that was promoted by modern rationalistic idealism against the ancient primordial monism which made life coextensive with being, was the vehicle for both the becoming of the lifeless coextensive with the objective being, and the isolation of pure consciousness, which now has no share in the objectified world, nor acts there, having become bodyless, merely contemplative, beholding consciousness.²³ In effect, without the body by which we are ourselves an actual part of the world and experience the nature of force and action in self-performance of them, on the one hand our knowledge-of-the-world is reduced to “a merely beholding knowledge,” and on the other hand the world becomes “a strictly ‘external world’ with no real transition from myself to it;” our knowledge would thus be reduced to Hume’s model in which causality has become “a fiction” that stands on a psychological basis, which in turn is left groundless itself.²⁴ In any case, the rationalistic paradigm has made pure consciousness as little alive as the pure matter confronting it. Accordingly, the one can as little generate the aliveness of active connection in its understanding as the other can present it to perception. “Both are fission products of the ontology of death to which the dualistic anatomy of being had led !”²⁵

THE VITAL ASPIRATION SURFACES ANEW ON THE
HORIZON OF BEING

Geometrizing Rationalism had thus backed itself into a blind alley, and still in the XX century it was at a loss for how to come out; in 1913, M. Scheler viewed as pioneering and incomplete the attempts at transformation of the European *Weltanschauung* and thus also of the idea of the world, undertaken by Nietzsche, Dilthey and Bergson with the intent to establish a philosophy that flows from the fullness of the experience of life.²⁶ Heidegger himself, before facing in 1929 the arduous topic of the relationship between the being of ontology and the time of life, had to work to take leave of the so-called theory of two worlds, psychological-subjective and logical-objective, and to root the predicative in the ante-predicative, since the world of ideas and of logical meanings must be able to manifest themselves in the empirical lived experiences, in order to enter into the life of man.²⁷

Actually, already in the heart of rationalistic Modernity, G. W. Leibniz had cultivated the “proto-generic and proto-genetic” ontological seed of vital spontaneity that alone could “open the integral field of the real”²⁸ and bring to flower the *mathesis universalis* that did not germinate in the unfolded Cartesian system; and this notwithstanding that it was precisely Descartes, dealing with the general problem of tangents, who introduced to classic geometry the new genetic/generative logic by which knowledge no longer had to lose itself in the multiplicity of spacial forms, having now discovered the access to the *logos* that presides over their generation and that is reproduced by the original unitary activity with which the figures are set (*Setzung*) in consciousness.²⁹ For this reason, Leibniz had defended Descartes from the accusation of the thinkers of Cambridge that he was affected by the *morbus mathematicus*, pointing out that the great principle of mathematical explanation of nature conquered by Descartes for science must not be touched or limited in any way, because the doctrine of life not only did not contradict the principles of knowledge in physics and mathematics,³⁰ but rather, was supported by them. Instead, it was necessary to go more deeply with the “mathesic” intuition to the point of leading mechanical intelligence of phenomena to the “sufficient reason” or in other words the “ground” for their being and becoming, implicit in their mode of origination. Extension, form and movement, explicative of the phenomena of nature, in fact are not enough to explain the mechanism itself, as global phenomenon, expressive not only of cause-effect connections but also of a background of continuity and harmony that cause one to intuit deeper “inner workings of nature.”³¹ In this way Leibniz developed the generative bud of being left implicit in the scientific work of Descartes, and moves the *mathesis universalis* forward, showing the organic connection of the derived mechanic forces to the living metaphysical forces, primitive and original, that for him are the monads. In fact, every event can be traced back to these simple, individual substances, of infinite number and endowed with spontaneous auto-movement: they are entelechies, or in other words living forces, inasmuch as they are bearers of the principle of their own activity and

of their own progressive evolution, in the course of which their essence unfolds, rising from one degree of formation to another, more perfect one. Mechanical becoming, in this “pluralistic universe,”³² therefore, is nothing other than the exterior side, the manifestation of that becoming that takes place in the substantial units, in the intimately and spontaneously active energies for a self-given purpose. As Leibniz himself communicates by letter to Wolff, the extension in which Descartes believed to have recognized the substance of the body is based on what is non-extended: what is extended is founded on what is intense, the mechanical level of being on the vital one.³³ Through the latter then we are introduced to the “primitive force,” in an ontological-metaphysical sense that is pregnant with possibilities, because the individual subject or substance, foundation of the extension, contains “the principles of all that which can be attributed to it, and the principle of its changes and its actions.”³⁴

Jonas warns that Leibniz’ ingenious attempt to correct the Cartesian position of psycho-physical dualism is nonetheless couched in the problematic terms of Descartes’ approach, drawing upon the motives and general determinations of his dichotomy.³⁵ Cassirer also underlines that “the concepts and basic tendencies of the Leibnizian system are transmitted [...] with certain limitations,” “by way of the transformation they underwent in the system of Wolff.”³⁶ Nevertheless, one cannot help but acknowledge that the Leibnizian idea of submitting all the mechanical conditions to the needs of self-deployment of the individual metaphysical subject’s existential content, that is preformed even in its organic seeds, is influential even today in the scientific field.³⁷

LIFE REFOUND IN A.-T. TYMIENIECKA’S PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE

E. Husserl also finds himself contextualizing “the egological Cartesian structure within a monadologic universe close to Leibnizian thought,” when he comes in Cartesian French homeland, with the dual intent of honoring Descartes, taking up again the theoretical form of meditation, and at the same time of radicalizing his subjectivistic turn in order to verify whether from the sphere of the thinking substance one can with phenomenology “reach the transcendental connection with intersubjectivity and extended substance.”³⁸ In fact, traces of Cartesian dualism continue to accompany Husserlian phenomenology itself, which still appears both held back by the “impossible situation of the subject’s constituting the world and being simultaneously an objective element of it,” and incapable of advancing “to unearth the universal logos and solve the quandry that puzzled Husserl.”³⁹

REVITALIZATION OF THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka feels strongly the reflective unease of this situation: for this reason she undertakes to subject the phenomenological enterprise to an inner “critique” that however will be far from the one proposed in E. Fink’s

Sixth Cartesian Meditation, as “last” transcendental reduction of transcendental-ity, or in other words, of transcendental constitution as such. In fact, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka intends to verify whether the phenomenological pursuit has not ultimately been hiding an ampler conception of rationality than was acknowledged by its founder Husserl and his followers. Consequently, rather than proceeding with one more effort to interpret phenomenology through its own method, in conformity with the Husserlian proposal of a self-critique of phenomenology upon its very own transcendental/subjective assumptions, she sets out to achieve an enlarged inquiry that will advance in virtue of rationalities that are not identical with constitutive/cognitive/intentional transcendentality.⁴⁰

Pushing beyond the confines of essential givenness, assured by the constitutive genesis of objectivity, and establishing a phenomenology of phenomenology, A.-T. Tymieniecka manages to establish contact with the vital and creative “inner workings” that she intuited subtended on the level of constitution and hosted in the profundity of human living experience (*Erlebnis*), in “the locus whence *eidos* and fact simultaneously spring,” in the conviction that “not constitutive intentionality but the constructive advance of life which carries it may alone reveal to us the first principles of all things.”⁴¹

What Tymieniecka set into motion with the whole movement of thought derived from Husserl was a true “intuitive re-sowing”⁴² through intentional empathy. She approached it as an organic phenomenon in vital expansion, as one living and expressive body that had reached and touched her with its generative/propulsive energy, involving her empathetically in its productive logos. In accepting to use this “twist” of thought on experience and “to take into consideration insights from any of them that fall within our purview,” A.-T. Tymieniecka, guided by the radical need “to follow the progress of the method in order to inquire into its very logos and its yielding,”⁴³ concentrated her attention on the “late breakthrough to the plane of nature-life,” opened by the final phase of Husserlian *Phänomenologisieren*, introjecting it, however, according to “the seminal virtualities engendered by [Husserlian] thought;”⁴⁴ in this way she made a philosophically organic connection, through phenomenological dissemination rather than by mere speculation,⁴⁵ between “the historical body of phenomenological learning and the horizons for future programs”.⁴⁶ In doing so, she succeeded, especially because of the previous work she had done to recontextualize conscious reflection in the sphere of life and to discover a further and more original talent/disposition of consciousness (*Uranlage des Bewusstsein*)⁴⁷ with consequent updating of philosophical discourse,⁴⁸ now directed to take on, beyond the “sequential ‘therefore’ order of writing” and “the stereotypical language of so-called ‘scholarly’ discourse that would ape science but be merely pseudo-scientific,” an adequate approach to living life: it “streams in all directions and will at any point refract its modalities and their apparatus into innumerable rays that flow concurrently onward” and therefore requires the installation of “all modes of human functioning, all human involvement in the orbit of life”.⁴⁹

In any case, according to the “philosophical testament” of Husserl,⁵⁰ did not precisely that establishment of a living empathetic relationship⁵¹ in the sphere of the “community of monads”,⁵² represent that source of “reproduction” (*Fortpflanzung*)

of philosophising through the succession of generations?⁵³ Isn't empathetic relationship the only one that leaves hope for the passing beyond of "historically degenerated metaphysics"⁵⁴ of the twentieth century?

"Probing from within the phenomenological horizon of accomplishments",⁵⁵ A.-T. Tymieniecka realizes that not even Husserl, in his complex and fruitful reflective proceeding, kept to the logic of the "speculative thinker who seeks to unify his various insights"; rather, he, too, followed the simple logic of human experience, that "follows an analysis to an obvious end and then takes up deeper questions". In the same overall "developmental sequence" of Husserlian thought, therefore, still often considered "without [...] apparent links between its phases" and therefore strongly disorienting for students and followers, Tymieniecka instead discovers that

the planes of human reality are intrinsically legitimated in that sequence, for Husserl adjusted his assumptions as he went without dismissing any set of them.⁵⁶

In other words, presiding at the succession of phases of the "integral Husserl"⁵⁷ is the same *logos* that is at work in the formation of "the planes of human reality" and that, in the temporal continuity of experience, builds each individual human being and opens him to ever-new cognitive and practical conquests. It is with exactly this living and temporally constructive *logos* that "carries on the great streaming edifice of life"⁵⁸ that Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka syntonizes herself, grasping the "thread of the iron necessity of the *logos*" of self-individualizing life that runs through the various phases of Husserlian thought and determines the reciprocal congruence of it in such a way that each level of it acts as a "springboard" for inquiry in a more profound direction. Responding to the many who see in this way of doing philosophy a vice of self-founding, Tymieniecka points out that the *logos* of life engaged in the Husserlian investigation is the same that is daily at work in every effective execution of descriptive inquiry, which phenomenology also is; it means that once an area has been cognitively traveled, one finds oneself at its borders and from there one can lean forward to grasp new dimensions, now within our reach. For that matter, it was precisely the marked heuristic-constructive value of this spontaneous cognitive human behavior that moved the progress of scientific knowledge in the twentieth century.⁵⁹

A.-T. Tymieniecka is profoundly struck by the "rational framework" that sustains the advancement from time to time of the stages of Husserlian phenomenology "that ever expands its horizon". In fact, she realizes that in "this inquiry into reality, the human being, and the world, it is not only the validity of each phase of phenomenology that is preserved but also the promise each offers": the vital *logos*, that animates it, makes possible that phenomenology "effectively retains its assumptions as it proceeds even as it stepwise supercedes them", since "it rejects earlier work only in the sense that it digs deeper furrows into reality as successive layers of that reality become intuitively visible".⁶⁰

The phenomenological *logos* that guides the evolutive sequence of the integral Husserl, "at deeper and deeper levels, establishing novel frameworks of legitimation as he went: eidetic, transcendental, the lifeworld, intersubjectivity, bodily participation in the constitutive process etc.",⁶¹ is therefore rooted in the constructivism of

life itself, that is, on that organic dynamic that, according to “the interrogative mode of the *logos* of life”, “proceeds by throwing itself from the already achieved to the presumed”. In this way, “each step posited throws up a ‘question’ for the next, that is, establishes an order for the dynamic” and “the *logos* of life [...] transforms the stream of its forces from a chaos into an organized becoming, the becoming of life”.⁶² This natural *poiesis*, or *autopoiesis*, according to U. Maturana and F. Varela,⁶³ however, observes A.-T. Tymieniecka, gained voice only when life reached the level of the human condition; only and exclusively at this level can it also mature its flowering in the *ontopoiesis* of life, operated by the living “enaction” of the human subjectivity that “expands life into possible world of life”,⁶⁴ beyond the limits of natural determinism. Tymieniecka comments:

Thus, man’s elementary condition – the same one which Husserl and Ingarden have attempted in vain to break through to, by stretching the expanse of his intentional bonds as well as by having recourse to pre-reduced scientific data – appears to be one of blind nature’s elements, and yet at the same time, this element shows itself to have virtualities for individualization at the vital level and, what is more, for a specifically human individualization. These latter virtualities we could label the *subliminal spontaneity*.⁶⁵

THE LIVING METAPHYSICS OF THE LOGOS OF LIFE

Indeed, A.-T. Tymieniecka has attained the pre-ontological position of being, that in which being generates itself and regenerates. From this point of view, she has been able to untangle the *logos*, which presides over the evolution of the life of being, indicating it, with a term of her own coinage, as “*ontopoiesis*”, that is, “production/creation of being.”⁶⁶

Therefore, while in the past we traced the tracks of being, now we can follow the traces that beings, living and non, leave in their becoming: they pursue a road of progressive and growing individualization in existence, that is, in the environmental context of resources, strengths, and intergenerative energies; life itself, inasmuch as *vis vitale*, pushes them along this road, promoting their unfolding and controlling their course. Also from within the human condition, in fact, there radiates, grafted on the natural self-individualizing flow of life itself, a dynamic of creative vital expansion, upon which every intellectual dimension is based. For this, the cognitive act, which points to the structures of beings and things, in order to give rise to static ontologies, must give way to the creative act, during which man manifests the same *vis vitale* at work in the becoming of beings: establishing ourselves on the level of creativity, it is possible to follow the *poiein* of those same essential structures that knowledge identifies, isolating them.⁶⁷

Establishing a bridgehead on the *ontopoietic* plane of life, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka finds herself in the condition, which had seemed lost, of setting up anew that *mathesis universalis* to which Descartes, Leibniz, and Husserl had equally aspired.

The “*ontopoietic plane of life*” is, in fact, “a plane of inquiry that combines the dynamic ontology of beingness in becoming with metaphysical insight and conjectural reaching beyond toward the great enigmas of the Universal Logos”. Now,

within this proto-ontological field, it is a matter of showing “how the timing of life and temporality as such belong to the essential ways in which the vital spheres of life emerge and unfold, and the specifically human moral and intellectual spheres also”, to the point of “the sphere of the sacred that lay beyond and toward the Fullness of the All”.⁶⁸

But will the driving force of the logos that sustains and pushes life in the complete deployment of its self-individualizing dynamic be able to conduct it from “the incipient instance of originating life in its self-individualizing process” all the way to “the subsequent striving toward the abyss of the spirit”?⁶⁹

The logos that is intrinsic to life has manifested itself as “a primogenital force striving without end, surging in its impetus and seeking equipoise”: it promotes the constructive prompting that determines the progress of life and it prepares its own means/organs for its own advance. This advance means the fulfillment of constructive steps toward transformations, that is, “step by step unfolding projects of progressive conversion of constructive forces into new knots of sense”. Therefore, “the crucial factum of life” has not appeared without reason, brought [...] out of “nowhere”; on the contrary, the logoc force of life has its purpose⁷⁰ – just like Schelling’s living nature, that embodies the “scheme of freedom”⁷¹ – and that purpose reveals itself as ontopoietic inasmuch as it expresses itself “in preparing scrupulously in a long progression the constructive route of individualizing life so that *Imaginatio Creatrix* emerges as an autonomous modality of force with its own motor, the human will”. Crowning its development, the force of the logos of life, with the will as new modality of force, finds itself able to advance from the vital/ontopoietic round of significance into two new dominions of sense: that of the creative/spiritual and that of the sacral. In the terms of traditional ontology, this means that “‘substances’ undergo a ‘transubstantial’ change” and also that “the inner modality of the logoc force undergoes an essential transmutation”. Therefore, “Life, [...] as a manifestation of the ontopoietic process” “is far from a wild Heraclitean flux, for it articulates itself”; in addition and first of all “[life] ‘times’ itself”,⁷² because time reveals itself as “the main artery through which life’s pulsating propensities flow, articulating themselves, intergenerating”.⁷³

In the metamorphic capacity that intrinsically qualifies the ontopoietic logos of life, there is the possibility for “the new metaphysical panorama”⁷⁴ that delineates itself to transcend “the timeless pattern of surrender to nature” and go beyond “the equipoise established through millennia of life between nature and human beings and between the gifts of nature and their use by living beings”,⁷⁵ also establishing new nexuses between time as *chronos* and *kairos*.⁷⁶ The fulcrum of this metamorphosis is that “unique phase of evolutive transmutation”, in which the “mature” phase of the platform of life manifests an extraordinary character and gives rise to the Human-Condition-within-the-unity-of-everything-there-is-alive. Paradoxically, the human being appears to be integrally part and parcel of nature yet to reach levels “beyond nature”, levels of life that endow the human being with special unique significance that is no longer simply vital but is also spiritual.⁷⁷

The appearance of the living human being sets off in natural life “a watershed event, essentially a transformation of the significance of life”: the “enigmatic”

surging of *Imaginatio Creatrix* in the middle of onto-poietic sequence, surging freely as it floats above the inner working of nature. Here we reach – observes Tymieniecka – the most surprising and enigmatic turn of logos of life, because this great shift was being prepared by the logos' constructive steps, starting at the very beginning of self-individualizing of life, but it produces a “countervailing move” that “brings about a complete conversion of its hold on life's individualization and opens the entire horizon of freedom”.⁷⁸ *Imaginatio Creatrix*, rooted within the functioning of Nature-life and yet an autonomous sense giver, introduces three new sense giving factors: the intellectual sense, the aesthetic sense, and the moral sense. With them life is endowed with meaning beyond what is geared to and strictly limited to survival; there comes about an inner transformation of the vitally oriented and single-minded functional system of reference into the *novum* of specifically human creativity. Within the creative modus of human functioning in its specifically creative orchestration there occurs a metamorphosis of the vital system of onto-poiesis.

The moral sense lies at the core of the metamorphosis of the life situation from vital existence into the advent of Human Condition:⁷⁹ here we have the entrance into the game of life of a specific thread of logos of life, that involves human communion and also the sacral quest.⁸⁰ The quest prompted by the moral sense is a mode of becoming but of an absolutely “spontaneous” becoming, one that does not follow a pre-programmed sequence to be accomplished but is “freely” projected becoming, building on the accomplishments of each actor. While the human creative condition and moral sense both develop in onto-poietic time, the quest for ultimate understanding goes in a direction reverse to that of the onto-poietic unfolding of life and work to undo its own accomplishments of the progressive transmutation of the soul.

Indeed – Tymieniecka exclaims – through the moral and entirely freely chosen work of the conscience, the self-enclosed onto-poietic course may be undone and remolded in a free redeeming course!

The logos of life has led us to a borderline place between the onto-poietic logos of life and logos' sacral turn toward territory that is beyond the reach of the logos of the vital individualization of beingness.⁸¹ It is here that the Great Metamorphosis takes place, “that completes life's meaning in a transition from temporal life to a-temporality, or better, hyper-temporality”.⁸²

At this point Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka can undertake a radical metaphysical re-elaboration, suitable for the needs that spring from the decline of the modern theoretical paradigm. In fact, philosophical inquiry into the principle of all things, that phenomenology of life set off again, now engages the field of being no longer in its generic and static wholeness, which embraces all-that-is, but also and above all in its continual concrete becoming and proceeding, by incessant auto-articulation: therefore, responding to the ancient need to “save the phenomena” means undertaking a research of *philosophia prima* directed at the objective of “theorizing” the overall phenomenon of the new “fullness of the Logos in the key of Life.” Really, what has thrown itself wide open before us is a path of theoretical research that we did not believe existed, on which instead we can adventurously embark, renewing

the need of the Enlightenment and Kant to “sapere aude!” (=dare to know!). We now catch sight of a unitary logos leading us, that animates the parmenidean sphere and the same absolute Hegelian Spirit and that, autoindividualizing itself through ontopoiesis, shows it can intrinsically connect phenomena emerging bit by bit from the inorganic to the organic, to the human, weaving a “metaontopoietic” network of innumerable metamorphic passages of transcendence, that open it in the direction of the divine, newly risen to sight, according to the perspective of *philosophia perennis*, already delineated by G. W. Leibniz, when, to rationally understand the truth of the propositions of fact, he introduced the principle of sufficient reason, which, while establishing a foundational dynamic tending toward the infinite, made it possible to construct a solid ladder of truth in order to always better suit the fullness of the logos.⁸³

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NOTES

¹ Cf.: H. Jonas, *Life, Death and the Body in the Theory of Being*, in: Id. (ed. by), *The Phenomenon of Life. Toward a Philosophical Biology*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 2001, pp. 10, 25.

² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³ Cf.: R. Descartes, *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences*, tr. by E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross, Dover, Mineola, NY, 2003, pp. 5–6. Furthermore: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/descartes/1635/discourse-method.htm>

⁴ Descartes, *Discourse on the Method*, op. cit., p. 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶ In this regard, see: G. Crapulli, *Mathesis universalis. Genesi di un'idea nel XVI secolo*, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, Rome 1969.

⁷ Descartes, *Discourse on the Method*, op. cit., p. 36.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 37–38.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37. Cf. in this regard the performative interpretation of the *cogito* proposed by J. Hintikka, “*Cogito ergo sum*”: *Inference or Performance*, in: W. Doney (ed. by), *Descartes. A Collection of Critical Essays*, Notre-Dame University Press, Notre Dame, 1967, pp. 108–139, taken up and valorized by K. O. Apel, *Transzendentaler Semiotik und die Paradigmen der ersten Philosophie*, in: *Globalisierung-Herausforderung für die Philosophie*, Bamberg Universität Verlag, Bamberg, 1998, pp. 21–48. See also: K. O. Apel, *Selected Essays I. Toward a Transcendental Semiotics*, Humanities Press, Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, 1994. Id., *A Spekulative-Hermeneutic Remarks on Hintikka's Performatory Interpretation of Descartes' Cogito ergo sum*, in: R. E. Auxier and L. E. Hahn (eds. by), *The Philosophy of Jaako Hintikka*, “The Library of Living Philosophers”, Vol. XXX, Open Court Publisher, Chicago and LaSalle, Illinois, 2006, pp. 357–367. See furthermore: <http://philmat/oxfordjournals.org>. In addition: A. Rossi, *Possibilità dell'io. Il cogito di Descartes e un dibattito contemporaneo: Heidegger e Henri*, Mimesis, Milan, 2006; S. Nicolosi, *Il dualismo da Cartesio a Leibniz*, Marsilio, Padua, 1987.

¹⁰ Descartes, *Discourse on the Method*, op. cit., pp. 38–39.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Part IV, § 5, pp. 39 and following.

¹² Jonas, *The Phenomenon of Life*, op. cit., p. 13.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁵ E. Cassirer, *Leibniz' System in seinen wissenschaftlichen Grundlagen*, Olms, Hildesheim, 1962, pp. 11–12. Cf. in this regard: D. Carloni, *Pensée mathématique et génération chez Descartes*, “Analecta Husserliana”, L (1997), pp. 143–154, where a brief review of the youthful writings of Descartes permits a glimpse of the initial suggestion that the experience of generation, as a universal and cosmic phenomenon, had an influence on the young philosopher and his aspiration to a *mathesis* conceived as origin of the sciences, including those of the phenomena of life.

¹⁶ Jonas, *The Phenomenon of Life*, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁷ Cf.: C. Wolff, *Philosophia prima sive Ontologia*, Francofurti et Lipsiae, 1736, § 55 and note.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, § 29.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, § 70.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, § 74.

²¹ Cf.: I. Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. by J. M. D. Meiklejohn, eBooks Adelaide, 2009, *Introduction*, vi: “metaphysics must be considered as really existing, if not as a science, nevertheless as a natural disposition of the human mind (*metaphysica naturalis*). For human reason, without any investigations imputable to the mere vanity of great knowledge, unceasingly progresses, urged on by its own feeling of need, towards such questions as cannot be answered by any empirical application of reason, or principles derived therefrom; and so there has ever really existed in every man some system of metaphysics. It will always exist, so soon as reason awakes to the exercise of its power of speculation. And now the question arises: ‘How is metaphysics, as a natural disposition, possible?’ In other words, how, from the nature of universal human reason, do those questions arise which pure reason proposes to itself, and which it is impelled by its own feeling of need to answer as well as it can?”. See also: I. Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysic*, tr. by P. Carus, Open Court Publisher, Chicago-London, 1902, § 57: “But metaphysics leads us towards bounds in the dialectical attempts of pure reason (not undertaken arbitrarily or wantonly, but stimulated thereto by the nature of reason itself). And the transcendental ideas, as they do not admit of evasion, and are never capable of realization, serve to point out to us actually not only the bounds of the pure use of reason, but also the way to determine them. Such is the end and the use of this natural predisposition of our reason, which has brought forth metaphysics as its favorite child, whose generation, like every other in the world, is not to be ascribed to blind chance, but to an original germ, wisely organized for great ends. For metaphysics, in its fundamental features, perhaps more than any other science, is placed in us by nature itself, and cannot be considered the production of an arbitrary choice or a casual enlargement in the progress of experience from which it is quite disparate”.

²² Jonas, *The Phenomenon of Life*, op. cit., p. 19.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁶ Cf.: M. Scheler, *Versuche einer Philosophie des Lebens*, in: M. Scheler and M. Frings (eds. by), *Gesammelte Werke*, Francke, Bern-Munich, 1972, III, pp. 314–339. We can find the Schelerian expression: “eine Philosophie aus der Fülle des Erlebens heraus”, at p. 314.

²⁷ Thus, V. Costa, *La verità del mondo: giudizio e teoria del significato in Heidegger*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan, 2003, p. 81.

²⁸ Cf.: A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Phenomenology of Life (Integral and “Scientific”) as the Starting Point of Philosophy*, in: “Analecta Husserliana”, L (1997), pp. ix–x.

²⁹ Cassirer, *Leibniz' System*, op. cit., pp. 13, 11–12.

³⁰ Cf.: G. W. Leibniz, *Considérations sur les Principes de la Vie et sur les Natures Plastiques*, in: C. J. Gerhardt (ed. by), *Die philosophische Schriften von G. W. Leibniz*, Vol. VI, Weidmann, Berlin, 1885, pp. 539 and following.

³¹ Tymieniecka, *Phenomenology of Life (Integral and “Scientific”) as the Starting Point of Philosophy*, op. cit., p. xi.

³² E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, tr. by J. P. Pettegrove, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1969, p. 29.

³³ Cf.: Leibniz – Chr. Wolff, *Briefwechsel zwischen Leibniz und Wolff*, in: C. G. Gerhardt (ed. by), H. W. Schmidt Publisher, Halle, 1860, p. 139. Reprint by Georg Olms, Hildesheim, 1963.

³⁴ Cf.: G. W. Leibiz, *Letter to Bossuet*, in: Foucher de Careil (ed. by), *Oeuvres de Leibniz publiées pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits originaux*, I, Ladrangé Publisher, Paris, 1854, p. 363. Reprint by Georg Olms, Hildesheim, 1975.

³⁵ Jonas, *The Phenomenon of Life*, op. cit., p. 63.

³⁶ Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, op. cit., p. 34.

³⁷ Cassirer, *Leibniz' System*, op. cit., p. 411. Cf. also the reference to: A. Weismann, *Essays Upon Heredity*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1889 (Ibid., p. 411, note 1); U. Maturana and F. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition. The Realization of the Living*, Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht, 1980. Original title: *De maquinas y seres vivos. Una teoría sobre la organización biológica*, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago de Chile, 1972.

³⁸ Thus R. Cristin, "Presentazione" at: E. Husserl, *Meditazioni Cartesiane*, it. tr. by F. Costa, Bompiani, Milan, 1994, pp. viii–ix, xv. Cf.: E. Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations. An Introduction to Phenomenology*, tr. by D. Cairns, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, The Hague/Boston/London, 1982⁷. At § 62, Husserl faces and rebuts the objection against phenomenology, according to which phenomenology is incapable of solving the problems that concern the possibility of Objective knowledge, unless it uses "an unacknowledged metaphysics, a concealed adoption of Leibnizian traditions" (p. 148).

³⁹ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *The Logos of Phenomenology and the Phenomenology of Logos*, in: "Analecta Husserliana", LXXXVIII (2005), p. xv.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. xiv–xv.

⁴¹ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Tractatus Brevis. First Principles of the Methaphysics of Life Charting the Human Condition: Man's Creative Act and the Origin of Rationalities*, in: "Analecta Husserliana", XXI (1986), p. 3.

⁴² Cf.: D. Verducci, *The Development of the Living Seed of Intentionality from E. Husserl and E. Fink to A.-T. Tymieniecka's Ontopoiesis of Life*, in: "Analecta Husserliana", CV (2010), p. 33; furthermore: Id., *La questione dello sviluppo in prospettiva ontopoietica*, in: "Etica ed Economia", 1 (2007), pp. 45–58; Id., *Examining Development from the Ontopoietical Perspective*, in: "Phenomenological Inquiry", 31 (2007), pp. 17–22.

⁴³ Tymieniecka, *The Logos of Phenomenology and the Phenomenology of Logos*, op. cit., p. xv.

⁴⁴ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *A Note on Edmund Husserl's Late Breakthrough*, in: A.-T. Tymieniecka (ed. by), *Phenomenology World-Wide. Foundations, Expanding Dynamics, Life-Engagements. A Guide for Research and Study*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 2002, p. 685a.

⁴⁵ Cf.: D. Verducci, *Disseminazioni fenomenologiche e innovazioni teoretiche*, in: Id. (ed. by), *Disseminazioni fenomenologiche. A partire dalla fenomenologia della vita*, Eum, Macerata, 2007, pp. 11–27.

⁴⁶ Tymieniecka, *A Note on Edmund Husserl's Late Breakthrough*, op. cit., p. 685 a.

⁴⁷ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Die Phänomenologische Selbstbesinnung*, in: "Analecta Husserliana", I (1971), p. 10.

⁴⁸ Cf.: D. Verducci, *La trama vivente dell'essere di A.-T. Tymieniecka*, in: A. Ales Bello and F. Brezzi (eds. by), *Il filo(sofar) di Arianna. Percorsi del pensiero femminile del Novecento*, Mimesis, Milano, 2001, pp. 63–89; Id., *The Human Creative Condition Between Autopoiesis and Ontopoiesis in the Thought of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka*, "Analecta Husserliana", LXXIX (2004), pp. 3–20; Id., *La meta-ontopoesi di A.-T. Tymieniecka come teoresi di solidarietà tra spirito e vita*, in: "Annali di Studi religiosi", 5 (2004), Edizioni Dehoniane, Bologna, pp. 315–335; Id., *The Ontopoiesis of Life: A Theory of Solidarity Between logos and life*, in: "Phenomenological Inquiry", 31 (2007), pp. 23–28.

⁴⁹ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, "Logos and Life", Book 4, Kluwer, Dordrecht/Boston/London, 2000, p. 4.

⁵⁰ Cf.: E. Husserl, *Teleologie in der Philosophiegeschichte* (in three chapters, the first two dated June/July 1937 and the last the end of August, 1936): it is a text from cover K III 29 and from pp. 5 and 9 of cover K III 28; now included in volume XXIX of "Husserliana", in: R. N. Smid (ed. by), *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie. Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934–1937*, Kluwer, Dordrecht/Boston/London, 1993, n. 32, pp. 362–420. In the *Anmerkungen des Herausgebers*, it is R. N. Smid who defines the text in question as Husserl's "last philosophical testament" (p. 362). See also: N. Ghigi, *Introduzione a "La teleologia nella storia della*

filosofia”, in: E. Husserl (ed. by), *La storia della filosofia e la sua finalità*, it. tr. by N. Ghigi, Città Nuova, Roma, 2004, pp. 11–55.

⁵¹ E. Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Second Book, tr. by R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, Kluwer, Dordrecht/Boston/London, 1989, § 51, pp. 209–210.

⁵² Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, op. cit., § 55, p. 120.

⁵³ Husserl, *Teleologie in der Philosophiegeschichte*, op. cit., p. 364.

⁵⁴ Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, op. cit., § 60, pp. 139–140.

⁵⁵ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *From the Editor*, in: “Analecta Husserliana”, I (1971), pp. vi–vii.

⁵⁶ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Phenomenology as the Inspirational Force of Our Times*, in: Id. (ed. by), *Phenomenology World-Wide*, op. cit., p. 3a.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2b.

⁵⁸ Tymieniecka, *Impetus and Equipoise*, op. cit., p. 4.

⁵⁹ Tymieniecka, *Phenomenology as the Inspirational Force of Our Times*, op. cit., pp. 2a, 3a.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3a.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2a.

⁶² A.-T. Tymieniecka, *The Great Metamorphosis of the Logos of Life in Ontopoietic Timing*, in: Id. (ed. by), *Timing and Temporality in Islamic Philosophy and Phenomenology of Life*, 3, Springer, Dordrecht, 2007, p. 20.

⁶³ Cf.: U. Maturana and F. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition. The Realization of the Living*, Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht, 1980. Original title: *De maquinas y seres vivos. Una teoria sobre la organización biológica*, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago de Chile, 1972.

⁶⁴ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, “Logos and Life”, Book 1, “Analecta Husserliana” XXIV (1988), p. 6.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁶⁶ Cf.: M. Kronegger and A.-T. Tymieniecka (eds.), *Life. The Human Quest for an Ideal*, in: “Analecta Husserliana” XLIX (1996), p. 15: “I call it [the becoming of life], going back to Aristotle’s *Poetics* a ‘poietic’ process: onto-poietic. In brief, the self-individualization of life is an onto-poietic process.”

⁶⁷ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Human Development Between Imaginative Freedom and Vital Constraints*, in: “Phenomenological Inquiry”, 31 (2007), p. 8 and following.

⁶⁸ Tymieniecka, *The Great Metamorphosis of the Logos of Life*, op. cit., p. 18.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁷¹ Cf.: F. W. J. Schelling, *Aphorismen über die Naturphilosophie*, in: K. F. A. Schelling (ed. by), *F. W. J. Schellings Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. VII, J. C. Cotta Publisher, Stuttgart-Augsburg 1861, p. 236.

⁷² Tymieniecka, *The Great Metamorphosis of the Logos of Life*, op. cit., p. 20.

⁷³ Tymieniecka, *Life’s Primogenital Timing: Time Projected by the Dynamic Articulation of the Ontogenesis*, in: “Analecta Husserliana”, L (1997), p. 4.

⁷⁴ Tymieniecka, *The Logos of Phenomenology and the Phenomenology of Logos*, op. cit., p. xix.

⁷⁵ Tymieniecka, *Impetus and Equipoise*, op. cit., p. 99.

⁷⁶ Tymieniecka, *Life’s Primogenital Timing*, op. cit., p. 4.

⁷⁷ Tymieniecka, *The Great Metamorphosis of the Logos of Life*, op. cit., p. 31.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁸³ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, “The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life”, Book I, “Analecta Husserliana” C (2009).

CRITIQUE OF REASON PROJECTS
WITH REFERENCE TO ANTIQUITY: I. KANT
AND THE PLATONIC IDEAS, E. HUSSERL
AND THE MNEMOSINEAN ENTICEMENT,
A.-T. TYMIENIECKA AND THE DYONISIAN
LOGOS

Motto The particular Greek manner of reasoning and expounding of thoughts I take to be the distinctive feature of philosophy. The question of philosophy is first and foremost a question of language.

Emmanuel Levinas

A B S T R A C T

Every new movement in the philosophical thought is not only new, but is always a repetition, a returning to the roots, to the Antiquity. New is not only something that takes place for the first time: it is conscious or unconscious meeting, a short-circuit with what has already taken place; it marks a break in the straight forward movement, but it is also a circularity, a returning back to the by-gone. This feature, in turn, enhances the poignancy of the actual situation, it imparts an ontological dimension to life

The paper deals with the analysis of the notions of “ideas” (Plato, I. Kant), “memories” (E. Husserl) and “the logos of life” (A.-T. Tymieniecka), which serve in modern philosophy, especially phenomenology, for the enhancement of the topicality both of the heritage of the Antiquity and of the issues of present-day relevance.

Indeed, are you able to imagine a philosophical discourse – even any of the most modern ones – without the use of Greek notions and words? At least the word *philosophy* itself has to be present. This goes to show that philosophical enterprise is never likely to be turned into pure analysis, for philosophy by definition is incapable of avoiding its self-designation and even analytical philosophy has to refer to its Greek origins.

Every new movement of philosophical thought is always a repetition, a returning to the roots of Antiquity. New is not not only something that takes place for the first time: it is conscious or unconscious meeting, a short-circuit with what has already taken place; it marks a break in the straight forward movement, but it is also a circularity, a returning back to the by-gone. This feature, in turn, enhances the poignancy of the actual situation, it imparts an ontological dimension to life. (Is it possible for philosophical cogitation to be void of ontological significance – that could be posed as the next question).

Returning is always the same and always a different one. Eternal Returning. A touch of Eternity and also of Non- Being.

I intend in the present essay to expose some meeting-points and to investigate some of the new insights that have appeared through pondering of such notions as *idea*, *Mnemosine* and *Dionysian logos* in the conceptions of Immanuel Kant, Edmund Husserl and Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka.

I D E A S

Idea is one of the most abstract, most all-embracing and also one of the most widely known *termini technicus* designed by Plato. It is also a notion most difficult to comprehend. It concerns Platonic metaphysics, ethics, philosophy of nature, cosmology, epistemology and mythology. The notion of *idea* leads to the understanding of essences (*ousia*, *substantia*), to the distinction between the essential and the non-essential. For example, in the dialogue *Parmenides* Parmenides asks Socrates as to the possibility of such things as mud, hair, dirt and other despicable entities having respective ideas or forms, and receives an answer to the effect that such things as these are just what they seem to be and that there are no ideas behind them. This is a very significant, if not the most significant element of Platonic approach, in other words – it leads to the conviction that evil and baseness are not representations of ideas, they are void of ontological foundation. It is the mind, the intellect, the faculty of understanding (*logos*, *nous*) that perform the separation of the essential from the inessential, thus releasing the energy for creative ordering of the world. This arrangement will remain essentially unchallenged till Kant.

In starting the investigation of ideas I. Kant (at the opening of the first part of Transcendental Dialectic of his Critique of Pure Reason) begins with the consideration of the notion of the idea itself – its content and habitual meaning – so as to decide about the further use of the word: either to stick to the existing one or to abandon it in favour of a new term. Of course, Kant turns to Plato in order to reveal the semantic field of “idea” and comes to the conclusion that no new term is needed, only the existing one should be augmented and further developed. Kantian reading of Plato accentuates those features which go to form the bases of his own significant contribution, namely – the practical aspects, the whole gamut of notions which refer to human freedom and the laws of corporate existence. In a way Kant approves of the very idea of Platonic “ideas” to the effect that “ideas obtain of their own reality and that they are not just a dream”.¹ Yet, for Kant – as distinct from Plato – ideas belong to the reason itself and consequently – they serve as markers of the transcendental field, the latter remaining unattainable to our experience. Yet, without these markers of boundaries our experience would turn out to be a mess of contradictions and a delusive dream.

It is noteworthy that for Kant ideas are responsible for the generation of doubts as to the ability of reason to grasp the essentiality of things, and even more – inability to approach the ideas themselves; and this – in spite of the fact that for Kant – in distinction from Plato – ideas are not confined to some specific sphere but are viewed

as a kind of polarity placed at some distance from the things. Thus, Gilles Deleuze writes: “To take an example of Kant. Kant, of all philosophers, discovered the lofty sphere of the transcendental. He is like a brilliant investigator, yet his concern is not with some other kind of world, but with the summits and the depths of our present world”.² Ideas are correlative with “I think”; they are objects related to all three synthetic functions of reasoning. Reason becomes aware of the existence of ideas through paralogisms, antinomies and ideas turn into problem-fields of reason giving rise to “deliberations in thinking”.³ This is why the ideal of the reason itself remains the first problem of reason, a task to be tackled before all other problems are approached. A certain amount of idealism is a precondition for the ontology of reason; ideas are a matter of reason, not only of things.

E. HUSSERL AND THE MNEMOSINEAN ENTICEMENT

Mnemosine – memory was an epic muse for the Greeks. E. Husserl has also succumbed to her charms.

In continuing the Augustinian and Cartesian tradition of thought E. Husserl has encompassed the phenomenon of memory within several thematic zones. First, Husserl thematizes memory as belonging to one of the basic forms of consciousness in the form of a specific type on intention *in concreto* (this research is to be found in Vol. XXIII of Husserliana – Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung – Zur Phänomenologie der Anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigungen. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1898–1925, Herausgeben von Eduard Marbach). It is worth noting that Husserl discusses the phenomenon of memory (Erinnerung)¹ alongside imagination and image-consciousness, not only within the inner-time dimensions. According to E. Marbach, who has arranged the collection and is the author of a substantial Introduction to it, Husserl had not worked out a systematic theory of memory. The theme of memory is to be found dispersed among other phenomenologically significant issues. It is also to be found elsewhere in Husserl’s works, as I intend to show later on. Husserl groups memory together with the perceptible-again-presentification notions, with the view of developing a “phenomenology of perceptible presentification” (Phänomenologie der anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigungen). Under Franz Brentano’s influence Husserl considers intuitive perception as a kind of inner perception in distinction from outer perception. Yet, according to E. Marbach, this distinction is not to be completely separated from the empirical tradition of European philosophy.⁴

By empiricism Husserl means only the concreteness of intentionality that takes place in the passive syntheses of Ego, where Ego is *constantly surrounded* (Husserl’s italics) by things (Cartesian Meditation § 38). However, this is not an empiricism

¹Although German *Erinnerung* is translated into English as “recollection”, Husserl uses the word in a wider sense – so as to include the notion of memory (Gedachtnis), therefore it is translated here as memory.

of facts, for in § 39 of the same meditation Husserl brilliantly makes the point concerning the irrationality of empirical facts. This is transcendental empiricism, as I have observed on other occasion in discussing Husserlian themes.⁵

As usual, Husserl embarks on the phenomenological description through demarcation – he distinguishes between the acts of experiencing of perceptible notions and those of experiencing conceptual notions. In distinction from conceptual notions, where a thing or an order of things is thought of, a thing or an image in perceptible notions appears (*erscheinen*). This shift of attention to a lower level the experience of mind (*erfahrungslogischen Vernunft*) had been intended by Husserl as a kind of critique of reason.⁶ Memory in the capacity of the again-presentification (*Vergegenwärtigung*) of the perceptible is radically different from the directly perceptible consciousness – i.e. – perceptions or becoming-present (*Gegenwärtigung*), because in the case of again-presentification such elements as time, belief, intuition come into play, and perform modification of mind. Although memory, imagination, expectations belong to one and the same group of the acts of mind, yet there is also some difference between them: memory and expectations are again-presentification of the established (*setzende Vergegenwärtigung*), while imagination is the again-presentification of the non-established (*nicht-setzende*). Both groups are to be distinguished from reproduction, which is the “pure” again-presentification: “Memory is reproductive modification of perception”.⁷ This aspect is stressed by Husserl also in Cartesian Mediation II, §. 19, by saying that in any given memory the same is repeated in a modified manner, while each actual perception always contains the past horizon as potentiality of memories, ready to be awakened. The objectified sense may be revealed also through memory, which is only implicitly marked in the actual cogito, or the act of mind. Which means that the sense is not to be conceived as a finished givenness of the objectified, but it is always accompanied by intentionality of the horizons. Memory is constituted by double objectification, but these are not ready-made things. The objectification is performed also by perceptions, yet perceptions themselves are part of the mind, *Selbstda*, or, to use Husserl’s formulation – “Consciousness consists entirely of consciousness”.⁸ So it turns out that the sense is as it were located in memory (*Setzende*), and at the same time it has to be brought out into reality. Thus the role of memory in the acts of remembering turns out to be the revitalization of the things themselves or of the past perceptions in their concreteness. These acts are not used as a material for the formation of conceptual notions, but they obtain of autonomous significance within the general relations of consciousness and they generate anew something that has already been in existence. Thus we may agree with J. D. Caputo, who characterizes Husserl’s approach as proto-hermeneutical and relates Husserlian constitution to existential repetition. “Husserlian constitution is optimistic parallel to existential repetition, a repetition which pushes forward and produces what it repeats”.⁹ Bernhard Waldenfeld also speaks of the creative force of repetition (“*noch einmal*”; *palin* – Greek; *iterum* – Latin).¹⁰ Actuality and belief, according to Husserl, are the memory-determining modalities, in distinction from, for example, imagination which is determined by non-actuality and neutrality. Belief which is present in mind as actuality (*das Bewusstsein als “Wieder” bewusstsein*)¹¹

is involved in modification of mind and is to be distinguished from positive belief as “non-modified intentionality”. It is (possibly) in order to draw attention to this difference, that Husserl often uses the English word “belief”. It may seem paradoxical, yet the use of “belief” in this sense enhances the clarity of memory (der Erinnerungs – und Erwartungsgewissheit): “Belief, however, is not a new intention, it is nothing but the modal character of clarity as against appearance and assumption (presumption) (Der belief ist aber nicht ein Hinzutretendes, nicht eine neue Intention, sondern nichts weiter als der modale Charakter der Gewissheit gegenüber der Charakteren der Anmutung, Vermutung”).¹² Memories in the capacity of acts of again-presentification are connected not only with the objectification of perception and the belief-clarity of what is remembered, but also with the formation of “I” identity, as it is clear from the etymology of the German word: Er – innern (penetrating inside): “Ich erinnere mich an die Erinnerungen Selbst”.¹³ Constitution of the identity of the subject in connection with the horizons of memory in Husserl’s phenomenology (in the form of Mit-erinnerung, Wieder-erinnerung, Selbst-erinnerung), as collected in vol. XXX of Husserliana, has been studied by R. J. Walton and J. V. Iribarne.¹⁴ Yet memory as repetition is not only subjective; it is also inter-subjective. Husserl has noted this already in *Ideas I*, §. 29 by saying that the fields of actual perception and the fields of memory – different for each person as they are – are at the same time also intersubjective due to the common *Umwelt* of people living in community.

A special and separate question concerns the phenomenon of memory within the context of the inner perception or subjective time consciousness. This problem has justly served as a point of interest for the researchers of phenomenology and continues to do so.¹⁵ This is why I intend to touch only upon some aspects of the theme bearing directly on my conception of the problem of memory.

One kind of criticism directed at Husserl’s teaching in connection with *Zeitbewusstsein* and memory holds that Husserl (1) affords unjustified privilege to the present and to the active Ego within the continuity of the inner time and (2) consequently fails to obtain the sense of the past itself and the specific manner of its difference from the present. Such kind of criticism is exemplified by “Bergsonianism” of G. Deleuze and by Michel Henry with his material phenomenology and ontological monism, etc.¹⁶ The fact that memory also “reproduces itself” not only in the present activity of Ego, but also within the passive acts of synthesis, was pointed out by me earlier (though this is not only immanently affective subjectivity as the passivity of pure life, as in the view of M. Henry).

Analytical defense of Husserlian analysis and understanding of the consciousness of inner time has been performed by Michael R. Kelly. He points out that Husserl’s “distinction between the passive synthesis of retention (or primary memory according to Husserl’s revised interpretation), which presents time’s passage, and the active synthesis of memory, which represents a past temporal instant, will reveal that consciousness’s double-life in the living present establishes both a sense of the past, i.e., the past in general, and a consciousness of succession”.¹⁷ Passive synthesis does not objectivize, i.e. – it does not turn the past into an object, but affords opportunity for its self-revelation. The fact that what is remembered takes place Now, does not rule

out the fact that I consider also the Not – now. It is the *clearness* (mine italics. – E. B.) of memory that permits to speak not only of the living present, but also of the “living past”. This is lucidly shown in Husserl’s example (from “The Lectures on the consciousness of internal time from the Year 1905,” 27. §.) about the remembering of the illuminated theatre, about its re-presentation: “This re-presentation of the perception of the theater must not be understood to imply that, living in the re-presentation, I mean the act of perceiving; on the contrary, I mean the being-present of the perceived object”¹⁸ and “Memory is the re-presentation of something itself in the sense of the past”.¹⁹ In a similar way it is possible to remember the present (memory of the Present, §. 29); and this is not to be taken just as a metaphor, it is a real act of consciousness, because consciousness is not a sum of single points, but a continuous fulfillment.

There is one more important question that concerns the temporal character of consciousness – is it at all right to place consciousness on the same level with the modes of time and their manifestations? In this connection Russian phenomenologist V. Molchanov advances a very pertinent and well-substantiated (to my mind) proposal: “It seems that Husserl did not feel at ease with the total identification of consciousness and time. This is seen from the fact that according to Husserl the very deepest layer of subjectivity – the absolute stream of consciousness is in itself a-temporal. Husserl holds that it is only by way of a metaphor that we can call it a stream”.²⁰ Thus we may conclude that consciousness as time is remembering eternity (like in the case of Augustine) because time without eternity is not time at all but a succession of material forms.

And in the end one more significant (and beautiful) addition to Husserlian understanding of time, connected with “narrative technology” approach. Memory was for the ancients the Muse of epics, and thus it is the highest epical faculty – reminds W. Benjamin.²¹ Story, narrative lies at the bases of the profoundest relations with one’s experience, with the depth and refiguration of time (P. Ricoeur). Story as an expounded life is a kind of poesis (from Greek – creation, formation) because by telling a story life expands, grows larger – P. Ricoeur calls it iconic growth.

It is worth noting that in Husserl’s case memory performs its work of passive synthesis by making use of the instruments of narrative, and not those of logical description, thus producing, synthesizing new meanings. Here is how Husserl remembers Mausberg – a location not far from Goettingen: “I was in Mausberg with my children, wonderful sunset. The town illuminated by evening light. Sunlit clouds of steam of the locomotive. Potato field with long diffuse shadows. . . Dark brown sparkling field. Returning home (Heimkehr). . . *Once again* I see these visions before my eyes. These have been ‘seen’ and seen ‘again’, though with interruptions”.²² Don’t you feel like reading Heidegger when going through passage like this?

Heimkehr.. Returning always means coming home, returning to one’s homeland, returning to one’s roots, returning to meet oneself, and the others. Returning is always the same, and always different. Eternal returning. It is meeting with Non-being and thus also – with Eternity. Such is the force of memory.

A.-T. TYMIENIECKA AND THE DIONYSIAN LOGOS

"...untill we furnish an answer to what is Dyonisic, the Greeks remain unknown and incomprehensible for us." – F. Nietzsche.

A.-T. Tymieniecka in her multi-volume work *Logos and Life* presents one of the most fundamental non-reductive approach to life by revealing the ontopoiesis of life or the strategy for subterranean manifestation of logos.²³ Notwithstanding the fact that the critique of reason in connection with creative experience is undertaken in Book 1 of the *Logos and Life*, I intend to deal with Book 4 where the Dionysian logos structure is most fully revealed. First and foremost I want to note the conceptual originality of the term, because usually the Dionysian origins and the logoic origins are conceived as a dualistic opposition – even Nietzsche thought so by holding, as he did, that the Attic tragedy originates from both sources, though the tension between Dionysian principle of the instinct of justification of life and the Appolonian principle of individuation and appearance, remains in his conception intact. Tymieniecka proposes a new strategy for the unification of the Dionysian the Appolonian principles, because life is not separated from logos, and the ontopoiesis of life is an on-going process in *Logos in Life and Life in Logos* manner. Yet, life and its progression, its self-creative qualities (autopoiesis) retain for the author the status of primacy, and thus her conception may be considered as an engagement in a *critique of reason* project. Dionysian logos is not identical with reason, it stretches over a wider field, and is characterized by "uniquely logoic synergies."²⁴ It may appear at first that A.-T. Tymieniecka elaborates on the Husserlian *Lifeworld* conception, yet her approach is marked by significant conceptual and linguistic shifts. Thus, for example, instead of the *Lifeworld* notion she introduces the concept of *World-of-Life*, which obtains of a completely new semantic structure.

It is life and not the world that offers the platform for scientific investigation taking off from the life-world and aiming to install itself in life's workings.²⁵

In order to understand the structure of the Dionysian logos and its significance within Tymieniecka's phenomenology of life one can hardly avoid the aforementioned comparison with Nietzsche. Nietzsche was the first one to establish the proper place of the Dionysian pathos in philosophy. This achievement had been facilitated by Heraclitus.: "No one before me has transmitted the Dionysian pathos into a philosophical principle – and that for the lack of tragical wisdom. I entertained some doubts, though, concerning Heraclitus, whose very presence made me feel warmer at heart and was more enjoyable than anything else. His approval of contradictions and of fight, of becoming, while radically rejecting the very notion of 'being' – this is where I recognized the most congenial idea that has ever been entertained."²⁶

By performing a kind of reflection on the Dionysian process of becoming in the form of autopoiesis of life, A.-T. Tymieniecka is not denying – as did Nietzsche – the concept of being; just the opposite: for her becoming is creating the full plentitude, the many-sidedness and unity of being, as exemplified by the final chapter of "Logos and Life" "The meta – ontopoietic clousure". Here the author summarizes her position as "recovering the great vision of the all", as revivication of "the great

ancient vision of the All". The priority of being in the conception of Tymieniecka does not mean only the equation of this concept with the principle of becoming or creativity; it means also non-acceptance of the Husserlian idea about the subject as the transcendental bases of the unity of the world, and other antropocentric gambits of thought: "Within the framework of the phenomenology of life, the human being is envisaged not in antropocentric fashion but as one of the types of beingness that emerges within the evolutionary progress of life as such – not as a crystalized essence, but being in the process of unfolding himself".²⁷

If Nietzsche's vision of becoming comes from Heraclitus, Tymieniecka's insight starts off "most significantly from the Aristotelian schema of things". This follows from the fact that Tymieniecka advances the principle of "Vital Unity-of-Everything-There-is-Alive". Here – in my opinion – we can see a modified structural similarity with Aristotle, because – relying on the opinion of the well-known scholar of Antiquity and Medieval philosophy V. Tatarkiewicz – we hold that "in his considerations of 'being' Aristotel first and foremost thought about living creatures. The branch of knowledge that he pursued and that formed the bases of his philosophical conceptions was biology."²⁸

Here is another significant passage bearing upon our present theme; Tatarkiewicz says: "Plato was the originator of principles, while Aristotel created full-blown theories."²⁹ In a similar vein we can continue: Husserl was the originator of principles, Tymieniecka is the author of a full-blown theory. The conspicuous presence of Aristotle in Tymieniecka's philosophy is attested both by numerous references to Aristotel's works and by the actualization of the notion of entelecheia – a principle that has been all too neglected in modern philosophy. This principle – Tymieniecka insists – is not a *substantia*: it is self-regulative, itself-adjustive, flexible and changable.³⁰ In a wider sense the principle of entelecheia represents the sentient logos of life that is one of the profoundest manifestations of the Dionysian logos. Tymieniecka distinguishes between four forms of Logos: the animated (sentient) Logos, the intellectual triadic-noetic Logos, the communicative Dionysian (feeling/sharing) logos and the Promethean (inventive, creative) Logos.³¹

Thus, once again returning to the comparison with Nietzsche, we see that Tymieniecka is reinterpreting then Dionysian Logos by way of extending the Dionysian/Apollonic distinction and creating a new one – a Dionysian/Promethean juxtaposition. At the same time both pairs of distinction are not inherently contradictory – neither for Nietzsche, nor for Tymieniecka. The difference between the two thinkers appears elsewhere: Nietzsche holds Socrates as being guilty of destroying the Greek tragical wisdom with subsequent consequences for the Western culture. For him Socrates with his rationalistic self-sufficiency and his optimistic "logical totalitarianism" appears as a third deity – a kind of redundant deity standing between the Dionysian and the Apollonic principles.³² For Tymieniecka exaggeration of the role of reason is also unacceptable, yet she entertains no ideas about the redundancy or abatement of any "deities", seeing that the intellective logos represents the principle of creativity and is of outstanding significance for the various manifestations of the self-individuation of life's antropoiesis.

Sharing-in-life is yet another of the most significant matrixes of the phenomenology of life. Life is a stream and Logos expands itself and differentiates through life in innumerable ways – from the pre-life realm, through living-beingness-in-becoming to the Promethean direction as dialectics of the embodiment and freedom.³³ The various impeti of life, the “driven moves of the logos, call for appropriate measures if they are to be balanced against each other, to be negotiated in their pluridirectional tendencies”.³⁴ The logico life device is intentionality: “There can be no doubt that the intentional act is in its fulness the implementation of the Dionysian logos that surges with the human creative condition, and yet if we look closer, consciousness is also the prerogative of animals, even if it be of degree less developed or more rudimentary”.³⁵ And again: “Dionysian logos excels and attains the greatest heights of logico achievement”.³⁶ In distinction from most of the modern conceptions linking the technological progress with the victory of the formalized instrumental *ratio* over the living life, Tymieniecka considers the technological progress as a specific impetus for the evolution of logos in the direction of human freedom: “The impetus of the Dionysian logos does not stop at any step reached with technological invention. So-called technological progress is nothing other than the impetus of the Dionysian logos in its Promethean aspiration to set the human being free, to make him master of not only his destiny but also of his very own ontopoietic course as set down by the system of life”.³⁷

By stressing the contiguity of the activity of logos with various forms of intelligibility and also with the sentient significance of mind, Tymieniecka has advanced – in my opinion – a completely novel approach to intentionality. And again, she looks for the substantiation of such an approach in the direction of the Greeks, this time – to the Stoics, by drawing attention, in particular, to the distinction between the “unspoken” logos, logos endiathetos and the “spoken” logos, logos prophoricus, seeing that the first one is concerned with rationality in the entelechial code, while the other one gets expression in thinking and in articulated sound.³⁸ Tymieniecka takes note of this significant distinction and at the same time she stresses also that her conception differs from that of the Stoics: “they did not seem to discern the uniquely sentient attunement of the ways and modes in which the animus in living being binds and then puts assunder, fuses, prompts, diffuses, etc. The ties between and among individuals, convivial undertakings, enterprises, projects, cooperative work, through which attunement plays a leading role in society.”³⁹

These are – in my opinion – some of the most significant spheres and strategies of the manifestation of the Dionysian logos in Tymieniecka’s phenomenology of life. General, finalized evaluation of her achievement could be characterized in the following way: first and foremost the concept of the Dionysian logos and of the logos as such, from which the present-day philosophy, with few exceptions (M. Merlo Ponti) is shying away – has been reinterpreted and its topicality enhanced.

Next – by using the concept of the Dionysian logos Tymieniecka revises and widens the phenomenological understanding of intentionality, bringing to the fore such elements as feelings, emotions, passions and the enjoyment of life.

And thirdly – by way of refusing to separate life and logos and by holding both elements as integral parts of the structure of autopoiesis that is developing in te

course of the life-processes – reason, logos does not become encompassed within boundaries (as is the case with the grandiose Kantian system), for it is not limited by forms of our understanding– on the one hand, and by undiscursiveness of ideas – on the other. Thus Logos is given an opportunity to undergo changes, to become transformed through evolvement in infinity. This, of course, is not the mechanically extended infinity, but the infinity of creative processes. This is why Tymieniecka at the end of her book introduces the notion of “other infinity” and of the “novel logicoic sphere in its ‘other’ infinity”.

In conclusion: all themes touched upon in the present article – concerning ideas, memory and the Dionysian logos – are engaged in tackling – in my opinion – of the over-all general question about the unbounded capacity of reason to balance and to harmonize the sphere of the world and the sphere of the human effort, or – to take the cue from the Greeks once again – to obtain a measure (*metron*) amongst the various “things” – between the contradiction -stricken human being and the equally heterogenous development of the world habitually designated as “progress”.

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WHAT WAS A CLASSIC UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF 20TH CENTURY?

A B S T R A C T

While in the 17th and 18th centuries, the concept of “classic” and its derivatives denoted superiority or competence especially attributed to Roman Antiquity writers, with the revolutions of romantic and then historicist thoughts, they started to qualify a style parallel to romantic conception or challenging the opposing styles. That happened through 19th century in connection with the canon formation in various European languages.

Democracy, social class, mass, national consciousness, civilization, culture, progress, standard, art, literature, education, and humanism. While we use these concepts to explain or to describe this and that, we tend to forget that all of them gained their current meaning in European languages through 19th century. Raymond Williams analyses the changes in the meanings of about hundred and ten of such concepts.¹ The concepts we have listed above are selected for being related to the concept “classic”. We are going to add here “classic” and “classicism” to R. Williams’ list. Let’s survey the semantic field of the “classic/classical” historically until the beginning of 20th century.

Before our discussion, we have to examine the concept of canon. The concept of classic and its correlative canon do not only have a meaning within their proper contexts, but they have recently become scientific concepts carrying both analytical and heuristic powers, thanks to the works of Jan Assmann and Adeila Assmann.

A research path opened in the last thirty or forty years, discovered fundamental differences between orally transmitted culture and written culture in terms of thought structures.² J. Assmann’s research which has brought forth the normative and formal structures of the classic and canon concepts in Antiquity, provides important clues for our inquiry.³ J. Assmann explores the concept of canon in contrast with the concept of classic, in the high written cultures of Mediterranean Antiquity. According to Assmann’s decoding, the meaning of the word “canon” evolved from meaning ruler, scale, meter, towards the meanings example (b), table and list (d) derived from the meaning concrete scale; and criteria (a) principle, norm, rule (c) derived from the meaning abstract scale. The canon of text is based on the meanings (c, d); the canon of text, or canon in common words is binding and official at the highest level. He establishing that canon originated independently and separately in the Torah and Buddhist religious texts. He explains the canonization of the Greek classics of secular nature in Alexandria, and the canonization of Christian, Confucian, Taoist texts referring to those initial, original examples. He

asserts that transition from ritual coherence based on repetition to textual coherence based on interpretation occurred in Antiquity within close dates; that occurred not because of writing as a tool, but through the canonization of tradition, through disruption of tradition in a renovative way. Cultural memory is the highest concept above and including all ramifications of Assmann's type-genre criteria classification, below are tradition and canon, and within the canon branch are classic and canon. The distinctive feature distinguishing tradition and canon, is that the criteria for determining canon is the exclusion of the options, the determining of the boundaries of the chosen. The difference between classic and canon is that in the classical concept, the excluded is not worthless, the classic choice is not binding; while the discrimination between classic and not classic is also based on the distinctions between authority, connectivity, measurability. Assman defines canonization as the emergence of new teaching, and not as the strengthening of tradition nor as the existing culture becoming sacred.

Disruption and not continuity causes the "Ancient" to rise to the throne of unsurpassable excellence. The classic emerges through the interruption that makes it impossible for the traditional to continue to exist and that fixes the relation to the ancient, and on the other hand, with the identification that transcends this interruption and which considers the past as their own past and the ancient masters as their own masters. The past should remain in the past but not be estranged.

If we roughly classify the reference and dictionary data,⁴ we can identify three primary meanings of the words "classic" and "classical". The first refers to a certain grandeur, stability, an important text, a standard text –and the meanings of conventional or stereotyped are derived from the reverse of this first set of meanings; the second one refers to Greek-Latin literature, for example the plural of word in English when alone means this; and last to classic in opposition to romantic in literature and this meaning has in fact emerged from literary discussions about romanticism. The word classic became obsolete in Middle Ages Latin, thus there is no continuity between its derivatives in European languages and its use in Latin. "Classicus" in Latin meaning tax group and class in the sense of classroom, marked the first uses of the word in European languages. The same evolution is roughly observed in the English, French, German and Italian meanings. The adjective "classic" meaning first class is first encountered in the 16th century; in the 17th century add on the meanings important, model, criteria; the adjective is used in the 19th century to denote a certain stage of a language or a culture. In the 17th century, the name "classic" means both a first class thing, and the sum of Greek and Latin literature. The concept of English classics is derived from the latter in the 18th century. Also "classic" means suitable to the Greek-Roman style in the 18th and 19th centuries. In Italian, whereas the adjective means first class in the 17th century, in the beginning of 19th century, it means criterion, measure for works of art. In French, the word is first encountered in the 16th century, and means emulating model, authority or material taught in classrooms in the 17th century.⁵ The same meaning is carried on the famous *Encyclopedia* published by Diderot and his friends in the middle of 18th century. The comprehension of the concept encompasses some authors contemporary of Augustus, some from the 2nd century Roma, and authors like Racine,

Molière, Corneille and La Fontaine. If we examine the extension of the concept, elegantly described, proper writing is the measure, with no other criterion. The list that comprises no Greek authors, is an enumeration of authors and not works. Among them, feature secondary authors such as Valerius, Maximus or Frontinus who only provide material for historical research.

In European literature, qualifying a product of living language as classic started in mid 18th century France, upon a retrospective look at their own literary tradition.⁶ Some authors from living languages throughout centuries have been remembered as “great” here and there, but we cannot speak of a common concept to qualify them altogether until 19th century. In this sense, the adjective is used in this sense, for the first time to qualify a certain period in French literature. Whether there are similar classical works in other languages or not will be questioned from 18th century on. For example Thouliez d’Olivet says in the second quarter of 18th century Italy has its classical writers we (French) never have. Nietzsche asks the same question for German and gives a negative answer in *The Wanderer and his Shadow* (the third part of *Human, All Too Human*). It is not before 19th century that Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, each start to be considered European classic writers.⁷ Goethe and certain writers around him for the first time have used the concepts of classic and classicism in a sense close to today’s. Schlegel brothers refer to classic and classicism within the context of discussion on romanticism –we are not talking here about the distinctions and fluctuations between the German forms *classik*, *klassik*, *klassizismus*, *klassische*. Thus, the meaning of the word ceased to be a value term to become a style current, fashion or the name that refers to a period and which can imply diverse qualifications within itself.

The expression is more rarely used in 19th century English (where it appeared within literature debates) than in French; whereas in German its use is originally spread in the second half of 19th century by the historians of German literature. The word is often resorted to in the beginning of 20th century, by literature critics from various backgrounds but who are all opponents to romanticism. To sum up, while in the 17th and 18th centuries, the concept of classic and its derivatives denoted superiority or competence especially attributed to Roman Antiquity writers, with the revolutions of romantic and then historicist thoughts, they started to qualify a style parallel to romantic conception or challenging the opposing styles.

J. J. Winckelmann, the founder of history of art, gives the first definition of classic in arts; while he classifies Greek statues as classical and archaic according criteria that he makes up, he characterizes Greek sculpture masterpieces most common and distinctive features as “a noble simplicity and a quiet grandeur” (*edle Einfalt und stille Größe*) – *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Werke in der Malerey und Bildbauer-Kunst, 1755* – *Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture / Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture* (translation by Elfriede Heyer and Roger C. Norton) in terms of stance and expression; this characterization remained as the only criteria in the field of classical art for so long.

Here Winckelmann, uses “Laocoon”, that we know today as the product of Hellenistic era, as an example to Greek masterpiece criteria. After affirming that

these criteria feature also in the Socratic era prose, he identifies the same features in Raffaello's work. Winckelmann was the founder of modern scientific archaeology and first applied the categories of style systematically to the history of art. As H.- G. Gadamer succinctly put, it was originally at the time of Winckelmann a normative concept, it was creative anachronism transformed into a period label, along with such terms as Archaic, Hellenistic, and so on, by historicist scholars: "The concept of the classical now signifies a period of time, a phase of historical development but not a suprahistorical value" (*Truth and Method* 287); With the rise of historical reflection in Germany which took Winckelmann's classicism as its standard, a historical concept of a time or period detached itself from Winckelmann's sense of the term, it denoted a quite specific stylistic ideal and, in a historically descriptive way, also a time or period that fulfilled this ideal. So the normative side of the term and the historical descriptive side of the term has been fused. When German humanism proclaimed the exemplarity of first Greek then Roman antiquity, the concept of classical came to be used in modern thought to describe the whole of "classical antiquity".

If we continue our investigation exclusively in the field of literature, we observe that the expression is more rarely used in 19th century English (where it appeared within literature debates) than in French; whereas in German its use is originally spread in the second half of 19th century by the historians of German literature. In the beginning of 20th century, the normative side of the concept has often been invoked by literature critics from various backgrounds but who are all opponents to romanticism.

Sainte-Beuve a leading critic of his time wrote his famous essay named *Qu'est-ce qu'un classique?* "What is a Classic?" in 1850 (Christopher Prendergast, *The classic: Sainte-Beuve and the nineteenth-century culture wars*, Oxford, 2007).

This text is not only the oldest, the most detailed written on the subject, it constitutes also a reference in every discussion on the subject. While dwelling on the Greek-Roman tradition, Sainte-Beuve expands the application field of the concept. Through discussing Louis XIVth time as an example, he suggests that this characterization requires a constant and stable resource that is formed slowly and transmitted from generation to generation. Even though he consults and discusses Goethe's "the king of critics" views as a standard, he doesn't consider him as classic.

Yet Homer, Dante, Shakespeare are considered classic even if they don't meet the criteria of Louis XIVth era, the only classic age. By criteria, we don't mean a consistently elaborated measure, but some qualities referring to a style, because he thinks in terms of oppositions introduced by Romantics, such as the one between those who control their inspiration and those who abandon themselves to theirs. In the meantime, of course he mentions the famous quarrel between old and new in 17th century France (*Querelle des anciens et des modernes*). Actually, the biggest part of his essay simply consists in enumerating groups of old and new writers worthy of entering the Pantheon of classics; his list comprises names of authors and not the works. Among them are the Indians Valmiki and Vyasa, Job, Solomon (he does qualify those last two as Prophets), the Iranian Firdevsî, and Confucius. Let's put

aside the judgments of Homer that he quotes from others, and his judgments that Sophocles and Aiskhylos are insufficient, crippled, debris, garbage; comedy writer Menandros is part of the list even though at that time complete copies of his texts were not yet available.

German thinkers from consecutive generations have been determinant in the formation of the current meaning of classic as a concept. Let's mention some areas to explore for an extensive study on the subject. J. J. Winckelmann gives the first definition of classic in arts. One should mention and The big picture includes, the review with a new eye of the Ancient Greek and its appropriation by scholars of philology initiated by F. A. Wolf, and by writers surrounding Winckelman's friend Goethe; philosophy of history started in 19th century by German thinkers; and the first secular secondary and higher education institutions achieved by Goethe's friend Wilhelm von Humboldt in Prussia. Even though Goethe doesn't know Greek, and even though his Latin is limited to reading Spinoza as he confesses in the beginning of his *Travel in Italy*, he had proposed higher education based on Greek and Roman texts, because these texts provide an education both ethical and aesthetic.

After that rough survey Instead of giving some conclusion I would like to make some remarks concerning education based on classical texts be it literature , scientific or philosophical, because the concept of classic gave rise to many institution in the fields of education in the 19th century. Modern secondary education and higher education in the West have been heavily influenced by the work of Wilhelm von Humboldt. In the first decades of 19th century in Berlin Goethe's friend W. Humbolt, processes the idea of *Bildung*, self-formation, put forth by Enlightenment thinkers since Herder, and creates the "gymnasium" a secondary school based on studying of Greek-Roman texts in their original language, of math and history; and in 1810, the University of Berlin, namely the first example of modern university.⁸ We owe him many key concepts and their applications: PhD based on original research, academic autonomy, innovative scholarship, especially his conception of *Bildung* or cultivation. By the end of the 19th century every state had, more or less aligned its educational system with the Prussian one, even the rival French model. Many universities emphasized a version of the Humboldtian *Bildung* and called it liberal education in English and *culture générale* in French. That approach gave rise to many higher education models such as liberal arts college, core curricula. Those are aiming at imparting general knowledge and developing general intellectual capacities, in contrast to a professional, vocational, or technical curriculum. Rooted in language and dependent in particular on writing, the humanities are inescapably bound to literacy. From reading great works of literature, history, and philosophy, or the symbolic texts of music and the visual arts, humanists proceed to elaborate their insights through language.

A second wave of transformations within the university system followed between the world wars in favor of technical education. The last transformation is the one we had been experiencing, namely the corporatization of the university. Conscientious scholars and teachers must, now and then, ask themselves the basic question of what

it means to be educated. Who would object to an education based on direct experience of classical texts themselves, which, as M. Arnold famously formulates are “the best that has been thought and said in the world”? Besides providing common, shared ground of higher education experience for all students humanistic studies could be the most suitable candidate to interrelate the humanities, social sciences, science, and technology. That should have been self-evident, but it is not the case. So defending liberal education against the excesses of professionalism and against the utilitarian academic bureaucracy is a priority.

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NOTES

¹ R. Williams, *Culture and Society 1780/1950* (Columbia University Press, 1958); R. Williams, *Keywords, A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Fontana, 1976).

² Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word* (London, 1982).

³ J. Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (C. H. Beck, 2007, pp. 87–129; 272–280).

⁴ *The Oxford English Dictionary; Dictionnaire de L'Académie Française; Le Petit Robert; C. Zolli, Dizionario Etimologico della Lingua Italiana* (Bologna, 1979); P. P. Wiener ed., *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* (New York, NY, 1968) in it René Wellek, “Classicism in Literature”. *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. J. Ritter, K. Gründer (Stuttgart, 1976); H. Fricke ed., *Reallexicon der Deutschen Literatur Wissenschaft* (Walter de Gruyter, 2000); Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and The Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by W. R. Trask (The Bollingen Library, 1953, [1948]).

⁵ M. L. Clarke, *Classical Education Britain 1500–1900* (Cambridge University Press, 1959).

⁶ Hans Ulrich Gumbert, “Phoenix to Ashes or: From Canon to Classic”, trans. by R. Norton, *New Literary History*, 20:1 (1988) pp. 141–163. The Author discusses also a vital short text on the subject by Voltaire here; he argues that the French classics composed mainly by drama started to be regularly staged in France, in the second half of 19th century; he discovers the concept of classic close to its contemporary meaning, through the mediation of the German romantics, in a book on Germany Madame de Staël wrote in the 19th century. Among the arguments suggested in a convincing manner, there is one however of crucial importance, that literature still meaning in 18th century massive, diverse, deep knowledge, and erudition, became transcendental and autonomous through the concept of classic. Also Gumbert arguments that 18th century literature shifted from writing towards reading and interpretation, because it lost its function of socialization and gained an educational value through writing in 19th century.

⁷ E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by W. R. Trask (The Bollingen Library, 1953) pp. 348–350.

⁸ David Sorkin, “Wilhelm von Humboldt: The Theory and Practice of Self-Formation (Bildung), 1791–1810”, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 44:1 (1983) pp. 55–73., Matthew Arnold’s *Culture and Anarchy* published in 1869 is the most famous modern advocacy of high culture and high humanism. According to Arnold culture is “the best which has been thought and said in the world”. A generation before Arnold, poet and writer Coleridge, while translating German ideas into English, has first used the form *cultivation* for the concept *bildung*. In his sentences, the concept ceased to be a natural tendency for development and started to mean a certain state of general consciousness in conflict with the concept of civilisation in the sense of general material progress: R. Williams, *Culture and Society 1780/1950* (Columbia University Press, 1958) pp. 49–70. The meaning of “culture” will gradually expand during a century, from individual perfection, to society’s overall development, then to arts as a whole, and last to a way of life in both material and intellectual senses (R. Williams, *ibid.*). The real issue in Arnold is education reform; he discusses

and criticizes the attitude towards education of almost every group, namely liberals, aristocrats, middle-class bourgeoisie, in the context of current political events. He considers each group deficient in terms of understanding education. He advocates "Unification of Education" which would be implemented as late as 1902 in Great Britain, and the superiority of culture and criticism, seen as the individual's efforts for perfection in all aspects against narrow specialization. He debates "Hellenism and Hebraism" as the two main components of British thought. Humboldt's is the only private name – praised – outstanding in contrast to the politics mentioned in current events, the abundance of people of religion, and to the fact that there is absolutely no reference to any example naming a writer new or old. The educational ideals put forward by Humboldt and continued by Arnold and the like, are in a way ideal and supranational regarding their content and purposes, despite otherwise defended opinions in Germany (the above mentioned article by David Sorkin). We will not deliberate here on the connection of this education bill with the ideal of a new citizen, and the training of public officials; we will just point that this education doesn't aim at training experts, but at general education. Arnold's "sweet light", the common must-have that he attributes to the educated, is based on acquaintances with "that which is thought and written in the best way".

SECTION II
LOGOS AND LIFE

THE EXISTENTIALISTIC SUBJECT TODAY

– *Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophy in a context of consumerism and individualism*

A B S T R A C T

This article examines the phenomena of intersubjectivity and freedom in Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophy in the context of our individualistic consumer society. The idea of the situated individual's responsibility introduces the problem or aporia of intersubjectivity. The early philosophy of Sartre must consequently be seen in relation to a problematized structure in which questions related to bad faith and an authentic life, freedom and anxiety and the aporetic aspects of the intersubjective dimension collaborate in forming an understanding of the historically, physically and socially situated subject. This is the foundation for an individualistic view of life where self-realisation derived from Sartre's concept of freedom will be central. This has some clear parallels to today's consumer society. The article then problematizes whether Sartre's philosophy can be said to be a theoretical justification of processes of individualization or, alternately, whether aspects of this philosophy can have an emancipatory function in regard to the more deterministic aspects of the consumer society.

The central assertion in this article is that the concepts of freedom, responsibility and intersubjectivity as they appear in the early philosophy of Sartre can illuminate current tendencies in our society such as processes of individualization and consumerism. This will entail an internal theoretical discussion, especially of the relationship between the concepts of freedom and intersubjectivity. In addition, the article will contain a critical analysis of late modernity's consumer freedom in light of Sartre's understanding of freedom. The primary focus will be *Being and Nothingness*, which expresses a conception of the subject as absolutely free, and where freedom, as a structure of consciousness, both constitutes the world as well as our understanding of it. At the same time the encounter with other people is presented as a conflict where the constitution of our life-world implies the Other, functioning as a limitation on an egocentric perspective of the world. These aspects of Sartre's philosophy constitute a paradox, making it difficult to deduce normative implications from his thinking. Nonetheless, there remains an existentialistic, individualistic intuitional philosophy which has a particular resonance for contemporary individualization-processes and consumer-based society.

ABSOLUTE FREEDOM

The concept of freedom in Sartre's philosophy is many faceted and requires analysis on various levels. First and foremost, the term must be seen in relation to the human mode-of-being. One's being is torn loose from what is, and one lives in expectation of something, in relation to something. Consequently, the human mode-of-being is characterized by absence, negation and nothingness due to the function of negating what he is conscious of. Therefore freedom is not something one has in the way one has qualities. "We are freedom", "we are condemned to freedom" or "we are thrown into freedom" are all varieties of the status of freedom in Sartre's philosophy.¹

Sartre expresses further, according to the phenomenological principle of intentionality, that actions are always intentional in the sense that they are addressed towards a future goal which always occurs in the context of an absence within, or a negation of, the actual situation. Every action assumes that I transcend what is, towards a goal which is yet to be realized. Consciousness is therefore a subject's manner of tearing loose from the past; it is a freedom to break with the causal series which are characteristic of an object's mode-of-being. In this situation, where nothing is given except the external laws of nature, one has to make a choice and these basic ontological conditions entail that consciousness is essentially connected with choice.² The individual, in relation to being, is free to conduct himself according to his own wishes. Freedom establishes reality; the subject must give reasons for himself and become his own foundation. This means that one is responsible for oneself, and in Sartre's subject-ontology the subject is therefore defined as both independent and, to some degree, isolated. The term angst is central here. Angst is freedom's reflective understanding of itself. I am filled with angst when I realize that to write this article, keep deadlines, be precise with references, etc. are some of my many opportunities in my immediate circumstances of life, opportunities which owe their justification of existence to me, and are maintained only by me. No one or nothing forces me to write this article. The anxiety about this article is angst if I am anxious, not about whether or not I will complete the article, but about choosing to put it away – to stop maintaining the opportunity of finishing this article.

THE AUTHENTIC CHOICE

The responsibility freedom carries with it leads to questions about the status of one's authentic choices and the opposing existential structure: bad faith. Bad faith is a state in which one rejects the responsibility that freedom demands and avoids the responsibility of transcending one's facticity. Sartre describes bad belief as either a retreat into transcendence or a retreat into facticity, the being-state of objectness. Bad faith rests on the duality of transcendence and facticity, where either the subject denies the one and identifies with the other, or tries to synthesize the two. Bad faith is therefore a self-delusion. In contrast to bad faith, an authentic life requires the acknowledgement of freedom and facticity while being willing to acknowledge one's contingent existence.³

This is the basis for Sartre's development of an individualistic and personal philosophy of life, where the subject maintains total responsibility for his actions. An extensive literature⁴ has attempted to deduce a normative theory from this concept of responsibility, thereby synthesizing the concepts of freedom and responsibility with theories of the Other as they appear in Sartre's philosophy. This literature seeks to develop an existentialistic ethics based on the idea of authentic existence and choice. Here, choice has universal implications in which responsibility is a responsibility for the Other. Through the subjective project one chooses how one wishes to conduct oneself in relation to the Other and establishes therefore a norm which reaches beyond the subjective realm itself. Sartre's own *Existentialism is a Humanism* must also be understood as a similar experiment in the sense of developing a foundation for an existentialistic normative theory. It is equally possible to locate other normative tendencies from other periods of Sartre's philosophy. According to Thomas C. Anderson there are at least two tendencies like this in addition to the perspective which is presented in *Being and Nothingness*.⁵ The one is from the period after *Critique of Dialectical Reason* and can be described as materialistic, while the other can be located in Sartre's work from the 70's, represented by the title "Power and Freedom".⁶ Still, I will argue that there are certain perspectives in *Being and Nothingness* – in particular the interpretation of intersubjectivity – which make it hard to extract an ethics based in the ontological concept of freedom. Consequently, Sartre's ontological concept of intersubjectivity will not, with deductive stringency, be able to be connected to a moral precept, but neither will it exclude it. One might say that Sartre allows for more than just an inference of the connection between ontological theory and moral philosophy. Even though the concept of intersubjectivity excludes a complete ethical system, it is possible to locate certain normative implications in Sartre's work. These implications have and can be made the foundation of a rudimentary ethics. This represents one possible direction of inquiry. However, Sartre's subject can be characterized as isolated, and thus the epistemological integration of the Other will appear problematic – something that I will later claim to be a paradox and aporia.

THE PENETRATING LOOK

Sartre describes social constitution through what he describes as *the look*. Because of *the look* I can experience the Other. To be seen by the Other is the basic existential relation between humans. *The look* is the subject who sees me as an object. Existentially this intersubjective relationship and the presence of the Other are doubly or ambiguous faceted. There is an interplay between subject oriented and object oriented attitudes. But there is also an explanation as to how the self experiences the Other as object amongst other objects in the world, and is himself experienced as object amongst other objects. The Other does not only appear in my experience as object, but actively reduces me to an object. The relationship is a mutual objectifying and negating of the Other's transcendence. Intersubjectivity must thereby be considered as conflict. This is rooted in an understanding that the subject is

forced into self-consciousness through social dialectics. The subject can only assert himself through being in opposition to another subject, and thereby make this other an object. Sartre would say that in the Other's *look* I experience that my freedom is threatened and challenged. Through my being-for-the-other I become an object, who can be integrated in his freedom and be made use of in his existential projects.⁷ The Other's *look* can make me an instrument, dependent on his being. My being is therefore to a great extent developed because of the Other's freedom, and this implies a partial alienation of my opportunities. Because of the Other, a great portion of self-knowledge is located outside of ourselves. This, which is called the other part, is still me, but out of reach, outside my radius of action, outside my sphere of knowledge. Sartre exemplifies this through the feeling of shame and how being ashamed necessitates the Other. It is through shame and similar experiences that the Other is constituted for me as one different from me, being-in-itself, and in similar ways I am constituted for the Other as a being-for-the-other.⁸ This intersubjectivity is constituted as an alternation between object- and subject-orientation. How the term intersubjectivity expresses ambiguousness or an aporia in proportion to the epistemological status of freedom is explicitly seen here.

An analysis of *the look* demonstrates the paradoxical and aporetic in Sartre's theory of the Other. It is paradoxical because consciousness is defined both as freedom and as sovereign in its understanding. Even if Sartre says that the subject is always free to transcend what he stands face to face with, the intersubjective dimension has determining epistemological implications that are difficult to neglect. This paradox can be formulated like this: How can the subject be in an already socially arranged world and how can the Other objectify the subject's being when the subject is at the same time torn loose from everything outside himself? One can therefore discuss whether Sartre succeeds in proving an actual decentring of the subject's sovereign epistemological position.

It is a further problem and paradox that consciousness is seen from the outside as if it was an object, but at the same time comes into view as behaviour and embodied intentionality. The experience of another human is therefore to be understood as this paradox: that the Other in front of me is an object, but still exists for himself, as another consciousness. The Other's existence lies within the contradictions of the subject-object relation. The Other's experiences are radically removed from me and are an eternal synthesis of unrevealed qualities. But it is only because the unfamiliar subject in this way escapes my direct experience that he is experienced as the Other. This duality warns of an epistemological problem because the subject cannot be an object to himself. The Other can consequently never be understood purely as an object among the world's objects, but more what one might call a privileged object or an ecstatic relation.⁹

From this explanation one can, on the one hand ask oneself how Sartre, by outlining a demarcation between sovereign consciousness and human commonality can escape an abstract rationalism. Sartre's subject-ontology is in danger of becoming an abstract rationalism where the self is self-sufficient, the free consciousness is *sui generis*, and in the end, consciousness defined as freedom is the main condition and

the sovereign instance for all knowledge. On the other hand, it is a question about how he can locate commitment in the Other. This is still problematic. Sartre's perspective on intersubjectivity will to a certain extent exclude human interaction and will also partly exclude the understanding of how phenomena appear or arise in relations between individuals. In my opinion, Sartre's understanding of the relation between subjects on one side, and the relation between the subject and the situation on the other, is too individualistic and ahistorical: The self's freedom is totalized and the social dimension disappears to certain degree. Here can Sartre's subject-oriented philosophy be accused of ruling out collective political actions, since it complicates engagement in something bigger than oneself. The problem of intersubjectivity is therefore not only a question about to what extent the subject can experience and know something about other humans and their experiences. It also concerns human coexistence and the possibility for interaction.

It is consequently difficult to derive anything but a personal and individualistic philosophy of life from Sartre, one in which self realization rooted in the concept of freedom is central. The intersubjective dimension is too unsettled and the aporetic aspects of this dimension can only partially ground a normative structure. Even though *Being and Nothingness* includes several value-oriented commitments, due to the fact that the concepts of bad faith, alienation and responsibility have normative implications, it seems that an ethical system based on this philosophy is excluded. Nonetheless, as we will see, Sartre's early philosophy might still have relevance when it comes to understanding current social processes.

NORMATIVE IMPLICATIONS – A CONSISTENT MORAL OR A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE?

A possible or tentative ethics based on Sartre's ontology will contain a more extensive question about judgement and to a larger degree, consideration of situation than traditional ethical systems such as deontological ethics. It is based in the situation, where the content of ethics is variable and where it acts to derail system-building in ethics. To have to adjust to a new situation every time is a trait of this normative theory of value, but its contents are still open and variable. There is no objective knowledge or objective universal ends to guide our conduct other than our truthfulness through authenticity and our consistency in our choices.¹⁰ It is a situated ethics, without any objective criteria to guide us between right and wrong or precepts for the good life – anchored in the ordinary life-world. However, it is – considering the aporetic aspects of the concept of intersubjectivity – difficult to transfer or adapt the generalised reciprocity which is characteristic of face-to-face ethics to an existentialistic ethics based in Sartre's philosophy. While face-to-face ethics is based in the intimacy of the Other's presence and the moral relevance of these circumstances, those same aspects are absent in the normative implications of Sartre's philosophy and can consequently be said to represent the actual problem or obstacle to developing an existentialistic ethics.

Based in Sartre's philosophy, an existentialistic ethics can be described as a tentative philosophy of life where the responsibility for one's own choices and a realisation of the individual are central. There are, of course, normative implications here. However, there are no established norms previous to the choice, and it is therefore a problem for Sartre to give reasons for a normative relevant difference between, for example, a nun and a torturer.

The relevant aspects of intersubjectivity are characterized by a theoretical aporia which is seemingly incompatible with the moral implications located in a concept of responsibility. Consequently, it is problematic to extract something more from the different perspectives of *Being and Nothingness* than an individual philosophy of life. The dimension of intersubjectivity and its aporetic structure makes the foundation for normative system-building difficult, perhaps impossible – which is in general accordance with Sartre's philosophy taken as a whole. *Being and Nothingness* contains – as mentioned – several value orientated determinants. However, given the paradoxical nature of the concept of intersubjectivity and given the priority and sovereign position of freedom, an interpretation of these different concepts can proceed in multiple directions. An attempt to synthesize the ontological concept of freedom and the dimension of intersubjectivity may give some indications of a normative theory, but an ethical system is excluded. In accordance with this, two interpretations seem especially reasonable. The first one involves an individualistic philosophy of life critical to hypostatic values, or any attempt to give reasons for norms outside the individual's existential projects. However, even the rejection of an ethical system is a normative position. The other interpretation makes possible a rudimentary existentialistic ethics based on the idea of authentic existence and choice, where choice may have universal implications. A precondition for this interpretation is that the concept of bad faith can not be ethically neutral, thereby excluding an ethical pluralism. In this case, the idea of the individual's responsibility in the situation announces a radical situational based ethics. Choice is subjective but through engagement in a project individual chooses to engage in committed forms of living.

At the end (with basis in the second interpretation) we are left with a rudimentary ethics which contains elements of virtue ethics, deontological ethics, discourse ethics and a face-to-face or situated ethics. In Sartre's philosophy it is decisive or conclusive as to what kind of person I am through my choices and my way of living. The individual finds values in those activities which he is insolvably and inseparably engaged in. This has a clear parallel to virtue ethics' concept of "praxis". Values are constituted through our praxis. At the same time, this Sartrian ethics has deontological traits in the manner that this ethics is universal in its form and that we commit others by our own choices. The universal aspects to an ethics of freedom are the irreducible position of freedom, the choice's committing status and that we are condemned to act upon a situation. It has a similarity to discourse ethics because it seeks the intersubjective preconditions and presuppositions for an ethics. At last, it is a situated or face-to-face ethics because its contents are open and only constituted in the situation and in everyday interaction with the Other.¹¹

THE EXISTENTIALISTIC INDIVIDUAL

Important aspects of Sartre's early philosophy can shed light on central tendencies of our time, particularly modern and late modern individualization processes. This applies specifically to the concepts of freedom and intersubjectivity, as well as what can be described as an individualistic life-philosophy. This approach to Sartre's philosophy is also an examination of the extent in which the theoretical perspectives which appear in *Being and Nothingness* include a diagnostic of society and an anticipation of our contemporary understanding of the individual. This obviously concerns ideas that were closely connected to the circumstances at the time Sartre wrote *Being and Nothingness*. But Sartre's philosophy of subjectivity can also be seen as being ahead of its time, legitimating theoretically the current zeitgeist and our individualistic social paradigm.

There are, however, problems in identifying Sartre's early philosophy of subjectivity as an individualistic philosophy. This is a philosophy that primarily examines the subject on an ontological level, and not on a social or moral level. Freedom must be understood as being of ontological character. The integration of Sartre's subject in a social and political context and the transition to an individualization which is contextualized in society must be considered problematic. Still, there are many aspects to this philosophy of subjectivity that agree with an individualistic philosophy where the freedom of the subject and the position of choice can be located within the meaning of individualization. At the same time, this philosophy of subjectivity has a special resonance in our western individualistic culture – not only in relation to questions about freedom and choice – but also seen in relation to the question of authenticity and responsibility. The ontological concept of freedom can consequently function as basis for this kind of socially founded concept of the individual. Accordingly, it can be claimed that the non-social individual is the most central figure in Sartre's philosophy, and that the perspective that appears is a kind of methodological individualism.¹²

THE ANTAGONISTIC INDIVIDUAL

One can say that our age's distinctive individualization processes began in the 1960s and 1970s, with for instance the 68-rebellions, and was strengthened by the neoliberal ideological turn in the United States and Great Britain around the 1970s and 1980s.¹³ This is a tendency that makes it possible to claim that the individual in today's western society is the fundamental unit in social reproduction – at the expense of the family and other collective structures.¹⁴ In contrast to the individual in so-called pre-modern societies, the modern individual does not have a given permanent identity or social function – other than perhaps that of a consumer. The modern identity is open, unfinished and differentiated in that it is not determined by socially given roles, but is constituted in a plurality of divided spheres of value and culture. This development must be seen as a consequence of the neutralization of tradition and existing social ideologies on one hand, and the differentiating of social functions

on the other.¹⁵ These aspects of modernity and the contemporary society are to be found in Sartre's philosophy: the status of the choice and the subject's possibility to project his freedom towards an open future. They are present in the sense that the individual creates meaning and identity where tradition and socially given roles no longer have privileged positions.

If our late modern age consequently can be characterized as a time in which collective ways of action or collective identities are considerably weakened compared to earlier periods, the individual can – according to this development – be described as independent, with more options available. With this development the individual is made increasingly responsible; responsibility for the self and one's own body is held solely by oneself. The individual is left to define his life, and identify his own projects.¹⁶ Freedom has become more subjective, as Sartre describes in the beginning of the 1940's in *Being and Nothingness*. It has been emancipated, in the sense of the boundlessness we find in Sartre's understanding of consciousness. This is a conception of individual autonomy: the individual is free to conduct himself within being as he wishes. Accordingly, Sartre's understanding of freedom and consciousness gives, in a social context, an understanding of the individual as free in the sense of being released from restraint. With this freedom comes the total responsibility for oneself.

However, the individualization processes are complex. It is a complexity that makes it problematic to locate certain development patterns and dominant tendencies. But individualization processes can be understood as the individual's expansion of his own autonomy, as an expansion of individual roles and lifestyles. Rights, education, career and expectations concerning mobility are individualized in the sense that interests and actions to an increasing extent are understood as singularized terms.¹⁷ As a consequence of individualization processes a development towards autonomy means that individuals become more and more isolated due to the network of anonymous social contacts expanding. Individuals are increasingly concerned with their own interests independent of other people.¹⁸ This understanding of the individual is also to be found in liberalistic political theory. Here I first and foremost refer to liberalistic contract theory with roots in the theories of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. In this tradition it is assumed, though simplified, that individuals abstain from the unlimited freedom of the state of nature and support a political and legal authority that shall guarantee the individual's life, security and property. The motivation to agree on a contract that protects the individual's basic rights is enlightened self interest. This is an ideal-typical understanding of the state where the state's legitimacy is dependent on its protection of individual rights. This approach contains an understanding of mankind as isolated individuals who are concerned with maximizing their own interests in competition with other individuals. One underlying condition of this understanding is the comprehension of the human being as a rational individual best suited to define his own interests alone. Further, the individual takes precedence over institutions and communities where individual freedom and individual rights are basic political and moral imperatives. In addition, freedom of choice is closely related to the individual's behaviour in a market. Last, it is a condition that the political sphere is an arena for the protection of

individual rights.¹⁹ In this approach to the individual's position in the political, I will claim that the individual's most important interests are strongly secured by negative rights, for example the right to property or the protection from random governmental involvement in private life and family. These rights apply to every individual and protect the individual's autonomy against encroachment by the state or by other individuals. The individual consequently holds a position as an independent, self-sufficient monad or unit, with individuals having an antagonistic relationship to one another.²⁰ This conception is based on the understanding that destructive relations between individuals who compete are dissolved in a collectively positive and functional maximization of benefits for society. This is a conception that also can be found in liberalistic theories' meta-narrative about the invisible hand.²¹

The liberalistic understanding of the individual as shown above is – though slightly simplified – the one we find in liberalistic political thinking. This view does partly correspond to Sartre's concept of intersubjectivity, in the way he describes social dialectics and the subject's partially isolated position. According to Sartre, the individual takes precedence over institutions and communities. Subjective freedom is a basic existential imperative, prior to any formation of association such as society or social grouping. Further, social dialectics are described by Sartre as antagonistic; the subject asserts himself by standing in opposition to the Other, and the subject can be made an instrument to be exploited in the Other's existential projects. In the same way as in the liberalistic understanding of the individual the Other's freedom is reduced by my freedom. However, seen from Sartre's perspective, the position on subjectivity that liberalism is based on will risk being accused of being essentialistic in the sense that the individual and his identity are strongly related to economic interests and behaviour in a market. The subject chooses himself, and the choice is subjective, but not necessarily instrumental, if instrumental means that the individual utilizes himself after given rules and is only oriented towards his own benefit. To define the subject as rational and instrumentally oriented, like liberalism seems to do, is incompatible with Sartre's resistance to claiming anything at all about human nature or essence. The subject is never identical with himself, and identity cannot be understood as substance, but as a self-creating and self-justifying process in which the individual is his own foundation. Existential freedom and authentic choice consequently include something more than the well-informed, forward looking and planned choice in a market. Sartre's subject is open-ended and without essence, better corresponding to, or able to adjust to other approaches to sociality and the role of subjectivity in the social.

Mouffe and Laclau criticize the theory of the subject as a self-transparent, rational agent. They argue that every position on subjectivity is a discursive position, part of a discourse's open character.²² Accordingly, the social is described as an irreducible plurality, meaning that it cannot be reduced to an underlying homogeneous principle or essence. In other words, we have, regarding both the individual and the social arena, no fully unified identities. This can be seen in light of Mouffe and Laclau's concept of "antagonism". An antagonistic relation is a relationship between, for instance, two subjects where the presence of the one subject prevents the other in achieving full presence. Here the antagonism does not take place under conditions

of a competition with given regulating principles, but in a non-transparent social and political arena. This can be seen in relation to Sartre's concept of intersubjectivity. On Mouffe and Laclau's understanding of the social, the Other's presence will prevent me from being totally myself. Relations do not occur as totalities, but from within the impossibility of their full constitution. The Other's presence cannot be subordinated as a positive differential element in a causal chain. I cannot be a complete presence to myself, but the force that antagonizes me cannot be a complete presence either. Accordingly, Sartre describes the Other as an inexhaustible synthesis of non-revealed qualities. At the same time, an important part of the knowledge about ourselves is located outside ourselves. The Other will therefore be a constituting exteriority in which identity is created in relation to others and where the subject sees himself and inscribes his own identity. Likewise the structure of *the look* will be a constituting exteriority in the sense that the subject's being is developed due to the Other's freedom, entailing that the subject is dependent on the Other revealing himself.

The consequence of this view of intersubjectivity is that society and the social is infused with antagonism and will consequently never become transparent and totally present. According to Mouffe and Laclau, the subject's and individual's co-existence cannot be shaped according to an objective and understandable pattern. Rather than being a transparent arena where social agents consider their interests rationally in competition with others, the social is an arena consisting of balance and aggregation between different groups and individuals, or constellations of institutions and power which take place in a cultural and historical development. This description of sociality can function as a continuation of Sartre's understanding of intersubjectivity where the social antagonism that Mouffe and Laclau describe can be founded in Sartre's antagonistic concept of intersubjectivity. The paradoxical in Sartre's interpretation can consequently better explain the complexity of the dynamic processes that characterize social phenomena and human relations than, for example, the liberalistic approach, which reduces the subject to a rational and benefit-oriented being.

SARTRE'S SUBJECT IN A CONSUMER SOCIETY

These individualization processes must also be seen in relation to new and developing governance structures and liberal market freedoms, at the expense of government regulation. We see a new form of governing rationality that moves towards less direct political central planning to the advantage of more undefined and individualistic forms of politics, where the political expands into the private. This development has, as mentioned, its basis in the development of advanced liberal democracies where a change has taken place from state sovereignty to governance techniques based in economic structures.²³ Each of us must govern ourselves, and this freedom is also – according to Sartre – the responsibility of creating oneself. This identity development often takes place as a participant in a market through the role of consumer.²⁴ The individual must govern himself – something which is

consistent with how, for example, commercial industry manufactures consumption as a creating of the self. Every choice in the market is presented as a new start (and this does not only apply to diet products), proof that we freely create our life through choices and actions.

In an individualistic consumer society, consumption is considered, according to Bauman, as a calling, a profession, or universal human right that does not recognize the exception in that it is the individual's skills as consumer that defines one as a person.²⁵ Consumption is inseparably related to individualism and identity. The choice of the right market-based products or services is regarded as a responsibility that rests upon the individual. The individual is constituted as a consuming agent whose goal is the maximizing of his own well being through his actions in a world of products. Products embody a seemingly personal meaning that reflects the individual and that person one wishes to become.²⁶ Like Sartre's subject, the individual has to choose between a number of possibilities and project meaning onto the objects, thereby constituting himself through the selection. Consumer ideology can be illuminating for how Sartre's total freedom and total responsibility relates to the individualization processes of our time. Sartre's view of responsibility lacks substantial values and should seemingly be compatible with the understanding of consumer responsibility. We create ourselves and are responsible for who we are. This perspective on Sartre's responsible individual is based on the view that individuals in a market have actual freedom and are made responsible as reflective, participating actors.²⁷ The individual's right to pursue one's own values and interests in a market creates social processes in which organizations and actors wish to influence market processes through consumer behaviour. This can be seen in campaigns for the protection of, for example, nature and the climate or solidarity with the poor.²⁸ This development includes something more than a fundamental view about the subject being hedonistic. The role as consumer can be understood in the sense that consumption represents new roles for citizens that supplement and replace classical political roles through consumer movements. It is however difficult to see that environment problems or the climate threat can be every person's responsibility, for example. It is more legitimate to ask whether *it is* every individual's and consumer's responsibility to reduce global pollution or address threats to the climate. Is this not a responsibility that stretches beyond the individual's possibilities of action? Here Sartre's philosophy could be criticized for supporting our tendency towards making social problems the individual's problem. This individualization has a concealing function for the identification of the social origin of general problems.

However, the existential responsibility cannot be reduced exhaustively to buying Max Havelaar or other fairtrade-products. Sartre's individualistic philosophy of life cannot unconditionally give reasons for the subject's expression of freedom that is consistent with consumerism because Sartre's subject is not synonymous with consumerism's comprehension of the subject. The subject is a nothingness and not the complex of desires that consumerism seems to depend on. Individualized consumption cannot function as compensation for basic existential projects, and consumption as the basis for identification with a social role can also be understood as a variation of bad faith. Rather, existentialistic authenticity could be understood as the rejection

of identifying our needs with consumption and our personality with certain products. Our self-realization, projects and identity construction must be understood as preceding a society of consumerism where the possibilities of expressing individual freedom through consumption are related to a standardized production of symbols determined through, amongst others, the design- and marketing-industry.²⁹ We are not condemned to market freedom or the materialistic market choice in the same way as “we are freedom”.³⁰ Consciousness is so defined as to break free from the causal series which are characteristic of being – also for the market-based being. In this context one can understand the emancipating aspects of Sartre’s philosophy confronted with what can be understood as deterministic market liberalism. At the same time this perspective is a comment on the ongoing intellectual debate which concerns alternatives to the capitalistic system which can be summarized by Fredric Jameson’s famous quote:

Even after the “end of history,” there has seemed to persist some historical curiosity of a generally systemic – rather than a merely anecdotal – kind: not merely to know what will happen next, but as a more general anxiety about the larger fate of destiny of our system or mode of production as such – about which individual experience (of a postmodern kind) tells us that it must be eternal, while our intelligence suggests this feeling to be most improbable indeed, without coming up with plausible scenarios as to its disintegration or replacement. It seems to be easier for us today to imagine the thoroughgoing deterioration of the earth and of nature than the breakdown of late capitalism [...].³¹

Market imperatives and the lack of alternatives to sovereign market mechanisms can be understood as a forced colonization of existence. Freedom is made instrumental and is coded towards consumption; individualization occurs as an atomizing process. In this context the market and its fictive freedom implies an alienation where Sartre’s philosophy can be revealed to represent an alternative. The subject is not a reflection of reality, but conducts himself freely in regard to it – also to market mechanisms that can seem fatalistic and absolute.

Dominant economic mechanisms and processes are consequences of globalization. That more and more social functions and values find their expression through market arrangements can seem alienating – a form of bad faith. Economic conjunctures, the hierarchical labour market, large international corporations, consumer products’ advantageous position in society, the commoditization of culture and art and market competition has an alienating function in which the Other’s intentions and plans are realized at the expense of the subject’s own.³² Consumer society is also divided into layers and classes where large groups are prevented from following emancipatory projects within a market or as a modern liberation project. Sartre’s early philosophy can therefore dissolve the understanding that social relationships seem so determined that they are considered being of the same character as natural phenomena. One is always free to transcend what he is opposed to, also seemingly determined society and market structures. What is authentic in this case would be to acknowledge that one has freedom when it comes to structures outside oneself, and that the structures are therefore changeable. Freedom as an ontological structure of consciousness comes before every other determination of human characterizations and therefore denies that there exist structures and essences in society that will give these determinations a privileged position.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Sartre's early philosophy and its normative implications must be seen in relation to a problem in which questions surrounding bad faith and authenticity, freedom and angst and the aporetic aspects of the intersubjective dimension intersect within the conception of the historical, embodied and socially situated subject. The subject must justify himself, becoming his own foundation and is thereby ultimately responsible. However, despite that the subject can acknowledge that he is free in relation to the Other and despite that the subject, by virtue of his actions, gives meaning to life, intersubjectivity's acknowledgeable structures always haunt the subject. These aspects of the dimension of subjectivity in Sartre's philosophy are partly consistent with current individualism and the modern consumption-oriented, selfish individual. The extreme individualization processes of our age that are coded towards consumption parallel Sartre's philosophy of subjectivity: the individual is absolutely free and has total responsibility for himself. At the same time, this perspective illuminates liberating elements in Sartre's philosophy. There are aspects to this philosophy that challenge how liberalism and consumerism understand the concept of the individual and provide a foundation for alternative understandings of contemporary individualized market society.

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NOTES

- 1 Sartre (2001).
- 2 Vestre (1993).
- 3 Daniels (2005).
- 4 Anderson (1993), Rendtorff (1993), Kerner (1990).
- 5 Anderson (1993).
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Sartre (2001).
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Oliver (2005).
- 10 Kerner (1990).
- 11 For more on this theme see Øyen (2010).
- 12 Østerberg (2009).
- 13 Beck (1992).
- 14 Madsen (2006).
- 15 Honneth (2004).
- 16 Rose (1999).
- 17 Madsen (2006).
- 18 Simmel (2004).
- 19 Habermas (1996).
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Laclau and Mouffe (2001).
- 22 Ibid.

- 23 Negri and Hardt (2000).
 24 Rose (1999).
 25 Bauman (2007): p. 231.
 26 Madsen (2006).
 27 Jensen (2007).
 28 Ibid.
 29 Madsen (2006).
 30 Sartre (2001).
 31 Jameson (1994): pp. xi–xii.
 32 Jensen (2007).

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RE-TURNING TO THE REAL:
PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROPRIATIONS
OF PLATO'S "IDEAS" AND THE ALLEGORY
OF THE CAVE

A B S T R A C T

This paper focuses on the way one thinker in the phenomenological tradition, Martin Heidegger, has appropriated, re-worked and radically re-cast what is arguably the great founding vision of Western metaphysics, the cave allegory at the heart of Plato's *Republic*. I take as my text the long, detailed and, inevitably, somewhat idiosyncratic interpretation of the cave story and Plato's "theory of forms" presented by Heidegger in the first half of his winter 1931–32 lecture series in Freiburg, entitled *The Essence of Truth* and published as volume 34 of his *Gesamtausgabe*. Through the lens of a close reading of Heidegger's analysis, I articulate two distinct themes of continuing concern within the broader phenomenological movement: the place of eidetic essences—paradigmatic structures of intentionality which, in Heidegger's term, "pre-model" the transcendent objects which come forward for us, 'as' what they are, in experience—and secondly, the place of the "quest" archetype, the dream of liberation from the shackles of the ordinary and, through philosophical questioning, the turn (or return) to the "essence" of human existence. My wider goal is to show that phenomenology has served not merely epistemological but also broadly "ethical" ends: its aims—in the work of both Heidegger and Husserl, I argue—have been not merely to justify, but to transform, both our claims to truth, and our very lives.

I suspect, at least among those of us who have dedicated ourselves to the study of philosophy, that there are very few who do not vividly recall the first time we encountered Plato's allegory of the cave. No text or tale is more central to philosophy than this story of a shackled prisoner, for whom a play of shadows is all of reality, finally liberated to the light of truth—and arguably no single conception has been more interpreted and debated than that of the *ἰδέα* (the abstract eternal essence or "Form") which, Plato tells us, the prisoner sees and recognizes as the truly real upon his ascent out of darkness and confusion. Plato's story from *The Republic*, as this suggests, contains two main elements which, though related, are fundamentally distinct: an account or *logos* of truth and the Forms, and as such we might say of the *λογοῦς* itself, and a *logos* of life, or philosophy as the true life or liberation to life. My goal here is to examine both in terms of their influence upon, and appropriation by, one of the key figures in the phenomenological movement, Martin Heidegger. I will principally examine his detailed reading of the cave allegory and related issues

in the first half of his winter 1931–1932 lecture series in Freiburg, entitled *The Essence of Truth*.

The first broad themes I wish to consider concern truth and our encounter, in knowledge and perception, with the objects of our experience; this will be my primary focus here—detailing the rather unexpected connections that arise between Plato’s theory of ideas and Heidegger’s own thinking. These are important concerns not only to understanding Heidegger’s ontology but also, given the consistent (though evolving) Platonism of Husserl’s thought (not least in its efforts to establish transcendental noetic essences constitutive of the intentional correlates in lived experience), to highlighting how Heidegger remains more deeply in the “wake” of his teacher’s lasting influence than many would recognize.

Along with, though as much as possible distinct from, the discussion of Plato’s “ideas,” I want to examine an even more perennial theme: the transformation and realization of human existence in what Plato spoke of as “the ascent from the cave” or, let us say, the turning of the soul. Such themes may seem, at first glance, less native to phenomenology “as such;” in my opinion, however, concerns with the possibility of a transformation to a fully realized life, resting on but going beyond the Socratic ideal of the “examined life” as the only life “worth living,” pervade Husserl’s thought—as does the conviction that phenomenology is the last and best hope of achieving it. As a founding part of phenomenology, these concerns have also remained close to most of the subsequent thinkers in the movement. Clearly, I cannot establish this here in detail; two quick citations from Husserl’s work will have to suffice.

Let me turn first to the *Cartesian Meditations*. Here, Husserl holds that phenomenology, while excluding “every naïve metaphysics,” does not exclude “metaphysics as such;” rather, all the traditional philosophical questions remain, including those concerning “the possibility of a ‘genuine’ human life,” but freed from the old errors and grounded instead on “an all-embracing self-investigation,” understood not in terms of an isolated Cartesian ego, but as universal and “intermonadic.”¹ Earlier, in *Erste Philosophie*, Husserl held that the philosopher “necessarily requires an individual resolve which, originally and as such, makes him a philosopher, an original self-causation, as it were, which is an original act of self-creation.” For Husserl, this resolve is of course precisely to effect the phenomenological reduction, as “radical world-denial”—which is for him the necessary means to “viewing an ultimate and true reality, and, therewith, for living an ultimately true life.” Such is simply not possible in everyday human life, lived in the “natural attitude” and in “kinship with the world:” that is, “a life carried out as an entirely primordial and thoroughly necessary surrender to the world and as a being lost in the world.” Instead one needs the wholly “unnatural attitude” of a life “of radical and pure self-reflection upon the pure ‘I am,’ upon the pure life of the ego and upon the ways in which something gives itself within this life as being in some sense objective, and how it achieves just this sense and this status as something objective solely through the inner and own-most achievement of this life itself.”²

This reference to “something . . . objective”—a measure to life that emerges within life but is in some sense beyond it—returns us of course to the Platonic

meditations on the Forms. My claim here, however, is this: For Husserl, and we shall see, for Heidegger as well, the aims of phenomenology are not merely to justify, but to transform, both our claims to truth, and our very lives. But let me now turn more directly to the Platonic “ideas.”

There is a fire in Plato’s cave, and one can well imagine that the first emergence of “virtual worlds,” the imaginary realms that now so dominate our leisure hours, was in the dream-like state induced by story-tellers as our earliest ancestors crowded around this dancing, artificial light, as the dark of night closed around them. But it was Plato who first vividly brought home to us the notion that the everyday world around us, plain as day, can itself be seen as “mere show,” a tissue of illusion. The appeal of this is as much mystical as philosophical, but Plato’s own concerns seem to be centered on how it is that we are able to perceive and give an account of things in the world in terms of stable formulations, and, in general, aspire to knowledge—despite the continually shifting nature of the experienced world.

Heidegger’s own abiding philosophical question, of course, is the question of being: the actuality of the actual. We encounter the actuality of things every day—most simply when we are not stopping to reflect, but busy with our work, as in his well known example, in *Being and Time*, of the carpenter at his work-bench.³ The hammer in our hand hardly seems “shadowy,” though when our attention is drawn to it—when it breaks, for example, or a philosopher like Plato interrupts us with his questions—it can suddenly seem uncanny, questionable. For Plato, of course, that the hammer breaks, gets thrown away, and that the wood and iron then slowly decompose in the land-fill, are arguments against its true hammer-being; what we must catch sight of instead is the hammer “as such,” the Form of hammer, the *ἰδέα*. But, Heidegger asks, “*what kind of seeing is this, in which ideas come into view?*” Clearly it cannot be with “our bodily eyes, for with the latter we see precisely the beings that Plato calls shadows,” and the Forms or “ideas” are, for Plato, emphatically “*other than these beings.*”⁴

Heidegger’s response to the suggestion that the ideas have nothing to do with bodily seeing is emphatic. “Not so fast,” he cautions his students, “Do we see beings with our bodily eyes? Doubtless we do!” With this, he launches into his own, distinctive kind of phenomenological account of seeing. This account rejects the “traditional” approach of locating the ideas in a “world beyond,” and places them rather in “the between,” as we might call it: the zone of contact and differentiation between perceiver and perceived, knower and known, subject and object (though recognizing, of course, the inadequacy of these “metaphysical” terms and oppositions already for Heidegger in 1931). More broadly, Heidegger offers the reader a hermeneutic interpretation of the ideas as that which allows “what is” to come forward in our experience *as* “what it is.”

Heidegger begins his account with the suggestion that to see, or to hear, is to “hold ourselves in a perception,” to “register something that is presented to us.” We hear tones, we see colors and, coextensively, shapes; we also see “glowing, sparkling, glittering”—the brightness of illumination. (36) But in fact, we are rarely aware of such elemental perceptions; instead, we hear the phone, we see the book. Seeing, especially—which Heidegger later acknowledges is the privileged access to the real

for the Greeks (74)—gives us the look, the form of the things before us. Or does it? Is this—the form—something we can sense, can there be a “sensation of form”? For Heidegger, assuredly not: “What is sensed with our eyes is not the book,” but merely, for example, the reddish brown of its cover; indeed, he goes on to clarify, “as such,” as sensory organs, the eyes do not even give us colors. Instead, the sense of sight “sees” colors “with the eyes,” which is to say, with their assistance, “by means of them”—but never the book “as such.” Thus, “when we say that ‘we see the book’, we use ‘see’ in a meaning which goes beyond perceiving the object by means of the sense of sight with the help of our eyes.”

We would never see anything like a book were we not able to see in another *more primordial* sense. To this latter kind of ‘seeing’ there belongs an *understanding* [*Verstehen*] of what it *is* that one encounters: book, door, house, tree. We *recognize* the thing as a book. This recognition registers the look that is given to us: of the book, table, door. We see *what* the thing is from the way it *looks*: we *see* its what-being. ‘Seeing’ is now a *perceiving*; of something, to be sure, namely this as a book, but no longer through our eyes and sense of sight [but rather] in the sense that we comport ourselves to what is presented to us. (37–38)

Once again, we are generally quite unaware of this—at least, until someone draws our attention to it, which is what Plato did with his discovery of the “ideas;” Plato brought us to begin to recognize what happens, every day, when we without hesitation see or take hold of something as the thing that it is. Heidegger writes,

‘*Ἰδέα* is therefore the *look* [*Anblick*] of something *as* something. It is through these looks that individual things *present* themselves as this and that, as *being-present*. Presence [*Anwesenheit*] for the Greeks is *παρουσία*, shortened as *ούσια*, and means *being*. That something *is* means that it is present [*es ist anwesend*], or better: that it *presences* [*west an*] in the present [*Gegenwart*]. The look, *ἰδέα*, thus gives *what* something presences *as*, i.e. what a thing *is*, its *being*. (38)

The “seeing” of the idea, which is to say, for Heidegger, the “understanding” of the “what-being and how-being” of a thing, is what “first allows beings to be recognized as the beings they are.” Hence, “we never see beings with our bodily eyes unless we are also seeing ‘ideas.’ ” (38–39)

This may well give us pause. On the one hand, we are presented with what amounts to a basic phenomenological insight: that eidetic structures of some kind are conditions of the possibility of experience. Specifically, for Heidegger here, the ideas somehow enable the presencing or standing-out of things as “what they are,” hence the being of beings. Thus, to repeat his last point, to see the book is also to see the “idea” of the book, as that “in terms of which” let us say, we perceive it. And so it is that Heidegger can also affirm that Plato’s discovery of the ideas was not some “far flung speculation” but “relates to what everyone sees and grasps in comportment to being.” (38) But relates how? The evident difficulty is that the prisoners in the cave—which is to say, presumably, all of us in our average everydayness—see the book but *not* the idea (or rather, in Plato’s terms, seeing the book as we do is seeing a dim shadow *of* the idea—a copy of a copy, at each stage further removed, “flattened,” and “dimmed down” from the original). As Heidegger goes on immediately to say, “the prisoners in the cave see only shadow-beings and think that these are all *there are*; they know nothing of being, of the understanding of being.” (39)

In addressing this apparent contradiction, which has us “seeing” the ideas but also knowing nothing of them, we will do well to recall that Heidegger’s focus throughout his reading of the cave allegory is the place in it of truth as *ἀλήθεια* (*aletheia*), which he translates as *Unverborgenheit*, unhiddenness. Specifically, what he finds in Plato, and even within the cave allegory passages as they unfold, is a turning away from the “originary” Greek sense of truth as *ἀλήθεια* to truth as correctness of assertions, *ὀρθότης* which, as *adequatio* and “correspondence,” has dominated Western metaphysical thinking, eclipsing the former despite being a derivative mode of truth “grounded in the particular manner of orientation and proximity to beings, i.e. in the way in which beings are in each case unhidden.” (26) From the outset, Heidegger has stressed that there is already truth as *ἀλήθεια*, unhiddenness, in the shadowy realm of the cave—but the prisoners are blind to it. That is—and this is very much a theme at the core of Heidegger’s thinking from first to last—they experience beings but not being, and lack explicit understanding of the ontological difference. Although things present themselves in the cave only as “shadows,” they nonetheless stand forth in the light; but the standing-forth itself and as such—in truth, which is to say, in *ἀλήθεια*—remains occluded. The prisoners see what is present but not its presence, its “unhiddenness.” One could say: there is truth here, there is being—but unrecognized. The light, without which there could be no shadows, has not itself been brought to light. So it is that Heidegger follows up his assertion that the cave-dwellers “know nothing of being,” with the words, “Therefore they must remove themselves from the shadow-beings” and “make an ascent, taking leave from the cave and everything in the lower region [. . .] for the light and brightness of day, for the ‘ideas’.” (39)

The reference to “ascent” here, central as it is to the allegory, may also give us pause. In the Platonic context, such talk makes sense: what Plato articulates, not just here but in congruent allegories in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, is an actual migration of the soul: his tales tell of a movement of the seer, an ascent from the unsteady vision of the ever-fading instance that somehow participates in the eternal Form, to the Form itself, which—problematically, of course, as Aristotle first instructed us—exists at a distance from its particulars, independently, in itself, in some kind of “other place” (e.g., the hyper-uranian “heavens”). But, as we have already seen, Heidegger’s interpretation of the “ideas” is far more phenomenological than metaphysical (or mystical). Troubled how something so much a part of everydayness could be still be “won” in the liberation from the cave, we focused on the inherent *elusiveness* of the ideas; structuring the visible and bringing them to vision, they remain themselves *invisible*, like lenses we do not see but see *through*. As Heidegger puts it, we go through our daily lives without once “suspecting” that “in order to see this book, door, and so forth, we must already understand what ‘book’ and ‘door’ mean,” which, he continues, is “nothing else but the seeing of the look, the *ἰδέα*.” (30) But if, as he goes on to say, this is seeing “the *being* of beings [*das Sein des Seienden*],” not only are we faced with the task of recovering that which withdraws, remains hidden or has, as the later Heidegger often puts it, fallen into oblivion—it is also clear that the place of our doing so can be none other than here, in our confrontation or encounter with the beings themselves. For Heidegger,

in short—in contradistinction from Plato—talk of ascent can be only talk, at best a “metaphor;” there is no “higher realm” to ascend to, but “merely” the task of thinking: letting oneself enter more fully into the “draft” or “current” of being.⁵

In Husserlian terms, what is called for is not a geographic displacement but a shift in regard, a refocusing of attention; the increasingly central place of the reduction in Husserl’s phenomenology reflects a growing awareness of the need to step back from the worldly entities that interest and consume us, to better grasp the intentional structures constitutive of experience. For Heidegger, however, there is more here than a mere shift of attitude or refocusing of regard; while not literally an ascent, it is something as profoundly shaking and transformative: a “liberation,” as Heidegger calls it, or a turning, as from the shadows into the light. This issue, as I indicated, we shall return to; for now, let me follow Heidegger’s own analysis of the light, and its relationship to the work of the ideas in bringing forward the things of our concern, in their being.

Heidegger identifies a number of related terms here which, precisely in their inter-relatedness to each other and to the making-visible of the ideas, call out for consideration: brightness, transparency, and light. Although we can see the source of light (for example, the fire, the sun), for the most part we do not see light itself but *by* the light; hence, as Heidegger writes, it is “nothing which can be grasped hold of; it is something intangible, almost like nothingness and the void.” (40) This seems fitting; like the nothing, like the “power of the negative,” we might suggest, light differentiates, bringing out boundaries and outlining edges, bringing things forward as “standing out” against the ground. Brightness, specifically, Heidegger says, is a word borrowed from the realm of sound: it means “penetrating;” and in the light, brightness is a letting-through that first makes sight possible. “Brightness is visibility, the opening and spreading out of the open,” the “originally transparent” that stands, like the ideas themselves, in the between: it lets through the thing “to be viewed” as visible, and also lets the view through *to* the thing. (41)

This bi-directional letting-through of the visible is of course nothing other than a letting-through of the being of beings; Heidegger calls this “precisely the basic accomplishment of the idea.” (42)

What is seen in and as the idea is, outside the allegory, the *being* (the what-being and how-being) of beings. *Ἰδέα* is what is sighted in advance, what gets perceived in advance and lets beings through as the *interpretation* of ‘being’. The idea allows us to see a being as what it is, lets the being *come* to us [...]. Only where being, the what-being of things, is understood, is there a letting-through of beings. Being, the idea, is what lets-through: *the light*. What the idea accomplishes is given in the fundamental nature of light. (42)

We said earlier that the idea is a kind of lens; here, this can help elucidate Heidegger’s claim that light, the letting-through, is itself let-through by the idea. We see a thing “as a book” only when “we understand its sense of being in the light of its what-being,” namely the “idea” we have, beforehand, of book as such.

If there were no light at all in the cave, the prisoners would not even see shadows. But they do not *know* anything about the light which is already in their sight, just as little as someone who sees a book knows that he already sees something more than, and different from, what he can sense with his eyes, i.e. that he must already understand what ‘book’ as such means. (42)

For Heidegger, understanding [*Verstehen*] is a standing-before something that gives an overview; we “have its measure” (2), we “see its blueprint.” (45). We now see that understanding is the fore-going opening that lets-through “what is;” he calls it the “pre-modeling projection of being.” (45)

To understand being means to project in advance the essential lawfulness and the essential construction of beings. Becoming free for beings, seeing-in-the-light, means to enact the projection of being [*Seinsentwurf*], so that a look (picture) of beings is projected and held up in advance, so that in viewing this look one can relate to beings as such.(45)

How is light related to freedom? Characteristically, Heidegger invokes the clearing in the forest [*Waldlichtung*]; free from trees, from “encroachments,” we might say, the clearing “gives free access for going through and looking through.” (44) While perhaps helpful, one feels a fuller elucidation is needed; light, as freedom, needs to be brought more fully to light.

Whenever we take a step back from the immediate, whenever we at last recognize an assumption of our own that we did not know we had, but that we now see holds us back, whenever we shift to a new perspective full of fresh possibilities and pathways of advancement, we say “I’ve seen the light.” The light is the medium of truth in which things come forward as what, truly, they are.

The light, then, broadens our awareness; just so, it can “dawn on us” that we are prisoners. We see by the transparent letting-through of the light, and that which was restricted, held fast within narrow confines (namely, our vision of things in the light), begins to open, to brighten. Thus it is, I would suggest, that we can best understand what is at first a somewhat bewildering claim: it is the light itself, Heidegger tells us, “‘seeing the light,’ that gives freedom.” (43) This “becoming free for the light” is “to understand being and essence,” and hence “to experience beings as such.” Therefore, Heidegger writes, “the essence of freedom” is “the *illuminating view*” which lets beings freely be (what they are). Only “from and in freedom” do “beings become more beingful, because being this or that.” As Heidegger continues,

Becoming free means understanding being as such, which understanding first of all lets beings *as* beings *be*. Whether beings become more beingful or less beingful is therefore up to the freedom of man. Freedom is measured according to the primordiality, breadth, and decisiveness of the binding, i.e. this *individual* grasping himself as *being-there* [*Da-sein*], set back into the isolation and thrownness of his historical past and future. The more primordial the binding, the greater proximity to beings. (44–45)

Here again we may well pause. What is the source of this light, and so the ground of the “measure” of the ideas by which we see? And, secondly, what is the source, the nature, and above all the aim or purpose (*τελος*) of the freedom that Heidegger associates with the light? Heidegger himself is well aware of these issues, invoking the familiar assertion of Protagoras as he asks, “What is man, such that he could become the measure of everything? Can the essence of truth be given over to man?” (54) We shall see Heidegger’s own response shortly, but we should first note that locating the light of truth as *lumen naturale* in man has a long history in metaphysical thought, perhaps best expressed in Descartes’ rationalism, and best lampooned in Nietzsche’s image of the “madman” who, using his feeble “lantern” in the bright light of morning, fails to find God and so announces, “God is dead,”⁶

For Platonism, the madman's efforts to locate and illuminate God by the light of human reason would be tantamount to lighting up the sun with a flashlight; it is of course the good, and nothing else, that provides not only the light of intelligibility and grounds the being of all that is, but is also the *τελος*, the guiding principle and measure by which, and towards which, we navigate as individuals and as *πόλις* (community)—in short, that “binds” human freedom. Heidegger, in contrast, sees freedom as a “binding of oneself for oneself, such that one remains always bound in advance.” (43) And to this, of course, our question will be: bound, yes, but to what?

Heidegger's response is vital to our examination precisely in its doubleness: He writes that to be “authentically free” means, “I can acquire power by binding myself to what lets-through;” hence, such binding “is not loss of power, but a taking into one's possession.” (44)

That is, I am bound to the thing—presumably, to the being of the beings—but only in simultaneously binding them to me, taking them up in an act of appropriation that makes them mine, takes them as “my own;” and in doing so there is apparently no “giving way” to something higher, but a self-assertion, an enhancement of my own-most power or—let us venture, given the dominance of Nietzsche's thought over Heidegger throughout the 1930s—will to power. The freedom described by Heidegger is not freedom *from* the shackles of unexamined assumptions or narrow thinking, or *from* the tyranny of propaganda or received opinion (we should note that at no point does Heidegger discuss those who shape the shared reality of the cave dwellers by manipulating the puppets and statues that cast the shadows by the light of the fire in Plato's allegory). Nor is it freedom as a “letting-shine” of an extra-human truth. Rather, at this point in Heidegger's thinking, it appears to be the freedom *to* impose our will, to lay out in advance, to bring beings within what he would later come to call the standing reserve, the instrumental matrix in which things are brought to a stand and “de-realized” precisely as endlessly transmutable quanta of power or energy, at our disposal.

Before we can judge the appropriateness of this criticism, we should note that Heidegger's later view of technology is at least hinted at in the account of modern science to which he now turns, as one of three examples of how “such freedom” as we have been discussing, that is, the appropriative “pre-modeling projection of being,” actually brings us into closeness to (or distance from) beings. Not surprisingly, Heidegger looks very critically at the rise of modern science—but not because it involved a “projection” which “delineated in advance what was henceforth to be understood as nature and natural process,” but because of the reductive nature of that projection, which limited nature to “a spatio-temporally determined totality of movement of masspoints.” Thus, though beginning as a bringing-forward into closeness of beings for us, “the projection has forfeited its original essential character of liberation,” such that beings are no longer made “more beingful,” but less. (45) Nonetheless, he concludes, “this penetration into nature happened on the basis of, and along the path of, a paradigmatic projection of the being of these beings, the beings of nature.” (46)

The other two examples Heidegger examines are history and art; of the latter, especially poetry, he affirms that it can happen that “the artist possesses essential

insight for the possible, for bringing out the inner possibilities of beings, thus for making man see what it really is with which he so blindly busies himself.” He then adds, “What is essential in the discovery of reality happened and happens not through science, but through primordial philosophy, as well as through great poetry and its projections.” (47)

At this point, in Section Nine of his lectures, Heidegger returns to his guiding concern, which is laying out as fully as possible the nature of truth as *ἀλήθεια*. As unhiddenness, truth belongs to beings, not to our assertions or statements; it is the coming-forward of beings as what they are, in the light and for a seeing, according to a projective guiding fore-having or sketching in advance in terms of the paradigmatic “ideas.” That these templates, let us say, or as Heidegger calls them, “blueprints”—that is, the ideas—should themselves come to awareness or come-forward in unhiddenness, is precisely the accomplishment symbolized in the story of the “ascent” out of the cave. Since “the unhiddenness of beings *originates* in them,” Heidegger tells us, the ideas, once recognized in what is presumably a new level of seeing, become “the most beingful beings, the primordially unhidden.” (48, cf. 51) In this, Heidegger appears to be preserving the “degrees of reality” doctrine associated with Plato’s “theory of Forms;” the ideas (Forms) are not only more true than their instances, the particulars, they are also more real (since they are, for Plato, perfectly and fully what they are). But in fact, this endorsement of Plato is merely apparent; although more “beingful” than the beings salient in everyday experience, for Heidegger the ideas do not have, contra Plato, any self-subsistent (even less, “eternal”) independent existence.

As we have seen, the ideas on Heidegger’s account “are” only as “sighted” in and by the “pre-modeling perceiving” of things by human beings, within the “coming to light” of truth as *ἀλήθεια* (unhiddenness). They thus have no existence “in themselves;” how, after all, could one conceive of a “look” (*ἰδέα*) that is not seen? Heidegger writes:

What might ideas be ‘in themselves’? Idea is what is sighted. What is sighted is so only in seeing and for seeing. An unsighted sighted is like a round square or wooden iron. ‘Ideas’: we must at last be serious with this Platonic term for being. ‘Being sighted’ is not something else in addition, an additional predicate, something which occasionally happens to the ideas. Instead, it is what characterizes them as such. (51)

Heidegger recognizes his divergence from Platonism at this point, but characteristically insists it is Plato who held back and could go no further—“with the consequence that the whole problem of ideas was forced along a false track.” (51–52)

For Heidegger, the true path involves a return to the problem we touched on earlier: bringing the Forms down to earth, re-situating them in the “between,” as I have put it, as formative of the human encounter with “what is”—even if this runs the risk of relativizing them, of reducing them to the “merely subjective.” In Heidegger’s words, “The problem of ideas can only be posed anew by grasping it from the primordial unity of what is perceived on the one hand, and what does the perceiving on the other hand.” The ideas are the “look;” in the light, they let the being “be seen.” But this, Heidegger tells us, is “a looking in the sense of perceiving [*Er-blickens*],”

which is to say, not a passive taking-in but “projection,” an active, primary “*forming*” of “what is looked at *through* the looking and *in* the looking, i.e. forming in advance, modeling.” (52)

At the origin of the unhiddenness of beings, i.e. at being’s letting-through of beings, the perceiving is no less involved than what is perceived in perceiving — the ideas. *Together* these constitute unhiddenness, meaning they are nothing ‘in themselves’, they are never *objects*. The ideas, as what is sighted, *are* (if we can speak in this way at all) only in this perceiving seeing; they have an essential connection with perceiving. (52)

This does not, however, mean the Forms (ideas) are “merely in our heads;” rather, Heidegger asserts, they are “neither objectively present nor subjectively produced.” That is, he continues, “Both, what is sighted as such, and the perceiving, *together* belong to the origination of unhiddenness, that is, to the *occurrence* of truth.” (53)

Before we come to focus on this question in more detail, let me briefly sketch the final elements of Heidegger’s account here: The perceiving of the idea, which we have characterized as projective, binding pre-modeling, Heidegger now names as “de-concealing [*Ent-bergen*];” (53) it is this which brings together viewing, freedom and light in their unity. It is also what properly defines the “liberation” of turning from the shadows into “the light of day” beyond the cave.

To be deconcealing is the innermost accomplishment of liberation. It is *care* [*Sorge*] itself: becoming-free as binding oneself to the ideas, as letting *being* give the lead. Therefore becoming-free, this perceiving of the ideas, this understanding-in-advance of being and the essence of things, has the *character of deconcealing* [*ist entbergend*].

Deconcealing, in short, “belongs to the inner drive of this seeing,” this “looking-into-the-light.” (53) It can even be said of deconcealment, Heidegger continues, that it “first creates the perceivable in its innermost connection,” for only in and through it does the “unhiddenness of beings” come to pass.⁷

Just as there are no ideas without man, so with truth: “the essence of truth qua ἀλήθεια (unhiddenness),” Heidegger writes, “is deconcealment, therefore located in man himself.” Would not such a reduction of truth to the “*merely* human” serve simply to annihilate it? Do we descend here into nihilism? Heidegger’s response is that the charge of relativism is too easy; it rests on countless unexamined presuppositions, most notably that the essence of “the human” is a given and well understood by everyone. Heidegger then asks, “From where are we to take the concept of man, and how are we to justify ourselves against the objection of an attempted humanization of the essence of truth?” [54] It is the cave allegory itself that provides the answer, Heidegger holds, for it gives “precisely the history in which man comes to himself as a being in the midst of beings,” a history in which the “decisive” occurrence is nothing other than “our” projective de-concealment; it is the essence of truth, as unhiddenness, that first discloses the essence of human existence. The allegory of the cave, as we shall see, shows us an individual who, in the fundamental occurrence of his *Dasein*, is “*set out into the truth*” [*in die Wahrheit ver-setzt*]. Heidegger continues:

Truth is neither somewhere *over* man (as validity in itself), nor is it in man as a psychological subject, but man is ‘*in*’ the truth. Truth is something greater than man. The latter is in the truth only if, and only in so

far as, he masters his nature, holds himself within the unhiddenness of beings, and comports himself to this unhiddenness. (55)

We are perhaps left with the feeling that Heidegger has sidestepped the real question of the “relativism” of truth. On the one hand, he has just said that truth is greater than man; on the other, one of his concluding points in this part of the lecture course is that “that truth itself is not ultimate, but stands under an empowerment.” (82) Earlier, we recall, in words that might seem to anticipate the views of the so-called “later Heidegger,” he suggested that “binding oneself to the ideas” is “letting being give the lead” (53)—but the question, of course, is: lead to where? This question remains resolutely unanswered. Instead, Heidegger tells us that the real question of the essence of the human, echoing Nietzsche, is not identifying what we are but “becoming what we can be;” for this, we must “come to a decision” on ourselves, on “the powers that carry and define” us. Man can only be understood, in other words, “as a being bound to his own possibilities, bound in a way that itself frees the space within which he pursues his own being in this or that manner.” (55) As this makes very clear, we are offered no hint of a *τελος*, no clear sense of what the good for man, or the realization of our *Dasein*, would be.

This is not to say that Heidegger ignores “the idea of the good” in his analysis. It is there, but its role is ontological, and explicitly *not* normative. That is, Heidegger cautions us, we must free ourselves from the outset from “any kind of sentimental conception of this idea,” for “it is not at all a matter of ethics or morality.” Rather, this “highest idea,” which lies out “beyond” all ideas, is the enabling ground of both seeing and being-seen, both the capacity of vision and the visibility of the visible, at once in themselves and in their connectedness; the good (*ἀγαθόν*) is the light which makes both possible and is also their common link or bond—in Plato’s language, the “yoke” (*ζυγόν*) under which both are harnessed. But the light of the good does not merely facilitate, let us say, knowing on the one side, understood in terms of sight, and the known in its truth, as unhiddenness or becoming-visible, on the other; rather, for Heidegger, it is for each and in their unity the enabling power (*δύναμις*).

The highest idea, although itself barely visible, is what makes possible *both* being and unhiddenness, i.e. it is what *empowers* being *and* unhiddenness as what they are. The highest idea, therefore, is this empowering, the empowering for *being* which as such *gives* itself simultaneously with the empowerment of *unhiddenness* as *occurrence*. In this way it is an intimation of *αἰτία* (of ‘power’, ‘mastery’). (72)

That is, the good, power, gives and sustains not just the visibility (intelligibility) but the existence of what is, beings, and also of ideas (which bring into the light of unhiddenness beings in their being). “In so far as being-as-idea means empowerment for being, the making manifest of beings,” Heidegger writes, it follows that the idea of the good surpasses both “being as such and truth.” (79) Heidegger supports his interpretation of the good by citing Plato’s *Sophist* where, at 247 d-e, the Eleatic Stranger suggests that, in Heidegger’s words, “the essence of being is found in *δύναμις*, i.e. in empowerment and nothing else.” (80)

Against the horizon of Greek thought and certainly, for us, in the light of Levinas’ later criticisms of Heideggerian ontology and his far-ranging meditations on Plato’s “the Good” and ethics as “first philosophy,” this may well seem like a disturbing

“hollowing out” of the good into mere “usefulness” or naked power. We note, for example, that on Heidegger’s reading, Plato’s holds that “the power of the good is to be valued even more highly than the ideas.” For Plato, Heidegger continues,

When we ask about the essence of being and unhiddenness, our questioning goes out beyond these, so that we encounter something with the character of empowerment and nothing else. Empowerment is the limit of philosophy (i.e. of metaphysics). Plato calls that which empowers *ἀγαθόν*. We translate: the good. The proper and original meaning of *ἀγαθόν* refers to what is good (suitable) for something, what can be put to use. ‘Good!’ means: it is done! it is decided! It does not have any kind of moral meaning: ethics has corrupted the fundamental meaning of this word. What the Greeks understand by ‘good’ is what we mean when we say that we buy a pair of good skis, i.e. boards which are sound and durable. The good is the sound, the enduring, as distinct from the harmless meaning suitable for aunts: a good man, i.e. respectable, but without insight and power. (77)

Despite his scorn for the traditional views, Heidegger does grant that “*what* this empowerment is and *how* it occurs has not been answered to the present day.” We no longer even ask the original Platonic question—yet, “in the meantime,” Heidegger continues, the idea of the “highest good” has “almost become a triviality.” He then concludes, in ominous-sounding riddles:

For whoever asks in a philosophical manner, Plato says more than enough. For someone who wants only to establish what the good is in its common usage he says far too little, even nothing at all. If one takes it merely in this latter way, nothing can be done with it. This clarification of the idea of the good *says* anything only for a philosophical questioning. (80)

What this reference to “philosophical questioning” returns us to is the question of transformation, of a “turning of the soul,” which is of course at the very heart of Plato’s allegory of the cave. Clearly there is a special conception of “the philosophical” being developed, both by Plato and by Heidegger: not simply philosophy as insight into knowledge and reality, as embodied for example in a “theory of Forms,” but philosophy as a way of life, a mode of human existence—and not just any mode, but a most “essential” and “authentic” possibility; let us say, not a mode merely but a *model* of the “realized” human. That is, philosophy has a doubleness here: it is both the process or means of human transformation, and that to which we aspire, the turning itself and that to which we turn.

Having traced in detail the careful articulation of Heidegger’s reading of Plato’s “theory of ideas,” I want briefly to sketch Heidegger’s peculiar vision of what I am calling “the turning” in these lectures on the *Republic*. We gain access to this issue through the question just touched on: philosophical questioning itself, as Heidegger pictures it.

Heidegger tells us that “understanding the cave allegory means grasping the history of human essence, which means grasping oneself in one’s own-most history.” To do this is to question philosophically—and it is precisely in this that the transformation is enacted. As he continues, in words strikingly evocative of Husserl’s “reduction,”

This demands, when we begin to philosophize at any rate, putting out of action diverse concepts and non-concepts of man, irrespective of their obviousness or currency. At the same time it means understanding what the clarification of the essence of *ἀλήθεια* implies for knowledge of human essence. [. . .] Man must first place himself in question, must comport himself to himself as that being who is asked about, and

who, in this asking, becomes uneasy. [. . . For] only by entering into the dangerous region of philosophy is it possible for man to realize his nature as transcending himself into the unhiddenness of beings. Man apart from philosophy is something else. (56)

It is precisely this questioning that leads to the liberation from the cave; for the liberated one is a philosopher, one whose own existence is in question. A striking feature of Heidegger's reading of Plato's allegory is his distinguishing a first, failed liberation from a second successful ascent out of the cave. The first attempt fails because the prisoners, though freed of their chains, still do not have what the prisoners as such all lack: an understanding of *difference*—between light and shadow, between appearance and reality (21); presumably, given what we have seen concerning the ideas as “the being of beings,” what they lack is ultimately an understanding of the ontological difference itself.

To be sure, the difference between shadows and things announces itself, but the former prisoner does not enact this difference, cannot grasp it as such, cannot bring the distinguished things into relationship. But the difference occurs in the enactment of the differentiation. To bring the differentiation to enactment would be being-human [*Menschsein*], existing [*Existieren*]. (28)

Instead, the prisoners turn back towards the cave wall, fully unaware of the connection, or difference, between the statues and the shadows they cast. But ultimately the failure is not merely one of vision, which could be cured by forcing the prisoner violently the rest of the way from the cave; it is, Heidegger says, a failure of will. And hence what is needed is “a change in the inner man”—precisely “in his willing.” This initial liberation or “turning” fails, in short, because the prisoner does not become “free for himself,” that is, does not come to stand “in the ground of his essence.” (28) This, it seems, requires the liberator; as Heidegger writes, “the liberator is the bearer of a differentiation.” (66)

Overall, what has emerged from our discussions as the essence of human existence, is the questioning stance in the midst of “what is;” though he detests “propositions,” Heidegger himself puts this into a propositional form as follows: “man is the being who exists in the perceiving of being.” But to understand this statement requires something very different than propositional logic:

The truth of this statement (precisely because it says something philosophical) can only be philosophically (as I say) enkindled and appropriated, that is, only when the questioning that understands being in the questionability of beings in the whole takes its standpoint from a fundamental decision, from a fundamental stance towards being and towards its limit in nothingness. (57)

Throughout the long and shifting pathways of his thinking, Heidegger saw philosophy as a transformative undertaking; its task, in the language of his later work, is to take up our place, in the humility of questioning, within the withdrawing mystery of the “gift” of being. This was never pictured as something that would bear practical benefits, advance scientific knowledge or even found an ethics or system of values. Rather, as a return to ourselves, in the essence of our being, and also to that which calls to us—in the things themselves, in ordinary language and in the worlding of the world—it is intrinsically vital. In this period of his life, however, in the early 1930s, this picture, while still recognizable, has a distinctive—and perhaps, today, somewhat off-putting—tone or flavor. For me, this is signaled here by the words

“decision” and “stance.” It is also, to say the least, rather atypical for Heidegger to go on to say, stridently, “What this means is not a matter for further talking, but rather for doing.” (57)

Heidegger builds on the notion of “stance” in announcing that philosophical enquiry requires, above all, a standpoint: hence,

The right choice of standpoint, the courage to a standpoint, the setting in action of a standpoint and the holding out within it, is the task; a task, admittedly, which can only be enacted in philosophical work, not prior to it and not subsequently. (57)

Evidently, this philosophical work must now, in the current “crisis” (of 1931–32) and faced with the increasing disregard for and “poisoning” of philosophy in the nation, include specifically political activity. Of course, one must keep in mind that his text is the *Republic*, in which Plato announces as his “third wave,” his most “laughable” doctrine, the necessity of the “philosopher king.” Nonetheless, it is chilling to hear Heidegger pronounce on this. It is not exactly, he says, that “professors are to become chancellors of the state;” rather,

Philosophers are to become *φύλακες*, guardians. Control and organization of the state is to be undertaken by philosophers, who set standards and rules in accordance with their wisest and deepest freely inquiring knowledge, thus determining the general course which society should follow. As philosophers they must be in a position to know clearly and rigorously what man is, and how things stand with respect to his being and ability-to-be. (73)

As we have seen, however, this kind of knowledge—at least, in the detailed sense that political action would seem to demand—remains highly elusive; there is no counterpart in Heidegger’s account to the Forms most sought after in Plato’s Socratic dialogues, such as justice, virtue and piety; and the good itself appears, as we have seen, in the guise of quanta of power rather than the guiding quality of goodness.

Heidegger makes it clear, however, that when “the liberator”—the philosopher, though Heidegger insists it is not himself, that he can only “prepare the way for the philosopher who will come” (62)—returns into the cave to help those still in chains, he does not reason with the prisoners. That is, the philosopher-liberator seeks to achieve his aims not by trying to “persuade the cave-dwellers by reference to norms, grounds and proofs,” namely, with reference to the “aims and intentions of the cave”—this would merely make him “laughable”—but “by laying hold of them violently and dragging them away.” (62) Nonetheless, he takes this drastic action in a spirit of political solidarity, at least with some: “Being free, being a liberator, is to act together in history with those to whom one belongs in one’s nature,” (92) presumably, also, with what Heidegger earlier spoke of as “strident courage that can also wait, that is not deterred by reversals.” (32) The liberator, we read, is

someone who has become free in that he looks into the light, has the illuminating view, thus has a surer footing in the ground of human-historical Dasein. Only then does he gain power to the violence he must employ in liberation. This violence is no blind caprice, but is the dragging of the others out into that light which already fills and binds his own view. This violence is also not some kind of crudity, but is tact of the highest rigor, that rigor of the spirit to which he, the liberator, has already obligated himself. (59)

In doing this, the philosopher is even more heroic in that he faces (as Socrates well knew) the threat of death; this of course recalls Heidegger's account of the resoluteness of authentic being-unto-death in *Being and Time*⁸—but the real death for philosophy we are told is the leveling down and “poisoning” of discourse just mentioned. It is this sorry state of public babble, along with the distribution of “honors” to the unworthy, that is so often repeated in Heidegger's depiction of the cave that one cannot help but feel a pervading bitterness—contemporary, one senses, and quite personal—far in excess of what any retelling of Plato's allegory could justify.

I stress these concerns simply to bring into relief the suggestion that, while Heidegger's break from traditional metaphysical thinking certainly has had tremendous phenomenological impact and influence, in many ways reinvigorating the movement as a whole and influencing even Husserl,⁹ it also seems to entail disturbing reminders of the limits of philosophy, particularly as his anti-foundational stance—a stance precisely over the abyss, one might say—was somehow made the basis, during the early 1930s at least, for political intervention. The precise context and setting of Plato's own attempt at such intervention, in Sicily, are for the most part long forgotten, though we know that he barely escaped with his life; in Heidegger's case, sadly, the stench of the historical stage on which he sought to play a role is still quite horrifically pungent.

Let me close on a note more pleasant, I hope, and more lastingly germane to Heidegger's efforts here: I have spoken, in my title and in these concluding comments, of a (re)turn to the real; I want, finally, to highlight the sense of these words that would be closest, I think, to Heidegger's own ultimate goal in these lectures. One advantage of speaking of “turning” rather than ascent is that one can turn away as easily as towards—and, for Heidegger, this is just what Plato did in his cave allegory, in ultimately occluding *ἀλήθεια* in favor of truth as correctness of assertions; hence the motivation for Heidegger's, as he himself says, often “violent” re-appropriation of it. Nonetheless, by his own account, Heidegger's efforts have been a failure: he has not achieved what he “strove for,” namely, a “return into history [*Geschichte*], such that this becomes our occurrence [*Geschehen*], such that our own history is renewed.” The reason, he says, is that we are no longer “touched” historically by the occurrence, in Plato, of truth as unhiddenness, *ἀλήθεια*, but remain at the level of “purely theoretical reflection.” This is not, however, our failing—but Plato's:

What already happens in Plato is the waning of the fundamental experience, i.e. of a specific fundamental stance [*Grundstellung*] of man towards beings, and the weakening of the word *ἀλήθεια* in its basic meaning. This is only the beginning of that history through which Western man lost his ground as an existing being, in order to end up in contemporary groundlessness. (87)

In fact, however, this failure became the basis of efforts far more lasting and important than Heidegger's short-lived political debacles: a continuing effort, throughout his philosophical work, to reclaim and to re-turn precisely into the withdrawn enigma at the origin of Western philosophy, the always veiled-unveiling event of truth as *ἀλήθεια*.

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NOTES

¹ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, transl. Dorian Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), pp. 156–57. (Emphasis removed.)

² Edmund Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923–24) Part II: Theorie der Phänomenologischen Reduktion*, Ed. Rudolf Boehm, *Husserliana*, vol. 8 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), pp. 19, 166, 123 and 141. Quoted in Ludwig Landgrebe, *The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl: Six Essays*, Ed. Donn Welton, Trans. R. O. Elveton et al., (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 72–73.

³ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer, 1953) sections 15 and 16 (pp. H 66 ff); translated into English as *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 95 ff.

⁴ Martin Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*, trans. Ted Sadler (London: Continuum, 2002), p. 36. Subsequent references to this text will be to this edition; page numbers will be enclosed in parentheses and inserted into the text.

⁵ Cf. Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* Trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 17.

⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), section 125, p. 181 f.

⁷ Some sense of the profound ramifications of the identification Heidegger make in the just-quoted passage between deconcealing and care (*Sorge*) can be glimpsed if we recall that, in *Sein und Zeit*, it is as care that the “totality of Being-in-the-world as a structural whole” reveals itself. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 274 (H231) *et passim*. To consider this in the detail it deserves would far exceed the bounds of the present paper.

⁸ Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Division Two, especially sections 53 and 60.

⁹ As Landgrebe, among many others, has attested to; see Ludwig Landgrebe, *Op cit*, p. 100.

LIVING LIFE AND MAKING LIFE

A B S T R A C T

The question “What is life?” has long been a major discussion point in all cultures. Nowadays whilst both Synthetic Biology and the Computer Sciences are trying to create life the question on life is becoming even more important. In order to answer this question the paper will present the biophilosophy of Humberto Maturana and Francesco Varela. The paper aims to display that this biophilosophy is very close to Husserlian phenomenology. It will be shown that a living system is autonomous and an creation by its own and dependent from its environment which is made by the living entity itself. Living entities cannot be understood without their own logos.

Q U E S T I O N I N G L I F E

Human beings are beings who are able to scrutinize their own life. Scrutinizing their own life, human beings ask themselves questions such as “*Who I am?*” or “*What is the reason that I am?*” This is the kind of question which is fundamental for the creation of cultural constructions such as religion, philosophy, literature, the arts and music. Culture can be understood as the attempt to give answers to these fundamental questions. One of these fundamental questions is the question “What is life?”

From the ancient tradition we get the answer that life is something that is in motion. But not everything that is in motion is alive, only what is in self-motion is alive, Plato points out. But what makes the moving, move? The moving power cannot be a material one as material matter in general can only come to motion if it is moved by something else. Hence the living is not brought to motion by a material but by a non-material entity. And this entity is called “soul”.¹

Like his teacher Plato, Aristotle also supports the conception of the living’s self-motion and appreciates the soul as the basis of the motion. But in contrast to Plato Aristotle acknowledges matter as being on the same level as the soul: Soul without matter is not alive just as material without soul is not alive. Only the interaction of soul and matter makes something alive. So we can summarize that the living is in a self-powered motion. To clarify the term motion we have to understand that motion is not only movement but it is every kind of change. In this way breath, nutritional support and even thinking, as Aristotle points out, are kinds of movement.²

If we agree with Aristotle that movement is the characteristic of the living we also agree that the end of the movement is the end of the living’s life. This Platonic-Aristotleian concept can be seen as the basis of understanding life.

In the following I would like to present a modern advancement of this ancient theory. I am going to speak about the two Chilean Biophilosophers Humberto Maturana (*1928) and Francisco Varela (1946–2001). The starting point of their work is a hermeneutic turn as it was established by Husserlian Phenomenology. Comparable with Husserl, Maturana and Varela also noticed a lack of awareness in the common scientific way of understanding phenomena. This problem of understanding is discussed by Husserl using the term Lifeworld. Husserl criticized the predominance of the scientific world view as leading to the danger of reductionism and maintained the meaning of the Lifeworld and its acceptance as the precondition of understanding.³ Similarly Maturana and Varela criticized the dominant approach of scientific research as reductionistic, especially the widely held opinion that it is possible to understand living entities by means of a description from outside. In contrast to this opinion both biophilosophers became more and more convinced that life is something which can only be understood from inside. This became the basis for criticizing objectivism in epistemology and the starting point for a new understanding of life. Objectivism in epistemology is seen by Maturana and Varela as an inadequate way of understanding phenomena which are not objectifiable and which only can be understood under their own laws. Those who make a clear distinction between living and non-living systems will not agree with the opinion that living systems can be fully described from outside. The difference is that which lies between the subjective and the objective position in epistemology. A prominent position of objectivism is Cartesian epistemology which is often seen as reductionistic and mechanistic. It is a kind of reductionism to reduce living entities to qualities which are exclusively typical for mechanical systems but not for living entities. Such reductionism takes place by means of a description from an outside perspective. To have this opinion one sees the deficiency between mechanical and living entities in the difference between the status of both and in this point even the anti-mechanists can follow Descartes and his differentiation between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*.⁴ No matter what else he was referring to, Descartes pointed out that the living entity is more than matter. Furthermore, the anti-mechanists can agree with Descartes's view that it is completely impossible to reconstruct the spirit.⁵ This all together suggests the presumption that living entities are of a level of complexity which forbids any simple explanation. This mechanism is the paradigm of a simple explanation that can be seen in the way of mechanistic explanations. These explanations are characterized by cause-and-effect-chains which are focussed on the parts of a system and not on the whole. However if we understand living entities as wholes we share the conviction that the whole is more than its parts and that does mean that the whole cannot be completely described and understood by its parts. This position is represented, among others, by the position of holism.⁶ When criticizing mechanism and avoiding simple cause-and-effect-chains one has to explain what the whole makes a whole. If we are convinced that the whole is more than its parts no explanation can be accepted which is focussed on a phenomena's parts alone. And this is the starting point of the autopoiesis-theory. As made clear before, autopoiesis-theory is denying both mechanism and dualism and the simple thinking in cause-and-effect-chains. Instead of thinking in terms of causes and effects Maturana and Varela promote a

thinking in relations. The paradigm of relation which is also important for the theory of holism notes connections between every part of a system and makes clear the changeability of the whole by a change of the different connections. This description characterizes a phenomena that is not static but in motion and the motion is seen as not completely predictable. The reason for this is not the phenomena's complexity alone, as this would be a quantitative question, but also the phenomena's quality. The phenomena we are speaking about are not simple machines but "living machines".⁷ Living machines are different from man-made machines primarily not in view of the matter or their complexity but in view of their activity. Activity can be regarded as synonymous with life as William James declared.⁸ In this way we can describe man-made machines as passive and describe only living machines as active. But what is the meaning of being active? While passivity is in general understood as a status caused by s.o./sth. else, activity is understood as status caused by the phenomena itself. This makes the difference. To say it in Maturana's and Varela's words: "An autopoietic machine is a machine organized (defined as a unity) as a network of processes of production (transformation and destruction) of components that produces the components which: (i) through their interactions and transformations continuously regenerate and realize the network of processes (relations) that produced them; and (ii) constitute it (the machine) as a concrete unity in the space in which they (the components) exist by specifying the topological domain of its realization as such a network."⁹ To put it in a nutshell, you can understand a living machine as sth which "continuously generates and specifies its own organization through its operation as a system of production of its own components, and does this in an endless turnover of components under conditions of continuous perturbations and compensation of perturbations."¹⁰ These descriptions are fundamental for further differentiations between man-made machines and living machines: The first are static the second are homeostatic systems, the first can be completely described, while the second cannot as there will be a remaining. If we ask why we cannot describe living entities completely and what the reason is for the fact that every description will keep sth in the dark we refer again to the idea of autopoiesis: Only autopoietic systems do have sth you could call a self. Therefore autopoietic systems are subjects and not objects as man-made machines. In contrast to an object, the subject and its being a self cannot be understood as sth finished but as sth in a permanent change. The subject's situation is both being the author of its own being and being the origin¹¹ of its own being. Obviously both descriptions are inadequate to understand an object which is made by someone or sth else, i.e. it is allopoietic. Furthermore an object lacks any kind of subjectivity that is the result of its allopoietic status. Autopoietic systems, living machines or shortly living entities are characterized by the contrary, as Pier Luigi Luisi points out: "The most general property of an autopoietic system is the capability to generating its own components via a network process that is internal to the boundary."¹² The phenomena of living which was described by Plato and Aristotle as being in selfmotion can be understood by Maturana/Varela as *autonomous, having individuality and being unities*.¹³ Each of these characterizations have an ethical impact as only phenomena which do fulfil these criteria have an intrinsic value and only phenomena with

an intrinsic value can be member of the moral universe.¹⁴ As the purpose of this paper is not to discuss moral questions we shall ignore these questions and go on to discuss the ontological questions which arise from the understanding of living entities as autopoietic systems. In this way we have to scrutinize each of the given characterizations. Let us start with *autonomy*. When Maturana/Varela speak about autonomy it is evident that they are not referring to a philosophical understanding of autonomy as it was argued by Kant. The distinction between the Kantian and the Maturanian term is obvious in so far as Maturana/Varela neither speak about moral challenges nor about rationality in an exclusively human manner. If this is the difference between the Kantian and the Maturanian use of the term of rationality there is also common ground. Both refer to cognition. But there is a big gap between mainstream philosophy and Maturana and Varela's position: While the majority of philosophy ascribes cognitive capabilities only to human beings and describes processes of epistemological orientation of other living beings as only quasi cognitive, Maturana and Varela declare cognition as a *conditio sine qua non* of being alive in general. That every living entity is a cognitive entity is both the result and the precondition of being autonomous. That is the case as only autonomous entities are able to understand the world because understanding needs perception as well as intentionality and intentionality refers to an autonomous self. Even this very first criterion of autonomy exemplifies the way autopoietic processes work as well as explaining the other criteria of *having individuality* and *being unities*: The self which is the precondition for individuality establishes the unit and is thinkable only in the context of an individual unit. This simultaneity is the coherence of any autopoietic process and at the same time makes a further distinction from allopoietic systems. Their genesis takes place on the chronological table where the latter is the better as it is closer to its final completion. This is the distinction from autopoietic systems which are at each time completed as they have at each time their own standing on the chronological table. For autopoietic systems no time is better than the other, which can be seen as the proof that every time makes sense. Later we will discuss the concept of sense as a result of an epistemological process, while here we focus on the meaning of sense for the self itself. Autopoietic systems are self-centered systems whose self is not fixed but in motion. The never-ending change of the self is the result of sense-making experiences which all together form the biography of the living entity's self. In this way biography has to be understood as the sediment of these experiences which are inscribed in a living entity's own history and which make an entity unique. Here we can see again these peculiar structure which is typical for autopoietic processes: A phenomenon, for example, a self, generate epiphenomena which for their part transform the phenomenon. To make it concrete: While the self is making sense the sense will make the self.

After these considerations we can summarize the main content of autopoiesis-theory as follows. The autopoietic structure describes systems which are created by itself. As the autopoietic structure is the main difference to allopoietic systems we can regard the autopoietic capability as the decisive fact which makes sth alive. This position has some important consequences:

1. We do not need any outer position of a creator to understand an living entity. We can understand the living, i.e. its becoming, its growth and its change by itself.
2. The living which is the reason for its own being has to be seen as a *self*.
3. In the autopoietic sense of explanation the self is created by itself.

What autopoiesis means can be exemplified by the phenomena of growth. Growth, and not reproduction as often mentioned is the very characteristic phenomenon of a living being. The process of growth can only be understood autopoietically: if something grows it is changing its form. The change of the form is not the result of an outer influence but of an inner process. In the process of growth each organism is changing itself permanently. Because the organism's change is caused by the organism itself the organism keeps its identity in each phase of growth. Without the concept of autopoiesis we would have to identify an organism in its early phase and in its later phase as different entities. But this would not make sense. And in fact of this everyone of us would, regarding a child's picture of her- or himself, say "that's me" and not "That is the one I came from." This simple fact of transtemporal identity can be understood by the idea of autopoietic genesis.¹⁵ What Maturana and Varela are going to explain with the autopoiesis-theory was centuries before put in a bright picture when Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth wrote that "The child is the father of the man" and it was as well illustrated by M. C. Escher's drawing "Drawing Hands".¹⁶

This idea also makes clear that living organisms cannot be fully described from the outer perspective as such a description would objectivate what is subjective and that is the self. In this way we can say that the autopoiesis-theory is on the one hand quite revolutionary, while on the other hand it is embedded in a tradition of thoughts which are represented by Plato and Augustine and which were buried by Aristotele and Aquinas as Stafford Beer points out.¹⁷ This background makes clear that autopoiesis is not only a perspective for understanding life but as well a particular cultural concept. In this way autopoiesis has a lot of in common with cultural concepts such as Romanticism which arises in the 18th century or Holism in the 19th century. Both positions were established as critical responses to a formation of rationalism which reduces our worldview by simplification. In the same way autopoiesis-theory also widens our world view and brings to mind life's inner perspective.

The concept of living as a self was introduced to the discussion by different thinkers and Maturana and Varela were not the first ones. But what is the distinction between their concept and that of the others, let us say the Romanticism?

To put it in a nutshell: The others take the term "self" as a *deus ex machina* and do not deliver any explanation of how the self comes into being. But only when we understand the being of the self we also understand how the self works. Autopoiesis-theory explains the emergence of the self as a process which is stimulated by the phenomena which is called a self. It is important to see that the self is not any finished entity but a work in process. The processor which is generating the process is at the same time creating itself as the processor. This is the meaning of the self.

Even here the phenomena of growth helps to understand the meaning of the self as growth cannot be understood as a process which is generated from outside: As discussed above we need the concept of an inner process to make the idea of transtemporal identity plausible. In addition only a concept of the self enables us to understand growth as an activity as it is. Without the concept of the self we could only describe a different status of an entity what strictly speaking means that we speak about different entities. Only the assumption of the inner perspective, i.e. the self-perspective, combines the different phases in time to one history of one entity. That makes the fundamental difference clear between the growth of organic entities and the growth of machines in the process of production. Organic entities which are growing are changing *themselves*, in contrast to machines which are changed by someone else when they are “growing”. This means that the first retains its identity even when it is changed, the second changes its identity in the process of production i.e. it is permanently becoming something else.

THE EMERGENCE OF LIFE

With the help of the autopoiesis-theory we are going to discuss the question of life's emergence. This question can be discussed in two ways, from the perspective of life as such and from the perspective of the individual life of an individual living being. Both perspectives lead to the same ground, namely to explain how the transformation from the non-living to the living status can be thought. As the theory of emergence has pointed out, only the conditions of life can be formulated but not the way these conditions take place. Consequently it looks to be impossible to explain the genesis from a non-living to a living status. This is a problem which cannot be solved as the distinction between the non-living and the living is a qualitative one and not a quantitative one what means that there is no smooth transition. That means that the becoming of life cannot be seen as a gradual process or as Maturana and Varela point it out: “Either a system is an autopoietic system or it is not.”¹⁸ The living and the non-living are from different ontological status.

To clarify more differences between living and non-living entities we can study the relationship both entities have to their surrounding world. In this regard the differentiation between open and closed systems is helpful: Living entities can be seen as open systems which are characterized by open borders, in contrast to non-living systems which are characterized as closed systems with closed borders. This idea was brought into debate by Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901–1972): “Living systems are open systems, maintaining themselves in exchange of materials with environment, and in continuous building up and breaking down of their components”.¹⁹

But what exactly is the difference between an open and a closed systems? In the first view the difference might not be seen because all systems, even the closed ones are in an exchange with the surrounding world. Even closed systems *react to* their world. Take for example measuring aggregates which collect their data from outside and answer to this situation. What however makes the difference between a closed

and an open system is expressed by the category of activity. To make this point clear we can see that open systems *respond* to their surrounding world. Being able to answer is significant for an activity. This can be shown by the open system's status of the border. The border of open systems is not a line where the system ends but part of the system itself. That is not the case with closed systems e.g. a machine. The border of the machine marks the end of the machine that is not the case by open systems e.g. a mammal: The mammal's skin is the outer border of the living being and at the same time an integral part of it. It is interesting to see that the skin has the same important capability as each cell has, that is the bridge function between outside and inside what is called osmosis.

The interesting question now is how open systems are possible i.e. what is the origin of an open system? I am going to discuss this question related to Synthetic Biology's plan of creating life.

LET'S CREATE LIFE

The history of mankind is full of ideas of creating life: Starting with the fall of mankind people were fascinated by the idea of being like God and creating life. Famous projects as Doktor Faustus (by Christopher Marlowe, 1589 and Wolfgang von Goethe, 1808) or Dr. Frankenstein (by Mary Shelley, 1818) give evidence that the idea to be as powerful as God and to create life is never gone. In our times the desire to make life can be studied by the brand new branch of Biology, the so called Synthetic Biology.

Synthetic Biology looks to design and to construct new biological systems which are not found in nature. There is one metaphor you can hear in the debate of Synthetic Biology (SynBio) very often that is the metaphor of "playing God" which is not only used by the critics of SynBio but also by its promoters. In this way Craig Venter who became famous for mapping the human genome declares that he is able to create life and to do God's job.²⁰

I won't discuss the hubris of this assertion but will take a look at its logical coherence and ask whether it is possible to create life. I am not going to discuss this question on the level of natural sciences but in theory. Therefore we have to acknowledge that the question of creating life is primarily not a challenge for natural sciences but for philosophy. And the problem which is in consideration is not a scientific one but an hermeneutic one. To make this point clear we will take a look at SynBio's key terms as there are *living machine*, *construction* and *the code of life*.

SynBio calls living entities "living machines". It is important to see that the term "machine" is here not used as a metaphor as Maturana and Varela does it but as a description of reality as it is seen by the SynBiologists. To ask what the consequences of this understanding are we will see that the term "machine" includes both the idea of an inner construction as well as the idea of being constructed. And that exactly is what SynBio is planning to do: to construct life. The most important blueprint of constructionism in biology is the idea of DNA as the code of life. If DNA is seen as the life-code the next step is to decode the code for

reading the life's text. This kind of research reminds of the metaphor of the "book of life" which is in debate since the Middle Ages. As maintained before, the natural sciences do not think in metaphors even when they are using them. Natural sciences are using metaphors to explain reality without clarifying these metaphors. This is the fact when e.g. DNA is called the software of life and the cell is called the life's hardware, or when it is said that mankind is standing at a breakthrough and the first time humans are able to create real life out of dead matter is coming soon.²¹

THE FOUNDATIONS

As declared before in this paper I am not interested in the ethical and legal background of SynBio but in its theoretical background. In fact of this the paper tried to do both to answer the question "What is life?" and to understand the SynBio's understanding of life. This understanding was shown as reductionistic and mechanistic as it remains on the perspective from outside which describes living entities as closed systems. In contrast, the autopoiesis-theory looks to be adequate for living phenomena as it enables to take the perspective from inside. In the following I would like to put the autopoiesis-theory in a wider context. In the first view, autopoiesis is the name of a biological theory in the second view however, we will see that it has an hermeneutic approach and is a philosophy.

It was even a hermeneutic approach which brought Maturana on the path to his revolutionary research. He was still a student of biology when he realized that the phenomena of the living are of a special kind which makes a special way of speaking necessary: Maturana was convinced that the characteristics of biological phenomena make it obvious that we cannot discuss such phenomena in terms of function or as a means to an end. Therefore we do need another language for debating living phenomena. As Maturana could not find any alternative language in the realm of natural sciences he started to elaborate his own language. With Maturana and Varela we can summarize the challenge of this new language as follows: This language has to be able

1. to perform the living phenomenon's position in general
2. to describe a phenomenon by excluding the describers' position
3. to exclude every kind of a "means to an end"-thinking

Within the natural sciences it is hard to find positions which fulfil these challenges and you would find no one which is acknowledged by the scientific mainstream. The very few positions which can be found are part of zoology. Most of them are from ethologists, think about scientists such as Konrad Lorenz²² and Adolf Portmann.²³ What these scientists have in common is their interest in the phenomenon which you could call an "interest without any interest". An "interest without any interest" fulfils the condition that Immanuel Kant formulated for an aesthetic approach.²⁴ Aesthetic perception differs from any other kind of perception as it is self-sufficient, i.e. it does not look for any further result. In this way if it is not mixed up with

other interests a pure aesthetic perception has no interest. However, as Kant points out, the aesthetic position of having no interest can also be the starting point of an interest.²⁵

This situation marks the difference between the classical scientific approach and the alternative of Maturana/Varela and a lot of others: If you are perceiving a phenomenon on behalf of s.th. you will get a different understanding of it from the one you would have if you had no interest. In the latter case you will get an interest in the phenomenon, i.e. in the phenomenon by itself.

Now it becomes clear why the mainstream position can be seen as reductionistic: it reduces a phenomenon to function. This way is reductive as every living entity is more than its function. This becomes plausible if you realize that the technical term of function does not describe the phenomenon's way of activity but the observer's view of the phenomenon's activity. The reduction mentioned is not only the reduction to function but also the reduction to the observer's view. For that reason the alternative way of perception is the *sine qua non*-argument for perception as such, otherwise we only perceive our own interests.

It is obvious that this *sine qua non*-argument of perception only refers to living phenomena and not to artificial ones: Artificial phenomena such as man-made machines are completely understandable by the observer's interests as these machines lack any interest of their own. In the other way around, living machines are characterized only by the observer's interests and can be completely perceived from an external perspective.

As a result of these considerations we understand living systems as centred on the self and expressed by a self. It is a consequence of this idea to assume for all living systems a self, regardless of its evolutionary stage as Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka points out when she writes that "we do have to take into consideration that animals, even those of the simplest constitution, being endowed with a minimal degree of conscious sentience, do manifest reflexes manifesting the retrieval of past instants in the present, so that urgency of acting in the present becomes apparent to them."²⁶

If we ask what makes a self, a self, we tend to characterize the quality of selfhood with consciousness. Doing so we run the risk of an *anthropocentric-rationalistic fallacy* which looks consciousness as exclusively founded on neuronal capacities. It is important to see that the formation of consciousness is necessarily founded neither on any level of the neuronal apparatus (e.g. the human being ones) nor on a neuronal apparatus in general. Therefore we can speak about selfhood also in relation to animals on a very low evolutionary level and even in relation to plants.²⁷ In order to be a self it is not relevant to have a brain but being able to recognize the inner and the outer world in relation to itself. This way of understanding is the basic condition of living.

What does "understanding" mean here? Understanding is the result of collecting and interpreting data. We can maintain that all living things are able to do so. Who ever fails in this endangers his life and in the long run he will die. In this way a disease e.g. cancer can be understood as a misinterpretation of signs. The living systems' capacity to read signs can be proved by all living systems and is analyzed in the field of Biosemiotics.²⁸

Biosemiotics is the result of an interdisciplinary research programme which adapts the approach of linguistics and hermeneutics to the realm of the living. Based on the idea that all living systems are both cognitive and corporal, biosemiotics takes the idea of Jakob von Uexküll's environment-theory and the theory of communication. The theory of environment has made clear that every living thing has an environment which is not static but which is performed by the inhabitant of the environment.²⁹ The capacity to perform its own environment refers to the other capacity of the living: its cognitive capacity. Recognizing the world is a very challenging process. First of all it makes the distinction necessary, between "self" and "non-self" furthermore a linguistic understanding is asked. The basal linguistic capability has to be superior to a simple sender-receiver-model. Being able to communicate postulates a sense of oneself and the self's world. Incidentally this marks the difference between the living and the non-living: The non-living only reacts to the world in the sense of the sender-receiver-model. Only the living entity which has an understanding of itself is able to answer, in other words, to communicate.

What we have learned from Biosemiotics i.e. the capacity to read and answer signs refers to a general part of logos. As we can now say, living systems have an "ontopoietic sense of the logos of life", as A.-T. Tymieniecka pointed it out.³⁰ And so the assumption of the logos looks to be constitutive for the understanding of living processes. The importance of this is shown in an empirical way by Biosemiotics which has proved that living entities live in a realm of sense. This means that the living need a cosmos of the logos.

Let us return to the theory of autopoiesis: If the cosmos of the logos is the basis of living, we see that autopoiesis-theory has to presuppose this realm of sense i.e. the logos of life. Without any idea of logos no autopoietic action is possible.

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NOTES

- ¹ Plato, *Phaedrus*, London 1998, p. 245.
- ² Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, London 1976, Chap. 8, Aristotle, *De Anima*, Oxford 1993, 411b.
- ³ Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*. Husserliana VI, Dordrecht 1976, p. 133.
- ⁴ René Descartes, *Discours on the Method*. IV, 2, Cambridge 1986.
- ⁵ René Descartes, *Discours*. V, 10f.
- ⁶ Jan Christiaan Smuts, *Holism and Evolution*, London, Bombay 1926; Jakob von Uexküll, *Der Organismus und die Umwelt* (1931), in *idem: Kompositionslehre der Natur*, Frankfurt 1980, pp. 305–342.
- ⁷ Nowadays the term "living machines" is a trademark for an apparatus for cleaning wastewater. There were probably Maturana and Varela the first which used these term for describing the difference between man-made machines.
- ⁸ William James, The Experience of Activity, in *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, Cambridge, MA 1976, p. 82.

- ⁹ Humberto Maturana, Francisco Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition. The Realization of the Living*, Dordrecht 1980, p. 78 f.
- ¹⁰ H. Maturana, F. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*, p. 79.
- ¹¹ The origin of an autopoietic system will be discussed in the chapter about the emergence of life, see below.
- ¹² Pier Luigi Luisi, *The Emergence of Life. From Chemical Origins to Synthetic Biology*, Cambridge 2006, p. 159.
- ¹³ H. Maturana, F. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*, p. 80 f.
- ¹⁴ This idea was brought into debate by Tom Regan as an argument for respecting animals and was used as well for integrating plants into the moral universe, for the first s. Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights*, Berkeley 1983, p. 235, for the later s. Anthony Trewavas, Plant Intelligence. In *Annals of Botany*, Vol. 92, 1–20 (2003). The moral impact of autopoiesis-theory is discussed by Nicholas Agar, *Life's Intrinsic Value. Science, Ethics and Nature*, New York 2001, p. 67.
- ¹⁵ See the idea of transtemporal identity by Martine Nida-Rümelin, *Der Blick von innen. Zur transtemporalen Identität bewusstsensfähiger Wesen*, Frankfurt/M 2006.
- ¹⁶ Wordsworth, William, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, London 1999 and F. H. Bool, M. C. Escher: *Life and Work*, Amsterdam 1981.
- ¹⁷ Here I follow Stafford Beer, in H. Maturana, F. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*, p. 63.
- ¹⁸ H. Maturana, F. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition*, p. 94.
- ¹⁹ Ludwig von Bertalanffy, The Theory of Open Systems in Physics and Biology. In *Science*, Vol. 111, 23 (1950).
- ²⁰ D. G. Gibson, Complete Chemical Synthesis, Assembly, and Cloning of a Mycoplasma genitalium Genome. In *Science*, Vol. 319, 1215–1220 (2008). Further links: E. Pilkington, I am Creating Artificial Life, Declares US Gene Pioneer, *The Guardian*, 6 October 2007; J. Kaiser, Attempt to Patent Artificial Organisms Draws Protest. In *Science*, Vol. 316, 1557 (15 June 2007); P. Aldhous, Countdown to a Synthetic Lifeform, *New Scientist Magazine*, 11 July 2007, pp. 6–7.
- ²¹ M. Schmidt, C. Meinhardt, *Synbiosafe. Synthetic Biology and Its Safety and Ethical Aspects*, Dvd 2009.
- ²² K. Lorenz, *Behind the Mirror*, London 1977.
- ²³ Adolf Portmann, *Essays in Philosophical Zoology. The Living Form and the Seeing Eye*, Lewiston 1990.
- ²⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Werkausgabe Bd. X, Frankfurt/M 1979, § 2, pp. 116–117.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, Footnote (p. 117).
- ²⁶ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Memory in the Ontopoiesis of Life, Book I*, Dordrecht 2009a, p. Xii.
- ²⁷ Anthony Trewavas, Aspects of Plant Intelligence. In *Annals of Botany*, Vol. 92, 1–20 (2003).
- ²⁸ G. Witzany, *Biocommunication and Natural Genome Editing*, Dordrecht 2009; T. Sebeok, Biosemiotics: Its Roots, Proliferation, and Prospects. In *Semiotica*, Vol. 134 (1/4), 61–78 (2001).
- ²⁹ Jakob von Uexküll, *Kompositionslehre der Natur*, Berlin 1980.
- ³⁰ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka i.c., p. XV and The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life. *Book I, The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, Dordrecht 2009b, p. 63.

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MAN'S WORLD AND LOGOS AS FEELING

A B S T R A C T

Man's relationship to the world is a perennial problem of philosophy. The problem is one of accounting for man's experience of the world. Although man shares the world with other living beings, his experience of the world is radically different from theirs. In accounting for his experience of the world he also understands himself, he becomes self-aware, as it were. The experience of the world, it has been claimed is the experience of an articulated, structured reality. Otherwise, the human mind would simply be lost in the maze of the multifarious and discreet perceptions of what it encounters in the world. In the ancient Western philosophy, the source of the fundamental order in the cosmos as a whole has been traced to the *logos*. In modern philosophy, it is resurrected especially in the philosophy of Kant and Husserl. The *logos* or the rationality of there being an ordered world of experience is cognitive rationality. This paper explores feeling as a hidden modality of the *logos*. In feeling we have a fundamental awareness of the object as a unity. This is a primitive experience. Here, an attempt will be made to understand the *logos* from the angle of felt experience imposing order on the world.

Man's relationship to the world is a perennial quest of philosophy. The problem is one of accounting for man's experience of the world. Although man shares the world with other living beings, his experience of the world is different from theirs. In accounting for his experience of the world he also understands himself; he becomes self-aware, as it were. The experience of the world, it has been claimed, is the experience of an articulated, structured reality. Otherwise, the human mind would simply be lost in the maze of the multifarious and discreet perceptions of what it encounters in the world.

In the ancient Western philosophy from Heraclitus to the Philo of Alexandria, the source of the fundamental order, not only in nature but in the cosmos as a whole, has been traced to the animating principle of the *logos*. *Logos* is an idea which not only took hold of the Greek mind, but in the eighteenth and nineteenth century also the Greek spirit reawakened with an enthusiastic upsurge of faith in autonomous reason, a faith in the rationality of all that is. Kant attributed the interconnections and articulation of phenomena to the apriori structures of the human mind. Husserl's phenomenological quest found the ultimate grounding of the world in the transcendental constituting consciousness.

The extraordinary spell of Greek thought on Husserl can be measured from the occurrence and role of Greek words in his works, words like *noésis* and *noéma*, *hylé*, *morphé*, *theoria*, *epistémé*, *entéléchia*, *télos*, *physis*, *doxa*, *nous* as well as *logos* and its derivative, logic. We find the *logos* as the guiding idea running through

Husserl's enormous corpus of writing. For Husserl, from his early work, *Logical Investigations* to the later *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, the main concern was the reconstruction of knowledge – knowledge which is universally valid. In the *Crisis* the infinite task based on the rationalization of experience is said to be the special telos of Western culture. Transcendental phenomenology is not possible if the *logos* as the unitary telos is not evident at all stages as a functional entelechy. The essence of phenomenology is the “philosophical pursuit of Reason or the *logos*”. As Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka observes: “These pursuits of rational structurations, links, articulations of genetic processes, etc., had as their essential reference the cognitive reason of the human mind, especially human intellectual cognition”.¹ The kinds of phenomena Husserl is interested in are objects of cognition. The cognitive relation to the world is paramount for Husserl. Indeed, we can speak of a *logos* tradition – the ideal of a philosophical culture in the West, permeated by an *ethos of logos*. Plato is taken to be the undisputed father of the *logos* tradition. Plato was searching for timeless truths, which could eliminate the dangers and contingencies that ordinarily seem to vitiate human life. This ideal of reason which stands at the root of Western civilization, born in the works of Plato and Aristotle, is the bequeathing of a tradition, an inheritance or legacy. But we have not so far clarified the meaning of “*logos*”. Let us now do it.

“*Logos*” is a “many-meaning word”. *The Greek-English Lexicon* of Liddell and Scott distinguishes two elements of meaning in it. First, the word by which the inward thought is expressed and second, the inward thought itself. It has been observed that

This dual nature of its meaning gives ‘*logos*’ extraordinary range. Primarily, it refers to those outward sounds that express thought . . . It is the ability to give voice to some reasoned thought, word, sentence, talk, speech, explanation, language, discourse, story, argument, rational account – all these function at different times as the proper translation of ‘*logos*’. It is also rendered as thought, reason, rationality, calculation, etc., when it refers to the ‘internal talk’ that goes on within. ‘*Logos*’ thus comprehends all that is verbal and rational within us. The one phrase that begins to capture both these meanings is ‘rational account’.²

According to Charles Taylor, “What underpinned this connection between saying, words and reason was what one could call a discourse-modelled notion of thought . . . Because thinking was like discourse, we could use the same word, *logos*, for both”.³ From the perspective of the ancients, there is a third meaning. This *logos* is not human speech or thought but refers to a “rational structure” which exists outside of the human mind or voice; the rational structure of the world “out there” that can be apprehended by human beings presumably by using their *logos*. For example, Heraclitus begins one of his aphorisms by saying “having listened not to me, but to the *logos*, it is wise to agree that all things are one”.⁴ Thus, there is an “ontic *logos*” and a *logos* in the human subject.

At the beginning of *Formal and Transcendental Logic* Husserl makes explicit the meaning of *logos* which owes much to antiquity. It is as follows:

1. In developed language, *Logos* sometimes signifies words or speech itself: sometimes that which is spoken about, the *affair-complex referred to in speaking*: but

also, on the other hand, the propositional thought produced by the speaker either for purposes of communication or for himself: the mental sense, as it were, of the assertoric sentence, that which the speaker means by the expression . . .

2. But, particularly where a scientific interest is active in all these significations of the word *Logos* takes on a more pointed sense, because the idea of a *rational norm* enters into them. *Logos* thus signifies sometimes *reason* itself, as ability and sometimes the action of rational thinking – that is, thinking that has the quality of insight or thinking directed to a truth given in insight.⁵

Husserl's investigations rooted in pure intellectual reason led him toward a "formal theory of everything". As Mohanty says: "Towards the concluding portions of *Ideas I*, especially in the chapter on phenomenology of reason Husserl extended the idea of reason from logic to ethics and value theory, to the theory of action (praxis), without developing his detailed views on these matters."⁶ Husserl does indeed intend phenomenology as a critique of reason and in this he treaded the Kantian pathway of a critical analysis of reason. In the words of Tymieniecka, ". . . Husserl appears to have stepwise pursued the critique of reason – of human reason – to the point at which the rational chain that had sustained his interrogations, the thread of the cognitive logos, in fact broke down. Despite Husserl's painstaking efforts 'phenomenology of phenomenology' was not accomplished. . ." This makes her wonder "whether the phenomenological pursuit has not ultimately been hiding an ampler conception of rationality than was acknowledged by its founder Husserl and his followers."⁷

What we intend to do in the present context is to show how the confident self-assertion of reason has limits. And the only way to do this is not to make purely theoretical arguments but to base logos in the course of human life; its work in the entirety and the world in which man finds himself. The value and significance of human life, the uniquely beautiful pathos of being human puts a question mark to the claim that investigation of the definite and the stable in human experience, its essential core is the only task of philosophizing. Human life is incomplete, unstable and often unpredictable. Since human life is incomplete there is the urge for creativity. We can make a distinction between construction and creation. We construct a bridge so that we can negotiate the river. Construction serves some utilitarian purpose. In creating something we transcend the given order of things; we create not to achieve some premediated end but because it gives us delight. "Artists create not because art is good but because they are creative".⁸ Creative activity is evidence of the fact that we can conjure up other possibilities, and that way we are constantly in the process of making ourselves anew. The authority of reason in defining who we are: rational beings, is a "blasphemy" against the urgings of creativity. Elevating *logos* as the *telos* to evaluate ourselves is evidence of a neglect of life. Equally, the world itself is heterogeneous, filled with objects that differ in kind. There is no world out there safely structured and amenable to the probing eyes of reason. As creativity is the life-affirming attitude, interest in maximizing earthly life brings about cracks, potentially vulnerable openings, in the shield of *logos*. ". . . the world cannot become a determinate and clean subject like medicine or arithmetic."⁹ Unlike the realm of

number, human world is not fixed; it is electrified by human desires, imagination and feeling. We, human beings, self-consciously alive, cannot be observed, measured and counted. Hence, we hope to discover an alternative conception of *logos* that is compatible with life-affirmation. Feeling, I submit, is that human capacity, that hidden aspect of the *logos* which is crucial for human existence, unfolding the human situation.

Feeling has not enjoyed the same favor of philosophers compared to reason. This is because feeling is alleged to be unstable, hovering between the poles of excitement and depression, waxing and waning. Another reason for the neglect of feeling, as a hidden modality of *logos*, is its confusion with emotion. In common parlance we do not make distinctions between feeling and emotion. But philosophically we must not fail to keep them separate. As Paul Ricoeur says: "Our natural inclination is to speak of feeling in terms apparent to emotions, that is, to affections conceived as (1) inwardly directed states, and (2) mental experiences closely tied to bodily disturbances, as is the case in fear, anger, pleasure and pain."¹⁰ Ricoeur further says: "... both traits come together. To the extent that in emotion we are, so to speak, under the spell of our body, we are delivered to mental states with little intentionality, as though in emotion we lived our body in a more intense way."¹¹ For him, genuine feelings are not emotion although they may be "embraced" or "surrounded" by it. Rather, they are "negative", "suspensive" experiences in relation to the literal emotions of everyday life. They imply an *epoche* of our bodily emotions.¹²

However, a further doubt is to be found raising its head. How could it be possible for feeling to function as an aspect or dimension of *logos* – one beyond cognitive rationality? Is not feeling essentially a subjective state considered without reference to an object? As a matter of fact throughout the history of philosophy and psychology feeling is regarded as a state of consciousness without an object. But this is due to our usual interpretation and understanding of feeling. The use of the word "feel" in language is always in reference to an object. Feeling must have an object. In this regard it is like cognitivity of consciousness. When sensing or thinking it is impossible not to sense or think of something. Similarly, in feeling it is impossible not to feel something. Let us try to feel without being directed toward, without feeling some object – it will seem impossible. If feeling is intentional then it is precisely the capacity to enter into relationship to objects. It involves even something more. To clarify what we want to say we may fall back upon Husserl's distinction between objectifying and non-objectifying acts. The non-objectifying act signifies such an act that itself does not possess the mark of being object-constituting but nevertheless aims at an object. Non-objectifying acts mostly refer to a feeling or an act of feeling. Feeling acts are not objectifying acts but are nonetheless aiming at objects.¹³ Why we bring in this distinction will be explained below. But before that let us consider one thing. In what does the alleged cognitivity of consciousness consist? In the *logos* tradition, it consists in the absolute validity of the intellectual *logos*. But we may speak of knowing a whole range of objects in the sense of, say, recognizing a face, without necessarily describing it; we may speak of knowing a person, a piece of music, of moral good and evil, of knowing the religious dimension of life or God, although unable to make exact true statements about them. Some of

the things of which we are aware, may be voluntarily called up, as when we imagine constructively, or they may be voluntarily received, as when we open our eyes upon the sunset. There is hardly any reason to fit in consciousness of objects into the mould of strictly critical cognition. Can consciousness operate in isolation from will and feeling? Is not consciousness colored by these? The English word "feeling" is equivalent in meaning to *rāga*, a concept from Indian musicology. *Rāga*, which is taken as pro-disposition and held as the contrary of *virāga*, contra-disposition, is often interpreted as that which colors the mind or consciousness. That feeling is not so disparagable a candidate in knowledge comes from Russell. Russell describes knowledge of mathematics as having a beauty as cold as marble and comparable to the closing cantos of Dante's *Paradiso*.¹⁴

Feeling is a kind of experience in which we experience something in a way which is itself fundamental and for which any other reason is not possible. It is an experience which we cannot account for by any other cognition. Feeling is a basic and primitive mode of understanding the world and ourselves. The act of giving meaning to the phenomena is accomplished not by imposing concepts, categories, ideas and principles upon them. Feeling makes the object felt obvious. It is revealed or manifested. It shows itself as itself. "I see a tumbler on the table" is a determinative judgment. Before this determination takes place the being of the thing as naked breaks upon our consciousness. We may call this feeling consciousness before we are concerned with the cognition of the thing in question. In feeling, the object felt is manifested in its totality as a unity, as one. In a subject-predicate judgment this unity is lost and we cannot get it back; getting back the unity will be an endless task. Feeling gives voice to a vision of the world which is not fully accessible to the rational working of the *logos*. Here is an act of awareness that brings consciousness closer to its object while pure intellectual reason puts it at a certain distance. The spontaneity and vitality with which feeling relates to its object implies a greater totality of fulfillment than is involved in the cognitive standpoint in which the subject of the cognitive activity is abstracted from its embodiment. We may say that feeling does not constitute its object. In fact, there is no need of that. The object is made our own by our touching it with feeling. The object gives itself over to feeling; it, as it were, "donates" itself.

What has been said above holds true not only of our everyday experience but of all artistic creations. In the latter, the felt unity between the artist and the projected object of his creation is a precondition of artistic activity. In creating something we try to project an alternative vision of the world, of alternative possibilities beyond the habitual pursuits of everyday. It has been held that in aesthetic experience, we are made to realize the world more fully or richly real than we do in normal experience. Art is no less deepening of the world-consciousness than it is a clarification of self-consciousness. Our poet Rabindranath Tagore says: "... there is the vast world ... which is personal to us. We must not merely *know* it, and then put it aside, but must *feel* it – because by feeling it we *feel* ourselves."¹⁵

The order that feeling bestows on the world is not effected through the mechanism of categories, concepts, ideas, representations, etc. The immediacy with which the felt object is enfolded in the feeling act discovers facts and relation between

facts such that facts become meaningful. This interrelatedness and unity of facts is declared to be truth. In feeling we transform facts into human truth. We feel, for example, the *serenity* of the sky, the *placidity* of the lake water, the *gloriousness* of a sunset, the *sublimity* of a mountain and so on; we also feel the appropriateness of a sequence of music, of the positive moral quality of love, or of the religious “numinous”. To speak of music; pure music, *mārga saṅgīt* in Sanskrit language, which has no theme outside the musical ones, is a fully developed articulation of meaning which we certainly come to experience through feeling. The world is real when it is known not only by “critical reason”, but also when it comes within the range of our feeling. We may here recall again Rabindranath’s very acute observation in one of his poems “Śukatārā” which may be rendered in English as “The Morning Star”. There is the astronomical reality of the Planet Venus, an “objective” truth of science indeed. And there is the *human* reality of a greater significance to us, of what we call Śukatārā, the luminous astral body, appearing like an autumnal dewdrop glistening on the forehead of dawn. The two, Rabindranath avers, deliver to us objectivity, but in different senses; the former in a weaker sense and the latter in a stronger sense. One is “weaker” because it is calculative, and the other is “stronger” because we have made it our own by bringing it to the unitary locus of our feeling, marked by immediacy and intensity. If such a conviction is endorsable then a revision of the received conception of *logos* is called for, by implication. *Logos* understood as cognitive rationality no longer serves as the central concept in understanding the human world. The critical consciousness is not the whole story of man. A man is a full person and not just a cognitive mind and it requires the resources of a full person to understand him and his world. “Our universe is the sum total of what man feels, knows, imagines, reasons to be . . .”¹⁶

I submit further that feeling establishes the conditions for the possibility of active engagement in a world with others. Feelings of love and sympathy make possible transcendence of the tragic dominance of the self and de-alienated living with others in the world. Society as a community of selves is marked by a we-feeling, that is, a feeling of I with others. It is a model of non-alienated living. Such a society cannot be brought into existence automatically. It is not received as a gift or forced into existence from outside. Society exists because man ever recreates his relations to others through love and sacrifice. The power of love not only sustains life, human and sub-human, it also transforms society into a harmony of persons. This apart, feeling is related to creativity as such. Creativity is very much a part of human life. As Tagore illustrates it: “. . . man by nature is an artist; he never receives passively or accurately in his mind a physical representation of things around him. There undergoes a continual adaptation, a transformation of facts into imagery, through constant touches of sentiment and imagination.”¹⁷

Artistic creativity has a very complex relationship with feeling. The projected object of creation must be made a content of feeling, and sustained by it. A creative genius or any ordinary individual experiencing a creative process is quite conscious about sensing creative ideas that form in his imagination. But the artist intends to look forward to have perspicuous representation. Representation involves, besides will and reason, feelings and sentiments through which the artist in any area nurtures

the gestate images. The many modifications that the artist makes on the canvas or the musician in fine-tuning the notes on his musical instrument are shifts from an imperfect state of feeling to a perfect state and finally, result in the feeling states of joy or pride.¹⁸

The metamorphosis or transformation takes place on another level. The creative art lives in our felt experience unfolding various meanings which undergo metamorphosis according to the way it is appreciated or discarded, or the joy and the satisfaction it provides to us. So both on the level of genesis and the level of appreciation creativity is enmeshed with the feelings of happiness, joy and satisfaction. The creative process is never complete. There is perhaps an element of truth in the lament that the best painting is yet to be drawn or the best poetry is yet to be written. For, there is a continual modification of creative ideas paralleling the refinement, sharpening and deepening of feelings. Creative experiences cannot be limited to human rationality. It might be the case that reason impedes such activities. For example, when trying to improve upon a musical score or creating a new *rāga* within the Indian classical music it is good to suspend the processes of analysis, articulation, justification, etc. So, there are non-reasoning activities like creative activities which suspend the authority of the *logos*.

To conclude: We have stated the first moment of assertion of the *logos* and the later stages of revision. And we have tried to posit feeling as an organizing factor at the very heart of human life and human world at the same time unfolding its relation to creative activity which bestows its own order on reality. Feeling is shown not as a rival of *logos*, subplanting it but as a hidden dimension of it.

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NOTES

¹ A.-T. Tymieniecka (ed.), "The Logos of Phenomenology and Phenomenology of the Logos", Book 1, *Analecta Husserliana*, Vol. LXXXVIII, (Netherlands: Springer, 2005), Vol. LXXXIII, p. xiii.

² David Roochnik, *The Tragedy of Reason: Toward a Platonic Conception of Logos* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), introduction, p. 12.

³ Charles Taylor, "Language and Human Nature" in *Human Agency and Language, Philosophical Papers 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 reprint), p. 222.

⁴ Heraclitus, Fragment No. 50, from Herman Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1952). Source: David Roochnik. *The Tragedy of Reason, op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁵ Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, trans. Dorian Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 18. Emphasies Husserl's.

⁶ J.N. Mohanty, *The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl: A Historical Development* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 288.

⁷ A.-T. Tymieniecka, "The Logos of Phenomenology and Phenomenology of the Logos", *op. cit.* p. xiv.

⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, trans. Marianna Cowen (Chicago: Dayakrishna, 1962), p. 55.

⁹ David Roochnik, *The Tragedy of Reason, op. cit.*, p. 191.

¹⁰ Paul Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process", *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. V, No. 1, Special issue on metaphor (1978), p. 156.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹³ Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations II*, trans. J.N. Findlay, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 743.

¹⁴ Bertrand Russell, *Autobiography* (London: Bantam Books, Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1969), Vol. 3, p. 52.

¹⁵ Rabindranath Tagore, *Creative Unity* (London: Macmillan, 1959), p. 16. Emphasies mine.

¹⁶ Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man* (London: Unwin, 1963), p. 15.

¹⁷ Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁸ Ranjan K. Panda, "Creative Visualization: A Semantic Analysis", *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*, Vol. xxi, No. 2 (2004), p. 99.

THE FEAST OF LIFE OR THE FEAST OF
REASON – KIERKEGAARD VERSUS PLATO

“The thought is transparent in the dialogue, and the action in the situation” (Søren Kierkegaard)

ABSTRACT

The article consists of three sections. The first section “Dialogue at the intersection of literature and philosophy” analyzes the fundamental differences between the two modes of human intellectual activity – philosophy and literature on the basis of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s philosophy. Nevertheless, the intersection is possible in the form of dialogue. The second chapter “Negative existential maeutics” is dedicated to Kierkegaard’s conception of existential maeutics in comparison with the Socratic maeutics. The stress is put upon its negative characteristics – the distance, the interruption, the situation of existential shock. These restrictions are necessary to allow the participants’ self-knowing. The third chapter explores they ways how Kierkegaard in his fragments *In Vino Veritas* reenacts Plato’s dialogue *Symposium* in order to demonstrate his strategy of negative existential maeutics in practice. If the goal the classical maeutics is the birth of knowledge during the process of conversation, then Kierkegaard’s goal is the birth of subjectivity and self-recognition.

The motto by Danish religious thinker Søren Kierkegaard breaks the grounds for the development of the theme “The feast of life or the feast of reason – Kierkegaard versus Plato,” as it points towards the special role of dialogue both in philosophy and literature. Of course, it is necessary to take into account the respective differences between these two realms of intellectual endeavors brilliantly disclosed by Anna Teresa Tymieniecka in the book 3 of her monumental work “Logos and Life,” entitled “The Passions of the Soul and the Elements in the Onto-Poiesis of Culture.” The differences apply also to the dialogue – be it literary or philosophical by its nature, and to the historical sources of the dialogical activity, having in mind, first of all – Socrates’ dialectic dialogue, Plato’s intellectual dialogue and Aristotle’s theory of drama, and comparison of the antique and modern interpretations of the dialogue and their respective roles in defining personality. All in all the dialogue, according to Kierkegaard, should be viewed as a specific way of conveying essential or existential truth about the world and about the conveyer himself. The form of communication may be almost similar, while the content – as different as it can be speaking of the speculative and the existential mode of philosophizing. Still, the most puzzling question is not so much about the influence of Socrates

and Plato upon Kierkegaard's mode of thinking (though it is important one), but rather – of the reason why Kierkegaard chooses to reenact one of the Plato's dialogues (“Symposium”) in a different setting and with different personages. The aim of the present investigation is to explore the reawakening of certain trends of antiquity in Kierkegaard paying a special attention to the short masterpiece *In Vino Veritas* (part of the longer work “Stages on Life's Way”) that appears to be, though not so obvious, the enactment of the Plato's dialogue *Symposium*. The choice of these two particular dialogues (*In Vino Veritas* and *Symposium*) accounts for the title of the present paper, namely, the celebration of reason versus the celebration of life, the intellectual dialogue versus the existential one. Thus the task is at least twofold – first, to explore the influence of antiquity upon the Kierkegaard's thought on the basis of the particular example, and, second – to investigate his idiosyncratic conception of the dialogue as the negative existential maieutics that nevertheless bears an imprint of the classical philosophical dialogue.

DIALOGUE AT THE INTERSECTION OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy and literature are caught in a constant contest as each attempt to absorb each other's task.
(Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka)

Despite the obvious similarities between two modalities (literature and philosophy) of the human intellectual activity there are also crucial differences between them. This problem has been discussed in depth in Anna Teresa Tymieniecka's monograph “The Passions of the Soul and the Elements in the Onto-Poiesis of Culture.” Both literature and philosophy set their task to present the world, but they differ in the matters of *what* to present and *how* to present it. “. . . there is an innermost motivation for the writer's urge to write, to communicate something uniquely his own to a public, to the society of his time, and to enrich by his message – or even transform – the culture of his period or of all time even.” (Tymieniecka 1990, p. 13) At the same time: “To reveal reasons is, in fact, the main task of the philosophical test.” (Tymieniecka 1990, p. 14) As to their relation it falls to philosophy to define and conceptualize the task and the role of literature. Of course, there is no a clear cut demarcation line between those two, and sometimes it becomes quite a difficult, almost impossible task to separate them as they always tend to invade each other's territory. Then could it be possible to speak of the philosophical literature and literary philosophy rather than of literature and philosophy as diverse modes of knowing and presentation? Don't they often have the same concepts in their disposal? Anna Teresa Tymieniecka emphatically insists that despite the similarities and sometimes almost coincidental narrative structures and rhetorical argumentation literature has its own unique vocation that non reducible to any other form of intellectual activity. “The role of literature, that to which it means are geared, is not to explain the world and life as we discover it by positive, universally valid, intellectual means. It is to *recreate* the world and life after we have already lived it and come to know it in the positive sense, to transform what trivial and bare positivism yields through the

creative vision.” (Tymieniecka 1990, pp. 17–18) *Creative vision* is the key concept in speaking about the fate and ongoing development of philosophy and literature in the Occidental tradition. A.-T. Tymieniecka proposes five general distinctions between them on the basis of their respective aims, means of expression (languages) and vision of the underlying structures and laws, attitudes towards the concreteness and abstractedness, and, finally, roles they play in the sphere of human knowing as such. Now let us turn in short to each of these statements of diversity.

If philosophy aims at discovering the most general principles of life and human existence, then literature is concerned with the most unique and personal vision of the state of affairs within and outside.

The challenge for philosophy, the philosopher’s quest is to give the rational and structures explanation of subtle and manifest phenomena of life “in order to provide principles explaining the definite nature of reality according to a most general outline of the vision of each philosopher. . .”. (Tymieniecka 1990, p. 19) The writer, in contrary, seeks to fashion his idiosyncratic version of the world and to express it in the most intuitive manner “to give it the most particular, specific, personal incorporation in human life-situations, characters, intertwining of events, etc. in accordance with his deepest feelings, emotions, strivings, and urges – stemming from his own flesh and blood, and spirit.” (Ibid.)

This point regards the universality of the language – if the philosopher intends to use the abstract notions, more or less precise and formulated clearly in order to be understood at least within the context of one or another philosophical tradition or school (keeping in mind the Continental and Anglo American divide, for instance), then the writer tries to evoke the most personal feelings, appealing to particularity in order to receive the emotional response.

The role of philosophy is the one of enlightenment “about the parameters of human existence, its nature and prospects, options and limitations; it offers this clarification to all men in all situations and also indicates the proper conduct for their fulfillment.” (Ibid.) Whereas literature, accordingly operates on a different level – on the margins of consciousness inhibited by fleeting impressions, vague reminiscences, deeply personal life experiences; in other words, literature tries “*to establish contact* between the living reader and his vision of life.” (Tymieniecka 1990, p. 20) And in this sense it promotes the reader’s self-understanding and self-inscription on reality, deciphering the life-significance and enlargement of the self beyond the limits of the individual ego. These distinctions, Anna Teresa Tymieniecka concludes, allow distinguishing the vocation of literature from the one of philosophy, and at the same time to stress their generic affinities.

Still, in our opinion, the dialogue in the form proposed by Plato is something that could be described as being at the intersection of philosophy and literature as it aims at disclosing the universal structures and forms behind particular appearances. Though, it has to be admitted that Plato himself, in the *Gorgias* has drawn a sharp demarcation line between philosophy and what he calls rhetorical practices. He states that the task of philosophy is truth rather than persuasion as people could be persuaded to believe in untruth by a skillful speaker. Like a sick person can be talked into not following the doctor’s orders and this can result in his death; likewise

in the legal and political matters. It seems then that philosophy calls for a special form of expression that is not subject to changing opinions and mood swings, the form that could be as transparent, as unvocal as the mathematical equitation, in other words, it calls for a tractate. But what does Plato himself do? He constructs imaginary dialogues between real and/or imaginary characters, inserts comic episodes of mishaps of participants (hiccupping, drunken behavior), includes everyday expressions and descriptions of daily activities, in short – he creates a story consisting of the beginning, climax and narrative conclusion. All this seemingly (at least on the surface) exhibits the paradigm of the literary expression, not of the philosophical, if we are to believe what Plato has declared in *Gorgias*. Thus we may conclude that all this has been done on purpose. But what purpose? Yes, Plato offers his readers the dramaturgical setting, but at the same time he doesn't create an illusion of illusion of the dramatic action – each speech has to be understood separately. It is to say, that Plato creates a distance between his personal views upon the world and views expressed by different characters, the reader is bound to read and to understand all by himself, without the guidance of the author behind the scene. So by the means of such distancing Plato turns the short literary caprice into the philosophical reflection about the fundamental questions of the world order – be they about the love for wisdom, the highest goodness, the justice, the pre-forms of all existing, and so on. Interestingly enough, the same principle of distance was employed by Søren Kierkegaard in his works, not the least in his *In Vino Veritas*, only his aim is to facilitate the birth of the subjectivity and the subjective truth.

NEGATIVE EXISTENTIAL MAEUTICS

But just as there is something deterring about irony, it likewise has something extraordinarily seductive and fascinating. Its masquerading and mysteriousness, the telegraphic communication it prompts because an ironist always has to be understood at a distance, the infinite sympathy it presupposes, the fleeting but indescribable instant of understanding that is immediately superseded by the anxiety of misunderstanding – all this holds one prisoner in inextricable bonds. (Søren Kierkegaard)

Of course, Kierkegaard's interest in antiquity was by no means accidental; it has run through his whole authorship. Moreover, he was always apt to use the antique sources for his own purposes (in the development of his philosophical stance), which only rarely complied with the original intentions of the ancient authors. In this respect Kierkegaard's interest is not historical, or rather – not historical in *sensu strictu*. To illustrate this point let us remember his dissertation "On the concept of irony with constant reference to Socrates" (1841). Notwithstanding the scandal in the academic milieu surrounding the process of defense (asking the special permit of the King to write dissertation in Danish contrary to the common practice at the times to submit it in Latin, as well as rendering seemingly non-academic, rather provocative style of narration, etc.) it is a serious research of the concept of irony both in antiquity and modernity. At the same time here, at least in retrospect, it is possible to see some hints of his strategy of existential communication that in our opinion forms the axis of his whole philosophical endeavor. This, in turn, means two things: first,

if communication is to be regarded as one of the basic concepts then there appears a possibility of vision of the Kierkegaard's authorship; second, the concept of communication itself functions in two ways – as a certain form of relying information (answering the question *how?*) and exchange of information (intersubjectivity); and as a manifestation of existence that presupposes ethical choice, internalization and self becoming. Thus the use of the concept is quite broad. If the former could be described as an “existential communication” (a form of communication, characterized by distance, gap, understating), the latter – as “existence-communication” (content what is to be communicated and process of communication itself). Perhaps one of the best descriptions of this specific mode of communication is given by Alstair Hannay: “Being ‘existential,’ such ‘communication’ differs from that on topics about which people can advise one another, discuss and agree on how to deal with them, or give each other general rules or prescriptions for doing that. An existential matter requires, as it were, a self-provided personal boost on the part of the recipient, something more than the recognition and acceptance of some such rule.” (Hannay 2001, p. 12) Such statement, in turn, brings forth the Aristotle's distinction between *techné* and *praxis*, where the latter opens up the possibility to establish harmonious relationship with the word by the means of personal activity; and since the source of disharmony is placed in the outside world, the disharmony can be avoidable. For Kierkegaard, in contrary, the source of disharmony is internal; thus all dialogical activity consists of two steps – towards oneself and only after that – towards others. Therefore, according to Kierkegaard the most important thing in each and every act of communication is the act of self-understanding and self-becoming rather than giving information to someone. Therefore *praxis* for Kierkegaard is mostly inward oriented activity and in order to communicate it a special form of arranged dialogue is of a prime necessity, namely, Kierkegaard stages a situation, that makes it impossible for reader to identify with life positions encoded in the work. He creates a distance between himself and a reader. Of course, such a relationship is asymmetrical, as one of the partners (the initiator) has an advantage – he and only he alone knows possible scenarios of future relations between the author and the reader (this accounts for the term “arranged” dialogue used in the present investigation); he and only he knows that this arranged dialogue won't contribute to the clarification of the matter, but rather – it will make the initial theme less clear, less transparent, and, finally maybe non-important at all. One has to learn that de-railing with such provocation in either way – to yield or to resist to it – involves reevaluation of the personal attitude towards the text and the tracking those changes within personality which occurred during the process of reading.

To reach the desired effect Kierkegaard uses various rhetorical techniques to stop the dialogue for some time (to stop, not to termination) such as mixing different genres and styles, contrasting life positions and world views within a single book, abandonment of narrative conclusions, narrative ruptures, problematization of the identity of pseudonyms and disclaiming the authorial authority. Regarding this problem Kierkegaardian scholar George Pattison states: “For, like many great works in literature, Kierkegaard's writings themselves construct the role (or roles) that their readers are obliged to assume in the course of their reading. . . . we must learn to

reflect on how we ourselves are addressed as readers: how we are seduced, how we are abandoned, how we are provoked.” (Pattison 1997, p. 292) The interrupted, stalled dialogue, in other words, compels the reader to pay attention to himself first, rather than seek the safety of collective opinion – only understanding the Self could be grounds for understanding others.

Kierkegaard contemplates the concept of maeutics, its meaning and practical applications as early as in the chapter “View made possible” devoted to the Socratic dialogic (narrative) dialogue of his dissertation. Step by step tracking the outer manifestations and hidden meanings of the Socratic art of questioning Kierkegaard formulates his own principles of the existential maeutics. These idiosyncratic principles received the thorough explication in the reenactment of the Plato’s *Symposium* later on in his authorship. The essence of the Socratic maeutics Kierkegaard grasps in the following statement: “. . . thought does not understand itself, does not love itself until it is caught up in the other’s being, and for such harmonious being it becomes not only unimportant but also impossible to determine what belongs to each one, because the one always owns nothing but owns everything in the other.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 30) This means that the self-recognition starts with the knowing what other people think of us (we become the co-owners of such information), this leads to the dissolution of all borders between the self and others, and finally to the feel of one’s inner poverty since the integrity of the self is lost in the process and the self becomes the source for others to know themselves. In other words, according to Kierkegaard, the true self-recognition becomes impossible as there is no the sense of the self anymore. The existential maeutics, in contrary, is a process that ensures integrity of the self by maintaining the border between the self and others, nobody can have full knowledge about the other(s), there is always some inner residue left – something unexpressed, untold, withdrawn from the world. “Socrates’ questioning was essentially aimed at the knowing subject for the purpose of showing that when all was said and done they knew nothing whatsoever.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 37) Kierkegaard’s maeutics is also directed towards the subject, but difference lies in the result of the dialogue – not knowing. If the Socratic disciplined (because it presupposes the certain role play, where one person is an interrogator, another – a respondent) dialogue is an attempt to let the thought manifest itself in its objectivity, the Kierkegaardian arranged (there is a role play as well, but the process of interrogation and inner changes while interrogating is much more important than answers received) dialogue results in the birth of subjectivity. Therefore, the Socratic not knowing exhibits the uncertainty about the world and the self in the world, but the Kierkegaardian counterpart exhibits the uncertainty about oneself and the world within this self. For Socrates “to ask questions – that is, the abstract relation between the subjective and the objective – ultimately became the primary issue for him.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 37) Kierkegaard, in turn, strives to create a situation where the individual could question himself, performing a kind of self-diagnostics that is possible only in the situation of solitude. This self-cognition, seclusion, in turn, is the mandatory condition for making the ethical choice what is the most important for Kierkegaard. This grants the existential status to the dialogue (existential in the sense that the stress is put upon changes within the communicating subject,

not to the informative result of the communication). Moreover, in our opinion, for the sake of precision, we can to add also the aspect of negativity to the current description; this aspect characterizes limitations of the dialogue which are applied intentionally by Kierkegaard in order to create a situation of the existential shock for an individual. This initial shock, according to him, is the necessary starting point for self understanding.

Kierkegaard also discusses the difference between two concepts – speaking and interrogating. He believes that only the latter represents the maeutical relation, because “. . . the subject is an account to be settled between the one asking and one answering, and the thought development fulfills itself in this rocking gait (*altero pede*), in this limping to both sides.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 35) Asking questions presupposes particular intellectual activity, the absolutely receptive relation to the subject and admittance of not knowing. “Although such a question form is supposed to free the thought from every solely subjective determinant, nevertheless in another respect it succumbs entirely to the subjective as long as the questioner is seen only in an accidental relation to what he is asking about. But if asking questions is seen as a necessary relation to its subject, then asking becomes identical with answering.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 35) But in the negative existential maeutics such identity is impossible as any relation to the subject is mediated as each and every questioning prompts, first, the self-interrogation of another party and, second, the presentation of the result of this interrogation that only partly accords to the initial question. The main interest lies in the very process of conversing and the respective inner changes within each party during the conversation, rather than in the possible consensus about the matter and objective knowledge about the world and the self. “. . . intention in asking questions can be twofold. That is, one can ask with the intention of receiving an answer containing the desired fullness, and hence the more one asks, the deeper and more significant becomes the answer; or one can ask without any interest in the answer except to suck out the apparent content by means of the question and thereby to leave emptiness behind. . . . The first is the *speculative* method; the second the *ironic*.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 36) Irony, in turn, requires particular subjective, indirect style of communication. Kierkegaard’s *In Vino Veritas* is an example of such mode of communication especially if we take into account its generic relation to the Plato’s *Symposium*.

K I E R K E G A A R D ’ S I N V I N O V E R I T A S A S R E E N A C T M E N T
O F P L A T O ’ S S Y M P O S I U M

I know very well that I shall not soon forget that banquet in which I participated without being a participant. . . (Søren Kierkegaard)

The stage for *In Vino Veritas* has been set in the very beginning of the fragment: the time and the place (“So I have deliberately selected an environment on the basis of contrast. I have sought the solitude of the forest, yet not a time when the forest itself is fantastic. For example, the stillness of night would not have been conclusive, because it, too, is in the power of the fantastic. I have sought nature’s peacefulness

during the very time when it is itself most placid. I have, therefore, chosen the afternoon light.”) (Kierkegaard 1988, p. 16), and, the most important, the temporary interior decorations to be put up just for the upcoming event (“The whole setting was to be new creation, and then everything has to be demolished – indeed, it would be all right if even before they rose from the table they were to notice preparation for demolition.”) (Kierkegaard 1988, p. 23) Then the mood of the banquet is to be created by the consumption of quite an amount of wine – “. . . no one was to speak before he had drunk enough so that he could detect the influence of the wine or was in the condition in which one says a great deal that one is otherwise not inclined to say – without needing for that reason continually to interrupt continuity of the speech and the thought by hiccups.” (Kierkegaard 1988, p. 30) Here we can detect the reference to Plato’s dialogue and hiccoughing of Aristophanes after drinking wine. The next resemblance is the theme of the gathering, namely, the one of the erotic love; moreover, the stories told shouldn’t be the descriptions of deeply personal stories in their triviality (though they can serve as the starting point for narration), they have to be of the reflective and ironically distanced nature.

The participants of the Copenhagen banquet are various fictional characters from different Kierkegaard’s books – Victor Eremita (the editor) and Johannes Seducer of the “Either – Or”, Constantine and Young Man from the “Repetition”, as well as some previously unknown man – the dressmaker. Hence here the potential reader is confronted by a range of ethical positions, expressed in narratives on various levels: noematical (related to the narrative facts, i.e., the story itself), associative (references to other works and themes by Kierkegaard), and existential (proposition of different life views and existential choices). The very fact that *In Vino Veritas* both structurally and thematically calls on *Symposium*, assigns this fragment a special role in understanding the Kierkegaardian existential maeutics, as playing upon similarities, he makes the differences even more audible. Kierkegaard is interested in the individual rather than the nature of things and the main question he posts is: “What does determine authenticity or inauthenticity of the personality?” Kierkegaard maintains that the individuality can’t be reduced to any abstract universal principle; from the viewpoint of the Greek classical philosophy such approach could be regarded as irrational. Kierkegaard wouldn’t agree to that since he doesn’t oppose the role of reason as such, but rather – the principle of universal objective reason. He strives to enlarge the scope of the notion of truth, placing it outside mere limits of objectivity. Kierkegaard places a special emphasis on the extra-narrative elements in Plato’s dialogue such as, Aristophane’s hiccoughing, Eryximachus helping him to overcome this misdemeanor, arrival of drunken Alcibiades, Socrates’ coming late, arrival of the loud troop of revelers at the very end of the party; each of these episodes are being commented (often if an ironical manner), and all this, according to Kierkegaard serves the purpose to interrupt the dialogue. For example, when belated Socrates arrives, Agathon invites him to lie down besides saying: “I may touch you and have the benefit of that wise thought which came into your mind in the portico, and is now in your possession; for I am certain that you would not come away until you have found what you sought.” (Plato, p. 126) The structure of *Symposium* and roles played there by different actors Kierkegaard describes in the following way: “Thus

all these speeches are like sliding telescope; the one presentation ingeniously merges into the other and in the process is so lyrically effervescent that it is like wine in crystal so artfully polished that it is not only the bubbling wine in it that intoxicates but also the infinite refraction, the light that blazes forth when one looks down into it.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 42) This means that every time we cast a glance upon the dialogue, it presents a different facet, a different relation between persons involved; a different set of meanings emerges. It seems that this changing perspective, this rocky gait (*alternò paede*), this unpredictability of the dialogue allows Kierkegaard in his creative reenactment (not imitation, not literal rereading) to practice his own existential maeutics. Kierkegaard makes use also of the Platonic tactics of the double recollection – both dialogues are stories told by people who had heard them from somebody else. Apollodorus repeats the dialogue which he had heard from Aristodemus, and had already once narrated to Glaucon. But even Aristodemus has to rely on other eye witnesses as he falls asleep and doesn’t follow the course of events. “Aristodemus was only half awake, and he did not hear the discourse. . .” (Plato, p. 186) The role of Aristodemus in *In Vino Veritas* is being played by William Afham, a silent witness. Certain similarities can be found in the ending of both dialogues – at the day break Socrates leaves others sleeping and goes off at first to the Lyceum and then home. “Thus the dialogue would presumably end without a conclusion, but this ‘without a conclusion’ is by no means synonymous with a negative conclusion.” (Kierkegaard 1992, p. 55) Kierkegaard believes that such conclusion without conclusion is a deliberate step taken by Plato (alias Socrates) in order to leave a reader in the state of not knowing. Whereas in Copenhagen the first rays of sun illuminate the idyllic scene – Judge William and his wife having early morning tea and demonstrated the blissful peace of the married life. No need to remind that Judge William is but one more character populating Kierkegaard’s “Either – Or.” This fragment ends in the surprise conclusion that contradicts to everything done and said during the banquet. So none of the onlookers “seemed gratified by this outcome, but others were content with making a malicious remark.” (Kierkegaard 1988, p. 85) Such an ending, as Kierkegaard sees it, serves as effective instrument to disrupt the unity of the literary piece at hand, and the purpose in doing so is to create a situation where the reader starts to question his own understanding of the material, of the position proposed by the author; such questioning, according to Kierkegaard, is the mandatory precondition for becoming the self, i.e. for actualization of one of the multiple existential possibilities.

The first speaker the Young Man in *In Vino Veritas* presents the scope of problems to be discussed (heterosexual erotic love and marriage) and sets the tone for the further speeches (in general quite arrogant towards women and feminine matters). The opening question is the crucial one – is the erotic love possible at all? According to the Young Man – it is not possible as, on one hand, feelings of love are irrational and from the viewpoint of rationalism they have no sense (“Therefore, you see, in my view Eros is the greatest contradiction imaginable – and comic as well.” (Kierkegaard 1988, p. 33)); on the other hand – the idealization of the feeling makes a man unable to fall in love with a real person. The similar contradiction prevails in the very idea of marriage – if the man comes into this world as a whole

being then why during his life course does he suddenly feel like a part of that whole? And the child born in this marriage repeats the cycle of being the whole first and then a part later on, thus the tragedy of life is ever growing. The latter statement reminds Aristophane's declaration in the *Symposium*: "Methinks I have a plan which will humble their pride and improve their manners; men shall continue to exist, but I will cut them in two and then they will be diminished in strength and increased in numbers. . ." (Plato, p. 144) The similarity of these statements is by no means a coincidence, the reader is to be reminded of the Plato's dialogue in order to have several layers of meaning. The second speaker of *In Vino Veritas* reflects on the feminine inconsistency and dependability upon outer circumstances (women are only relative rather than self substantial beings). He states: "And now for woman, of whom I will speak. I, too, have pondered and have fathomed her category; I, too, have sought but have also found and have made a matchless discovery, which I now communicate to you. She is properly construed only under the category of jest. It is the man's function to be absolute, to act absolutely, to express the absolute; the woman exists in the relational." (Kierkegaard 1988, p. 48) The most important aspect of the present statement, in our opinion, is the one of doubled reflection, namely, the woman is the construction by help of which the man can carry out his self-reflection. In other words, for the man to understand himself another person (here – a woman) is necessary, but not a real living person, rather – a construct to be used for his own purpose of self-knowing. Here again we can see the exposition of Kierkegaard's negative maetics as the dialogue between these two species of human race is impossible. "Between two such different entities no real interaction can take place." (Ibid.) Victor Eremita turns against marriage as the end of the ideality, because marriage inevitably leads to the philistinism (the woman is not capable of theoretical reflection, her life is the one of everydayness). The Dressmaker, in turn, accentuates that the woman is not worth even to be the object of erotic imagination. It seems that the one and only person in the dialogue to praise the woman is Johannes Seducer. But after criticizing all the previous speakers and their respective positions he gradually comes to the conclusion, that the woman is nothing more than an empty abstraction, a caprice, an instrument for self-reflection, self-construction. "Woman, even less than the god, is whim from a man's brain, a daydream, something one hits upon all by oneself and argues about *pro et contra*." (Kierkegaard 1988, p. 73) Thus after the last speech in our disposal there is a set of quite similar in their attitudes speeches. Doesn't it contradict to the hypothesis of the present paper that Kierkegaard offers different views in order to preclude identification with one single position? Because now the single, it seems, position is being reinforced by multiple repetitions. Yes, it may be so, but then we have to look for the existential content of the dialogue not in the narrative structures of the story itself, but in its generic relation to the Plato's text (playing upon similarities and differences), as well as in the underlying questions: "What does it mean to be the authentic self? Can the authenticity of the self be gained by the means of erotic love?" As to these questions in the end we receive both negative and positive answers – the negative in the speeches of the banqueters, whereas the positive one in the final scene with Judge William and his wife. These contradicting answers compel the reader to make his

personal choice on the basis of all material read and changes that occurred within him while reading. “Kierkegaard’s unsettling maeutics seeks to keep the individual on the journey to selfhood by preventing the sojourner from sinking roots too deeply in finitude. . . . Kierkegaard’s Socratic midwifery attends a spiritual rebirth effected by the volitional repetition of transcendent possibility, instead of the cognitive recollection of immanent ideality.” (Taylor 1980, p. 104) This description by Mark C. Taylor the most precisely characterizes Kierkegaard’s existential maeutics. Kierkegaard prompts the individual to become what he is not. Aesthetical, ethical and religious are not only stages on the life’s way but also the steps in self understanding (natural, ethical and religious). The natural stage signifies the emancipation of the self from the non-differentiated status (immediacy) and the beginning of initial self-reflection. The ethical, in turn, comprises the self-realization of the individual in his concreteness, and manifestation of this stage is the ability to make a deliberate decision. However, the authentic self for Kierkegaard is the religious self – “. . . a person who is fully conscious of the responsibility he bears for his own life constitutes his unique individuality by decisively distinguishing himself from the other selves and by defining his eternal identity in the face of the wholly other God.” (Taylor 1980, p. 252) For Kierkegaard the maeutics is first of all the pedagogic strategy to be accomplished only in the indirect manner, i.e. the individual is to be lured in becoming the self. Instead of offering the concrete solutions the author withdraws himself and leaves the reader alone in front of various models of interpretation and existential codes to make a decision on his own. The confrontation (not harmonization) of these models is the place where, as Kierkegaard believes, the self-reflection can start. Nevertheless at first it is only the potency of reflection (immediate existence), the actualization of this potency requires free, unique exercising of the will (reflection) and only after that – the measuring oneself up with the eternity (secondary immediacy). The form of presentation should be suitable for gradually involving the reader in the dramatic dialogue with different personas and the – with himself. In order the reader could be tricked into self-reflection he must understand the text and therefore the author must understand what the potential reader knows and where his interests lie, the suitable form of indirect presentation must be chosen. Kierkegaard compares this maneuver with an attempt to talk sense into the person who is in love and whose infatuation seems ridiculous and unworthy. In case the language is inappropriate for the case, the lover will withdraw in himself and no talk would be possible at all. There wouldn’t be a better result in the case of a total identification with a position expressed by the author or some character. In both cases there is no real maeutical relation, in Kierkegaard’s view, as there is neither a connection (no ongoing dialogue), nor separation (subject and object become one, thus there is no dialogue as well). The solution to this dilemma, proposed by Kierkegaard is his strategy of existential negative maeutics – a movement towards the self, more precisely, towards self becoming the self.

Kierkegaard’s use of Plato in his *In Vino Veritas* is by no means accidental, just a matter of choice, for him the reenactment of the Plato’s *Symposium* serves the purpose to promote his own philosophical views in the indirect manner. He deliberately plays upon the similarity of both works (establishing the field of references), as

well upon their dissimilarity and incongruity (demonstrating the difference between the classical Greek conception of maieutics and his own conception of the negative existential maieutics).

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GIBT ES EIN MATERIALES APRIORI?

*Mit Moritz Schlicks Kritik An Der Phänomenologie Über Das Verhältnis
Zwischen Sprache Und Vernunft Nachzudenken Anfangen*

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Für die Phänomenologen gibt es freilich ein materiales Apriori, aber diese phänomenologische Behauptung wird zu einer Frage „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“ bei den Opponenten der Phänomenologie, vor allem bei Moritz Schlick. Für Schlick, ist ein materiales Apriori unmöglich. Aber der größte und gründlichste Trugschluss in den Kritiken Schlicks an der Phänomenologie besteht darin, dass Schlick alle Probleme auf einen Satz und ihren Wahrheitswert immer voreilig reduzierte, deswegen können seine Kritiken nicht das phänomenologische eigene Problem treffen. Wahrscheinlich sollen wir Schlick nicht als bloße Opposition ansehen, sondern als Spiegel. In diesem Spiegel kann die Phänomenologie über sich vielleicht besser und tiefer nachdenken. In der Tat kann man finden, dass die Frage „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“ eigentlich zwei Fragen der verschiedenen Stufen in sich schließen kann, nämlich, erstens: „Gibt es sowohl ein anschauliches Apriori als auch ein grammatikalisches Apriori?“ und zweitens: „Welches Verhältnis gibt es zwischen dem anschaulichen Apriori und dem grammatikalischen Apriori?“ Während man durch das Prinzip der Selbstgegebenheit oder der absoluten Evidenz auf die erste Frage antworten kann, können wir aufgrund der Lehre der Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht auf die zweite Frage antworten. In diesem Sinne ist es gerade möglich, dass die Struktur des Denkens und die Struktur der Sprache identisch zu sein scheinen und das grammatikalische Apriori auf das anschauliche Apriori fundiert ist.

Es wird als phänomenologisch wichtige Einsicht angesehen, den Gegensatz „a priori – a posteriori“ mit dem Gegensatz „formal – material“ nicht zu identifizieren, sondern diese zwei Gegensätze zu unterscheiden. Im Gegensatz zu dem materialen Apriori als Kuriosum bei Kant betonen sowohl Husserl als auch Scheler dieses materiale Apriori als reine Tatsache. Scheler führt klarer weiter aus: „Phänomenologie steht und fällt mit der Behauptung, es *gebe* solche Tatsachen –

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und *sie* seien es recht eigentlich, die allen anderen Tatsachen, den Tatsachen der natürlichen und der wissenschaftlichen Weltanschauung, zugrunde lägen, und deren Zusammenhänge allen anderen Zusammenhängen zugrunde lägen.“ (X, S. 448) Dieser doppelten Behauptung kann aufgrund der ursprünglichen Bedeutung des Apriori die Behauptung, *es gebe ein materiales Apriori*, angegliedert werden. Aber diese phänomenologische Behauptung wird zu einer Frage „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“ bei den Opponenten der Phänomenologie, vor allem bei Moritz Schlick.

Für die Phänomenologen gibt es nicht nur ein materiales Apriori, sondern auch „überall dort materiale Aprioritäten“, „wo sich Geist in irgendeiner seiner Aktarten aktuiert.“¹ Aber für Moritz Schlick, ist ein materiales Apriori unmöglich, sie sprechen immer von dem Irrtum, „der von den Verfechtern des materialen Apriori begangen wird“.² Diese zwei verschiedenen Positionen stoßen sich von Anfang an ab, so dass es nicht möglich scheint, sie zueinander zu vermitteln. Mit den Worten von E. Tugendhat ist dies ein Streit auf Leben und Tod und nur eine Position kann nur weiter überleben.³ Deswegen muss man eine Position alternativ einnehmen. Hier werden wir zunächst Schlicks Kritik an Husserl und Scheler kurz umreißen, und dann versuchen wir, für Phänomenologie einzutreten. Wahrscheinlich sollen wir Schlick nicht als bloße Opposition ansehen, sondern als Spiegel. In diesem Spiegel kann die Phänomenologie über sich vielleicht besser und tiefer nachdenken. Am Ende werden wir einige Ergebnisse dieser Reflexion, vor allem das Verhältnis zwischen Sprache und Vernunft, zu erklären versuchen.

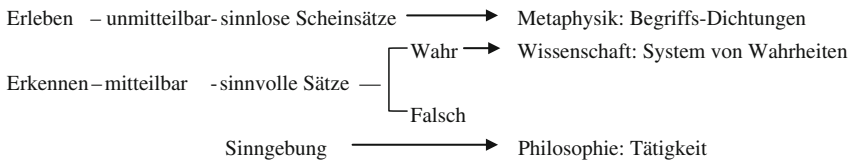
ES GIBT KEIN MATERIALES APRIORI: M. SCHLICKS KRITIK AN HUSSERL UND SCHELER

Wir müssen im Rahmen unseres Themas den Streit zwischen Schlick und der Phänomenologie (vor allem bei Husserl und Scheler) nicht detailliert wiedergeben.⁴ Für uns relevant ist die Tatsache, dass Schlicks Kritik an Husserl und Scheler meiner Ansicht nach zwei grundsätzliche Seiten besitzt. Es geht erstens um die Intuition und Wesensschau bzw. Ideation und zweitens um ein materiales Apriori.

Schlick hat das *Erkennen* vom *Kennen* bereits klar unterschieden. Der Unterschied deckt sich mit dem Gegensatz des Nichtmitteilbaren und des Mitteilbaren. Nach Schlick bedeutet „etwas kennen“ etwas wesentlich anderes als „etwas erkennen“: „kennen“ kann man etwas nur durch das Erleben, und dieses ist stets qualitativ; es lässt sich nicht mitteilen, sondern nur im Erlebnis unmittelbar aufzeigen. Dagegen ist „erkennen“ immer objektiv und mittelbar, „etwas erkennen“ bedeutet, dass sich etwas in einem Urteil oder Satz ausdrückt.⁵ Damit ist nach Schlick der große Fehler aufgedeckt, den die Intuitionsphilosophen, z. B. Husserl, begehen: „Sie verwechseln Kennen mit Erkennen. [...] Kennen und Erkennen sind so grundverschiedene Begriffe, dass selbst die Umgangssprache dafür verschiedene Worte hat; und doch werden sie von der Mehrzahl der Philosophen hoffnungslos miteinander verwechselt. Der rühmlichen Ausnahmen sind nicht allzu viele. Der Irrtum ist zahlreichen Metaphysikern verhängnisvoll geworden.“⁶ Das heißt, alle metaphysischen Lehren, z. B. der Voluntarismus, der Bergsonsche Vitalismus

und natürlich die Phänomenologie, beruhen nach Schlick auf der Verwechslung von „Kennen“ oder „Erleben“ und „Erkennen“, wenn sie das Transzendente statt das Formale zu erkennen, intuitiv zu erleben versuchen. Aus diesem Grund hielt Schlick alle intuitive Metaphysik für Nonsens, d. h. für eine widersprüchliche Wortverbindung.

Schlick hat den Unterschied zwischen Wissenschaft und Philosophie sowie Metaphysik in Bezug auf das Verhältnis beispielsweise des Satzes erklärt. Man kann sagen: Durch die Philosophie werden Sätze geklärt, durch die Wissenschaften werden Sätze verifiziert, die Metaphysik jedoch hat mit Sätzen nichts zu tun, sondern lediglich mit „Scheinsätzen“. Der grundlegende Gedankengang Schlicks lässt sich durch das folgende Schema zusammenfassen:



Für Schlick ist dabei zentral, dass der Unterschied zwischen der Falschheit und der Sinnlosigkeit eines Satzes beachtet wird. Durch diesen Unterschied lässt sich das Folgende verstehen: „Der Empirist sagt dem Metaphysiker nicht: »Deine Worte behaupten etwas Falsches«, sondern »Deine Worte behaupten überhaupt nichts!« Er widerspricht ihm nicht, sondern er sagt: »Ich verstehe dich nicht.«“⁷

Eben in diesem Sinne gehört die Phänomenologie nach Schlick noch zur intuitiven Metaphysik. Obwohl die zentrale Lehre von der „Ideation“ in Husserls Phänomenologie „tatsächlich Richtiges“ enthält, fragt Schlick weiter: „Nur ist zur Lösung unseres Problems damit nicht das Geringste geleistet, man hat ihm nur wieder einen neuen Namen gegeben. Wir müssen nämlich weiter fragen: Ist nicht das intentionale Erlebnis als reale psychische Größe von den idealen Gebilden ebenso weit und unüberbrückbar getrennt, wie etwa die Vorstellungen von den Begriffen? Woher weiß ich denn, worauf meine Akte sich richten? Bin ich mit ihnen nicht wieder mitten in der Psychologie, ohne Aussicht, in das Gebiet der Begriffe und der Logik hinüber zu gelangen, wo allein die Strenge und Schärfe herrscht, um deren Möglichkeit wir besorgt waren?“⁸

Das bedeutet: Die Ideation oder Wesensschau in der Phänomenologie und sogar die Anschauung als Prinzip aller Prinzipien werden bei Schlick zum Kennen oder Erleben (nicht zur Erkenntnis), die Phänomenologie wird zur intuitiven Metaphysik (ist also weder Wissenschaft noch Philosophie). Daher kann man die Unmöglichkeit der Phänomenologie und des Intuitionismus betonen. Wie der Schlick-Schüler Julius Kraft sagt, beruht die phänomenologische Methodik der Wesensanschauung „auf einfachen logischen Fehlern“ und hält „diese Fehler auf Grund vielfältiger Selbsttäuschungen für Intuitionen“.⁹

Um zu demselben Schluss zu kommen, kritisiert Schlick das materiale Apriori in der Phänomenologie. Sowohl die „Wesensschau“ bei Husserl als auch „die phänomenologische Erfahrung“ bei Scheler werden im Gegensatz zur reinen Anschauung

Kants von Schlick als „Quelle schlechthin allgemeingültiger Sätze“ angesehen. „Es wäre natürlich völlig unerlaubt“, das Apriori der Phänomenologen als idealen Gegenstand zu bezeichnen. Denn „ein analytischer Satz ist ein solcher, der vermöge seiner bloßen Form wahr ist; wer den Sinn einer Tautologie verstanden hat, hat damit zugleich ihre Wahrheit eingesehen; deshalb ist sie a priori. Bei einem synthetischen Satz aber muss man zuerst den Sinn verstehen, und hinterdrein feststellen, ob er wahr oder falsch ist; deswegen ist er a posteriori.“¹⁰ Schlick hat a priori wieder mit der Form verbunden und im Gegensatz zu Scheler betont, dass die Identifizierung des Apriorischen und Formalen bei Kant nicht „Voraussetzung oder Vorurteil“ ist, sondern „Ergebnis“. In der Tat bedeutet die Form hier für Schlick nur die Form der Sätze. Gerade in diesem Sinne übt Schlick scharfe Kritik an der Kantischen Lehre von den synthetischen Urteilen a priori sowie an der Husserlschen und auch Schelerschen Phänomenologie.

Nach den neueren Entwicklungen der mathematisch- physikalischen Wissenschaften könne es überhaupt keine synthetischen Sätze a priori geben, die nichts als analytische bzw. nur tautologische Sätze a priori seien. Schlick macht klar, „dass alle Aussagen, prinzipiell gesprochen, entweder synthetisch a posteriori oder tautologisch sind; synthetische Sätze a priori scheinen ihm eine logische Unmöglichkeit zu sein.“¹¹ In demselben Sinne hat Schlick ein materiales Apriori abgelehnt. Für ihn ist ein materiales Apriori wie ein synthetisches Urteil a priori logisch unmöglich. Zugleich hat man nach Schlick auch kein irgendwie besonderes Erkenntnisvermögen (z. B. Wesensschau und die phänomenologische Erfahrung), um solche Sätze oder ein solches materiales Apriori gewinnen zu können.

Schlick hat die Phänomenologen damit in ein Dilemma gebracht: Weil es keine synthetischen Sätze a priori oder materialen Sätze a priori gibt, sind Sätze dieser Art in Wahrheit entweder nicht synthetisch oder nicht a priori.¹² Sind sie nicht a priori, sind alle von den Phänomenologen behaupteten Sätze oder Urteile a posteriori; damit gibt es natürlich kein Wesen oder materiales Apriori als idealen Gegenstand usw. Sind die phänomenologischen Sätze oder Urteile nicht synthetisch, sind sie „rein formal- tautologisch“, sodass Schlick sogar betonen kann: „Als nichtssagende Formeln enthalten sie keine Erkenntnis und können nicht als Grundlage einer besonderen Wissenschaft dienen. Eine solche Wissenschaft, wie die Phänomenologen sie uns versprochen, existiert ja auch in der Tat nicht.“¹³

Aber muss man danach fragen, ob Schlicks Kritiken an der Phänomenologie Husserls und Schelers das phänomenologische eigene Problem treffen können? Kann Schlick daher die revolutionäre Bedeutung der Wesensschau und des materialen Apriori sowie der Phänomenologie selbst anerkennen?

DIE WESENSSCHAU ALS GENUINE METHODE DER ERFASSUNG DES APRIORI

Auch wenn Husserl sich häufig direkt auf Kant bezieht – er bezeichnet z. B. seine Phänomenologie auch als Transzendentalphilosophie – so entfernt er sich doch hinsichtlich des Begriffes „Apriori“ entschieden von Kant. Wie oben erwähnt,

behauptet Husserl an zahlreichen Stellen, dass Kant der phänomenologisch echte Begriff des Apriori gefehlt habe. Er hat den Begriff „Apriori“ bei Kant daher auch als einen „halb mythischen Begriff“ bezeichnet,¹⁴ zu dessen Verwendung er sich nicht „herablassen“ will. Statt dessen zieht er es vor, den Begriff „Apriori“ bei Hume zu erklären, um die Philosophie als strenge fundamentale Wissenschaft zu begründen.¹⁵

Aber was bedeutet eigentlich für Husserl das Apriori? Kürzer gesagt ist a priori bei Kant hauptsächlich ein Adjektiv, dagegen verwendete Husserl Apriori als ein Nomen. Beispielsweise bedeutet die „Anschauung a priori“ bei Kant vor allem eine Art von Form der Anschauung bzw. den subjektiv-strukturellen Charakter a priori, hingegen wird aus der „Anschauung a priori“ von Kant bei Husserl „Anschauung *des Apriori*“, das heißt, Apriori kann für Husserl in der Anschauung erfasst werden, hat also gegenständlichen Charakter.¹⁶ Aber es ist jetzt zu erklären, wie man eigentlich das Apriori phänomenologisch erfassen kann.

Husserls Bestimmung des gegenständlichen Apriori ist mit seiner Betonung des Seins der idealen oder allgemeinen Gegenstände eng verbunden. In den *II. Logischen Untersuchungen* (LU) analysiert Husserl die Seinsweise der idealen oder allgemeinen Gegenstände. Im Gegensatz zum traditionellen Nominalismus behauptet er, dass die idealen oder allgemeinen Gegenstände wahrhaft existieren. „Es hat evidenterweise nicht bloß einen guten Sinn, von solchen Gegenständen (z. B. von *der* Zahl 2, von *der* Qualität Röte, von dem Satz des Widerspruches u. dgl.) zu sprechen und sie als mit Prädikaten behaftet vorzustellen, sondern wir erfassen auch *einsichtig* gewisse kategorische Wahrheiten, die auf solche ideale Gegenstände bezüglich sind.“¹⁷ Damit verteidigt Husserl die „Eigenberechtigung“ der idealen oder allgemeinen Gegenstände neben den realen oder individuellen Gegenständen. Aber die idealen Gegenstände haben für Husserl im Gegensatz zum Platonischen Realismus ihnen eigentümliche Seinsweisen. Das heißt, er lehnt sowohl die psychologische Hypostasierung der idealen Gegenstände als auch ihre metaphysische Hypostasierung ab.¹⁸ In der Tat sind die idealen Gegenstände als eigentümliche Seins-Art der Gegenstände uns laut Husserl in einer einsichtigen Ideenschau selbst gegeben. Das gegenständliche Apriori gehört gerade zu solchen idealen Gegenständen.

Diese einsichtige Ideenschau, in der uns das Apriori selbst gegeben ist, wird von Husserl als „Ideation“ oder „ideierende Abstraktion“ und später „Wesensschau“ oder „Wesensanschauung“ bezeichnet. Im Unterschied zu der Abstraktion im Empirismus, die die „Hervorhebung irgendeines unselbstständigen Moments an einem sinnlichen Objekte“ bedeutet, betont Husserl diese „ideierende Abstraktion“, „in welcher statt des unselbstständigen Moments seine »Idee«, sein Allgemeines zum Bewusstsein, zum *aktuellen Gegebensein* kommt.“¹⁹ Wie schon gesagt, beruft sich die Phänomenologie als universalster und konsequentester Empirismus auf den erweiterten Begriff der Erfahrung oder Anschauung. Damit hat Husserl bereits in den *Logischen Untersuchungen* den Begriff der Anschauung erweitert: Neben der sinnlichen Anschauung gibt es auch die kategoriale Anschauung.²⁰ Nach Husserl kann man gemäß der Weise der gegenständlichen Beziehung zwei verschiedene Arten der kategorialen Anschauung, den *synthetischen* Akt und den

abstraktiven Akt, unterscheiden.²¹ Der Letztere ist die hier besprochene „ideierende Abstraktion“ oder „Ideation“ und wird später von Husserl als „Wesensschau“ oder „Wesensanschauung“ bezeichnet.

In diesem Sinne kann man sagen: „Die Rechtmäßigkeit des Anspruchs der Phänomenologie, Wissenschaft zu sein, hängt also davon ab, ob die Methode der Wesensschau als eine Form der Erkenntnis (d. h. als eine Form der kategorialen Anschauung) begründet werden kann. Da Husserls Phänomenologie den Anspruch erhebt, für sich als Methode letzte Selbstbegründung und Selbstrechtfertigung zu bieten, ist die Klärung der ideierenden Abstraktion ein entscheidendes Ziel der *Logischen Untersuchungen*.“²²

Husserl hat in der VI. LU die Wesensschau bzw. diese ideierende oder generalisierende Abstraktion als eine besondere Form der kategorialen Anschauung ausführlich analysiert. Hier können wir beispielsweise die Wesensschau des Allgemeinen „Rot“, wie Husserl an zahlreichen Stellen formuliert, erklären.

Nach dem zuerst in den *Logischen Untersuchungen* bestimmten Fundierungsverhältnis²³ sind alle kategorialen Anschauungen einschließlich der ideierenden Abstraktion oder Wesensschau in der schlichten Anschauung einseitig fundiert, das heißt, die kategoriale Anschauung der idealen Gegenstände oder des gegenständlichen Apriori muss sich auf die schlichte Anschauung individueller Gegenstände berufen. Wenn wir das Allgemeine „Rot“ erfassen wollen, müssen wir von einer singulären Anschauung von etwas Rotem ausgehen. Das ist der erste Schritt im „Dreischritt“ der kategorialen Anschauung; er wird von Husserl als „Gesamtwahrnehmung“ bezeichnet.²⁴ In dieser Gesamtwahrnehmung wird etwas Rotes (A) als Ganzes gemeint, zugleich wird ihr unselbstständiges Moment „Rot“ (a) nicht als expliziter Gegenstand mitgemeint.

Und „in der Einschränkung der Gesamtwahrnehmung zur Sonderwahrnehmung wird nun die Partialintention auf das a nicht aus der Gesamterscheinung des A herausgerissen, als ob dessen Einheit in Brüche ginge; sondern in einem *eigenen* Akt wird das a zum eigenen Wahrnehmungsobjekt.“²⁵ Die Sonderwahrnehmung als zweiter Schritt der kategorialen Anschauung wird von Husserl auch „gliedernder Akt“ genannt. In dieser Sonderwahrnehmung wird das unselbstständige Moment „Rot“ (a) in etwas Rotem (A) „in explizierender Weise“ gemeint. Das bedeutet aber keinen Wechsel des gemeinten Gegenstandes, der immer etwas Rotes (A) bleibt, sondern ein Wechsel der gemeinten Weise des unselbstständigen Momentes „Rot“ (a). Husserl sagt: „Der auf das a bezügliche Repräsentant fungiert als identisch derselbe in doppelter Weise und indem er es tut, vollzieht sich die Deckung als die eigentümliche Einheit der beiden repräsentativen Funktionen.“²⁶ Es hat sich nämlich eine „Deckungssynthese“ oder „Deckungseinheit“ zwischen der expliziten Intention der Sonderwahrnehmung auf das unselbstständige Moment „Rot“ (a) und der impliziten Partialintention der Gesamtwahrnehmung auf das Rot in dem Übergang von der Gesamt- zur Sonderwahrnehmung ergeben.²⁷ Zugleich hat sich im zweiten Schritt eine andere bestimmte Art von Deckungseinheit zwischen den durchlaufenen gliedernden Akten, die auf das unselbstständige Moment „Rot“ (a) gerichtet sind, ergeben.²⁸

In der kategorialen Synthesis, die der entscheidende dritte Schritt der kategorialen Anschauung ist, dient eine solche „Deckungseinheit“ zwischen den durchlaufenen gliedernden Akten als Repräsentant für die kategoriale Intention.²⁹ Das Allgemeine „Rot“ als idealer Gegenstand ist gerade „durch die Reihe der Sonderwahrnehmungen individueller Gegenstände und in der Überdeckung ihrer intentionalen Bestandteile“ selbst anschaulich gegeben.³⁰ „Wir blicken auf das Rotmoment hin, vollziehen aber einen eigenartigen Akt, dessen Intention auf die »Idee«, auf das »Allgemeine« gerichtet ist.“³¹

Weiter behauptet Husserl, dass „man an einem Typus, etwa repräsentiert durch die Idee »rot«, Ideen sehen und sich das Wesen solchen »Sehens« klarmachen lerne.“³² Das heißt, nach diesem Grundmuster oder Typus sind sowohl die Allgemeinheiten höherer Stufe (z. B. der Begriff der Farbe überhaupt) als auch das Wesen der Bewusstseinsakte, die ideierende Abstraktionen vollziehen, selbst anschaulich aufgefasst. Also sagt Husserl betont: „Wesensschauung birgt nicht mehr Schwierigkeit oder »mystische« Geheimnisse als Wahrnehmung. Wenn wir uns intuitiv zu voller Klarheit, zu voller Gegebenheit bringen »Farbe«, so ist das Gegebene ein »Wesen«, und wenn wir uns ebenso in reiner Schauung, etwa von Wahrnehmung zu Wahrnehmung blickend, zur Gegebenheit bringen, was »Wahrnehmung«, Wahrnehmung an sich selbst – dieses Identische beliebiger fließender Wahrnehmungssingularitäten – ist, so haben wir das Wesen Wahrnehmung schauend gefasst. Soweit Intuition, anschauliches Bewussthaben reicht, soweit reicht die Möglichkeit entsprechender »Ideation« [...] oder der »Wesensschauung«. Soweit die Intuition eine reine ist, die keine transienten Mitmeinungen befasst, soweit ist das erschaute Wesen ein adäquat Erschautes, ein absolut Gegebenes.“³³

Mit einem Wort: „Die Wesensschau als genuine Methode der Erfassung des Apriori“³⁴ erfasst das Apriori als „Wesenssein“ und setzt in keiner Weise Dasein. Hierbei wird „die Priorität der phänomenologischen Methode vor der transzendental-logischen Kants“ nach der Auffassung Thomas Seebohms nicht in Zweifel gezogen.³⁵ Husserls Kritik an Kant übt großen Einfluss auf die erste Phänomenologen-Generation aus, was natürlich auch für Max Scheler gilt. Obwohl Scheler auch Husserls Besinnung des Apriori kritisierte, nimmt Schelers Kritik an Kant bezüglich des Begriffs des Apriori die Einsicht Husserls in großem Ausmaß auf. Daher kann man sagen, dass Schelers Kritik an Kant die Kritik Husserls an Kant ergänzt und vertieft. Man kann wahrscheinlich sagen, dass Scheler mit Husserl in der Kritik an Kant bezüglich der Lehre des Apriori ungefähr übereinstimmt. Beispielsweise behaupten Scheler und Husserl beide, (1) ein gegenständliches Apriori als idealer Gegenstand; (2) die Wesensschau oder Ideation als genuine Methode der Erfassung des Apriori; (3) den Unterschied zwischen dem materialen Apriori und dem formalen Apriori.

Man kann feststellen, dass Schlicks Kritikpunkte an der Phänomenologie zahlreiche Missverständnisse auszeichnen, wenn sie nicht sogar im Ganzen ein Missverständnis darstellen. Wenn wir die kleineren Missdeutungen Schlicks außer Acht lassen, besteht der größte und gründlichste Trugschluss der Kritik

Schlicks an der Phänomenologie meiner Ansicht nach darin, dass er alle Probleme voreilig auf einen Satz und ihren Wahrheitswert reduziert, sowohl in der Kritik an der Wesensschau oder Ideation als auch in der Kritik an dem materialen Apriori. Daher vermag seine Kritik das der Phänomenologie eigene Problem nicht zu treffen, so dass man ihr sehr einfach widersprechen kann. So hat z. B. hat Scheler den Unterschied zwischen dem Intuitionismus und der phänomenologischen Anschauung bereits klar hervorgehoben. (Vgl. XI, S. 23 ff.) Es heißt bei ihm deutlich: „Doch ist diese bei Bergson wenig klare Lehre von der Intuition nicht mit der streng und eng begrenzten »Wesensschau« der Phänomenologie zu verwechseln“. (III, S. 327, Anm. 1) Auch meint nicht nur das materiale Apriori in der Phänomenologie die Sätze a priori, sondern vor allem das anschauliche Apriori, das Schlick tatsächlich übersehen hat. Wie bereits bemerkt, beruht die Phänomenologie auf dem Prinzip der *Selbstgegebenheit* oder der *absoluten Evidenz*, das nach Schlick bei den Phänomenologen „viel mehr psychologistisch“ als bei Kant ist.³⁶ Aus diesem Grund kann er jedoch die revolutionäre Bedeutung der Wesensschau und des materialen Apriori sowie der Phänomenologie selbst nicht anerkennen. Vielleicht kann man sagen, dass es Schlick eigentlich nicht besonders im Sinn lag, das Apriori anschaulich zu erfassen. Husserl hat im Voraus danach gefragt: „Wie könnten wir ihn überzeugen, unter der Voraussetzung, dass er keinen anderen Sinn hätte?“³⁷

Wahrscheinlich sollten wir Schlick nicht als bloßen Opponenten betrachten, sondern als Spiegel. In diesem Spiegel kann die Phänomenologie über sich selbst möglicherweise besser und tiefer nachdenken. Wir werden einige Ergebnisse dieser Reflexion zu erklären versuchen.

SYNTHETISCHES APRIORI UND DIE FUNKTIONALISIERUNG DER WESENSEINSICHT

Am 25. Dezember 1929 fragt Schlick in einem Gespräch mit Wittgenstein: „Was kann man einem Philosophen erwidern, der meint, dass die Aussagen der Phänomenologie synthetische Urteile a priori sind?“ Diese Unterhaltung wurde unter dem Titel „Anti- Husserl“ protokolliert.³⁸ In der Tat hat Wittgenstein in eben diesem Gespräch sowohl Kant und Husserl als auch Schlick selbst kritisiert. Wir interessieren uns hier vor allem für seine Kritik an Schlick. Er behauptet: „In der Phänomenologie handelt es sich immer um die Möglichkeit, d. h. um den Sinn, nicht um Wahrheit und Falschheit.“³⁹ Das heißt, für Wittgenstein gibt es im Gegensatz zu Schlick eine dritte Möglichkeit: Es geht in der Phänomenologie nicht um „sinnlose Scheinsätze“, sondern um „den Sinn“. Natürlich heißt das nicht, dass Wittgenstein die Wesensschau und das materiale Apriori bzw. Phänomenologie im Ganzen völlig übernehmen kann. Für ihn bedeutet diese dritte Möglichkeit nichts anderes als „Syntax“,⁴⁰ die in der Phänomenologie als „apriorisches Wesen und apriorische Wesensstruktur (oder materiales Apriori)“ angesehen wird, und die Apriorität des Wesens und der Wesenszusammenhang bedeuten nichts anderes als die Möglichkeit der Schlussfolgerung aufgrund des Gesetzes

der Sprache. Dennoch gibt diese sogenannte Syntax a priori uns doch einen Anhaltspunkt, über die Lehre des phänomenologischen Apriori weiter und anders nachzudenken.

Hier werden wir wieder auf den „Großvater (mütterlicherseits)“ der Phänomenologie, Bolzano, zurückgreifen. Husserl hat bereits in §11–12 der III. LU einen wichtigen Unterschied zwischen dem synthetischen und dem analytischen Apriori markiert. Der Grund, weshalb dieser Unterschied wichtig ist, besteht darin, dass er einerseits mit dem Unterschied zwischen dem materialen und dem formalen Apriori Husserls gleichgesetzt wird und die Grundlage für die Lehre der materialen und der formalen Ontologie in Husserls Phänomenologie schafft, und dass dieser Unterschied andererseits in der analytischen Philosophie diskutiert wird, wie hier bei Schlick und Wittgenstein. Es ist vor allem festzustellen, dass die echte Quelle des materialen Apriori Husserls die Lehre des synthetischen Apriori bei Bolzano ist, wie J. Benoist eindringlich hervorhebt.⁴¹

Für Bolzano bedeutet das Apriori im Gegensatz zu Kant vor allem „begriffliches Apriori“ und er hat über das Verhältnis des synthetischen Apriori zu verschiedenen Begriffen nachgedacht. So gibt es bei ihm z. B. ein Apriori der Farbe, usw.⁴² Daher bedeutet das Apriori bei Husserl vor allem anschauliches Apriori, das in der Wesensschau anschaulich selbst gegeben werden kann. In der Gesamtheit des Apriori unterscheidet Husserl die „sachhaltigen Begriffe“ oder das materiale Apriori von den „bloß formalen Begriffen“ oder dem formalen Apriori: „Begriffe wie *Etwas* oder *Eins*, *Gegenstand*, *Beschaffenheit*, *Beziehung*, *Verknüpfung*, *Mehrheit*, *Anzahl*, *Ordnung*, *Ordnungszahl*, *Ganzes*, *Teil*, *Größe* usw. haben einen grundverschiedenen Charakter gegenüber Begriffen wie *Haus*, *Baum*, *Farbe*, *Ton*, *Raum*, *Empfindung*, *Gefühl* usw., welche ihrerseits Sachhaltiges zum Ausdruck bringen. Während jene sich um die leere Idee des Etwas oder Gegenstands überhaupt gruppieren und mit ihm durch die formalen ontologischen Axiome verknüpft sind, ordnen sich die letzteren um verschiedene oberste sachhaltige Gattungen (*materiale Kategorien*), in denen *materiale Ontologien* wurzeln.“⁴³

Zugleich besteht ein *Satz an sich* nach Bolzano aus den *Vorstellungen an sich*, die als Teile des Satzes an sich angesehen werden. Zur Unterscheidung der analytischen Sätze von den synthetischen Sätzen ist zu überlegen, ob und wie weit der Wahrheitswert eines bestimmten Satzes mit der **Veränderung** seiner Vorstellungsteile einen Kompromiss schließen kann.⁴⁴ Obwohl Husserl insofern Bolzano nicht ganz folgt, hat er diese Idee der „Veränderung“ von Bolzano übernommen und eine Lehre der „**Ersetzung**“ oder „**Formalisierung**“ in Bezug auf das Verhältnis zwischen analytisch-apriorischen Sätzen und synthetisch-apriorischen Sätzen entwickelt. Husserl formuliert: „In einem analytischen Satze muss es möglich sein, jede sachhaltige Materie, bei voller Erhaltung der logischen Form des Satzes, durch die leere Form *etwas* zu ersetzen und jede Daseinssetzung durch Übergang in die entsprechende Urteilsform »unbedingter Allgemeinheit« oder Gesetzlichkeit auszuschalten.“⁴⁵ Ganz im Unterschied zu Kant bedeutet ein synthetischer Satz a priori bei Husserl einen solchen Satz, der „sachhaltige Begriffe in einer Weise einschließt, die eine Formalisierung dieser Begriffe *salva veritate* nicht zulässt“.⁴⁶

In diesem Verständnis geht J. Benoit weiter. Er behauptet, dass das phänomenologische Apriori einen zweifachen Charakter hat, d. h. ein anschauliches Apriori und grammatikalisches Apriori.⁴⁷ Nach ihm handelt es sich in der IV. LU gerade um das grammatikalische Apriori.⁴⁸ Benoit geht so radikal vor, dass er zuletzt behauptet, die Begrenzung des grammatikalischen Apriori bestimme die Begrenzung der Anschauung selbst und die Form unserer Welt sei nichts anderes als die Form unserer Sprache.⁴⁹ Man kann mit Recht fragen, ob er hier noch Husserl oder die Phänomenologie interpretiert, oder ob er sich nicht vielmehr in die Lehre des späten Wittgenstein verläuft.⁵⁰

Um die Radikalisierung Benoists abzulehnen, werden wir uns nun mit der Lehre der *Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht* bei Scheler beschäftigen. Diese wichtige Eigenschaft aller Wesenserkenntnis gehört nach Scheler zu den noch „am wenigsten durchschauten“ Eigenschaften. Die sogenannte Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht bedeutet: „Die Wesenserkenntnis funktionalisiert sich zu einem Gesetz der bloßen »Anwendung« des auf die zufälligen Tatsachen gerichteten Verstandes, der die zufällige Tatsachewelt »nach« Wesenszusammenhängen »bestimmt« auffasst, zerlegt, anschaut, beurteilt.“ (V, S. 198) Deswegen ist alles subjektive Apriori bzw. die Form a priori im transzendentalen Sinne Kants „nichts Ursprüngliches, sondern ein Gewordenes“. (Vgl. V. S. 208; IX, S. 204)

Die Lehre von der Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht erklärt einerseits vor allem das Verhältnis zwischen dem materialen Apriori und dem formalen Apriori, d. i. dass „alle Funktionsgesetze auf ursprüngliche Gegenstands-Erfahrung, aber auf *Wesenerfahrung* resp. *Wesensschau* zurückgehen“. Durch die Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht wird das ursprüngliche materiale Apriori zu einem subjektiven formalen Apriori: „Gedachtes wird »Form« des Denkens, Geliebtes wird »Form« und Art des Liebens.“ (Vgl. V, S. 198, 208) In diesem Sinne hat W. Henckmann die Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht auch als „Schematisierung“ bezeichnet, „wonach allerdings nur ein Wandel vom materialen zum formalen Apriori möglich ist“.⁵¹

Andererseits wird uns das Folgende durch die Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht verständlich: „Ein *Werden und Wachsen* der Vernunft *selbst*, d. h. ihres Besitztums an apriorischen Auswahl- und Funktionsgesetzen.“ In der Tat gibt es für Scheler im Gegensatz zu Kant keine „schlechthin ursprüngliche[n], schlechthin unveränderliche[n] und unvermehr- wie unverminderbare[n] Funktionsgesetze“. (Vgl. V, S. 198) Er hat bereits überzeugend die „kantische Identitäts- und Konstanzlehre der menschlichen Vernunft“ abgelehnt. (Vgl. V, S. 200; II, 20) Im Gegensatz dazu behauptet Scheler „ein Vernunftwerden durch Funktionalisierung von Wesensanschauung, und zwar ein so geartetes, das über den formalsten Gehalt dieser Wesensanschauungen hinaus innerhalb der verschiedenen großen *Gruppen* der gegliederten Menschheit zu verschiedenen Vernunftgestaltungen geführt hat; das ferner zu wahren Wachstum und (wahrer Abnahme) der höheren und höchsten Geisteskräfte des Menschen führen kann und tatsächlich geführt hat“. (V, S. 201 f.)⁵²

Nun ist es für Scheler sehr deutlich, dass einerseits das grammatikalische Apriori (oder wahrscheinlich auch die Syntax a priori bei Wittgenstein) ursprünglich

als materiales Apriori in der Wesensschau anschaulich selbst gegeben und dann durch die Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht zum formalen Apriori wird; dass andererseits alles grammatikalische Apriori nicht schlechthin Ursprüngliches oder Unveränderliches, sondern ein Gewordenes ist.

Nun können wir auch feststellen, dass die Frage „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“ eigentlich zwei Fragen verschiedener Stufen in sich schließen kann. Nämlich erstens: „Gibt es sowohl ein anschauliches Apriori als auch ein grammatikalisches Apriori?“, und zweitens: „Welches Verhältnis gibt es zwischen dem anschaulichen Apriori und dem grammatikalischen Apriori?“ Während man durch das Prinzip der Selbstgegebenheit oder der absoluten Evidenz auf die erste Frage antworten kann, können wir aufgrund der Lehre der Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht auf die zweite Frage antworten. Kürzer gesagt, gibt es für die Phänomenologen im Gegensatz zu der Identifizierung des Formalen mit dem Apriori bei Kant ein materiales Apriori, das in der Wesensschau selbst gegeben wird. Durch die Lehre der Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht kann der Gegensatz „a priori- a posteriori“ (als absolut) von dem Gegensatz „formal- material“ (als relativ) vollständig unterschieden werden.

Zugleich ist es festzustellen, dass das grammatikalische Apriori auf das anschauliche Apriori fundiert ist. In diesem Sinne kann man sagen, dass die Form unserer Welt nicht die Form unserer Sprache ist, sondern die Form unserer Vernunft bzw. unserer *werdenden und wachsenden* Vernunft. Nach dieser Funktionalisierung der Wesenseinsicht scheint es gerade möglich, dass die Struktur des Denkens und die Struktur der Sprache identisch sind.

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NOTES

¹ W. Henckmann, *Max Scheler* (München: C. H. Beck Verlag, 1998), S. 78.

² Vgl. Schlick, „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“, in *Gesammelte Aufsätze 1926–1936*, Wien 1938, hrsg. Schlick. (Nachdruck: Hildesheim 1969), S. 20–30, hier S. 29. (Zuerst erschienen in: *Wissenschaftlicher Jahresbericht der Philosophischen Gesellschaft an der Uni. zu Wien für das Vereinsjahr 1930/31*)

³ Vgl. Ernst Tugendhat, „Phenomenology and linguistic analysis“, in *Edmund Husserl. Critical assessments of leading philosophers*. Vol. IV, ed. R. Bernet, Donn Welton and Gina Zavota. (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 49–70, hier p. 49.

⁴ In seinem 1918 veröffentlichten philosophischen Hauptwerk *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre* übt Schlick Kritik an Husserl. 1921 publiziert Husserl die zweite Auflage des zweiten Teils des zweiten Bandes der *Logischen Untersuchungen* und hebt im Vorwort des Buches zu einem Gegenschlag an: „Ich muss noch ausdrücklich bemerken, dass es sich bei M. Schlick nicht bloß um irrelevante Entgleisungen handelt, sondern um sinnverkehrende Unterschiebungen, auf die seine ganze Kritik aufgebaut ist.“ (Hua XIX/2, B2 VI f.) Im Jahre 1925 veröffentlichte Schlick die zweite Auflage des Buches *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*. Er ging auf Husserls Replik ein und hat alle irgendwie entbehrlichen polemischen Ausführungen aus dem Buch entfernt. In seinem 1930/31 veröffentlichten Aufsatz „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“ kritisiert er jedoch Husserls Phänomenologie erneut, natürlich auch oder hauptsächlich in Form der Phänomenologie Max Schelers.

Zum Vergleich Schlicks mit der Phänomenologie vgl. z. B. M. M. Van De Pitte, „Schlick’s critique of phenomenological propositions“, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 45 (2) (1984):195–225; Jim Shelton, „Schlick and Husserl on the foundations of phenomenology“, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 48 (3) (1988):557–561; Philip Blosser, „The a priori in phenomenology and the legacy of logical empiricism“, *Philosophy Today* 34 (3) (1990):195–205.

⁵ Vgl. M. Schlick, „Erleben, Erkennen, Metaphysik“ (1926), in *Wiener Kreis*, hrsg. M. Stöltzner und T. Uebel. (Hamburg: Meiner, 2006), S. 169–186, hier, S. 171 f.

⁶ M. Schlick, *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*. (Berlin: Springer, ¹1918, ²1925), A 68 f. (Wir werden mit „A“ die erste Auflage des 1918 veröffentlichten Buches bezeichnen und mit „B“ die zweite, 1925 publizierte Auflage.) Bei Schlick ist „Kennen“ mit „Erleben“ oder „Erlebnis“ sinnverwandt.

⁷ M. Schlick, „Positivismus und Realismus“ (1932), in *Wiener Kreis*, hrsg. M. Stöltzner und T. Uebel. (a. a. O.), S. 222.

⁸ Schlick, *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*, A120/B 127.

⁹ Vgl. Julius Kraft, *Von Husserl zu Heidegger. Kritik der phänomenologischen Philosophie*. (Frankfurt am Main, ²1957), S. 108.

¹⁰ Vgl. Schlick, „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“, a. a. O., S. 22.

¹¹ Ebd. S. 25.

¹² Vgl. Schlick, *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*, B 69 ff.

¹³ Schlick, „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“, a. a. O., S. 30.

¹⁴ Vgl. Hua VII, S. 235.

¹⁵ Vgl. Richard T. Murphy, *Hume and Husserl. Towards radical subjectivism*, *Phaenomenologica* 79. (The Hague/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980), p. 24. „Husserl will not even deign to adopt the Kantian notion of the »a priori«. Rather, he will interpret Hume’s notion of the a priori in order to overcome the radical concreteness and subjectivism of Hume’s skepticism and establish philosophy as the rigorous foundational science.“

¹⁶ Vgl. Thomas Seebohm, *Die Bedingungen der Möglichkeit der Transzendental-Philosophie. Edmund Husserls Transzendental-Phänomenologischer Ansatz, Dargestellt im Anschluss an seine Kant-Kritik*. (Bonn: H. Bouvier u. CO. Verlag 1962), S. 19.

¹⁷ Hua XIX/1, A 124/B₁ 124 f.

¹⁸ Vgl. Hua XIX/1, A 121/B₁ 122.

¹⁹ Vgl. Hua XIX/2, A 634/B₂ 162.

²⁰ Heidegger behauptet später, dass die Konsequenz der Entdeckung der kategorialen Anschauung, insbesondere der Ideation, darin liege, „dass dadurch die philosophische Forschung instand gesetzt wurde, das Apriori schärfer zu fassen und die Charakteristik des Sinnes seines Seins vorzubereiten.“ (Heidegger, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs. Marburger Vorlesung Sommersemester 1925*, GA 20, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann GmbH ³1994, S. 98) In der Tat hat Heidegger die „Intentionalität“, die „kategoriale Anschauung“ und den „ursprünglichen Sinn des Apriori“ als die drei fundamentalen Entdeckungen der Phänomenologie bezeichnet. Wir werden die Intentionalität bei Husserl und Scheler in den Abschnitten 3.2.2 und 3.3.2 behandeln.

²¹ Vgl. Hua XIX/2, VI. LU, §47 und §52.

²² Dieter Lohmar, *Erfahrung und kategoriales Denken. Hume, Kant und Husserl über vorprädikative Erfahrung und prädikatives Erkenntnis*, *Phaenomenologica* 147. (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic, 1998), S. 183.

²³ Husserl bestimmt in der III. LU formal den Begriff des Fundierungsverhältnisses und unterscheidet zwischen der wechselseitigen und der einseitigen Fundierung. Während in der III. LU die wechselseitige Fundierung wichtiger ist, zieht Husserl in der VI. LU den Begriff der einseitigen Fundierung vor. (Vgl. Thomas Nenon, „Two Models of Foundation in the Logical Investigations“, in *Husserl in Contemporary Context. Prospects and Projects for Phenomenology*, ed. B. C. Hopkins. (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic, 1997), pp. 97–114.

²⁴ Vgl. Hua XIX/2, §48; Vgl. auch D. Lohmar, *Erfahrung und kategoriales Denken*, a. a. O., S. 169 ff.

²⁵ Hua XIX/2, A 626/B₂ 154.

²⁶ Ebd.

²⁷ Vgl. Hua XIX/2, A 592 ff./B₂ 120 ff., A 508 ff./B₂ 36 ff.; Vgl. auch D. Lohmar, *Erfahrung und kategoriales Denken*, a. a. O., S. 171.

²⁸ Diese zwei verschiedenen Arten der Deckungseinheit dienen in der Tat als Repräsentant für die zwei verschiedenen kategorialen Anschauungen: d. i. den *synthetischen* Akt und den *abstraktiven* Akt der kategorialen Anschauung. Der Repräsentant für die kategoriale Anschauung ist nicht mit dem sinnlichen Repräsentanten der Gegenstände der Gesamtwahrnehmung oder der Sonderwahrnehmung identisch. Die Deckungseinheit beruft sich nicht auf die gleichen reellen Bestände, sondern ist nicht-sinnlich.

²⁹ Hier kann man das Schema von Auffassung und Auffassungsinhalt, wie in der sinnlichen Anschauung, wiederfinden. Husserl selbst kritisiert dieses Schema (vgl. z. B. Hua X, S. 7, Anm. 1), und R. Sokolowski vertritt die Ansicht, dass Husserl es in der genetischen Phänomenologie fallen lässt. (Vgl. R. Sokolowski, *The Formation of Husserl's Concept of Constitution. Phaenomenologica 18*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970, pp. 177 ff.) Dennoch findet sich dieses Schema nach Meinung D. Lohmars an vielen entscheidenden Stellen sowohl in den LU als auch in *Erfahrung und Urteil* wieder. „For acts constituting intentional objects and categorial objects it is not defective, but unavoidable.“ (D. Lohmar, „Husserl's Concept of Categorical Intuition“, in *Edmund Husserl. Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers*. Vol. III, ed. R. Bernet, Donn Welton and Gina Zavota. London & New York: Routledge, 2005b, pp. 61–83, hier p. 70.) – Was die Erfüllung der kategorialen Anschauung betrifft, gibt es verschiedene Ansichten. Nach Tugendhat gibt der „aktuelle Vollzug der kategorialen Synthesis“ der kategorialen Intention Erfüllung. (Vgl. E. Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., ²1970, S. 111–129) Wir stimmen hier mit D. Lohmar darin überein, dass die Deckungseinheit als nicht-sinnlicher Repräsentant der kategorialen Intention Erfüllung gibt. (Vgl. D. Lohmar, *Erfahrung und kategoriales Denken*, a. a. O., S. 172)

³⁰ Vgl. D. Lohmar, *Erfahrung und kategoriales Denken*, a. a. O., S. 185.

³¹ Hua XIX/1, A 221/B₁ 223; Vgl. auch Hua II, S. 56 f. Der Unterschied zwischen der individuellen Anschauung von etwas Rotem und der Wesensschau auf das Allgemeine Rot bedeutet hier nicht einen einfachen Wechsel des Blicks und Interesses oder die Änderung der Apperzeption.

³² Hua XVIII, B XV.

³³ Hua XXV, S. 32 f.

³⁴ Hua IX, S. 72. Später hat Husserl unter den Titeln „eidetische Reduktion“ oder „eidetische Variation“ die hier besprochene „Ideation“ oder „ideierende Abstraktion“ oder „Wesensschau“ weiter als eine besondere Form der kategorialen Anschauung kritisch bedacht. (vgl. z. B. Hua IX, S. 72–87; Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, §86–88) – Gemäß des Hauptthemas unserer Untersuchung kann es hier freilich nicht darum gehen, die Lehre der Wesensschau und der „eidetischen Reduktion“ bei Husserl ausreichend zu klären. Vgl. zu diesem Thema Liangkang Ni, *Seinsglaube in der Phänomenologie Edmund Husserls, Phaenomenologica 153*. Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic, 1999, S. 155–187; D. Lohmar, „Die phänomenologische Methode der Wesensschau und ihre Präzisierung als eidetische Variation“, in *Phänomenologische Forschungen 2005a*, S. 65–91; Burt C. Hopkins, „Phenomenological Cognition of the A Priori: Husserl's Method of »Seeing Essences« (Wesensschauung)“, in *Husserl in Contemporary Context. Prospects and Projects for Phenomenology 1997*, pp. 151–178.

³⁵ Vgl. Thomas Seeböhm, *Die Bedingungen der Möglichkeit der Transzendental-Philosophie. Edmund Husserls Transzendental-Phänomenologischer Ansatz, Dargestellt im Anschluss an seine Kant-Kritik*, a. a. O., S. 19.

³⁶ Vgl. Schlick, „Gibt es ein materiales Apriori?“, a. a. O., S. 22.

³⁷ Hua II, S. 61.

³⁸ Vgl. L. Wittgenstein, „Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis“, in *Wittgenstein Schriften, Bd. 3*, Hrsg. von Friedrich Waismann. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1967), S. 67 f.

³⁹ Ebd. S. 63.

⁴⁰ Ebd. S. 66. Wittgenstein formulierte: „Wenn jemand nie aus seinem Zimmer herauskommt, so weiß er doch, dass er Raum weitergeht, d. h., dass die Möglichkeit besteht, aus dem Zimmer herauszukommen (und wenn es auch diamantene Wände hätte). Das also ist keine Erfahrung. Es ist in der Syntax des Raumes gelegen, a priori.“

⁴¹ Vgl. zu dieser wichtigen Entdeckung J. Benoit, *L'a priori conceptuel: Bolzano, Husserl, Schlick*. a. a. O., S. 98 ff., 138 ff.

- ⁴² Vgl. Bolzano, *Wissenschaftslehre*, § 72.
- ⁴³ Hua XIX/1, A 246/B₁ 252.
- ⁴⁴ Vgl. Bolzano, *Wissenschaftslehre*, § 148.
- ⁴⁵ Hua XIX/1, B₁ 255; Vgl. Hua XIX/1, A 247: „Die **Formalisierung** besteht darin, dass in dem vorgegebenen analytischen Satze alle sachhaltigen Bestimmungen durch Unbestimmte **ersetzt** und diese dann als unbeschränkte Variable gefasst werden.“ (Herv. W. Z.)
- ⁴⁶ Hua XIX/1, A 248/B₁ 256. Husserl insistierte stets auf dem Unterschied zwischen dem materialen (sachhaltigen oder synthetischen) Apriori und dem formalen Apriori in diesem Sinne. Vgl. Hua XVII, S. 26; Hua XI, S. 33 f.; Hua XXIV, S. 240; usw. Vgl. auch Elisabeth Ströker, *Husserls transzendente Phänomenologie*, Frankfurt am Main 1987, S. 176 ff.
- ⁴⁷ Vgl. J. Benoist, *L'a priori conceptuel: Bolzano, Husserl, Schlick*. a. a. O., S. 106 ff., 114.
- ⁴⁸ Vgl. J. Benoist, „Grammatik und Intentionalität (IV. Logische Untersuchung)“, in *Edmund Husserl, Logische Untersuchungen, Klassiker Auslegen, Bd. 35*, hrsg. Verena Mayer. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2008), S. 123–138 und J. Benoist, „The Question of Grammar in Logical Investigations, With Special Reference to Brentano, Marty, Bolzano and Later Developments in Logic“, in *Phenomenology World-Wide*, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. (a. a. O.), pp. 94–97. Vgl. auch Hua XIX/1, IV. LU, § 10.
- ⁴⁹ Vgl. J. Benoist, *L'a priori conceptuel: Bolzano, Husserl, Schlick*. a. a. O., S. 134, 178.
- ⁵⁰ Vgl. Claudio Majolino, „Book Review: Jocelyn Benoist, *L'a priori conceptuel. Bolzano, Husserl, Schlick* (Paris: Vrin 1999)“, in *Husserl Studies 18*: pp. 223–232, 2002, hier p. 230.
- ⁵¹ Vgl. Wolfhart Henckmann, „Schelers Lehre vom Apriori“, a. a. O., S. 138 f.
- ⁵² In diesem Sinne betont Scheler weiter, „dass die großen menschlichen Kulturen und Erkenntniszusammenhänge – schon auf dem Niveau des apriorischen Wissens – gegenseitig *unvertretbar und unersetzlich* sind“. (V, S. 202) Man könnte auf dieser Basis eine Lehre des kulturellen Apriori entwickeln, vgl. VIII, S. 24 ff.; vgl. auch Anthony J. Steinbock, „Personal Givenness and Cultural a priori“, in *Time, Space, and Culture*, eds. David Carr and Chan-Fai Cheung. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2004), pp. 159–176.

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SECTION III
LOGOS AND EDUCATION

THE IDEA OF PAIDEA IN THE CONTEXT
OF ONTOPOESIS OF LIFE

ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the analysis of the notion of *paidea* in a wide context starting from antiquity till post-modern century. It is stressed that the actualization of Greek-Roman ideal of universal education (*παιδεία*, *humanitas universalis*) by means of phenomenological discourse lies in the tradition founded by E. Husserl and linked with spiritual heritage of Antiquity. Within the concept of ontopeosis of A.T. Tymieniecka, one can easily see an attempt to actualize the whole specter of intuitive meanings of antique notion *φύσις*. Thanks to it *paidea* will find a new and deeper interpretation.

Being the heritage of ancient thought of Greece *paidea* remains one of those universal things of culture that in post-modern century keeps in itself the idea of unity of the individual and society, of general and special, of objective-necessary and subjective-valuable. Education is one of the most important values in the life of a human being. It is a good thing not only in the sense that it gives a chance for a person to get professional knowledge and skills, to be involved in the process of acculturation and reach a high social status. The main task of education is to develop a personality. An individual should be given a chance to get “a human image”. So, real possibilities provided by the system of education for every human being to become a unique creature may be regarded as the main criterion of humanistic approach. Humanistic measure of education is in the degree of educational ideal limit by the inner nature of a human being. The problem is to what degree and under what social conditions he\she is able to demonstrate internal principle of free and unlimited obtaining of integral structure of individual spiritual life. So, the Greek idea of *paidea* is born. It aims at restoration of the unity between an individual and society, tradition and contemporary time, subjective valuable and objective-necessary, individual and universal.

In *paidea* we don't deal with absorbing of one opposition by the other but with the link of those oppositions on the basis of the third and much higher element. Being a humanistic universal thing different in various types and forms of Western-European education, *paidea* is kept as a cultural paradigm. Let us remember K. Jaspers' remark about the role of Antiquity. He thought that Antiquity has provided a factual basis to who we could be in the West as human beings.

Our position, that we try to make arguments to is the following: *humanistic essence of paidea internally presupposes the formation of such a spiritual position of a human being that comes from a universal link of a human being with the world*

of all being alive. But in order to be a projective idea of “education in general” there is a need for reconstruction of its semantic structure that as contemporary studies show, has acquired clear and finished contours only in the epoch of high Greek classics.¹ Understanding of paideia as a spiritual space where cognition in its sense becomes a sort of paradigm (a norm or a pattern) of internal life of an individual who systematically ignoring public opinion and any authority practices the acts of critical and logical thinking is being formed on the basis of the principle of ethic rationalism, that can be vividly seen in Socratic method. A thought is based on the assumption that a desire forms the basis of every action. It passes an internal sense to every action. The desire is “to make a name for oneself” and have it repeated for generations. All the highest level are “those whose procreancy is in the spirit rather than of the flesh – and they are not unknown, Socrates – conceive and bear the things of spirit. And what are they? You ask. Wisdom and all her sister virtues; it is the office of every poet to beget them, and of every artist whom we may call creative” (Symposium, 209 a).² So education is cognition of what is a real virtue – the way to virtue life. But the experience, known already to the Greeks show that it is possible to teach any practical skills or arts (τέχνη), but not to moral behavior. No parent can transfer his own life experience to his/her children. The same happens to a teacher who can not teach his pupil a virtue. *Techne* for the ancient Greeks meant craft, skill, art; it is knowledge of poiesis, involving knowing how to create what the craftsman desires. By contrast, *theoria*, from which theory is derived, means speculation, contemplation or “a spectator above”. Theory assumes an attitude of detachment and distance from everyday life and practice. The form of knowledge associated with theory was episteme, which meant certain knowledge of perfectly clear, immutable, and time-less truths. *Episteme* opposes *techne* because *techne* is knowledge of how to do things in this vague, changeable world. The Greeks put *theoria* and *episteme* at the top of the hierarchy of knowledge. *Poesis* and *techne* were at the bottom.

The way to practical morality (φρόνησις) is not morality itself. If virtue (αρεταί) was only “true knowledge” of kindness, it would never be active educative tool. In reality it contains some spontaneous and unconscious element that though cannot give us clear vision of the reasons of our actions, but still drives us to virtue and happiness (εὐδαιμονία). The cognition of virtue itself that Socrates thought to be the basis of human virtues is only the conscious embodiment of that striving rooted in the deepness of the soul, where cognition and its results make one whole.

Plato’s theory of learning is of importance to recall too. Learning is a process of growth and change. Some learning, such as learning through self-initiated inquiry, caused Plato special problems in the dialogue called *Meno*. There he set out the *Meno* paradox: It is impossible to learn anything through inquiry because either you already know, so there is no need to inquire, or you have no knowledge whatsoever and therefore would never recognize it. This paradox results from either/or thinking. It does not allow for coming to know. Plato’s solution looks metaphysical and epistemological. His theory of recollection presumed that before birth everyone caught a brief glimpse of what he called the immutable and eternal Forms. For him learning meant recollecting forms. Plato believed that theoretical wisdom (*theoria*)

is knowledge about these metaphysical verities that he called Forms. The Forms are abstract and indubitable supernatural entities, existing outside space and time and therefore unchangeable. For Plato, everyday things located in space and time, hence subject to change to the vicissitudes of change and fortune, are but contingent and imperfect copies of the perfect Forms of true reality. As Jim Garrison says: “For Plato all knowledge is of the entirely abstract, immutable, indubitable, and eternally fixed Forms. All the rest is just opinions about things of the empirical world of space and time copied from the Forms. Plato placed a supreme harmonizing principle – the Good- above the Forms. By harmoniously structuring the Forms, ‘the Good’ not only guarantees that reality is rational, it also assures that reality is an aesthetic and moral order. For Plato, indubitable knowledge of the Forms (and above all ‘the Good’) is the source of timeless wisdom”.³

Plato’s idea of *eros* as a *daimon* is a valuable one. The desire for a better world drives a person from where he/she is now to where he/she ought to be. Eros is a mediating diamond existing midway between being and not being. It defies the law of noncontradiction and is a principle of genesis, birth, and becoming. Becoming and development are intermediate between being and not being. According to the myth, eros is the son of Poros and Penia. Poros means “plenty”, “way”, “method”, “craft”, or “skill”. The myth associated the minor Olympian Deity Poros with the virtues of practical ability. Penia was unattractive, poor and homeless. When Aphrodite, goddess of beauty, was born, the Olympian Gods feasted. Drunk from too much nectar, Poros falls asleep in the garden of Seus. In a scheme to overcome her poverty, Penia contrived to lie down beside Poros, and together they conceive *eros* (Symposium, 203b–c). Eros conception occurred in the excesses of intoxication, a kind of madness. So, conception and birth require the mediation of passionate desire. So Eros helps unite opposites, it’s a powerful and paradoxical passion that mediates a multitude of opposites and brings people together. In Plato’s theory we see that *eros* is not the subject of love, but a desire. Usually a person desires what he is deprived of. In metaphysical sense eros is a striving of a human being to the unity, wholeness, that is becoming an ideal seen as absolutely perfect and full of virtue. Eros is a deep need for spiritual self perfection oriented to idea. So, love for good and bliss is a sort of striving to real accomplishment of a human being’s nature, hence to education in the initial sense of this word.

The origin of eros of Gods means that it should serve to good and perfection of the subject of love. Love to another person is grasped by Plato as the need to develop one’s own Self, that can be only along with “you”. Thanks to it, the forces belonging to every of the two parts unite and start acting. Eros is a symbol of spiritual link between the individuals and brings *paidea* into the space of human communication, where good is a norm where real friendship and love can be accomplished. Then it becomes clear that if we cannot teach virtue, but you can transfer it only by means of upbringing. The spirit of loving person is forcefull and desires to be embodied in another person. Mutual love bonds people in their striving to beautiful and eternal. It opens for the educator a way to mimesis, that allows to form in the pupil the desire for perfection. So, *paidea*, born with help of *eros*, turns into *αρεταί*.

In Greece the idea of education was firstly grasped and embodied to an extent that it is applied by everyone who understands it. All great elevations of a human being took place in the West thanks to closeness and demarcation with Antiquity. Through a variety of expressions, the metaphysics of Platonic supernaturalism exercises an immense influence on Western thought.

Wherever it was forgotten barbarity appeared on the scene. Torn off its ground should sway as it loses its support. Our state would be the same in case we lose our links with Antiquity. It is our soil though it constantly changes and only then and without autonomous power of education – the past of its people.⁴

The actualization of Greek-Roman ideal of universal education (παιδεία, *humanitas universalis*) by means of phenomenological discourse lies in the tradition founded by E. Husserl and linked with spiritual heritage of Antiquity. The founder of historic-cultural phenomenology saw in ellinist world the sources of life intention, the horizon for constituting “spiritual image of Europe.” Theoretical statement born within Greek philosophy meant radical emancipation of human consciousness from the power of utilitarian necessities of everyday being. New sense structures embodying the ideas of universal have become life meaningful for a human being, who owing to it has become a completely new individual.

Paideia means *περιαγωγή ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς* - a guidance to reform of the human being in his/her very essence. The role of Ariadna’s thread showing to a human being the way for spiritual renovation should be given to philosophy that is the means of “such an orientation in the truth that determines the being of the truth as an idea itself” (Heidegger M.)

A historical drama of Paideia, according to E. Husserl, is in the fact, that idea of universal development of a human being was grasped from philosophy by the gaining strength science that in 17th century lost its connection with the universe of pre-predicative senses and set the task for radical reform of new European’s life world. The subordination of Paideia to the activistic claims of the reason caused the transformation of the idea of “education”. The formation (*Formierung*) starts dominating over the initial meaning of “development in accordance with a pattern, an idea” (*Vorbild*).

In Antiquity the pattern and the key idea for human being development was nature. The initial meaning of φύσις is organic growth. The investigations of Heidegger W.A. made it possible to reveal the following meanings of this notion: 1. Birth, emergence (*γένεσις*); 2. Internal force (*δύναμις*), providing the course of the process; 3. Initial state (*ἀρχή*, from which everything emerges and where everything returns); 4. Personified creative force, which is present and acts everywhere (*Φύσις*); 5. Individual or general constitution of a separate human being, human society or living creatures; 6. Universal characteristic of space, being presented analogically with a living creature (*φύσις τοῦ πάντου*); 7. Invisible force, determining internal form or the structure of this creature; 8. The spiritual or emotional of a human being, his natural “*etos*”, that can be seen on top of all this in natural insufficiency and rudeness, that may be overcome by upbringing, teaching and exercise. Both basic and complimentary meanings of φύσις are closely connected with the idea of the animation of nature, its fullness of internal activity and life.

Deep connection existing in antique perception between φύσις и παιδεία was lost by both E.Husserl and M Heidegger. It blocked the classic leaders of phenomenological philosophy to reveal the presence of creative human being development in universal context of life. Within the concept of ontopeosis of A.T. Tymieniecka, one can easily see an attempt to actualize the whole specter of intuitive meanings of antique notion φύσις. Thanks to it paidea will find a new and deeper interpretation.

Ontopeosis is being accomplished as progressive individualization of the forms of life, emergent activity of which can form the system of world contexts supporting each other. At the highest stage of evolution vital constitutes transform into social and cultural contexts that gives possibilities to human individuals for free self-determination. It does not abolish, but on the contrary stresses the necessity of personal development in much deeper layers of world context. That is why transformation of a human being in its essence (paidea) should be understood as cooperation of a human being in emergent unfolding of life process.

Erudition is a characteristic of human state that emerges thanks to meaningful life intention. Socio-cultural context, created on the basis of intellectual, moral and aesthetic sense believing, forms the world of meanings endured and interpreted by people in their mutual every-day life. Intersubjective structure of the world of every-day life was interpreted by E.Husserl and A. Shutz as the basic, pre-predicative reality. That is why education from the socio- phenomenological point is limited to the process of sedimentation of social knowledge in the form of individual experience.

If stick to the concept of ontopeosis, then theoretical, moral and aesthetic maxims may be seen in the life-world as well as practical(natural) maxim. Thanks to it, a human being can place her/himself “within the unity of all alive” as a conscious, responsible and creative creature. Universal erudition means involvement of all the complex of those tasks that are set by the necessity of keeping life on our planet into horizon of contemporary human being experience.

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NOTES

¹ The most profound work dealing with the evolution of Greek paidea is the study of German specialist in phology Verner. Jeger. (Paidea. Die Formirung des griechischen Menschen). Paidea. Vospitanije antichnogo greka. (Paidea. Upbring of Antique Greek. Translated from German into Russian by M.N.Botvinnik.-M., 1997. p. 151.

- ² Jim Garrison, *Dewey and Eros. Wisdom and Desire in the Art of Teaching*. Published by Teacher's College Press, Columbia University, New York, 1997, p. 10.
- ³ Jim Garrison, *Dewey and Eros. Wisdom and Desire in the Art of Teaching*. Published by Teacher's College Press, Columbia University, New York, 1997, pp. 5–6.
- ⁴ K. Jaspers. *Spiritual situation of time. The Sense and Purpose of History*. M, 1991.–C. 358–359.

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF JOHN
DEWEY'S PEDAGOGY: LESSONS FOR
TOMORROW

A B S T R A C T

The chapter deals with international reputation of John Dewey's pedagogy in different cultural contexts in the 20th century. The actuality of the ideas of this outstanding American philosopher and educator is evident as his model of society- and child-oriented school based on the idea of communication and cooperation still attracts many educational theoreticians and practitioners. The chapter shows how Dewey's educational ideas were digested in many cultural contexts. So, the chapter contributes to the problem of educational transfer. Dewey's appeal to develop reflective capacities of teachers and to overcome dogmatic thinking is still vital in Russia. Any school reform depends on the teacher's competence. Innovative search in education in many countries is progressing only thanks to innovative teachers. For Dewey who thought of school as a co-society of researchers the basic elements of educational paradigm were the school, the child and the society. The conditions for making these three elements meaningful were "democracy", "growth" and "experience". Learning by doing has become very important as well as the creation of educative atmosphere by means of museum pedagogy and art and music education. Developing a real citizen of a democratic society was also Dewey's dream. Dewey could implement his educational program in his Laboratory school at the University of Chicago (1896–1904) that became a pioneer of laboratory school movement and stimulated innovative search in European countries, including Russia, in Eastern (Japan, China, Turkey) and Latin American ones (Mexico, Chili, Cuba, Brazil, Argentina). Of particular interest is the part in the chapter that describes the perception of Dewey's pedagogy in Russia where reputation of Dewey was changing from "the best philosopher of contemporary school" (Stanislav Shatzky in 1920s) to "the enemy of all progressive mankind" (in Stalin time, late 1930s). The materials of the chapter crush the existing ideological myth of Dewey created in Soviet Russia.

For more than 25 years educational writings of J. Dewey served as my intellectual background as I attempted to reconstruct the pragmatic paradigm in education, to question the "identity" of this paradigm and to trace its influence on the development of educational theory and practice in Russia and other parts of the world. According to J. Lovinger: "Scientists are similar to lovers: they find tokens of their beloved everywhere." While studying the process of reception of Dewey in Turkey, Japan, and Latin America I realized the fact that only in a cross-cultural dialogue one could grasp the resemblances and differences of innovative educational

developments caused by new pedagogy of activity. More to it, I came to understanding that the notion “influence” lost, to a great extent, its explanatory power as a tool in intellectual history of ideas. In such complex issues like educational transfer we deal with the process of reception the ideas within a specific cultural context and they interact with existing traditions, ideas, and practices. So, the specific context is of decisive influence on the way in which these ideas and practices are taken up, digested, translated, transformed and eventually made into something new.

As Quentin Skinner points out, there are three conditions that must be met in order to conclude that the appearance of a given set of ideas in a text may be explained by their appearance in the text of an earlier writer. First of all there must be a genuine similarity. Further, it must be the case that the ideas in the later text could not be found in the work of any other writer but the one said to have influence. And, finally the probability of the similarity being random should be very low. So, I agree with the positions of some other Deweyan scholars¹ that only taking into consideration a specific cultural context it becomes possible to explain why, for example, despite the manifest influence of Dewey on the thought of prominent educationalists in many countries this did not result in any tangible influence on educational practice, or why while Dewey’s ideas were not only well-known but appear to have been integrated into existing traditions, they were other factors, unrelated to the quality or significance of Dewey’s ideas, that exerted a decisive influence on the eventual course of events. The Dutch case, as well as the other ones, brings a lot of arguments against the validity of the notion of “influence” in our analysis.

Today when world integration makes the science cross the national borders, comparative research in education is becoming of great importance and come to the focus of scientific discussions. Educators try to find out the facts and processes of cultural interlinks, though they understand how important it is to avoid superficial analogies, to deepen logical arguments in comparing different phenomena. The problems of educational transfer, perception and acceptance of the other have become of paramount significance. Educational legacy of American scholar John Dewey is considered to be the subject of interest not by chance. He was not only the leader of North American educational reform that took place around the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, but one of the key figures in what was called “new education”, “progressive education” or “reform pedagogy”. The man of the 20th century, John Dewey has made great impact on the development of world pedagogy. As N. Yulina points out, he could be called the philosopher of modernism, as “he tried to grasp the dynamics of modernization, civilization and culture in the 20th century, the strings, pushing the countries towards democracy and humanism, and at the same time to understand what forces block it. He believed in human wisdom, in science and scientific methods, in active social and moral role of philosophy in society, in open systems of thought and, he rejected dogmatism and authoritarianism, being confident of humanistic capacities of liberal democracy, and what is more important, in enlightenment as the main lever of democracy”.²

Dewey’s educational paradigm was an alternative to existing traditional authoritarian one that was criticized by educators in many countries. Future teachers should realize that it was the ideas in his writings – his instrumental form of

pragmatism – that made his influence so great. In Dewey's case we face an extraordinary versatility. W. R. McKenzie gave a summary of what Dewey was working at in the 1890s: « . . . Philosophy, psychology, philosophy of education, educational psychology, psychology of selected educational subjects, child study, elementary education, secondary education, Laboratory schools, pedagogy as a university discipline and others. . . »³

Dewey wrote about his own development: “Upon the whole, the forces that have influenced me have come from persons and situations more than from books – not that I have not, I hope, learned a great deal from philosophical writings, but that what I have learned from them has been technical in comparison with what I have been forced to think upon and about because of some experience, in which I found myself entangled”.⁴

The image of Dewey is multi – faced – a serious social and political leader, a reformer in education, a philosopher, a master of polemics and at the same time – a loving father, a good family man, a generous friend and a patron of talented students, ready to join them in the strikes for democracy. Today all these characteristics cannot match the existing myth of Dewey in Russia as “weapon-carrier of American reaction”, that was created during Stalin regime and “cold war” period. The President of American Psychological Association, the President of American Philosophical Association, the President of American Association of University Professors, “the Teacher of teachers” – John Dewey was defamed in Russia in 1930s after he got involved in Mexico in the International Commission of Inquiry into the charges against Leon Trotsky at the Moscow trial and a statement of the commission's findings had been published under the title “Not Guilty”. Dewey's relations with Stalin were badly spoiled and he became the opponent of the “Genius and the Teacher of the Peoples”.

My intention as a researcher and a lecturer in Philosophy and History of Education for many years was to shed light on the educational phenomenon of Dewey and give a chance for Russian teachers to grasp his real contribution to the development of educational theory and practice and to show the international character of his pedagogy. At the beginning of the last century Russian educator Stanislav Shatsky mentioned that future teachers should study Dewey's works very thoroughly. Dewey attracts the reader by his great ability to reflect over his own educational experience, over the vast number of well-analyzed facts.

His educational philosophy, grown out of his experiment at his school, seemed to be inspiring for many teachers because it met the demands of the changing society. In Special Collection of Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago one can see 143 items chronologically listed beginning from Dewey's letter of February 15th, 1894, optimistically viewing the opportunities in prospect at the University of Chicago. The archives give a chance to grasp the devotion of the scientist to his experiment and his reflection over it. Dewey's letter to president W. Harper about his friend G. H. Mead, who was his true and cooperative colleague at Lab School (dated April, 10th, 1894), his “Plan of Organization of the University Primary School as well as the records of his Lab School, nice pictures of it in different periods of its existence and even the letter of Dewey of June 16th, 1904, after he angrily had resigned

from the University and was about to leave for Columbia and New York – all the documents show Dewey's commitment to the idea that the concerns of education are really worthy of the most serious scholarship that university can provide".⁵

Dewey's school aimed at educating a flexible, creative, thinking and cooperative pupil and not a passive person. He wanted school to be a social institution representing life as vital to the child as that carried on at home. Very relevant for contemporary teachers are today Dewey's ideas of education as a process of living each day and not a preparation for future living.

Many of Dewey's followers assumed that a subject-oriented curriculum in his experimental school was replaced with a new program consisting mainly of projects. Some of them – W. Kilpatrick and Y. Meriam – were sure that teaching «accidentally» they were exactly following Dewey. On the contrary, I agree with L. Tanner that Dewey's curriculum was not synonymous with projects. The curriculum had two dimensions: the child's side (activities) and the teacher's side (logically organized bodies of subject matter: chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics, history, language, literature, music and physical training).⁶

By studying Dewey's educational experiment teachers realize that to refer to a school subject mainly as a set of facts and principles, mastered through effort rather than interest, means to ignore child psychology. Relevant for contemporary students is Dewey's idea that something done should be something inherently significant, and of such a nature that the pupil appreciates for himself/herself that it is important enough to take a vital interest in it. «Learning by doing» was the principle proclaimed by Dewey as a reform of the methods of instruction.

Dewey was far ahead of his time when he pointed out that a school subject is just a form of communication and artistic expression, and should not be referred to as something existing for its own sake. Dewey's idea of an educational process based on communication, his insistence that children understand a subject best if they experience it as a form of communication is very appealing to contemporary teachers too.

Being misunderstood by their interpreters some ideas of Dewey after implementation into practice brought some negative results. The overemphasis of the process aspect of teaching/learning and the under-emphasis of the content itself in some American schools during the early 20th century led W. Bagley – the leader of essentialist movement – to criticize Dewey's theory. But nobody would deny that Dewey's ideas encouraged the thought, self-activity and creativity of the learners.

Thanks to progressive experiments of F. Parker, J. Dewey, W. Kilpatrick and others the American school was turned from one of «passive listening» to the «school of activity», as P. Blonsky (an outstanding Russian educator and psychologist) remarked.

In his many years of working first at the University of Chicago and then at Teacher's College of Columbia University Dewey tried to do his best to improve teachers' professional training. His Chicago summer-sessions for in-service teachers brought him popularity and the title of «the teacher of teachers». His «laboratory» approach to organization of the practical aspect of teacher education was a new idea and differed much from a traditional approach (an «apprenticeship»

model). Dewey tried to find the correlation between theory and practice. He wanted to put a teacher in the position of a researcher and thanks to him a lot of interesting techniques were introduced to teacher training. Different case – studies of educational problems of the classroom stimulated a trainee teacher to develop his reflective skills and to realize the problems of the concrete school students. More to it, the students saw how theory could be applied to practical task. Many findings of the American educator have significance today.

Now from a historical perspective we can precisely value the novelty of Dewey's experiment and its shortcomings. There is a great difference between an idea and its implementation into practice, as the fate of the idea is in the hands of those who implement it. So there is a difference between Dewey and Deweyan. His idea of freedom was sometimes taken for anarchy, his statement that a teacher should not be a «mentor», but a guide, an adviser and an organizer of a child's various activities was also misunderstood by many teachers as a very easy task. Instead of grasping the more complicated role, teachers got rid of all of their responsibilities, just the opposite of what Dewey had meant.

The task for Dewey's philosophy of education was to comprehend and gather together the varied details of the world and of life into a single inclusive whole – to attain as unified, consistent, and complete an outlook upon experience as is possible on the macro, meso and micro societal levels. Dewey tried to overcome the gap between educational theory and practice. A lot could be learnt from what Dewey said and practiced.

According to D. Sidorsky, “John Dewey was the most influential figure in American philosophical thought in the first half of the 20th century. His influence was both broad in scope and deep in impact. . . The impact of Dewey's ideas upon American philosophical and social thought was so great that it must be considered a major phenomenon of American cultural history of the 20th century”⁷

John Dewey's influence on philosophical thought and educational reform was not limited to America. Before 1950 “Dewey in Europe” was somewhat of a trademark as Jurgen Oelkers stated in 2000.⁸ John Dewey was firmly linked to European “progressive education” and was read and received all over the continent. In 1946 the then director of the International Bureau of Education in Geneva, Robert Drottens, hailed Dewey as the person who had had the greatest influence on contemporary education worldwide.⁹ In 1961, the president of Hong Kong's New Asia College, Ou Tsui-Chen, commented: “John Dewey was one of the most important philosophers of education of this century; few educational theorists have equaled his widespread influence, which was not limited to his own society, but was felt throughout the world”¹⁰ In Soviet Russia in 1920s Stanislav Shatsky called Dewey “the best philosopher of contemporary school”. On occasion of Dewey's ninetieth birthday (October 20, 1949) W. Brickman discussed Dewey's reputation as an educator in foreign countries and pointed to some examples of Dewey's influence on educational thought and practice abroad. Mentioning that “. . . a more accessible measure of Dewey's relationship to his contemporaries in foreign countries is his reputation as an educator”, he determined it “. . . by translations of books and articles, professional reviews, discussions of ideas in professional

and other publications, and references to theory and practice in miscellaneous sources".¹¹

We should stress that the attitude towards John Dewey throughout the 20th century dynamically changed. As Oelkers remarked about European perception of Dewey, it was relatively easy to link Dewey with the philosophy of Henri Bergson in Geneva, but impossible to bring about pragmatism and Dewey against neo-Kantianism in Germany before and after 1914. Critical theory up to Habermas showed no real interest in Dewey, at least not in his conceptions of democracy and education, although the social theories have very much in common.

After Robert Westbrook's magistral study "John Dewey and American Democracy" (1991), research and literature on Dewey has exploded. In education alone ten to twenty doctoral dissertations, books, articles or collections appear every year. "Understanding John Dewey", written by Campbell in 1995 has become of central interest to Anglo-Saxon philosophy and history of education in the nineties. After 1989 with the fall of socialist education interest in Dewey has increased in Europe too. For European education Dewey is no classic in the sense of "essential truths", his theory of education is a challenge to do better.¹²

Dewey's influence on educational thought and practice was felt on six continents and was brought about in three ways: (1) Dewey's visits to foreign countries, most notably his visits to Japan, China, Turkey, and the U.S.S.R.; (2) translations of Dewey's books and other writings into at least thirty-five languages; and (3) the thousands of students from other lands who studied with Dewey and his colleagues at Teacher College, Columbia University and other American Universities and colleges where Dewey's philosophy was taught, and then returned home to become leaders in their countries' ministries and universities.¹³

In the older European countries at the beginning of the 20th century there was little tendency to look to America for new ideas in the realm of thought. W. Kilpatrick wrote that in such old European countries like Germany and England John Dewey's ideas have been interpreted rather narrowly, mostly in connection with the place of industries in elementary education, and George Kershensteiner's "Arbeitsschule" dealt with Dewey's Critique of a child's activity.¹⁴

It is important to mark that John Dewey's philosophy of education was being formed under a great influence of German philosophers. The influence of European philosophical and educational thought on the formation of the first generation of academics in the United States was enormous, as many researchers point it.¹⁵ John Dewey's educational philosophy was greatly influenced by Hegel and Herbart. It was with "naturalized Hegelianism", and "social behaviorism" in which distinctive social categories such as communication and participation played a pivotal role that philosopher and psychologist John Dewey entered the American educational stage. This stage itself was thoroughly influenced by three strains of European thought: (1) William Torrey Harris – United States commissioner of education from 1899 to 1906 and the leading American Educator in the last quarter of the 19th century had brought Hegelianism into the American schools; (2) Herbartianism, introduced in the United States by Charles De Garmo, Charles McMurry and Frank McMurry who tried to implement in America what they had learnt at Jena in teacher training

schools in the country; (3) The ideas of Friedrich Froebel, introduced through the kindergarten, which was introduced by disciples of Froebel in the 1850s, first in private and from 1873 onward also in the public system.¹⁶

Being extentional to the European Educational tradition John Dewey had close links to it and even visited Europe for some times. His first visit took place in January 1895 and he spent a year there with his wife and three young children. In 1904 Dewey visited Europe again and it was another 20 years before Dewey went to Europe to survey Turkey's educational system and to recommend ways for its improvement. In 1926 Dewey saw Paris, Madrid, Vienna, visiting museums together with art collector Albert Barnes. In 1928 he went to London, Berlin and again to Paris and afterwards visited Leningrad and Moscow to see schools in and around both cities as a member of a group of 25 American educators who were there by invitation of the Soviet commissioner of education. In April and May of 1929 Dewey was in Edinburgh, to give the prestigious Gifford Lectures. In 1930, he was in Paris to accept an honorary degree from the University of Paris and for a few weeks in Vienna. He came to Europe for the last time revisiting Paris and Vienna in 1933.¹⁷

Though Dewey did not receive his education in Europe, his intellectual background was closely connected with European thinking. Dewey positioned himself on a theoretical level in between the Herbartians and the Hegelians criticizing the Hegelians for their failure to connect the subject matter of the curriculum to the interests and the activities of the child and the Herbartians –the representatives of the child-study movement for their failure to connect the interests and the activities of the child to the subject matter of the curriculum.¹⁸

So, we can explain similarities between European and North American educational reform of the eve of 19th–20th centuries partly by the shared intellectual background of Dewey and European reformers. Though even in the recent analysis of Education and the Struggle for Democracy, Carr and Hartnett (1996) conclude that, if to take the context of Britain, "John Dewey is doubtedly the most influential educational philosopher of the 20th century".¹⁹

At the same time when English political leaders want to find somebody to be blamed for all the faults at their schools they speak of Dewey's "undeniable" and "disastrous" influence on English education as presented in the report of John Major and his education secretary while adopting National Curriculum in 1991. How can we explain such opposite positions in Britain?

At the beginning of the 20th century, in 1929, for example Thompson wrote that "In Great Britain, except Scotland. . . I have been repeatedly struck by the absence of references to Dewey's ideas and sometimes by complete ignorance of them, although the same views in other dress are often mentioned in their practical aspect".

Though Scotland has a separate educational system from England and Wales, there was "the comparative lack of penetration shown by Dewey's doctrines before the 1960s."²⁰

In the first half of the 20th century Dewey was in teacher training courses on the lists of prescribed reading, thanks largely to J.J.Findlay, professor of the University of Manchester, who published a collection of Dewey's essays in 1906 under the title "The School and the Child", and did much to introduce Dewey to an academic

educationalists in Britain. But his ideas were not widely assimilated into practice or theory. Herbart's was still the favored theory at the start of the century.

A modest movement towards greater recognition of Dewey was felt in the 1930s in England. Three reports of the Consultative committee show this (1926 – no explicit references on Dewey, but the one in 1931 on the Primary school marks the beginning of acceptance of Dewey's ideas by the educational establishment. Though a passing reference to Dewey by name, its recommendations clearly have close affinities to Dewey's thinking, contrasting "traditional education" with "the real business of life". But everything connected with such innovations as Kilpatrick's Project method, Parkhurst's Dalton Plan – all of which were influenced by Dewey, gets a somewhat guarded endorsement: "It would be unnecessary and pedantic to attempt to throw the whole of the teaching of the primary school into the project form. . .". Some of this may be a protest against too enthusiastic adoption of Dewey's views in English primary schools: in general, however, it is a characteristic English reaction. The Committee rejects Dewey's philosophy, and they reject his principles as principles, but they are quite prepared to accept and commend his methods where they serve their own principles. And these principles remain the traditional ones. In the report of 1933 on Infant and Nursery Schools – a whole page is allotted to Dewey's ideas with the conclusion that "Dewey's works. . . have played an important part in the evolution of modern ideas on infant education in this country".²¹

In England only pedagogical ideas of Dewey had some impact but not his epistemological, social or political ones up to 1940s and only to extent that the notion was endorsed by some as a worthwhile principle, or at least as an aspiration, and generally accepted more by academics and reformers than by teachers.

Scotland (1969) links this "comparative lack of penetration" to the intellectual climate in his country at this time: "Project method and problem teaching and activity methods were lectured on in Scottish universities and colleges, much discussed in professional assemblies, but little practiced at schools. In a country with a strong tradition of Platonic idealism, Dewey's pragmatic attitude could hardly expect to be welcome, nor could a doctrine, which stressed the need for the learner to do the work appeal in a system where the . . . teacher was the king. . . , where stern discipline was considered to build character".²² Dewey's emphasis on social context of education was in opposition to the individualistic philosophy of Nunn which was widely favored from 1920 until at least 1940. Long-established, rigid structures in British society, in which social class divisions were endemic, subject-oriented curriculum was the obstacle for Dewey's model of school.

Only in 1960s Britain saw a marked warning of deference to authority. Old ways were to be questioned and traditional practices challenged. In primary education in 1960s there were significant changes. Plowden Report (1967) advocated a strikingly progressive approach to education and Deweyesque nature is vivid: "At heart of the educational process lies the child. No advances in policy, no acquisition of new equipment have their desired effect unless they are in harmony with the nature of the child, unless they are fundamentally accepted to him" (Plowden, p. 7). It reminds us of Dewey's change, "not unlike that introduced by Copernicus when the astronomical center shifted from the earth to the sun", and ". . . the child becomes the sun

about which the appliances of education revolve; he is the center about which they are organized".²³

From 1979 till now with the advent of a right-wing Conservative government in London, much political pressure was exerted to bring British primary education back to more traditional ways, but still despite the criticism, and the introduction of a national subject-based curriculum, the appeal of child-centered thinking continues to influence practice in Britain. The opponent of child-centered education, Anthony O'Hear, professor of philosophy at Bradford University has criticized in 1991 what he sees as Dewey's "disparagement of didacticism". But he really overestimates Dewey's influence as he writes that "Deweyesque practice is contemporary practice in many of our schools, particularly in the maintained sector, where it is all but universal at primary and junior level; and Deweyesque theory is contemporary theory in the educational establishment of our country".²⁴ The researcher Bretony thinks that this unprofessional judgment though very influential because of the post of the author is an overstatement that made possible the statement of "undeniable" and "disastrous" influence of Dewey on English schools to appear. The notion Deweyesque is rather vague. Sometimes in England they saw Dewey responsible for all the progressive education implementations and this is not the right way as Dewey criticized progressive education methods very much. But what is true is that his educational philosophy has found its proper place in educational discourse in Britain.

As for France, Dewey was first recorded there in 1883 after an anonymous review of a philosophical text by Dewey that had appeared in the April 1882. After this no notice was taken of Dewey in France for several years until the journal "L'Education", edited from 1909 onwards by Georges Bertie, director of Ecole Roches, listed Dewey in its editorial as a leading contributor. From this period until the 1960s, the reception of Dewey was restricted to the pedagogical element of his heritage. It is important to mention that Dewey's ideas didn't penetrate deeply in the French educational system, though they were popular in academic discussions. Only in 1901 the church was separated from the state in France. It was not easy for Dewey's active pedagogy to be accepted in the tradition where the center was on a teacher. In the period before the World War I there appeared first translations of John Dewey. The critical reception of Dewey in France may be explained by the conflict in this country between new education and traditional school. The experiments in French schools, proclaimed like Dewey's experiment sometimes didn't correspond to the original idea. In 1965 there appeared in France the book entitled "John Dewey's Pedagogy", written by Gerald Dalledalle, with the introduction by Maurice Debesse. Debesse came to the conclusion that though Dewey was considered in France to be a very important author within New Education, the French didn't know him very well. Only Gerald Dalledalle tried to pay serious attention to Dewey's works. He systematically studied John Dewey's works and wrote many books on pragmatism and his founders.²⁵ Dalledalle wrote that John Dewey's educational ideas were rather influential in France but it is very hard to trace this influence on different French educators. Dalledalle himself confirmed that American philosophy in general and Dewey's ideas in particular served his intellectual background. He accepted

John Dewey's idea of cooperative work and considered the *Ecole de Roches* to be experimental sides for John Dewey's principles. "New classes", introduced in three French schools (Sevres, Montgeron, Pontoise) reflected the ideas of American reformer. This scientist stressed very important roles played by Claparede, Ferrier and Decroly in empirical reception of Dewey's ideas in France. In 1975 Dalledalle published the translation of John Dewey's "Democracy and Education". In his introduction he pointed to five central aspects of John Dewey's pedagogy: spontaneous and intellectual activity concentrated on the interests of a child, the sociality of whom should be shaped at school, reflecting the structure of the existing society, in case if the structure is based on the principle of continuity.²⁶ This author thought that John Dewey was falsely blamed by all the mistakes of American school system. He thought that many teachers tried to copy the ideas of Dewey's school without understanding of his experimental method. John Dewey's idea of constant reconstruction of experience demanded to take into consideration the changing conditions of life, it was incompatible with "orthodoxy of undeflected passage along a single path of salvation".²⁷

In the Netherlands there was also some interest to John Dewey's progressive ideas. According to the report of Dutch researchers G. Biesta and S. Miedema (1988), in period of 1908–1988 43 writings on Dewey have been published (42 in Dutch and one in English). The opinions expressed in the writings on Dewey's influence were different. Some totally rejected his ideas, some thought that parts of Dewey's work could be used and other parts, especially his philosophy of life, should be rejected. Dewey's anti-fundamentalism, both in his theory of knowledge and in his ethics, and consequently in his educational ideas have definitely formed an important stumbling block for educators in the Netherlands, especially for those who adhered to biblical conceptions. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century private schools, were founded in the Netherlands, providing education based on educational principles, like those voiced by Maria Montessori, Helen Parkhurst (John Dewey's pupil), Peter Peterson, Rudolph Steiner. Dutch researcher N.L. Dodde wrote, that at the beginning of the last century "...the school system should be more conveniently arranged and more accessible for pupils. The educational institute should pay more attention to differences in interest, experience and development of its pupils and the education should, besides intellectual education, also offer space for more practical training".²⁸

The most obvious proof of Dewey's influence on education seems to be the existence of a "Deweyan" educational practice. In the case with the Dutch educator Jan Ligthart (1859–1916). A principal of an elementary school in the "Tullinghstraat", we see much in tune with Dewey; examples include bringing daily life in its totality into school and bringing about the active participation of the child. Ligthart was opposed to verbalism and stressed learning by doing. When his school was visited by Ellen Kay (1905), A. Zelenko (1910), and Eduard Clapared (1912), those familiar with both Dewey and Ligthart often concluded that there were striking and surprising similarities between them. Ligthart was aware of his similarities with Dewey, but at the same time stressed that it was not the result of the Dewey's influence but the coincidence of ideas – thinking in the same direction, as they say. The "encounter"

between Dewey and Lighthart clearly reveals that the existence of a strong similarity between two sets of ideas and/or practices is not enough to conclude that the one has influenced the other. In Lighthart's case the first condition of Skinner's methodology is met, but the others are not. Skinner's point allows us to speak of influence if we can trace a direct, exclusive and unidirectional connection between one set of ideas and another. So, we see that the perspective of "influence" is hardly adequate to bring Dewey's contribution into vision. Another Dutch educator-G. Wielenga, professor of Free University of Amsterdam, a Dutch Reformed institution for higher education (founded in 1880) played a great role in bringing Dewey's ideas to the Netherlands.

Primarily engaged with Christian elementary and secondary education, in a series of lectures that were published from 1946 onwards, Wielenga had expressed a very positive interest in Dewey's work on psychological, didactical and more general educational questions related to the issue of learning how to think and attempted to legitimize the adoption of Dewey's psychological and educational ideas. At the same time he rejected Dewey's view on religion and the religious, his "humanistic" philosophy of life.²⁹ Wielenga tried to find a place for Dewey's ideas about the process of education within his own. Another Dutch educator Van der Velde was also very positive about Deweyan ideas. He was associate professor at the center for educational studies of the City University of Amsterdam and taught courses in the philosophy and history of education. In 1968 he published a book "Child, School, Society" together with Van Gelder. Contrary to prevailing interpretations of Dewey's conception of education as being a 100 per cent social theory of education, Van der Velde argued that Dewey was concerned both with the individual and with society, and, more specifically, with the interaction between the two. Dewey's position came close to that of the most renowned educationalist in post-war Dutch academic education, M.J. Langeveld, who contributed to a theory of education along phenomenological-hermeneutical lines, starting from the "common ground" of the phenomenon of education, and not from first (denominational) principles. The writings of Van der Velde and his colleagues and the earlier work of Wielenga had made Dewey's ideas available to the larger educational community. But at this juncture in time dramatic changes in the context took place. Educationalists in special education and curriculum studies took inspiration from the findings of German and Anglo-American empirical studies. The fighting flared up between those in favor of a value free, objective empirical paradigm for educational science, and the adherents of the phenomenological-hermeneutical approach along the lines of Langeveld and the "paradigm wars" took up most of the time of Dutch educationalists for well over a decade. The Dutch researchers S.Miedema and G.Biesta consider it to be the reason for holding the Dutch educators back from actively pursuing the Deweyan approach to education and schooling.

In the field of Dutch kindergarten Dewey's ideas were accepted. The key figure in this case was C. Philippi-Siewetz van Reesema who first wrote about Dewey in her extensive study on American educational "pioneers" and the way in which they had developed their educational philosophy and their school-systems. Philippi became a member on Montessori Dutch Association Board in 1917 and attended

Montessori's course in London and started criticizing Montessori for her dogmatic and strict use of educational tools and the "so-called" sensitive periods. She praised in her Dewey's contribution to the education of young children – his experimental, observational and experiential approach, his contention that nursery and infant school should not be separate but ought to be part of a comprehensive school system, and his genetic psychology which she perceived as being an implicit critique of formal learning (Frobel, Herbart) and the formal approach to educational tools (Montessori). In her book on the world of infant and infant education she made use of Deweyan ideas. Her students – for ex. W.Nijkamp also sustained Philippi's positive reception of Dewey's ideas. A. Stoll – another influential figure in Dutch education also paid positive attention to Dewey in her handbook for students at Christian infant teacher college.

So, Dewey's ideas had a real impact on Dutch infant education in kindergarten classrooms, but as infant education was considered to be the domain of women who were not seen as belonging to the academic circles and as the field was seen as "preparation for real education", most of the work was ignored.

In the early years of the century before the World War I, the ideas and practical suggestions of Dewey also became known in Australia largely through the interpretations of educational writers in England. In Australia this was the beginning, for Australia, of what has been called the "New Education". The second period, twenty years from the end of World War I to the beginning of World War II, had a much richer experience of progressive education. Herbartianism, which was seriously criticized by J. Dewey, had by then become the orthodox conservatism of educational thought and practice and was challenged by the Dewey of Democracy and Education, by the Project Method, and other new forms of instruction.

Dewey's influence may be observed in Turkey where his involvement was evoked by an invitation of the Turkish Government under the presidency of Mustapha Kemal, named Atatürk, to survey the Turkish educational system and organization and to make recommendations for its improvements. Dewey's investigations resulted in his Report and Recommendation upon Turkish Education.³⁰

Dewey came to Turkey when it was changing from a Muslim theocracy into a secular state. In 1923, the Turkish government was proclaimed, State and society were secularized, all citizens got equal rights, but at the same time American educator marked that Turkish nationalism was propagated against anti-Turkish nationalism (mostly Armenian and Greek).³¹ The Turkish government thought John Dewey's philosophy of education "to fit the democratic aims of Turkish educational reform movement".³² In Dewey's report the main end to be secured by the Turkish educational system was "the development of Turkey as a vital, free, independent and lay republic in full membership in the circle of civilized states".³³ American reformer suggested that Turkish schools should: (1) "form proper political habits and ideas, (2) foster the various forms of economic and commercial skill and ability; and (3) develop the traits and dispositions of character, intellectual and moral, which fit men and women for self-government, economic self-support and industrial progress; namely, initiative and inventiveness, in dependence of judgment, ability to think scientifically and to cooperate for common purposes socially."³⁴ Dewey

wanted to educate the mass of Turkish citizens “for intellectual participation in the political, economic and cultural growth of the country”,³⁵ he didn't limit this aim to certain leaders. The American scholar stressed the importance of the existence of different types of schools – vocational and agricultural in addition with existing schools with only academic training. He saw in private schools an experiment station for public schools. He recommended foreign schools in Turkey (mostly French and American) because they embodied a variety of typical methods of school administration and instruction from which mainstream Turkish educators could profit. He also stressed the need for better salaries for teachers as an indication of the recognition of the society and government of the teacher's status. Dewey wanted to introduce in Turkish teacher education modern and progressive pedagogical ideas, he also suggested that teachers had to be sent abroad to experience other systems and solutions. Traveling specially trained supervising inspectors and libraries were seen like good means of improving Turkish schools.³⁶ The American educator thought it important for Turkish government to sponsor the translation of foreign books and particularly that “those, dealing with practical methods and equipment in progressive schools” should be “widely circulated” and “carefully studied by teachers”.³⁷ It is important to mention that while Dewey was in Turkey the schools were not in operation. He relied on impressions and information given him about the structure and climate of Turkish schools. Maxwell – Hyslops asserted that: “The aims and nature of the organization of education in Turkey today offer proof of the extent to which [Dewey's] recommendations were followed”.³⁸

Dewey's report had a great impact on a Turkish educational practice. His ideas on teacher training, teacher payment and differentiation between teacher training schools and training of inspectors nearly completely was set into practice. But the policy of prohibition and strict control, regarding the foreign schools didn't change.³⁹ It is a pity that some of Dewey's views were interpreted rather narrowly in Turkey, that led to positivistic, technological and product-oriented patterns of action. Theocratic culture and the family structure of the country blocked democratic reform in Dewey's sense. The case of Turkey is a good example of the use of progressive ideas in the modernization of the State. Though we can clearly see the misinterpretation of Dewey's educational ideas by Turkish official government that destabilized pluralism in educational system, contrary to his recommendations.

In Latin America he seems to be also famous at the beginning of the century. In Chili (1908), Cuba (1925), Mexico (1929) and Argentina (1939) the first translations of his famous books gave a chance for the educators in those countries to get to know his philosophy of education. In Brazil the educational heritage of Dewey was known thanks to Lourenzo Filho. He even gave the title to his own book “Dewey and World Educational Reform”. In 1930 a famous book of Dewey “Democracy and Education” and in 1933 his famous text “How we think” appeared in translation.⁴⁰

Though his ideas were not too influential in Latin America as socio-cultural situation in such countries like Mexico, for example, differed greatly from that one in North America, his action pedagogy was even officially adopted there in 1923 and played some role in the modernization of society. Dewey visited Mexico two times. In this country two main of his ideas – observation and experience as the

means of individual efficiency and cooperative work were seen as the means to strengthen the spirit of fraternity and to provide future new social order.⁴¹ According to M. Vaughan, progressive reform associated with Deweyan philosophy of education could not become a wide – spread movement as the situation of dependent capitalism in economy and lack of resources blocked it. It was just an experiment.⁴²

The political context in Russia during the last century influenced the process of John Dewey's pedagogy digesting. Analyzing the process of Dewey's reception in Russia one can identify four distinct periods:

- (1) The pre-revolutionary period (the first two decades);
- (2) The 1920s – the period of his most popularity;
- (3) The 1930s: the period of the de-Deweyization of Soviet education;
- (4) The late 1980s–1990s when, as a part of the movement of “the pedagogy of cooperation”, Dewey's ideas became the focus of attention in Russia again.

At the beginning of the century Dewey's idea of a child-oriented school penetrated Russia with the publication of his book “School and Society”. This was translated into Russian in 1907 and had a great impact on many talented educators of the time, such as N. Krupskaya, A. Lunacharsky, P. Blonsky, A. Pinkevich, and S. Shatsky. Before the revolution. In setting his “Settlement” program Shatsky and his colleague A. Zelenko, and L. Shleger were greatly inspired by Dewey's new philosophy of education, his democratic model of the school, and his idea of the organization of the child's vital activities. The “Settlement” was the first club for children in Russia in the working men's quarter of Moscow, at Maryina Rosh. A. Zelenko was connected with the University “Settlement” in New York City. When he came back to Russia, he told Shatsky about the Hull-House.

The Hull-House as a community center for all of Chicago, organized by Jane Addams, was for Dewey, associated with it, a sort of a social center. It turned out to become “a cultural center. A social service school, a university, and a church”.⁴³

Shatsky was very inspired by the American experience and tried to operate along non-political lines and in the neutral fields of children's clubs, recreation, and health. A group of children was made to concentrate on agricultural work and manage its own affairs. Shatsky tried in his experiment to discover regularities in the way groups of children behave; he did his best to find ways and means to help the young generation master progressive and cultural norms. While experimenting, Shatsky met with constant opposition and embarrassment from the Tsarist regime and his experiment was soon halted. His wife Valentina Shatskaya taught aesthetics at school and made a program for the society “Child's Work and Leisure,” which was in tune with Dewey's ideas.

In 1911, Shatsky organized a summer colony called “Bodraya Zhyzn” in Kaluzhskaya region. He considered the most important task of school to be the organization of children's vital activities. Later, after visiting Shatsky's colony as a member of an American delegation, Dewey wrote in 1929 in “Impressions of Soviet Russia”, that his school was based “on a combination of Tolstoy's version of Rousseau's doctrine of freedom and the idea of the educational value of productive work derived from American sources.”⁴⁴

Shatsky tried to implement many of Dewey's ideas in his practical work in the colony. For Shatsky, education meant "organization of children's life" and he tried to act in conformity with nature and did not ignore the influence of environment. Shatsky thought that the main task for a teacher was to create facilities for a child to display his/her "forces and abilities" in order to give vent to all natural instincts. Inspired by Dewey, he tried to implement Dewey's principles and practice of democracy into school life and administration, and showed increased human interest in current social affairs. But Shatsky went further than Dewey's adaptation to society idea and tried to change the environment by means of the school.

In 1922–1933 Dewey's theory and practice greatly influenced existing Soviet educational practice. J. Dewey visited Russia in 1928 as a member of an American delegation, and saw tremendous changes in the relationships of teachers and pupils in Soviet schools. Dewey's concept of a teacher as a guide, and organizer of various activities was taken by Shatsky and other Soviet progressive educators as a main principle in their experimental educational practice. While in Russia Dewey was impressed by the phenomenal achievements of the Soviet school system, which were due to the deep and constant attention which Soviet society paid to the upbringing of the younger generation. Although he found much political propaganda at schools, Dewey noted the enthusiasm of remarkable Russian men and women, students and teachers, who were ardently convinced of the necessity place of education with a social aim and cooperative methods in securing the purposes of the revolution. After his visit Dewey wrote a series of articles very sympathetic in tone to the USSR, which led to his being described as a "Bolshevik" and a "red" in the conservative press.

It is not by chance that Dewey gave such high evaluation of the school of 1920s. Many specialists consider this period to be the brightest period of Soviet education, as it was a period of a dialogue in educational science and innovative search in education. The "Era of Krupskaya," as this period is sometimes called, may be characterized by the fact that many talented people such as P. Blonsky, A. Kalashnikov, S. Shatsky, A. Pinkevich and others worked with N. Krupskaya – at that time the Deputy Chairperson of the People's Commissariat of Education (headed by A. Lunacharsky) on school programs, plans, and textbooks. According to P. Blonsky, under the guidance of Krupskaya "all kinds of public dialogue took place, as did public criticism of various pedagogical positions and undertakings".⁴⁵

During Dewey's visit to Russia he met Krupskaya and had fruitful discussions with her on the problem of the labor school. Krupskaya knew the works of Dewey well and in her book *Narodnaje Obrazavanije i Demokratija* (Popular Education and Democracy) she analyzed the theory and practice of education from a historical perspective. Dewey's school of activity appealed to Krupskaya, as she also thought that schoolwork should be inseparably connected with science and culture. The Soviet educator B. Komarovsky published in the 1920s two books devoted to the analysis of J. Dewey's ideas. Komarovsky called Dewey a prominent researcher in the fields of logics and epistemology, pedagogy and psychology, ethics and social philosophy.⁴⁶ M. Bernstein named Dewey as the best American educator and "the best of the best

Americans". A. Lunacharsky gave Dewey the title of "one of the greatest educators of our century".⁴⁷

The innovation movement in Soviet education at that time reflected the American influence. M. Pistrak, a member of the State Academic Council, confessed in the pedagogical discussion of 1928 that the Russians adapted the Dalton System from Western Europe and America and tried to apply it, but not very successfully. Russian pedagogues as P. P. Blonsky, S. T. Shatsky, and A. Zelenko and other Soviet educators in the 1920s tried to learn about experiences in American high and secondary schools (M. S. Bernstein, G. F. Svadkovsky), some visited the United States and thought that it was the main educational laboratory at that time.⁴⁸

Soviet educators actively applied the testing and project methods. But in the late 1930s Stalin's directives and "the iron curtain" blocked close cooperation between Soviet and American educators. Any signs of the American way of life were to be condemned and abolished. In 1932. The Dalton System in Soviet Russia was abolished by a special statement of VKP (B). The official reasons for this were the low role of the pedagogue and the disregard for the individual capacities of pupils. But the real aims of Stalin's policy were to make Soviet school a part of a command-administrative system, and make the pupil a small screw in the state machine. The fear caused by the statement prohibiting the Dalton System and other American methods lasted for a long time and is even nowadays a blocking factor today to educational reform in Russian high and secondary schools. The complex programs that were elaborated by the members of the scientific-pedagogical section of the State Academic Council may be considered to be an example to combine Marxist principles with progressive educational ideas. The subject matter in the program was organized in three columns: nature, labor, and society. All the teaching was based on "integral instruction" through themes and not on regular discipline. The programs were to be filled with regional materials, corresponding to the vital needs of the environment in which the child lived.

The influence of Dewey's ideas is clearly observed in the complex programs. The Soviet educators were looking for a new school that could focus its attention on the children, their interests, and their inclination for action. The educators thought that the programs should reflect the growing complexity of children's lives and their personalities. The new programs were aimed at getting children acquainted with something essential for their present life and future. The implementation of the ideas embodied in complex programs proved to be not so good in practice as it seemed in theory. First, the programs were applied universally, to all schools in the Soviet Union. This was problematic for such a vast country where schools differed greatly in material resources and facilities. Second, the teachers were not prepared for the creative implementation of the ideas. Sometimes the task of linking the program with the local needs of the school and its surroundings led to frivolous things; some pupils devoted much time to such complex themes as "The Duck", "The Birch Tree", and so on. These links seemed to be very artificial. The authors of the new programs did their best to improve the complex programs until the 1930s. At that time all the school experiments were ended by the authoritarian regime of Stalin. In hindsight, we can see that the ideas that informed the complex programs were not

accompanied by the necessary means of implementation, trying to give new content to their schools, but having no forms in which to stack and organize it. Sometimes complex programs were simply ignored by the teaching staff, or simplified to such an extent that the essence of the complex method was completely lost.

The project method, originated by Dewey's pupil W. Kilpatrick, was also introduced in the Russian school of the 1920s. Being a modification of Dewey's problem method, it was adapted to the Soviet system with the aim of realizing the principle of education in the collective – the main principle of Soviet school of that time. Soviet educators made an attempt to compile new textbooks for schools practicing the project method. Soon the method was established to such an extent that it led to the neglect of scientific knowledge, reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. These extremes were most characteristic in the educational practice of the Lefts (V.N. Shulgin, A.V. Shapiro and V.M. Pozner).

It is remarkable that Dewey's ideas were adopted both in pre- and post revolutionary Russia. The Revolution marked a decisive change in the outlook of Russian educators with regard to the role of the school in the transformation of society. Dewey's ideas happened to be fit first, because they stressed on the continuity between school and society, on the intrinsic relationship between learning and work, and on the cooperative attitude.⁴⁹

The ban of pedagogy in 1936 and its liquidation as a humanistic discipline by the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Party paralyzed the development of all sciences dealing with childhood and stopped a very serious experiment in education. Stalin's command-administrative system was strengthening step by step. It is worth mentioning that later in his autobiography Dewey wrote that the reports that came to him after the high-pressure five year plan was put into effect of the increasing regimentation of the schools and of their use as tools for limited ends were a great disappointment to him. The process of de-Deweyization in Russia started with the elimination of encyclopedia articles on Dewey in the period of the late 1930s-1950s and also with the criticism of progressive experimentation in the schools. During the Cold War Dewey was labeled in Russia as "the wicked enemy of all the freedom loving peoples on our earth" and in the 1950s all the articles and books written about him belittled his educational contribution and stressed his misguided social and political orientation. His pragmatic philosophy was criticized, too. The publications of Soviet researchers on Dewey in the 1960s and 1970s were in the same line. Only in the late 1980s and early 1990s was there a shift in the perception of John Dewey's philosophy of education in Russia, that brought a sort of revival of interest to the ideas of American reformer, this time in connection with the category of experience, active learning, dialogue-oriented pedagogy, cooperative and interactive methods of teaching and idea of inter-subjectivity. Trying to find a democratic model of school Russian Educators turned to historical legacy of progressive educators in Russia and abroad. Dewey's ideas serve as an instrument in the change of society.

The experience of Japan in perception of Dewey's educational ideas is of particular interest as it helps to see how Japanese tradition tried to meet and interpret innovative western ideas. John Dewey's reputation as the recognized leader of the

pragmatic movement in philosophy and pedagogy came to oriental countries like Japan and China in the beginning of the 20th century. When Dewey settled in New York at Columbia's University in 1905, he was already rather famous. In January 1918 as Dewey and his wife were about to sail for a vacation to the "Orient", he received an invitation to deliver some lectures in Japan. At the end of the 19th century Japan was very open to western innovations. In creating Japanese educational system, the Japanese had full confidence in foreign educators and counselors. As for Dewey's pedagogy, it became known in Japan even at the end of the 19th century. A famous book by Sudzi Ivasa was written under the influence of J. Dewey's philosophy of education and became a manual for teachers of Japan. Among supporters of westernization movement in Japanese school there were different positions. Some of them supported Herbert and didn't accept pragmatism, though many others positively accepted many key elements of Dewey's philosophy of education. It is remarkable that Americans first drew attention to Dewey after in one of the journals there was a paper of Japanese author Motoo Yujiro in 1887. The paper was devoted to psychology and the author was the first of Japanese pioneers – a Christian protestant, studying American philosophy. He evidently heard of Dewey at the lectures of professor Stanley Hall at the University of John Hopkins. Later Motora became the Head of Japanese Association of Child Study founded in 1902 after coming back home Motora became the professor of the University in Tokyo and Tokyo High Normal School. It was Motora who let it possible for Japanese to know one more representative of pragmatism – W. James. Motora wrote some papers about him and was the editor of the first translation of W. James' "Principles of Psychology".⁵⁰

One more Japanese scientist Nikaima Rikiso has made his contribution to Dewey's reception in Japan by discussing Dewey's work "The Outlines of Critical Theory of Ethics", that first appeared in Japanese translation in 1900. Next year Japan saw Dewey's book "School and Society" and in 1905, 1923, 1935 and 1950 – four more of his main translated in Japanese books.

Japan is a country of traditions. When Dewey came to Japan during his two-and-a-half-month's visit he delivered a series of eight lectures at the National Imperial University in Tokyo. These lectures were organized around a general theme dealing "with the problem of reconstructing moral and social thinking and he benefits to be derived from a democratic way of life".⁵¹

Dewey thought that the lectures would give him a chance to express his ideas for world peace. Since Dewey's visit in 1919 Dewey's influence on Japanese educational thought seems to have been continuous and reached its peak, in all probability, during the "Americanization" of Japanese education following the World War II.⁵²

The name of Dewey is often mentioned in the lectures and papers of Japanese educator Naruse. He admitted that Dewey's educational idea appealed to him greatly. In 1912 Naruse visited Dewey in New York and Dewey got his chance to pay him a visit later in 1918 when he had a lecture at Imperial Tokyo University on "New Tendencies in Philosophy, Religion and Education".⁵³

At the beginning of the 20th century many young Japanese students who studied in U.S. took interest in Dewey's ideas in Japanese educational thought and wrote that Naruse took some elements of Dewey's didactics in his school, but he was not a very

good specialist in Dewey's philosophy. One of the serious researchers of Dewey's pragmatism was Tanaka Odo (1867–1932). He listened to Dewey's lectures at the University of Chicago in 1889 after the graduation from the University of Chicago. Tanaka taught at High Industrial School in Tokyo and then at Waseda University. He did not share all the positions with Dewey on societal problems and was greatly influenced by Hegel. Tanaka was an idealist in the case of social progress but reproached his Japanese colleagues for "Philosophy in armchair" in tune with Dewey and criticized them for "being isolated from a real world in an iron tower". In this book "Off the library to the street" (1911) Tanaka asked the scientists to leave their study-rooms and to study a real social world. It was Tanaka who did his best for Waseda University to become the center of pragmatism. A famous "Waseda group" consisted of Sugimoro Kojiri, Hoashi Rijichiro and Tanaka. Hoashi called himself "The pupil of Dewey's pupil".

Though in Kobajashi's view Dewey's brief lecture tour in 1919 did not have a significant impact but his ideas as transmitted through his writings in the years following did influence Japanese thought. The popularity of Dewey in the postwar period was amazing as Japan was an Asian country long known for its authoritarian tradition in education. Still Japanese kept to look for "Western technology" but tried to adhere to "Eastern morals".

Between the two world wars of the last century dedicated Dewey's scholars who had studied in Northern America tried their students with democratic ideas of American reformer. When in 1927 William Heard Kilpatrick visited Japan and lectured on his version of the project method, which had been inspired by Dewey's ideas, his lectures reached a very wide audience through various media, including radio. The Dalton Plan and the project method became very popular with Japanese education at that time. A number of schools had been founded following the pattern of progressive schools that had been started in the United States.⁵⁴

Kobajashi was writing his study on Dewey in 1964 and he marked that two years earlier, a Japanese journalist had stated "no one can deny Dewey's great influence on educational thought in Japan in the last eighteen years. It exceeds that of any other educational thinker".⁵⁵ The Japanese Bibliography of Education for 1945–1957 contained 176 entries under the heading "Studies of Educational Thinkers". Almost half – eighty-one – dealt with John Dewey; the U.S.S.R. educator Makarenko was second in frequency with only eighteen entries. Nagano's General Introduction to Dewey's Philosophy, published in 1946, was in its sixteenth printing by 1948.

Kobayashi cites other evidence of popularity of Dewey in post – World War II Japan brisk book sales, 21 translations of Dewey's works, papers presented on Dewey at meetings of educational research associations from 1946 – every year at least one, but in 1951 – 8 papers on Dewey. Many students at the Universities did their master's papers on Dewey. The popularity of Dewey was so high that in 1959 in the year of his 100th Anniversary of birth there appeared a catalogue on Dewey's studies in Japan. In the country of festivals there was the festival of Dewey on Shikoku Island. On June 1, in 1953 the University of Hokkaido organized "The Night of John Dewey". In 1957 the Japanese Society of John Dewey was organized and by 1962 it united 130 educators and philosophers.⁵⁶

Many Japanese educators perceived the “New Education” of the Occupation years following World War II as continuing the “New Education Movement” that had existed in Japan between 1912 and 1926 (which had led to Dewey’s influence at the time) and that had been curtailed by the rising militarism and the war.⁵⁷ Though we can make a strong case for John Dewey’s influencing Japanese educational thought it is not easy to determine Dewey’s impact on school practices even those Japanese educators, who viewed the educational reforms promulgated by the U.S. Occupation as “based on Deweyan principles, differ among themselves on the extent to which Deweyan ideas have penetrated classroom activities. Furthermore, the Deweyan approach being more an attitude rather than a set procedure of teaching is difficult to observe directly and to judge objectively”.⁵⁸

According to the French historian L.Fevre, “the only lesson of history is precisely that it offers no lessons”. This is true, but at the same time the historical material can be very effective in solving contemporary problems not by giving ready answers, but by searching for unused ways and conditions of successful implementation into practice of this or that idea.

Dewey’s philosophy of education and his experimental practice had to pass national filters. The “Russian Dewey”, the “English Dewey”, the “Turkish Dewey” or the “Japanese Dewey” were just cultural interpretations of Dewey’s ideas and practices. In any country – Britain, the Netherlands, Russia, Turkey, Latin America or Japan, the cultural canvass every time would correct the model sample digesting and interpreting it. In some countries they were used as a means in modernization of the state, in some – to stimulate educational discourse in school reform. In any case, it is hard to deny that Dewey’s reputation as a world famous pedagogue and thinker was observed in many countries. In 2009 October, 20 all progressive educational community has celebrated 150th anniversary of John Dewey’s birth. Luckily in Russia he is now also considered to be one of the outstanding philosophers and educators of the last century. The myth created in Stalin time about Dewey as “the enemy of all progressive mankind” was crushed in 1990s by the efforts of our researchers and now intending teachers read about him not ideological staff but objective truth. Publication of the translated books of American scholar in the last two decades gave the possibility for Russian readers to see the texts of Dewey itself instead of many stereotypic interpretations of his ideas.

But pragmatic pedagogy should be considered to be rather a way “to think about” education than a way “to do” education. This is not to suggest that Dewey’s ideas are by definition impractical. It is only meant to draw attention to the fact that pragmatic pedagogy is not a sharply defined educational program that can easily be put into practice in a variety of different settings.⁵⁹ Dewey’s ideas on developing reflective capacities of a teacher, his stress on competence of the teacher and necessity of profound psychological training, his laboratory approach to organizing intending teachers’ practice and his democratic model of school are still actual. His theory of civic education and idea of school based on the idea of communication and cooperation, creation of the school scientific community remain relevant today.

It was said that the 21st century would be the one of the interpretation of the text. Looking at Dewey’s pedagogy as a sort of a text, a phenomenon interpreted by

the consciousness of different cultures we did not try to measure the degree of its influence it had marked but aimed at observing various results of its perception or rejection in different countries. Dewey's reputation as a foreign educator cannot be limited to the countries, mentioned in this chapter. Of great interest could be also the experience of China, Israel, Germany and other countries in reception of John Dewey's active pedagogy. But even the reaction of the above given ones widens our vision of the educational reform of the eve of 19th–20th century implementation.

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NOTES

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THINKING CONDITIONED BY LANGUAGE
AND TRADITION

ABSTRACT

Tradition is embedded in language. Language assures continuity of tradition. When the strength of words to express meaning weakens, there is a rebellious linguistic eruption. Writers, poets, and thinkers experiment and play with words and their meaning to restore the expressive power of language. It isn't someone's capricious willfulness and selfishness that brings new layers of language into existence. It is our human existence grasping and reflecting itself in the word. Thinking and understanding depend on language, on the flexible balance between expressive and conceptual powers of language, between metaphoric and conceptualizing forces of language.

In our global world, more and more we encounter situations when people move from one culture to another, switch languages and countries, and run into different sources of information, different ways of describing and interpreting things. People are born into one tradition. Then they move and acquire something else. Can we expect instant enrichment from the doubling or tripling of cultural backgrounds? Blindfolded by excitement, we forget how challenging it is to live in a state of constant and unending translation.

Understanding "what means what" becomes more and more difficult and requires a well-trained faculty of judgment to correct contextual preconditions that influence our thinking. In the old days, cultural upbringing was more straightforward, with sources of information concentrated in universities and libraries, but even then conflicts and contradictions arose when meaning was grasped within opposing systems of ideas and beliefs. In today's world, sources of information do not have a historically subordinate hierarchy extending into the depth of previous centuries. Today information floats horizontally. Contradictions and latent conflicts are permanently woven into the fabric of our daily lives, but it is immensely difficult to identify them because in the cultural background hidden a priori preconceptions are determining understanding.

Existing surroundings in which we are immersed pre-program our perception of this world. We arrive into an established tradition and culture, and we are surrounded by concepts and notions some of which we accept as self-evident and understand spontaneously, without activating, turning on our conscious attention. Other concepts can be acquired only after many hours of laborious work. We are aware of our conscious processes. We know what subjects are involved and which theories and strategies we use to clarify and organize our thinking. We are familiar with the words we use to express our thinking and represent our understanding. But do we

always know how our thinking is conditioned historically? Do we truly know how our minds are culturally wired and how our cognitive acts are existentially preconditioned? How does the historicity of understanding affect our worldview? In his major philosophical study *Truth and Method*, Gadamer researches the historical nature of understanding. When the circular structure of understanding was discovered in the 19th century, it was perceived as an obstacle in the process of cognition and was labeled “vicious”. Gadamer points out that it was Heidegger who uncovered the ontologically positive importance of the circularity of understanding. Heidegger understood that, “In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing. To be sure, we genuinely take hold of this possibility only when, in our interpretation, we have understood that our first, last, and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves” (Heidegger 1962, p. 195). We are fooling ourselves if we do not keep in mind that our approach to any object is preset by our previous experiences. This preset casts a shadow on everything that our understanding touches. We can call this preset linguisticity of understanding. Forms of language reflect historical paths of thinking.

If I am telling someone who speaks the same language as I do about my daily experiences, he most likely will fully understand my descriptions and my emotions. If I am explaining to the same person my worldview, it is possible that some words may create misunderstanding or even result in a complete rejection of my way of thinking about the world. The differences of our fore-conceptions may clash and abort any bridging effort to establish common ground. Whenever we encounter an obstacle, a barrier in the way, a contradiction, anything that obscures the clarity of our understanding, it is a possible sign that our pre-conditioned perception should be addressed and looked at. Not always can our mutual anticipation be a full match depending on differences linguistically and culturally imbued in our cognitive acts.

What helps us to stand on a common ground? What are those linguistically conditioned mechanisms that influence our thinking, increasing its sensitivity and attentiveness? Well-known linguist Guy Deutscher explains that metaphors are essential elements of our thinking process. “Metaphor is an essential tool of thought, an indispensable conceptual mechanism which allows us to think of abstract notions in terms of simpler concrete things,” writes Deutscher (Deutscher 2005, p. 142). The mind’s ability to use metaphors indicates its adaptability to the cognitive demands of our existence. The use of language also predicts the level of authenticity a human being may achieve in the search for its existential self. According to Deutscher, “metaphors are everywhere, not only in language, but also in our mind. Far from being a rare spark of poetic genius, the marvelous gift of a precious few, metaphor is an indispensable element in the thought-process of every one of us. . . . We use metaphors not because of any literary leanings or artistic ambitions, but quite simply because metaphor is the chief mechanism through which we can describe and even grasp abstraction” (Deutscher 2005, p. 117). I would like to stress this idea that “a metaphor is a chief mechanism of thinking”. It tells us that the words we use to express our thought matter extremely. If the words I use to say something do not touch

the cords of your thinking, they are useless or could even be harmful. Overspent and overused words do not emanate a magnetic field that captures another's thinking. To transmit meaning, words have to be active, able to create forces of attraction. A human being is the meeting point between the past and the future. It lives, and this living extends a human being into the future. It leaps forward in being and comes back to itself as a reflecting thought grasping itself in language.

Gadamer directs our attention to the fact that we move in a linguistic world and our worldly experience is pre-structured by language. Most metaphors in our everyday language have penetrated the very structure of our perception and have specifically mapped out our world-view. For example, linguists acknowledge that images of "more is up" and "less is down" are very common in our use of language. "The conceptual metaphor 'more is up' has taken over much more than just language," acknowledges Deutscher, "and has become so deeply entrenched in our minds that it even influences how we plot graphs and design control panels" (Deutscher 2005, p. 123). We accept this as our reality without questioning or focusing our thinking on it. This is the fore-conception that makes up the first part of a hermeneutical circle. This is our a priori understanding that we cast over the object of our thinking. Undercurrents that determine the thinking being's rootedness in history, culture and tradition are responsible for forming pre-conceptions that a priori bond our perception.

Deutscher underlines that over-familiarity inevitably weakens the force of the meaning. He also stresses that "the strength of meaning of a particular word depends on its distinctiveness, so the more often we hear the word, and in less discriminating contexts, the less powerful the impression it makes. When certain intensifiers are used more and more often, it is only natural that an inflationary process will ensue, resulting in attrition of meaning" (Deutscher 2005, p. 97). Sensing this problem led to the assertion that language is failing to deliver and disclose meaning. In the beginning of the 20th century, the critique of Enlightenment ideas focused on the inability of language to provide impeccable conceptual tools needed to understand human beings and their world. Language failed to envelop the experience of thinking in words because worn-out and overused conceptual notions weakened the expressive capacity of language. Thinking became aware of the limits of the existing language and engaged in linguistic creativity to expand its expressiveness.

French linguist Roland Barthes also examined different situations where linguistic forms carry meaning and asked what makes them more or less expressive and mentally engaging. In his article, "The Rustle of Language," Barthes described how to detect meaning and how language conducts meaning's appearances and disappearances. He imagined himself being the ancient Greek who was described by Hegel. According to Hegel, this ancient Greek passionately and uninterruptedly interrogated the rustle of branches, springs, and winds, which are the shudder of nature. The ancient Greek was a genuine element of nature. "And I", wrote Barthes, "it is the shudder of meaning I interrogate, listening to the rustle of language, that language which for me, modern man, is my Nature" (Barthes 1986, p. 79).

Barthes compared meaning and music. To have an ear for meaning is similar to having an ear for music, for sound. Understanding is a pleasurable moment similar

to experiencing something sensually delightful. “And language – can language rustle?” asks Barthes, “Speech remains, it seems, condemned to stammering; writing, to silence and to the distinction of signs: in any case, there always remains *too much meaning* for language to fulfill delectation appropriate to its substance. But what is impossible is not inconceivable: the rustle of language forms a utopia. Which utopia? That of a music of meaning; in its utopic state, language would be enlarged, I should even say denatured to the point of forming a vast auditory fabric in which the semantic apparatus would be made unreal; the phonetic, metric, vocal signifier would be deployed in all its sumptuousness, without a sign ever becoming detached from it (ever naturalizing this pure layer of delectation), but also – and this is what is difficult – without meaning being brutally dismissed, dogmatically foreclosed, in short castrated. Rustling, entrusted to the signifier by an unprecedented movement unknown to our rational discourses, language would not thereby abandon a horizon of meaning: meaning, undivided, impenetrable, unnamable, would however be posited in the distance like a mirage, making the vocal exercise into a double landscape, furnished with a ‘background’; but instead of the music of the phonemes being the ‘background’ of our messages (as happens in our poetry), meaning would now be the vanishing point of delectation” (Barthes 1986, pp. 77–78). As an example, where meaning was not just conceptually but also sensually incorporated in the text, Barthes cited Michelet, whose history excurses were impassioned not because their author was overly emotional or hotheadedly judged about historic facts, but because he did not arrest language at the fact (Barthes 1986, pp. 197–198).

What happens to all those powerful, vibrant, and potent words that come into language, take part in a cognitive break-through, perform their mission and then fade away on the sidelines for the next generation of human beings. Deutscher explains that historically, “The simplest and sturdiest of words are swept along, one after another, and carried towards abstract meanings. As these words drift downstream, they are bleached of their original vitality and turn into pale lifeless terms for abstract concepts – the substance from which the structure of language is formed. And when at last the river sinks into the sea, these spent metaphors are deposited, layer after layer, and so the structure of language grows, as a reef of dead metaphors” (Deutscher 2005, p. 118).

Thinking is greatly influenced by thinker’s native tongue. Language plays an exceptional role in conditioning thinking and worldview. Words reflect the ways people think and behave and in that sense they are the keys that help to explain and understand their culture. It is difficult to match in translation the meanings of words in different languages because languages have culturally specific notions or categories. They are the cognitive tools that contain the experientially unique experience of every particular society. Those tools influence extensively the manifestation of thought of members of society. In every culture there are some words with a very distinctive, deeply embedded meaning that permeates all layers of that functioning society. They are the “key words” that define the cultural undercurrents of every nation.

Not always are linguistic experiments and rebellions understood and appreciated. Most likely, society will perceive changes as an unnecessary interruption and inertia

will prevail at first. Unfortunately, even the creative and talented minds greet tearing down parts of tradition with suspicion. At the beginning of the 20th century, Russian poet Iosip Mandelshtam incriminated his fellow Russian writers and poets of straying away from the pristine Hellenistic tradition of use of words. He described Andrey Bely as being sickly phenomenon in the history of the Russian language because he mercilessly and brutally chased words following only the temperament of his speculative thinking. Choking in his ornate verbosity, Bely would not sacrifice a single nuance, a single facet of his capricious thought (Mandelshtam 1987, p. 59). He would destroy existing bridges between words and meanings because, according to Mandelshtam, he was too lazy to explore how to cross them. As a result of this instantaneous firework, when we read Bely, indicated Mandelshtam, we have to deal with a pile of debris, a dismal picture of destruction. At the same time, Mandelshtam accepted even more radical experimentation with language, seeing in it a race towards the future. He viewed the pace of language as different than that of life. It is impossible to adjust language mechanically. Sometimes language leaves everyday life far behind. According to Mandelshtam, this is the case of Russian poet Velimir Khlebnikov, who busied himself with words like a mole, digging tunnels into the future, and moved language years ahead (Mandelshtam 1987, p. 60). However, Mandelshtam did not elaborate on why Khlebnikov experimented with language wishing to fortify its emotional and, thus, conceptual power.

Both, Bely and Khlebnikov, played with language to attain the most powerful effect and to push their readers into chopped-up perception routines, to ambush them, to overwhelm them, to snowball them with words they could not anticipate receiving. Linguistic rebellions are visible and impressive, with words cannonballed at each other to tear them apart and prepare for something different. At the same time, side by side with the linguistic fireworks, minuscule change occurs daily and it takes a while until it can be noticed. Hans-Georg Gadamer indicated that the “life of language consists in the constant playing further of the game that we began when we first learned to speak. A new word usage comes into play and, equally unnoticed and unintended, the old words die. This is the ongoing game in which the being-with-others of men occurs” (Gadamer 1977, p. 56).

When we are articulating our thought, the first word brings along the next one and this is repeated many times. When we choose the word, it has to break itself out of the preconditioned context and emerge with unintended consequences and associations. Whenever we use a word, its appearance adds something to an existing thesaurus. When human beings communicate, the purpose of this communication is not to exchange well-defined facts, but to transmit meaningful content, to reveal something. If the disclosure of meaning is happening, the human being adds a new facet to his existence.

When we approach language as a research subject, we also encounter a very specific problem. Gadamer points out that “all thinking about language is already once again drawn back into language. We can only think in a language, and just this residing of our thinking in a language is the profound enigma that language presents to thought” (Gadamer 1977, p. 62). We can agree with Doede that, “For Gadamer, humans dwell in a world that is linguistically saturated; language is the

historical-cultural *a priori* that makes possible the human way of being in the world. From this perspective, the thinking most expressive of human being is essentially dependent upon language. And language, as these thinkers conceive of it, is both the product of social relations and the producer of social beings – self-reflexive beings whose identities are socially forged through mutual linguistic expressivity” (Doede 2003–2004, p. 7). Gadamer underlines that “we are always already biased in our thinking and knowing by our linguistic interpretation of the world. To grow into this linguistic interpretation means to grow up in the world. To this extent, language is the real mark of our finitude. It is always out beyond us. The consciousness of the individual is not the standard by which the being of language can be measured” (Gadamer 1977, p. 64). Language is the mark of our finitude and at the same time a dialogue that opens up infinity for thinking and meaning. Gadamer also speaks of the self-forgetfulness of language. It is not natural for a subject to be aware of the structural components of language while using it. “The structure, grammar, syntax of a language – all those factors which linguistic science makes thematic – are not at all conscious to living speaking” (Gadamer 1977, p. 64). The more natural is the use of language; the less conscious we are about it.

Gadamer has elaborated about the role of translator. And it is true not only in translating from other languages but also in every case when someone is interpreting a literary text or anything else. Hermeneutics embraces the universality of translation. Let us listen to Gadamer when he states that a translator “cannot simply convert what is said out of the foreign language into his own without himself becoming again the one saying it” (Gadamer 1977, p. 67). Understanding is both an interpretation and translation. Every interpretation is already a move towards overcoming naiveté, the initial assumption that perception gives us understanding of the world as it is. According to Husserl, at the natural standpoint we just passively perform our observations of presented reality following the preset rules of cognitive inquiries. Husserl uses the term “phenomenological reduction” to explain that thinking being has to overcome psychological and empirical actuality to claim understanding.

When we are glancing towards an object in our view, we are apprehending it based on an intuitive perception of its nature. Our previous sense-experience has built a certain fundamental framework, which lets us intuit with self-evidence. It is very important to think about the remarkable words of Gadamer, “It is not really ourselves who understand: it is always a past that allows us to say, ‘I have understood’ ” (Gadamer 1977, p. 58).

We are immersed in the tradition and cannot understand ourselves as a separate entity. And it is also true that we cannot understand tradition without understanding our being in it. According to Gadamer, “The operation of the understanding requires that the unconscious elements involved in the original act of knowledge be brought to consciousness. Thus romantic hermeneutics was based on one of the fundamental concepts of Kantian aesthetics, namely, the concept of the genius who, like nature itself, creates exemplary work ‘unconsciously’ – without consciously applying rules or merely imitating models” (Gadamer 1977, p. 45). Thus, interpretation is needed to understand the results of those unconscious acts and to make them available for the broader society. Romantic hermeneutics also contributed to the understanding

of the historicity of tradition. Gadamer makes clear that “romanticism began with the deep conviction of a total strangeness of the tradition (as the reverse side of the totally different character of the present), and this conviction became the basic methodological presupposition of its hermeneutical procedure. Precisely in this way hermeneutics became a universal, methodical attitude: it presupposed the foreignness of the content that is to be understood and thus made its task the overcoming of this foreignness by gaining understanding” (Gadamer 1977, p. 47).

What belongs to that circle of understanding? What are the steps towards true knowing? At the beginning a person projects understanding, inherited from the tradition and cultural surroundings. This subconscious, unreflected knowing a priori belongs to the past and is forwarded by the tradition. Gadamer writes, “a person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. Again, the initial meaning emerges only because he is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning. Working out this fore-projection, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there” (Gadamer 2006, p. 269).

Gadamer’s editor and translator in English notes that for “Heidegger and Gadamer alike, man not only uses language to express ‘himself,’ but, more basically, he listens to it and hence to the subject matter that comes to him in it. The words and concepts of a particular language reveal an initiative of being: the language of a time is not so much chosen by the persons who use it as it is their historical fate – the way being has revealed itself to and concealed itself from them as their starting point” (Gadamer 1977, p. LV). We are born in language and it is our tradition. We define and understand ourselves in words. What happens when we start feeling that language is failing to serve this need and is losing its expressive power? Do we think that language is in crisis? Do we think we have reached its limits? Do we think that we are misusing it?

There are several assumptions about language, which we encounter in our culture. The history of philosophy reveals that mankind strives to reach the truth, thus acknowledging that the proper language of philosophizing is conceptual. From here we can see that conceptualizing power of language was always considered a unique and privileged duty that language performs in philosophy (Schmidt 2004, p. 35).

Heidegger and Gadamer focused on language’s capacity to transcend conceptually the experiential space and time of a human being. They both tried to capture in words the dilemma of human cognition: the rapture between the two sides of the being – the experiential side of existence and the reflective side of concept building.

What is language capable of expressing? Where is the power of the word hidden – in its conceptual rigidity or in its expressivity, its ability to touch existential chords of being? Already Hegel brought everyday language into philosophy to sharpen thought’s expressive capacity. He brought into philosophy new terminology that came from German and that was suited better to describe new experiences. Heidegger also came into philosophy with his own conceptual language. Terminological changes were aimed to expand and deepen the expressive capacity of language. For Heidegger, language performs two distinctive

functions – it discloses meaning and communicates information. He allows words to resonate in his mind and become a match with existentially experiential content. What happens naturally and spontaneously during the long stretches of time in history, Heidegger is testing in the phenomenological approach to being.

While working on his own concept of language, Gadamer constantly returns to Heidegger's ideas. For Gadamer, "the role that the mystery of language plays in Heidegger's later thought is sufficient indication that his concentration on the historicity of self-understanding banished not only the concept of consciousness from its central position, but also the concept of selfhood as such. For what is more unconscious and 'selfless' than that mysterious realm of language in which we stand and which allows what is to come to expression, so that being 'is temporalized' (sich zeitigt)? But if this is valid for the mystery of language it is also valid for the concept of understanding. Understanding too cannot be grasped as a simple activity of the consciousness that understands, but is itself a mode of the event of being" (Gadamer 1977, p. 50).

Language we can perceive better as a game or as a play where the flow of words rub against things or appear from the secludedness of our unconscious knowing of the world.

It is not astounding that Gadamer eloquently elaborates about the fluidity and creativity of this process. "No one fixes the meaning of the word," Gadamer notes, "nor does the ability to speak merely mean learning the fixed meanings of words and using them correctly" (Gadamer 1977, p. 56). Whenever we discuss understanding, we cannot avoid discussing language because all thinking is confined to language either as a limit or as a possibility.

Understanding defines a human being. But understanding is not something that is consciously done or achieved; that is only a result of cognitive effort. Understanding is always an event. It is an ontological happening that changes the nature of being. Understanding is not an epistemological problem. Representatives of Enlightenment philosophy simplified the problem of understanding and interpreted it in the framework of cognitive theory. Understanding was equated with knowing, with a conscious possession of knowledge. Adorno was one the harshest critics of this legacy of Enlightenment. At the same time Adorno refused to accept Heidegger's correction of traditional rationalism. He equates Heidegger's terminology with a jargon, which carries an ideological mandate. Adorno believes that Heidegger uses words that have not been part of thought and thus are just empty shells resembling linguistic signifiers. Adorno insists that in Heidegger's philosophy, "hypocrisy thus becomes an a priori, and everyday language is spoken here and now as if it were the sacred one" (Adorno 1973, p. 12). When jargon "dresses empirical words with aura, it exaggerates general concepts and ideas of philosophy – as for instance the concept of being –so grossly that their conceptual essence, the mediation through the thinking subject, disappears completely under the varnish" (Adorno 1973, p. 12). Adorno blames Heidegger for stealing words from language and for manipulating the elements of empirical language. According to Adorno, Heidegger's "jargon" uses "disorganization as its principle of organization, the breakdown of language into words in themselves" (Adorno 1973, p. 7). Jargon

confuses and manipulates, creating an illusion that a person can be in charge of his own thinking. In his foreword to the English edition of Adorno's *The Jargon of Authenticity*, Trent Schroyer emphasizes that "the jargon shares with modern advertising the ideological circularity of pretending to make present, in pure expressivity, an idealized form that is devoid of content, or, alternatively, just as the mass media can create a presence whose aura makes the spectator seem to experience a nonexistent actuality, so the jargon presents a gesture of autonomy without content" (Adorno 1973, p. XIV). Adorno states that "while the jargon overflows with the pretense of deep human emotion, it is just as standardized as the world that it officially negates; the reason for this lies partly in its mass success, partly in the fact that it posits its message automatically, through its mere nature. Thus the jargon bars the message from the experience, which is to ensoul it. The jargon has at its disposal a modest number of words, which are received as promptly as signals" (Adorno 1973, p. 6). One would wonder why Adorno extremely politicized Heidegger's position on language and emphasized its ideological ambiguity, highlighting the possibility that it can become an oppressive tool and be used against human beings.

Interestingly Foster represents the point of view that Heidegger and Adorno were attempting to deal with the same problem – crisis situation in language – feeling that language is losing its ability to communicate the truth. He stresses that "Heidegger wants to allow the moment of meaning disclosure to come to expression in language, without allowing that moment to be corrupted by the natural drift of language towards disengaged representation" (Foster 2007, p. 197). Foster also underlines Heidegger's inclination towards everyday language and its use in building terminology. Heidegger is using this strategy all over *Being and Time*, hinting that beyond the simplicity of words is the hidden depth of meaning. Heidegger focuses on a disclosive force of a word from the everyday language. According to Foster, Adorno criticizes Heidegger for his inability to properly explore and implement the idea of the aesthetic origin of cognition. The moment of artisticity in cognition appears as a blind spot linguistically and causes the illusion that it is possible to grasp meaning that cannot be expressed as conceptual content. For Adorno this means that Heidegger is giving up the critical function of thinking and is succumbing to repressive and destructive social structures. Apparently, Adorno's point is backed by Heidegger's flirtation with the Nazi regime.

Roger Foster writes, "Adorno believes that the unsayable must be brought to language in such a way that language at the same time lights up its own speechlessness before the unsayable. In other words, the task must be to bring the unsayable to language in such a way that shows it as what is unsayable. This requires a type of articulacy that is neither a refusal to speak that is, silence, nor is it the statement that subsumes something under a concept. Adorno perceived that the modernist problem required an understanding of philosophical writing as a process in which language reveals what is currently unsayable" (Foster 2007, p. 201). In the end, Adorno acknowledges that thinking may not have adequate linguistic tools to reveal its meaning, and that "unsayable" is a reality. Similarly, did not Heidegger speak about the gap between what we say and what has to be said?

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HOW TO CONDUCT LIFE
(ARETE AND PHRONESIS)

ABSTRACT

Taking Husserl's thematisation of Greek philosophy as a starting point, the aim of this paper is to explore and recover the full sense of the concept of arete (virtues) and especially that which is considered to be the "virtue of all virtues": *phronesis*. *Phronesis* is a dianoetic approach that deals with the deliberative aspects of the human condition. It is the "practical intelligence" that guides us in our actions and provides us with a sense of awareness of the world, enabling us to conduct our lives. It must also be remembered that *phronesis* is a constant presence in life's practical situations. This paper will also discuss its conceptual foundations, namely *proairesis* (the capacity for personal choice) and boulesis (deliberation). In this sense, *phronesis* is a form of knowledge that facilitates decision making and the correct governance of our lives. Indeed, it will allow us to use our acquired habits in the correct manner, as it is responsible for articulating intellectual and moral virtues. It facilitates learning in order to enable us to face the complexities of life and to do things as they should be done: *phronesis* invites us to adopt the best decision on each occasion. It is man's most reliable and immediate truth in an uncertain world. It is a means of foresight in the light of what may occur, a form of knowledge that can use the experiences of the past as a means of anticipating future events. For many centuries, *phronesis* has been a form of practical knowledge, and as such, represents a type of "emotional intelligence" that plays a key role in our experiences and situates us in a world where choice is a necessity; the choices we make at any given time shape our very nature.

INTRODUCTION

The irrepressible driving force underlying the impact of Greek philosophy based on an ideal of philosophical life, is the central theme of Husserl's well-known work *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*. As the father of phenomenology reminds us, the world around us is not only made up of "empirical facts" (with all the issues entailed in the understanding of this concept), but it also involves experiences of idealised objectivities, and by extension varying values, ethics and aesthetics. Taking this as our starting point, it must be remembered that in Greek philosophy in general, and the thinking of Aristotle in particular, the key question is "How should life be conducted?", "How should I lead my life?" The answer is by cultivating *arete* (virtues), as this is the only way of living

as a human being in the true sense of the expression. Seen from this perspective, virtues are not acquired either naturally or by working against nature, but instead through a natural disposition to receive and perfect them through habit and custom. Greek ethics is essentially rooted in the nature and life of the individual seen as a whole.

Aristotle's ethics are based on virtue, unlike the moral philosophy that began with Kant and the Utilitarianists and has continued until the present day. Their sense of ethics is concerned with formal criteria or the good and evil of our acts; in other words, with our sense of duty. In contrast, Greek ethics is the shaping or education of individuals with the aim of ultimately reaching perfection. Virtues are moral habits and personal choices that human beings are required to interiorise and display socially in order to conduct their lives efficiently. These are essentially acquired through *paideia* and become second nature to the individual.

In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle defines two major categories of virtues: ethical *arete* (strength, temperance and justice) and dianoetic virtues (wisdom and *phronesis*). The former are the so-called "moral virtues", and the latter "intellectual virtues". By shaping our character, they guide us in the way of conducting our own lives. Aristotle defines *arete* –virtue or excellence– as "a characteristic of a person that renders good, of which it is the excellence and causes it to perform its function well" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1106a). He goes on to clarify this by stating that: "Virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by reason and by that reason by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it" (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1107a).

Virtue –*arete* – is therefore a habit –*exis*– that is deliberately chosen –*proairesis*: "the deliberative appetite of things within one's power" (*Eudemian Ethics*, 1226). This means that through the *arete* of *phronesis*, man is shaped in our interests by dint of repeating those acts that guide him towards good.

It must be stressed that Aristotle considers *phronesis* to be the most decisive of all *arete*. *Phronesis* is more than a simple virtue; instead it is the "governing virtue" that determines the nature of all other virtues. It is practical wisdom with an ethical capacity for determining human acts. A faculty that is concerned with making ethically desirable choices and the discovery of what is good for the individual. In other words, *arete* is the practical intelligence that enables us to choose what is fit (moral beauty) and the means best suited to achieving our proposed objective (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1144a).

Phronesis is therefore the ability to direct our own lives, which involves deliberating on what is or is not convenient for the human being. It also helps us to reflect (the realisation of future possibilities) on man's purpose, as it has the capacity to highlight the true mission of our lives.

I

In Classical Greece, *aisthesis* (sensitive perception, beauty, aesthetics) was the overriding concept of life. This idea is directly linked to *logos* in terms of its core meaning of proportion or harmony. Indeed, this is a manifestation of life whose

internal and external aspects are proportionately balanced. The Greeks referred to harmony as *arete*. *Paideia* was also governed by this concept of harmony, as art represented a permanent horizon for Greek educators. Art in the human sphere is known as a means of overcoming natural deficiencies. Its mission is therefore to create a sense of harmony between *physis* and *logos*. Aristotle frequently resorts to the metaphor of nutrition when referring to *paideia*, which he conceives as the educational interiorisation of our being within *arete*.

According to Aristotle, the essence of *paideia* lies in: a) the search for *aletheia* (seeking truth through disclosedness); and b) the shaping of the character governed by *arete* (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1143a).

For the Greek spirit, the key lay in educating the character, enabling man to be modified by the most powerful forces that shape and govern our lives, namely music and poetry.

Educating the character implicitly aims towards the realisation of the ideal of life in a practical sense. For Aristotle, the materialised ideal is the search for *arete* (*Politics*, 1371). A quest that is developed through *phronesis*, which provides man with the capacity to choose the right form of life at each moment: for the Greeks, fulfillment in life comes with a life that is chosen (*proairesis*) and that allows self-creation.

Art (words, harmony, sound, rhythm) was not an autonomous professional activity (as it is today), but instead a means of inner education (*Bildung*) and a means of shaping our spirit – a strategy that leads to a sense of harmony within the self. The art that was created during this period must be seen as a source for the production of new entities. Rather than being “created” from nothingness, they stem from the indeterminate.

Aristotle claimed that art is the predisposition for creation accompanied by a series of rules, whilst *phronesis* is the willingness to act in accordance with those rules (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1140b). He also distinguished between contingent objects whose principle resides in the producer and those contingent objects whose principle resides in the thing produced, “which are the things that are by nature” (*Physics*, I, 192b).

As mentioned previously, the role of *aesthesis* in Greek *paideia* is crucial. Education was seen as the passing down of *paideia* from one generation to the next. Initially, the means for this was a song. Indeed, laws were chanted long before they were first written down. And rhythm provided the means for memorising them. In truth, *nomos*, means both law and song.

The ideal of aesthetics and harmony was expressed through *kalokagathía*: beauty and goodness. Music and other similar arts were the ingredients of this “balm for the soul”. The aim was to achieve beauty and goodness by extracting from musical arts the essence that fired human passions and left the spectator (observer) in complete control in order to reach *kalokagathía*. *Arete* was present in each part of this maximum aspiration.

The Greeks were aware of man’s potential on entering the world, yet also that this potential required development in order to overcome disharmony and disorder. What was needed was a cleansing process known as *catharsis*, which played a

key role in *paideia*: just as medicine healed the body, *catharsis* was responsible for man's "emotional healing". In other words, the aim was to dispel the causes that exacerbated the perturbing and unsettling emotions and passions. In the Greek world, the role of *catharsis* essentially targeted the experience of art (represented through music and tragedy).

It was within this context, and once *paideia* and *catharsis* had fulfilled their mission, *kalokagathía* (beauty and morality) would make its appearance. The Greeks' aim was to use man to create the most complete work of art through *arete*, *paideia* and the experience of art.

Humans idealistically aspire to virtue and *eudaimonia*, yet not all are successful in this quest. *Paideia* aims to fill the voids left by nature and to act as an instrument that can help man to become fulfilled and virtuous. In this sense, it has the capacity to become an artefact for life, for choosing the best possible life, together with its corresponding *praxis*.

Aristotle uses the nutrition metaphor to provide us with a clear vision of what he understands by *paideia*. In fact, it is the spiritual nutrient humans require, allowing them, through *arete* to become what they should be whilst at the same time enabling them to shun all that they should not be.

Arete consequently plays a crucial role as it is not generated by or acts against nature; instead it possesses the natural conditions necessary for reception and perfection through habit.

Arete epitomises the educational ideal of Classical Greece: practical intelligence manifested fully in *phronesis*.

Paideia therefore aims to bring about the practical realisation of the ideal of life through the development and assimilation of *arete*. The education process itself is the suitable context in which to acquire the habits for a good life. This positions us within *phronesis*, as it is this that will guide our *praxis* through practical judgement. Under such condition, education is nourished by *phronesis*, capacitating humans to appreciate and value their lives.

In *paideia*, in the education of men, intellectual considerations converge smoothly in close relationship with *praxis*. It is a question of aesthetic sensitivity, of receiving a good education through *arete*. Sensitivity that is proof of practical intelligence (*phronesis*). Wisdom cannot be taught; all that can be done is to point out the path which leads to its ultimate acquisition.

II

In the modern age, the Greek concept of virtue has gradually lost ground amongst ethical theories in favour of the idea of duty or moral law, essentially due to the influence of Kant. In his *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals* and *Critique of practical Reason*, Kant formalises the concept of duty, moral law and their capacity for universalisation. To put it another way, the move away from principle-based to virtue-based ethics. At all events, the concept of virtue, and by logical extension *phronesis*, falls into decline from the 18th century onwards.

The contemporary recovery of the concept of virtue was known as “the ethics of virtue” and is an attempt to provide an ideological response to Liberalism and a philosophical alternative to Utilitarianism and Kantism.

However, my aim in this paper is to recover the Greek concept of virtue in its fullest sense, and specifically that which is considered the “virtue of all virtues”, namely *phronesis*. In part VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* it is defined as a practical arrangement accompanied by true rules concerning what is good or bad for man (1140b). *Phronesis* is an *arete* associated with knowledge whose limits are those of man himself. Specifically, it is a dianoetic *arete* that assigns and points to the deliberative aspects of the human condition. It is practical intelligence capable of guiding the actions of man. It allows us to be alert and aware of the world, enabling us to conduct our lives. Furthermore, it fills the void that exists between the mechanical laws of nature and the elusive and shifting human *praxis*.

Science has always aspired to creating a totally transparent world. A world in which nothing could be any other way. Were this true, there would be no place either for the experience of art or *paideia*. If we attempt to clarify absolutely everything within our temporal and spatial sphere, then there would be no room for human initiative, which is what art and *phronesis* feed on. An interpretable world that invites us to reflect upon it is a vital space in which there is still a place for the genuinely human.

Knowledge cannot consist (or at least not exclusively) of “knowing the truth” as science would have it. Should we come face to face with the truth, we would be freed from the need to deliberate, to choose the path our lives should take (*proairesis*), which is what makes us human. Freedom always implies choice in a life filled with complexities and shadows; it is being in a position whereby we can choose whether or not to take a certain course of action.

A man with *phronesis* has chosen the path of knowledge, and is on his way to becoming wise. As Aristotle knew, a wise man is he who knows how to take the setbacks life brings and even turn them to his advantage. A man with *phronesis* is capable of freeing himself from life’s blows through an inner attitude (*catharsis*). In short, it is an attempt to be wise, to realise that wisdom depends on the self in a world which is beyond our control. *Phronesis* is attempting to obtain an insight into and to anticipate an inevitably uncertain future. It is foresight against what might happen in an attempt to safeguard ourselves from danger.

As a dianoetic virtue, *phronesis* deals with human acts in general and through them the essence of man and the man present in a world on which it must act.

In philosophical terms, Aristotle saw *phronesis* as the human quality that enables us to guide ourselves towards the act that is good and desirable for man.

Phronesis is knowledge that enables us to make choices that will guide our lives in the right direction. In this sense, it allows us to use the habits we have acquired correctly, as it articulates both our intellectual and moral virtues.

Those in possession of *phronesis* are referred to as *Phronists* – men with the capacity to deliberate in the light of any eventuality. *Phronists* are those that lean towards action and productive art. *Phronesis* is the practical disposition to exercise

choice (*proairesis*), which is executed by *Phronists*. They do not merely interpret the rule or regulation, but instead are themselves the rule (like his disciple, Plato also gave precedence to man over the law).

As an extension of the concept of *Phronists*, Aristotle also invokes the *Spoudaios* (virtuous men, similar to the *Phronist*, who set an example to all). These are citizens whose actions have earned them the trust and confidence of others, and whose actions transmit a sense of certainty and reassurance. Indeed, men lacking in *spoudaios* are considered to be infirm – in other words they take decisions that are detrimental to the self.

In this sense, it must be remembered that Aristotle agreed with his master Plato (*Meno* 94a) in that virtue is not an object of education, as it is closer to wisdom and poetic inspiration than *episteme*. At this stage, it is also worth bearing in mind that for the Greek scholar, *phronesis* differs from *episteme*, in that this form of knowledge is a deliberating *arete* of the self (1140b).

The Aristotelian concept of *Phronists* would therefore be in keeping with Plato's idea of the philosopher king (*Politics*, 294a), if we do away with the idea of the world of ideas as the sole foundation. For *Phronists*, everything is susceptible to intelligibility. Furthermore, they are in optimum conditions to deal with the blows that life deals and to turn them to their advantage. *Phronists* face a complex, harsh and dangerous world in which they are forced to venture towards an uncertain future in order to safeguard themselves as far as possible from the unforeseen events that may befall them. In such an unpredictable and uncertain world, *Phronists* must make choices (*proairesis*) and deliberate (*boulesis*), as they are aware that this is the means to obtaining an insight into this future.

If man takes on an indeterminate world, his apprehension may only come from an indeterminate rule, that is represented by *phronesis*. It is from this that the concept of equity as a moment of *iuris-phronesis* appears: in order to be just, the law must be corrected through equity. *Epieikeia*, thus conceptualised, is the correct nature of law in its specificity, a means of seeking a higher justice. This idea must be based on the consideration that the law is always at a disadvantage when pitched against the complexities and elusive nature of human fatalism. In this sense, together with Aristotle, we must differentiate between what is just by virtue of the literal nature of the law and due to deliberation (*Nicomachean Ethics*. E 10). The capacity of deliberation to project itself into the future and to gain further knowledge and insight must always take precedence over written rules. Equity is not so much related to the literal sense of the law, but instead to the meaning that underlies its literality, the hidden meaning that required interpretation. All legal texts (and indeed any type of text in general) not only represent that which can be gleaned from an initial interpretation, but also a deeper meaning that requires deliberation and further interpretation. In any text, we must seek that which the writer or legislator has unwittingly included in order to bring it to the fore, making it accessible to comprehension.

III

As we have seen, *phronesis* is wisdom that enables man to cope with life, providing an insight on how it should be conducted. It should also be remembered that *phronesis* is not the knowledge of the immutable (*episteme*), but rather that of contingency. It confers a knowledge that albeit lacking in scientific character, is filled with *logos*.

We have also seen that the conceptual foundations of *phronesis* lie in the capacity to choose (*proairesis*) and deliberate (*boulesis*). Nor must we overlook the fact that it intrinsically contains the fundamental form of experience.

Phronesis is the capacity for self-advice and is not limited to personal objectives. It is knowing how to act and therefore consists of self-knowledge. It is destined for immediate application based on *praxis*.

Unlike skills, which are always specific, *phronesis* is always destined for the ends to which we live. They cannot form part of a knowledge that can be taught; we are only shown how to display them.

Phronists are those that possess *phronesis*. Individuals who are not dictated to by fury or passion, but instead who are guided along the right path to making the decisions that affect their lives. *Phronists* are aware that only those that have acquired learning (*paideia*) can adopt certain determinations.

Phronesis unquestionably involves learning to do things as they should be done and to face complex situations: it is foresight for the future, the capacity to learn lessons from the past in order to foresee what lies ahead in a world full of uncertainty.

Finally, it must be stated that had the concept of *phronesis* been the object of study in antiquity, we would not be speaking today of the concept of “emotional intelligence” as an innovative idea. Indeed, it is anything but new: for centuries.

Phronesis has been a “practical form of intelligence” and as such an inexorable form of “emotional intelligence” that plays a major part in our lives, placing us in a world where choices must be made. The choices we make at any given time shape our very being. In conclusion, *phronesis* requires preparation, habit, deliberation and the capacity to make decisions. However, once these prior requirements have been integrated, it immediately exerts a governing influence on our actions, enabling us to reach fulfilment as human beings.

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SECTION IV
HUSSERL IN THE CONTEXT OF TRADITION

THE REASON OF THE CRISIS. HUSSERL'S
RE-EXAMINATION OF THE CONCEPT OF
RATIONALITY

ABSTRACT

According to Edmund Husserl's diagnosis, we can speak of the crisis of sciences which generally consists in the loss of faith in reason. In the light of the Husserlian analysis, reason had become merely a technical and computational power of cognition leading humans to the control of nature, and to an oblivion simultaneously, the oblivion about human essence, i.e., governing life by reason. Conversely, Husserl sought an authentic view on reason, and, as he argued, the authentic notion of reason was present in antiquity. Precisely ancient Greeks defined reason as the foundation of the human life. The main purpose of the article is to present Husserl's immanent development of his considerations on rationality which led him from the theory of objective reason to a formulation of the theory of reflection on a practical level. By referring to the ancient ideal of reason, as it is argued in the article, Husserl re-examined cognitive model of reason and he introduced practical and communal dimensions of rationality into the mentioned model. Such a theoretical step can lead to the reinterpretation of so-called phenomenological movement in general, and of Husserl's phenomenology in particular.

INTRODUCTION

From the very beginning, phenomenology claimed to be a reformatory program of philosophy in general. For this reason, in the *Logical Investigations* Edmund Husserl struggled with a psychological interpretation of logic in particular. While discussing the empirical account of logical laws, Husserl presented as an alternative to the account such crucial ideas as the theory of meaning as an ideal entity, the intentional interpretation of consciousness, and the thesis about the superiority of the objective expressions over the subjective expressions. The ideas were relevant to the methodological level of philosophical investigations, rather than to the level concerning such themes as human life, or the world. In *Ideas I*, Husserl enlarged his project by introducing the notion of constitution. The latter notion emphasized correlation between transcendental subjectivity and the world. The constitutive phenomenology claimed to be comprehended as a pure science, which is able to ask about the conditions for possibility of experience of the world. In order to examine the conditions, the phenomenologist has to bracket a worldly character

of being, i.e., his researches cannot be determined by presuppositions. Rather, the phenomenologist's investigations have to be free from presuppositions, as Husserl (2001b, p. 177) formulated the principle in the *Investigations*. From this perspective, however, Husserl's last published work – *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* – presented a specific “breakthrough,” which meant the introduction of such themes as crisis, culture, and reason. Is it true that within phenomenology one is confronted by two different tendencies: on the one hand, by leading the phenomenologist towards a non-worldly being, the strict scientific one and an abstract tendency; on the other, a critical tendency. The former is associated with eidetic claims, the latter, by contrast, consists in asking about human life and his world. How, if at all, are these two tendencies non-contradictory? How, again, Husserl was able to define and examine such themes as the crisis, culture and reason in the *Crisis*, without suspending his phenomenological method?

In the article it is argued that within Husserl's phenomenology one is faced rather with a permanent development, than with the series of “breakthroughs.” The notion of reason plays the crucial role in this context, because precisely the notion is a leading clue which can lead commentators to adopt the thesis about Husserl's continual re-examination of the entire phenomenology, at least in regard to the concept of rationality. Hence, inasmuch as in the *Crisis* reason is grasped as the source of the crisis of sciences (Husserl 1970, p. 9), reason is specifically understood in this context. Of course, Husserl had in mind rationality founded by a modern science. Nevertheless, a philosophical reflection on reason, grasped in its broadest sense, according to Husserl, can lead entire culture out of the crisis. Therefore, reason is the source of the crisis, but it is the only defense simultaneously. Therefore, following Maurice Natanson, “[p]henomenology is a defense of Reason” (Natanson 1973, p. 17).¹ The reflection means a critique, but the latter notion is here understood twofold. On the one hand, the critique involves answers to the following questions: What does the crisis mean? In what sense does scientific rationality base the crisis? Thus, such a critique is close to a contemporary criticism of rationality (Plotka 2009, pp. 4–5, 10). On the other, the critique has its sources in the Kantian philosophy, which asked for the conditions for possibility of experience. As soon as 1906, it was evident for Husserl that the most general purpose for entire phenomenology was equivalent to the Kantian purpose of the critique of reason; in a personal note, written on the 25th of September 1906, Husserl (1984, p. 445) noted that the critique of reason, understood as investigations of sense, essence, and methods of the rational reflection, shall be a point of departure for each philosopher. Thus, also entire phenomenology can be grasped as a permanent re-examination of the concept of rationality.

The main purpose of the article is, then, the presentation of Husserl's re-examinations of the concept of reason, at least with regard to two aforementioned senses of the critique of reason. Firstly, I will reconstruct phenomenological critique of calculative reason. The latter concept involves rationality of modern sciences. As it will become clear in the following, Husserl began this manner of criticizing rationality much earlier than in the *Crisis* published in 1936. Secondly, Husserl's account of “authentic” reason is to be sketched. As Husserl supposed, “authentic”

reason can overcome calculative rationality of sciences, and it leads towards “new” rationality. It is important to note, however, that the “new” rationality will require to refer to Eugen Fink’s ideas from the period of his collaboration with Husserl the reinterpretation of the method of reduction. Moreover, it is argued that this “new” rationality had its sources in the ancient Greek ideal of rational life; finally, the difference between scientific and “authentic” rationality, I will assert, consists in the introduction of practical aspects into human life. Therefore, in contrast to commentators who stress merely a theoretical character of Husserl’s discussion on the crises of sciences, the article asserts that the crucial sense of his inquiry is practical at the very heart.

THE CRITIQUE OF CONVENTIONAL REASON

As phenomenology has stated clearly, the philosopher always stands opposite the world, in which it is possible to construct infinite world views. In a word, he is in the lifeworld, i.e., in the pre-scientific world of ordinary actions. Elisabeth Ströker sought to define “pre-scientific” character of the world, and she emphasized: “[t]o call a world ‘pre-scientific’ could naively be interpreted as if the foundations of science” (Ströker 1997, p. 305). According to Ströker, the lifeworld cannot be “given” in any way; also sciences are not able to reconstruct the world. Rather, sciences are the equivalents for certain world views. How, then, is the crisis of science possible? After all, sciences presented during the 1930s, and still present, a series of their successes. But, as James Dodd argued, the science’s “very success does not preclude the possibility of crisis is a key insight of Husserl’s; but it means that to talk of the crisis of science is, paradoxically, to talk of the crisis of a success” (Dodd 2004, p. 29). Therefore, one can ask again: What does it mean to speak of the crises of sciences, if the crises is parallel with its successes?

To answer the question, following Ströker (1997, p. 305), let me stress that the lifeworld is the field of practice. Although modern sciences present merely world views, they developed techniques and methods which are able to determine human practice. However, they “forgot” its genuine purpose to determine life with regard to rational principles. Instead of giving the principles and inquiring about them, they constructed its own “outer” rationality, i.e., scientific rationality. Yet, this rationality is not derived from life. Furthermore, to quote Dodd once again, modern science “no longer seems to order life, to give life the sense of itself necessary for its pursuit of itself, thus its future” (Dodd 2004, p. 140), or, to quote Husserl’s *Crisis*:

[i]n our vital need . . . this science has nothing to say to us. It excludes in principle precisely the question which man, given over in our unhappy times to the most portentous upheavals, finds the most burning: questions of the meaning or meaninglessness of the whole of this human existence. (Husserl 1970, p. 6)

Thus, modern sciences are in the crisis in this sense that they lost its essential connection with life and the world.² Nonetheless, while they were and are still successful, sciences order human life indeed, but indirect, because these successes concern at the end practice. Therefore, it should not be surprising that Husserl’s main purpose was to reveal sciences presuppositions in regard to practice.

First of all, however, it is necessary to reconstruct Husserl's understanding of sciences, at least of positive sciences, with regard to the concept of rationality. As Husserl has stated clearly, the sciences are expressions of the processes of rationalization in general. In turn, rationalization is "a mental operation . . . which leads all factual descriptions through upgrading of the factuality to a pure possibility in appropriate essential establishment" (Husserl 2001c, p. 48). Obviously, by affirming the given world as the ultimate reality, the sciences are grounded on an uncritical relation to the world (Husserl 2003, p. 3); they discuss the world as if it were objective. Does it mean, then, that the special kind of mental operation which comprehends factual world as an objective and pure possibility, reflects the objective structure? Not at all, because the description of specialized fields of nature is guided not by certain essences of objects, but rather by mathematical method; only if the scientist uses this method, he is able to achieve a description of the world as the objective one (Husserl 2001a, p. 544). Husserl has proceeded to investigate scientific method by pointing at the "technicization of the method". He has stated that "[t]echnical method involves the use of the unreasonable [elements – W.P.], and namely . . . empty words and signs" (Husserl 1993, p. 35). Yet, human rationality is determined by the primacy of calculative, but "unreasonable" practice. Husserl did not provide a precise definition of "technicization;" he only emphasized that it operates with "substitutes," which are determined by methodological aims. Therefore, the "unreasonable" elements denote simply "technical" practice as mathematical. "Mathematics", according to Husserl, "is the biggest technical wonder" (Husserl 1993, p. 35).

Two aspects of scientific rationality, i.e., calculation and technicization, were analyzed elsewhere broadly (Plotka 2009, pp. 7–8). Yet, in order to understand Husserl's point in his discussion on calculative reason, let us emphasize that calculation which leads to technicization consists in the formulation of abstract "truths in themselves." By replacing the factual being and life with the universal constructions of ideal calculus, the Husserlian reflection on scientific rationality provides an observation that only by calculating ideal entities the sciences have a "kind of predication" which "infinitely surpasses the accomplishment of everyday predication" (Husserl 1970, p. 51). Moreover, the predication grasps the world which is constructed by the calculus as "given" once and for all. Nevertheless, the calculating scientist "forgets" that the proper object of his current activities is not the world, but a kind of ideal being, viz. the calculus itself. The world is the field of relative relations, rather than it is defined once and for all. As Husserl once put it, "[a]ll being is relative" (Husserl 2008, p. 5).

According to Husserl's lectures on the *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*, the calculative method introduces the sphere of objectivity in such a way that it allows to treat each question as settled for "everyone" (Husserl 2001a, p. 542) who practices the method. Thus, the use of the same method for all of us implies the treatment of nature as non-differentiated, i.e., as the same for "everyone." This "everyone," simply stated, is an abstract entity. It does not refer to an individual. Rather, it points at the abstract subject of science. The "ratio of natural sciences", as Husserl wrote, is "the ability . . . of calculating future and past relations of possible

fields of the givenness of an experience” (Husserl 2008, p. 733). Therefore, calculative rationality of science misinterprets its world view as the world itself. This thesis is a kind of premise of positive science.

While keeping aforementioned concept of positive science in mind, one can understand Husserl’s “uneasy,” as he defined it, question: “What does the premise about the rationality of man who cognizes in a real and possible way mean?” (Husserl 1993, p. 30). Precisely, the question set out to challenge the positive scientists, casting doubt on the latent premises of science. It is alleged that science is naïve to the extent that it relies on a calculative concept of rationality. Inasmuch as the concept is “normal” for the scientist, a kind of “normality” is an “uncovered presupposition of the scientist” (Husserl 1993, p. 30). But, again, all presuppositions are important for the phenomenologist, who is asking the “uneasy” question and by doing so, he is heading for the formulation of the presuppositions which finally concern practice. For this reason, the proper questioned object of the question is the practice of the scientist. In this sense, Husserl suggested that we assume that certain activities are rational. Hence, if one wants to describe the concept of scientific rationality, he should examine how is it practiced, rather than investigating scientific theories themselves. Therefore, at the beginning of the 1922–1923 lectures on *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, Husserl (2003, p. 6) emphasized that such an investigation might allow us to formulate a theory of rationality which is immanent to the theories constructed by the scientist. To put it clearly, as the practitioner, the scientist does not question the foundations of his practice. Only philosophy can do this. By contrast, the scientist just knows what he can do, and this is the reason why he does not care about the premise of rationality. He focuses on his actions or, rather, on actual operations, and he does not address the theme of rationality in his investigation (Husserl 1993, p. 31). For this reason, each question about latent premises of practice is “uneasy” for him and, lastly, the proposition that scientific rationality is determined by the technical method becomes obvious. Precisely from the perspective of calculative rationality which determines human practice, it is possible to speak of the crisis of science and rationality simultaneously.

So far, positive sciences were characterized as naïve, because they took a given world for granted; the scientist did not recognize the proper object of his activities, i.e., he forgot, following Husserl, that the object is the ideal world denoted by calculus. For this reason: “[t]he natural sciences have not in a single instance unraveled for us actual reality, the reality in which we live, move, and are” (Husserl 1965, p. 140). It is obvious that sciences concern rather a certain world view, than the world itself. As Husserl put it repeatedly, rationality of positive sciences aims at the construction of related “world views,”³ or it finds certain “representations of the world” (Husserl 1989a, p. 189). All related “world views” parallel the calculative actions of the scientist. In other words, positive sciences have their own “rationality,” inasmuch as they introduce certain order into the “representation of the world” which is reflected in the ideal construction of related science. According to phenomenological philosophy, then, nature is a theoretic construction of physics (Husserl 2001a, p. 543), and as such it does not equal the world in which a physician lives and works (Husserl 1976, p. 390). It is important to note, however, that

the world of actual practice cannot be given in any way at all. Just as Ströker (1997, p. 305) emphasized, “pre-scientific” character of the world does not mean that it is somehow pre-given in sciences; rather, the lifeworld encompasses all sciences in such a sense that it is the “ground” (*Boden*) of all practice.⁴

What is Husserl’s key insight with regard to the critique of conventional reason, however, is not only the statement that the sciences determine human practice, but also that the determination involves a special kind of rationality. According to Husserl, the rationality of scientific actions became an equivalent for rationality in general. Hence, by criticizing calculative reason, Husserl (2002a, pp. 12–13) aimed *eo ipso* at “the tragedy of scientific culture,” as he put it metaphorically while lecturing on nature and spirit in 1919. To phrase it differently, rationality which claimed to be comprehended as determining entire human practice limited itself to merely abstract actions. To use Husserl’s notions which involve the concept of rationality, ratio of sciences did not equal ratio inner of human actions. Of course, Husserl (2002a, p. 5) agreed with Francis Bacon at least that, as they famously stated, “knowledge is power.” Both philosophers attributed the power of sciences to their grounding in mathematical, as well as positive methods, which allowed to reduce the scientist’s workload to merely an abstract and automatic calculus. Husserl, however, in opposition to Bacon, was conscious of twofold consequences of applying scientific method to human life. Indeed, the method “is progress,” following Husserl’s *Natur und Geist* lecture series from 1919, “but it is a danger as well: it saves the scientist much intellectual effort, but due to the mechanisation of method, many branches of knowledge become incomprehensible” (Husserl 2002a, p. 6). As he continued: “outer rationality, which is understood as justification based on changing conclusions, does not correspond to inner rationality, to the understanding of inner senses and aims of thoughts and to basic elements of method” (Husserl 2002a, p. 6). First of all, Husserl’s words indicate that the critique of the calculative character of method is closely linked to the critique of rationality in phenomenology in general. In this context, Husserl spoke of an “inner” and “outer” rationality. While the “inner” rationality was an equivalent to the essence of genuine human rationality and thinking, forming its aim and meaning, the “outer” rationality of method reduced rationality to its own ideal constructs of justification and the “outer” mechanisms of practice. Therefore, the rationality of calculative reason transformed human rationality into a mechanism that belonged to a dogmatic science.

By replacing “inner” rationality with “outer” rationality of scientific method, the crucial consequence arises for the understanding of human being. One can ask: *Who* is the subject of science? After all, the scientist is not any individual, rather, while focusing on “hard” facts, he must suspend his subjective being, his beliefs, and his own life to proceed scientific researches. In a word, he must resign from the claims to determine his own life by science.⁵ Therefore, because of the definiteness of nature, he does not use a kind of private language in opposition to the language of sciences. As Husserl put it in a note added to *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*: “[t]he definiteness of nature, its being-in-itself implies an intersubjective being-thus of nature that is identifiable for ‘everyone’ in relation to everyone – a being-thus of all that is, and according to all its things and properties” (Husserl 2001a, p. 543).

Hence, positive science replaced an individual with an abstract “everyone.” Namely, “everyone” is able to use “exact” methods of science, and despite who he is, or what he believes, he is able to achieve the same truth as anyone else. As it will become clear in the following, this aspect of positive science provides a decisive difference in comparison of naïve science to authentic.

Summing up, according to Husserl’s diagnosis, contemporary sciences are in the crisis. The crisis consists in the loss of the sciences’ significance for human life. In order to understand this thesis, the Husserlian account of the lifeworld was reinterpreted in such a way that the lifeworld was presented as the “ground” of all practice. Inasmuch as the world involves human actions, science can determine the world, but only in an indirect way, i.e., by regulating the practice through a distinctive world view. Science offers humans a certitude and an easiness in using the mathematical method. Otherwise, it will be merely the one of the many possible world views. Indeed, positive science constructed indirectly a special kind of practice – calculative. Nonetheless, Husserl’s key insight was in this context that the practice involved a kind of rationality. The latter Husserl called “outer” rationality and he indicated that it implies an abstract understanding of human life. At the end, let us emphasize that Husserl’s reflection on calculative rationality is not characteristic only for the last period of his work, but, just the opposite, the question of calculative rationality became a life-long concern of Husserl right through the unfinished *Crisis*. Therefore, one is able to find the sources for Husserl’s interests in rationality even in the *Investigations* (Husserl 2001b, p. 223).

TOWARDS A NEW FORMULATION OF RATIONALITY

In a personal note, written on the 25th of September 1906, Husserl (1984, p. 445) defined the main purpose of phenomenological inquiry as the critique of reason, which can reveal a sense, essence, and methods of the rational reflection. The critique defined in such a manner, based on the power of reflection, namely, on a self-referential character of reason. Just as aforementioned critique of calculative reason based on the rational power of reflection also Husserl’s re-examination of calculative rationality and his way towards a new formulation of rationality had its point of departure in the question about the power of reflection. In general, this comparison demonstrates that entire Husserl’s reflection on rationality is based on a fundamental ability of reflection. Indeed, it is reflection which makes possible to define and then to evaluate the mechanization and technicization of method. Husserl built this concept of rationality through examining the idea of modern sciences. Furthermore, the concept of calculative reason derived from the sciences justified the thesis about the crisis of reason, because reason was reduced to the ideal construction of calculative laws. Additionally, Husserl’s thesis about the crisis had further important implication, i.e., rationality manifested itself in a factual practice. This implies, however, that the crisis concerns the fields of culture, science and philosophy itself (Buckley 1992, p. 9) simultaneously.

Although, the crisis of calculative rationality seemed to be necessary and unresolved, at the same time one has to be conscious of the possibility of non-naïve account of reason. Therefore, on Husserl's view, when one speaks of the crisis "we must not take this to mean that rationality as such is evil or that it is of only subordinate significance for mankind's existence as a whole" (Husserl 1970, p. 290). Hence, the crisis of calculative rationality did not equal the crisis of reason in general. Rather, as Philip R. Buckley argued,

"[t]he breakdown of rationality is, for Husserl, not a sign that rationality (in its true sense, that is, philosophy) is no longer possible," but "it is a sign that the 'old' rationality is in fact no true rationality, it is a sham, and its bankruptcy has finally been exposed." The crisis makes evident for Husserl the need for the true form of rationality, for true philosophy, for transcendental phenomenology. (Buckley 1992, p. 123)

Of course, the "old" rationality equals the "outer" one and hence it indicates the concept of rationality related to modern sciences. Husserl, just the opposite, aimed at the formulation of "new" rationality, and in this context we agree with Johanna Maria Tito (1990, p. xlv), who emphasized that Husserl sought the method of investigating the essence of reason to reach a *new* reason as distinct from rationality of the calculative method.⁶

Yet, in opposition to calculative reason, rationality towards which Husserl was leading while pointing at the power of reflection has to present a real alternative for the possibility for regulating human life. In a word, it cannot be merely a theoretical critique, as the critique of calculative reason was in fact, but it must become, to paraphrase the title of one of Husserl's texts from the beginning of the 1920s, *the radical critique*. This kind of critique, has to take a regulative function of human practice to the fore. Therefore, by doing so, the critique provides a point of departure for a broader understanding of the lifeworld as the "ground" of practice. By comparison with the world view of positive science, the lifeworld claims to be comprehended as a "new" world. As Husserl put it in *Radikale Kritik*: "[a]n autonomous man will build . . . this new world" (Husserl 1989a, p. 107). Thus, following Marcus Brainard (2007, pp. 17–18), one can speak of the practical impulse of Husserlian efforts. But, what kinds of practical implications does the concept of the radical critique have?

We introduced a "being-thus" as the category of naïve sciences which reduced an individual to the abstract "everyone." Namely, the "everyone" must go follow rationality immanent to science, or, to phrase it differently, the scientist follows necessary "being-thus." Furthermore, all being grasped by sciences is defined once and for all. Yet, the scientist has the entire field of his possible activities as given, defined by necessary "being-thus." For this reason, again, the scientist is determined and enslaved by calculation and technicization of scientific method; after all his activities whatever they concern are determined and defined. The phenomenologist who is re-examining calculative rationality can ask: Is this a genuine consequence of science? Was science constructed to enslave humans? Not at all! Just the opposite, the genuine intention of science, at least for Husserl, was to determine action of a free person. Hence, according to Husserl, rationality of sciences as shaped by the methodological mechanization contains in itself a fundamental contradiction. More precisely, positive science claimed that "[s]cience should make us independent . . .

in all our practice and aspirations. However, as science is subordinated to the mechanisation of method, it does not make us free even theoretically” (Husserl 2002a, p. 12). By contrast, the radical critique has to make a man free, whether theoretically or practically. Here, then, the crucial practical implication of the critique arises: The rational critique involves practice by making a man free, but, again, this claim cannot be comprehended on a naïve level.

In order to grasp the non-naïve account of the claim to be free, Husserl’s and Fink’s view on reduction is to be analyzed briefly. Husserl presented the principle of freedom from presuppositions already in 1900–1901 in the *Investigations* (Husserl 2001b, p. 177). Also after two decades, consequently, he saw in philosophy a proper way of making the philosopher free from presuppositions (Husserl 1958, p. 479). In Husserl’s view, the “presupposition” denotes “unjustified judgment” (Husserl 2002b, p. 441). It is important to note that although the purpose of phenomenology is the same in both texts, the understanding of “freedom” changed for Husserl essentially. On the one hand, we can speak of “freedom from presuppositions” if one asks for “grounds” of the presuppositions, and by doing so, he justifies the related judgment. However, from the transcendental viewpoint, this taking a certain judgment for granted, i.e., the end of asking about further presuppositions, equals naïveté. Therefore, on the other hand, “freedom from presuppositions” can be parallel rather to the understanding of presuppositions, than to the exclusion of them. To understand why critique is able to make a man free, one must take into consideration the latter understanding, and then he can speak of what Husserl (2002b, p. 303) defined as “a state where prejudices are universal” (*Universalität von Vorurteilen*). In a word, a non-naïve account of freedom denotes the situational character of reflection which, paradoxically, *always* has certain presuppositions. But, again, our *understanding*, and *not* the suspension, of the situation provides a “real autonomy” and an “absolute self-establishing” of our life (Husserl 1958, p. 506). At this point, we are confronted with the reinterpreted idea of phenomenological reduction.

What is philosophically interesting, in the context of the paradoxical account of “freedom,” is Husserl’s idea that the phenomenologist must grasp the state of presupposition as permanent. To understand this paradoxical structure, one can speak of what Fink defined as “the situation of reduction;” in his notes written in the period of his collaboration with Husserl, he wrote:

[p]henomenological reduction is no method which cannot be taught once for all, but inasmuch as . . . [philosophical – W.P.] telos is human freedom, [reduction – W.P.] is the task of philosophy. Philosophy wants to exist only for freedom. The motivation of the reduction is only the will to freedom. (Fink 2006, p. 222)

Thus, in Fink’s view, freedom is the proper task of reduction, because while reducing the phenomenologist discerns himself as the subject of presuppositions, therefore, at the same time, he is conscious of them and he understands his situation as having presuppositions. In a word, only while doing reduction, he is able to see presuppositions of his activities. Obviously, before reduction the man is enslaved, because presuppositions enslave a naïve subject of actions, however, to quote Fink once again, “[a] man is enslaved essentially. And only because he is not free,

he might be free” (Fink 2006, p. 222). This is precisely the context in which one shall read Fink’s assertion that “[a] man exists as a paradox. He combines in himself matters, which seem to be contradictory. He understands the being in original strangeness and original confidence” (Fink 1958, p. 30). In other words, the reducing scientist lives in a natural attitude, but the very heart of this life stays still unknown, because he simply forgot about himself paradoxically. Rather, with regard to the scientific method he transformed himself from an individual into aforementioned abstract “everyone.” Only if the phenomenologist started doing and redoing reduction (Cairns 1976, p. 43), he became capable to see himself as the acting person and in consequence he became free. In a word, due to reduction the phenomenologist established himself, despite calculative rationality. Here, reduction is an equivalence for the radical critique which founds authentic ratio.⁷ Yet, to stress it clearly, the phenomenologist is free *only* while reducing. For this reason, he achieves authentic ratio during the radical critique, however, he returns to naïveté necessarily.⁸

The reflective power of reason made evident that the modern science deformed the idea of rationality (Mall 1972, p. 135). The decisive step towards the deformation was dualistic interpretation of reason: on the one hand, reason was grasped as merely a factual power, on the other, it was associated with objective laws of thinking. As it was presented, the naïve science negated the former and affirmed the latter at the same time; finally, the positive science replaced factual actions with abstract constructions. Conversely, the “new” rationality involves a non-dualistic understanding of reason. Almost always when Husserl spoke about the “new” rationality he referred literally, or indirectly to rationality founded by ancient Greeks,⁹ because, following *The Vienna Lecture*, “[s]piritual Europe has a birthplace, . . . not a geographical birthplace . . . , but rather a spiritual birthplace It is the ancient Greek nation in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.” (Husserl 1970, p. 276). According to Husserl, precisely in ancient Greece, reason was not comprehended as a mathematical power, but rather as the authentic power of self-reflection. As Husserl once put it,

[r]ationality, in that high and genuine sense of which alone we are speaking, the primordial Greek sense which in the classical period of Greek philosophy had become an ideal, still requires, to be sure, much clarification through self-reflection. (Husserl 1989a, p. 290)

Additionally, the unified Greek view on reason as self-reflection, has one important consequence: inasmuch as one overcame the dualism of rationality, self-reflection involved rather factual actions in the world, than ideal calculus. Therefore, be referring to the Greek rational tradition, Husserl spoke to us much more than he gave as the speculative thesis on the “spiritual birthplace of Europe.” Namely, he indicated that the Greek rationality proposed a concrete account of a human being, i.e., in the ethical-political sense. Hence, authentic reason apart from the abstract “everyone” as the subject of ideal actions provided a point of departure for the understanding of *animal rationale* as an individual who acts in a community. To quote James Hart’s appropriate assertion: “[b]ecause it [reason – W.P.] is the power to unite and bind humans, we may say that a most decisive articulation is in the way each actualizes the latent plural dative (‘us all’) and anonymous ‘we’ and sees his

or her action in terms of the good of others” (Hart 1992, p. 651). In other words, Husserl sought in the Greek rationality the supplementary of the abstract modern rationality, i.e., political and ethical involvement of subjects in the world.

To sum up, by replacing calculative rationality with authentic reason Husserl re-examined the understanding of rationality, in consequence, broadening it significantly. First of all, Husserl combined authentic reason with the power of self-reflection. Only due to the power, the critique of calculative rationality was possible, and precisely the power led the phenomenologist towards his radical autonomy. However, following Fink, the autonomy is understood as a permanent confrontation of the phenomenologist with presuppositions, rather than as a naïve denial of them. Finally, the autonomy showed its whole significance by the introduction of the practical meaning of the lifeworld and actions, because at the practical level humans are grasped as individuals, rather than as abstract subjects of calculative rationality. Moreover, while referring to the Greek sources of rationality, Husserl made it clear that practical, i.e., political and ethical,¹⁰ aspects of reason are crucial for taking into account also intersubjective context of human actions. Only in such a way one is able to overcome solipsistic *milieu* of calculative rationality.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me recall that the main purpose of the article is the presentation of Husserl’s re-examination of the concept of rationality with regard to the twofold understanding of the critique of reason. On the one hand, the critique denoted the investigation, which aimed at the solution of the questions: In what sense are we able to speak of the crisis of rationality? How do sciences involve the crisis? On the other, the critique referred to the Kantian tradition in which the critique referred to the investigation of sense, essence, and methods of the rational reflection. Both understandings were connected essentially, however, inasmuch as the former understanding based on the latter, and the latter had its proper point of departure as early as in 1906, namely in Husserl’s declaration that the main purpose of phenomenology is the critique of reason (Husserl 1984, p. 445), it is evident that phenomenology presents a permanent development, rather than the series of “breakthroughs.” Therefore, the *Crisis* is a result of Husserl’s great efforts (which he started already in the *Investigations*) to re-examine the concept of rationality.

Summing up, in regard to the first understanding of the critique, it became clear, following Søren Overgaard (2002, p. 213), that science can tell as *how* things happen as they do, however, it did not inquire about its grounds, and for this reason it fallen into naïveté. Furthermore, the main reason of the crisis was identified as the calculative interpretation of rationality. Calculative rationality, then, led humans towards the abstract field of operations defined by mechanization and technicization of scientific method. At the end, the scientist operated within the ideal field, but at the same time he forgot that his activities involve the field, and not the factual one; in a word, calculative rationality replaced the factual world with the ideal one, and moreover an individual with the abstract “everyone.”

By contrast, Husserl's way towards a new formulation of the theory of rationality led him through inquiring about the reflection itself, rather than about the state of culture. In doing so, Husserl defined the proper aim of the reflection as the "freedom from presuppositions," however, this state of freedom is not achievable once and for all. Rather, as Husserl and Fink made it clear, the process of inquiring about the presuppositions is endless. It was argued that a permanent inquiry claimed to have its sources in ancient Greece. In ancient Greece precisely, rationality was formed not only as non-calculative, but moreover it had a broad practical sense, leading the philosopher to adopt the thesis about a communal character of investigations. The thesis made possible to transform the abstract "everyone" of calculative rationality into concrete "us" of authentic rationality. The authentic rationality which involved a practical level, let us suggest in the end, expressed the crucial sense of rigorous science. In Husserl's note from 1935, we find the following ironic question: "You still tell the same old story about Your radical rationalism, do You still believe in philosophy as a rigorous science? Have You slept through the end of the new time?" In light of our findings so far, Husserl's answer expresses practical aspect of rationality: "Oh no. I do not 'believe' or 'tell stories': I work, I build, I am responsible" (Husserl 1989a, p. 238). Therefore, as Husserl tried to show us, there is no another response to calculative reason than rational practice itself.

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NOTES

¹ In his recent book on the crisis and reflection, James Dodd emphasized, "Husserl could perhaps be considered one of the last great philosophers of the Enlightenment, and the *Crisis* his grand defense of reason" (Dodd 2004, p. 169).

² Ernst Wolfgang Orth (1999, pp. 46–49) emphasized that the diagnosis of the crisis of culture and the critique of scientific reason were typical for intellectual discussions of the beginning of the twentieth century.

³ Cf. Husserl 1989a, p. 175; Husserl 2002b, p. 321; Husserl 2008, pp. 202, 673.

⁴ Husserl stressed the understanding of the lifeworld as the "ground," or the horizon of all practice repeatedly. Cf. Husserl (1970, p. 142); Husserl (1993, p. 45); Husserl (2002b, p. 394); Husserl (2008, pp. 308, 351). See also Claesges (1972, p. 88) and Park (2001, p. 109).

⁵ As Ulrich Melle once put it, "[b]y concentrating on so-called objective, hard facts modern science in its positivist distortion left us without any firm guidance in making hard choices" (Melle 1998, p. 329).

⁶ Ram Adhar Mall emphasized: "[p]henomenological reason does not copy the mathematical reason. Unlike the latter it does not consist in construction. It does not formalize; it does not create either. It is a reason which shows itself as a task and is clearly seen as 'lived' as such" (Mall 1973, p. 115).

⁷ Inasmuch as naïve sciences which constituted calculative rationality enslaved man, according to Husserl's observation, "an authentic ratio can heal those losses" (Husserl 1989a, p. 239). In the course of examining the nature of authentic ratio, Husserl wrote about a "renewal" of humanity. It is important to note that in his articles on the renewal for *The Kaizo*, written in 1923 and 1924, a point of departure for the Husserlian critique is the observation that technique became a real practical rationality (Husserl 1989a, p. 6). In consequence, also the overcoming of the crisis can be grasped as a certain "renewal" of rationality.

⁸ Within the Husserlian reflection on two basic attitudes, i.e., the naïve attitude and the theoretical, or philosophical one, one shall stress essential correlation of both, rather than their contradictory character. As Husserl emphasized briefly in the *Epilogue* to the English translation of the first book of *Ideas*: “the necessary point of departure . . . is the natural-naïve attitude” (Husserl 1989b, p. 416). Nonetheless, the necessary point of departure makes possible to build the phenomenological reflection on the higher, non-naïve level. Just as any way is impossible without a point of departure, also the non-naïve phenomenology is impossible without the naïve attitude. To paraphrase Husserl’s (1958, p. 478) own words, every time the phenomenology is split.

⁹ Cf. Natanson (1973, p. 17). About Husserl’s turn towards the ancient Greek rationality, see also Ströker (1988, p. 214).

¹⁰ One of the ethical aspects introduced into the Husserlian interpretation of rationality is the concept of *responsibility* which broadens the meaning of rigorous science. Following Buckley: “Another way of defining rigour is to say that to be rigorous is to be *responsible*, to be able to justify each and every position taken, to be willing to provide the evidence for one’s beliefs. This definition expresses the ethical imperative which Husserl felt regarding philosophy. To be sure, there was also an ‘epistemological’ imperative: philosophy is, after all, about ‘knowledge.’ But true knowledge for Husserl is that for which one can ‘answer’ (*verantworten*)” (Buckley 1992, p. 22). Cf. Kuster (1996, pp. 38–39).

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LOGOS AS SIGNIFIER: HUSSERL IN THE
CONTEXT OF TRADITION

A B S T R A C T

The present article has tried to establish a bond between the phenomenology of Husserl and the philosophic tradition of the West, between intentionality and the *logos*. However, the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition, in which *logos* has been taken to be *mere* reason, cosmic or human, helps little in understanding Husserl, because that actually is based on the separation between thought and its object. The real meaning of *logos* Heidegger finds in pre-Socratic philosophy of Heraclitus and Parmenides. The tradition I take into consideration is the Heideggerian interpretation of pre-Socratic philosophic heritage in which *logos* means “basic gathering”. If Husserl revives antiquity, he does so by re-establishing this “basic gathering” in the name of intentionality. The concept of intentionality may be looked upon as the reunion of thinking and being.

L O G O C E N T R I S M

Logocentrism is detested by postmodern thinkers. According to them, it has been a prejudice of the philosophers. If one is still logocentric in our time, Foucault would call him a mere nostalgic one. However, the term is popularised as something to represent a notorious concept by Jacques Derrida. The history of metaphysics, maintains Derrida, has always been a search for the ultimate truth and this origin of all truths has been found to be in the *logos*. Or is itself the *logos*. The history this truth of all truths again “has always been . . . the debasement of writing, and its repression outside ‘full’ speech”.¹ The belief that speech is prior to writing, which is termed as phonocentrism, is only a variation of more general theory of logocentrism. The general theory of logocentrism assigns the truth of any particular object to something outside it. However, as Derrida deals mainly with phonocentrism, “logocentrism” and “phonocentrism” became interchangeable terms. In short, logocentrism is the belief in the *logos* which provides meaning to anything from outside.

L O G O S A N D T H E G O S P E L

The Greek word *logos* is translated in English as “word”. However, “*logos*” is used in many other senses in different contexts e.g., an utterance, principle, law, reason, an account, etc. All these senses are somehow related but “word” is one of the most

frequent translation for “*logos*”. The association of these two may have its source in pre-Christian antiquity, but it is strengthened by the Gospel. The Gospel of John identifies Christ with *logos* or the word. When it states that “Before anything else existed, there was Christ with God”, it is actually referring back to the Genesis in which God is said to be creating just by uttering words. Then God said, “Let there be light” and light appeared. The Gospel of John goes on saying that “He has always been alive and is himself God.” Thus, in a sense, it is the *Logos* that is responsible for the very creation. This may remind one the concept of *Śabdabrahma* of the great Indian thinker Bhartṛhari, according to which, word is the ultimate reality. However, the Gospel also establishes at the same time the primacy of speech because the first words were uttered and not written.

LOGOS AND THE TRADITION

The concept of *logos* as an utterance is much older than the Gospel. To reiterate, the word is a Greek one and is even was present in the writings of the earliest Greek thinkers. “It is cognate with the verb *legein*, which normally means ‘to say’ or ‘to state’ ”.² It is believed that when Heraclitus refers several times to “this *logos*” in his book, he simply means “this utterance” or “this statement”. The belief is strengthened by his insistence “Listening not to me but to the account [the *logos*], it is wise to agree that all things are one”³ In his obscure poetry, Parmenides also writes “. . .preserve the account [*logos*] when you hear it. . .”⁴ We listen to speech and not to writing. One interesting point to note is that Aristotle writes, “Learning is reserved for those that in addition to memory who also have the sense of hearing. . .”⁵ *Hearing*, and not seeing. Here also speech gets priority over writing. However, let us back to the point. By transference, *logos* begins to mean an explanation and then the faculty of human beings which explains. Since then, *logos* comes to be used in the sense of “reason” also.

HEIDEGGER REINTERPRETING TRADITION

It is a common belief that Heraclitus perceived the world only as becoming and Parmenides saw a being behind becoming. Aristotle himself writes about Heraclitean view that “all perceptible things were in a permanent state of flux and that there was no knowledge of them. . .”⁶ And everybody knows that it is Heraclitus who said that one cannot step twice into the same river, although, it is possible that he did not say this exactly in the same manner. History remembers Heraclitus as a preacher of diversity, whereas, although Parmenides speaks several times of “change”, he is remembered as the preacher of unity. It is generally overlooked that Heraclitus also perceived a unity behind what appears. However, Russell observes that the “One” Heraclitus perceived in all changes is the “fire” which itself is ever changing.

Heidegger rejects the traditional interpretation of Heraclitus initiated by Plato and Aristotle. The unconventional way of Heidegger's interpretation of Heraclitus and pre-Socratic Greek philosophy presents a very different, thought provoking and unique concept of *logos*. The concept of *logos* Heidegger presents is in the context of his explanation of the meaning of being in his magnificent work – *An Introduction to Metaphysics (Was ist Metaphysik?)*.

It is difficult to grasp the meaning of being, says Heidegger. We see a building over there. It is an essent (*Seindes*). Essent is approximately what Sartre calls in-itself (*en soi*). We encounter corridors, staircases, rooms etc. in that building but where is the being of that building? We utter such expressions like “being of the building”, “the building is. . .” etc. Do we really encounter being? Etymology shows that “being” is a noun but it does not belong to the class of nouns like “house”, “bread”, “chalk” etc. “Being” is a noun like “falling”, “going”, etc. Thus, “being” is a substantive formed out of an infinitive – “to be”. It is clear then, “being” cannot be encountered like chalk and duster can be. Nevertheless, we see an apple falling, a boat sailing etc. Being is encountered neither in that way. Do we have to agree with Nietzsche then that “being” is an empty, vaporous term?

The emptiness of “being” does not make it meaningless to Heidegger. “[T]he word ‘being’ has the emptiest and therefore most comprehensive meaning”.⁷ For him, “being” is the most universal word. So many things are expressed with the help of the single word “is”. “God is”, “The earth is”, “The lecture is in the auditorium”, “The book is mine” and many other expressions he cited. In each case the “is” is meant differently. This extreme universality makes being indefinite in meaning and yet we understand it definitely. “Being proves to be totally indeterminate and at the same time highly determinate.”⁸ This would have been rejected by the traditional logic as meaningless. Heidegger embraces this contradiction. But how to explain the determinateness of “being”?

UNDERSTANDING “BEING”

One of the ways of understanding a concept is to understand it as opposed to its limitations, i.e., to that from which it is distinguished. In understanding the concept of being, Heidegger contrasts it with the concepts of becoming, appearance, thinking and ought.

There is a tendency to reduce the distinction between being and becoming to that between being and appearance and vice versa. Although connected, the two distinctions are different. Becoming is genesis, the “not yet”. Whereas, being appears as the pure fullness of the permanent, completely untouched by the changing process, the unrest. Being, as opposed to appearance is understood differently, as real and authentic. Appearance is unreal and inauthentic. Thus, a strong sense of evaluation goes along with the distinction between being and appearance which is absent in the former case. “The distinction implies an evaluation – the preference is given to beings.”⁹

One important thing is to be noticed that although Heidegger clarifies being by contrasting it to becoming and appearance, on a closer analysis of the concepts, he rejects any essential difference between being and becoming or being and appearance. Not only that the opposition between being and becoming is a misunderstanding, the opposition between Heraclitus and Parmenides is a misinterpretation of their works. Heraclitus “says the same as Parmenides”. Appearing, on the other hand, is the very essence of being. His analysis of the German word *schein* for “appearance” provoked him to conclude that appearance means exactly the same as being. Both “being” and “appearance” indicate to a presence. In fact, the opposite of being as well as appearance is non-being, which means to withdraw from the presence. To falsify appearance as something merely imagined or subjective has been a trend set by Plato and is a deviation from the intention of the pre-Socratic philosophers.

The next formula Heidegger examined is the distinction between being and thinking. Being has often been understood as opposed to thinking but thinking differs from the other counterparts of being, viz., becoming and appearance. Thinking is the foundation of all the other distinctions. Being is placed before thinking as an object and being takes on its entire interpretation from thinking. “Thinking brings something before us, represents it.”¹⁰ But what does it mean to say that thinking represents being? Something represents some other thing if the two things are different, separate and the one acts as a sign for the other, speaks for the other. The relation between representative and the represented is contingent. Does thinking represent being in this sense? What is the original meaning of representation? How exactly thinking and being are related? For answers to these questions, Heidegger looks back to logic, the science of thinking.

HEIDEGGER’S CRITIQUE OF LOGIC

Heidegger detests Logic that is practiced in the universities and colleges. “Logic is an invention of schoolteachers and not of philosophers.”¹¹ Traditional Logic is so formal that it has lost essent (being). Rather, it teaches us to think without reference to *physis*. Thinkers like Leibnitz, Kant and Hegel did not mean traditional logic when they spoke of Logic. What is Logic in Hegel is otherwise known as Metaphysics. The Logic that separates thinking from being has its origin in Platonic-Aristotelian philosophy. Heidegger liquidates the supremacy of logic because it does not allow asking the most fundamental metaphysical question of being and nothingness. The question regarding nothingness would be considered as contradictory by the traditional logic for violating its rule.

LOGOS REINTERPRETED

However, in order to explain the relation between being and thinking, Heidegger does take Logic into consideration but a different one altogether based on a novel interpretation of *logos*.

Logic comes from the word *logos*. *Logos* means word/discourse or speech as in “dialogue”. *Logos* also means reason or thinking and Logic is a science of thinking. The transference of *logos* as word to that as thinking is already discussed in this article. However, this is not the only way of interpreting *logos*. This interpretation does not tell us why traditional (post-Socratic) Logic is a deviation from the earlier one. Heidegger finds that the fundamental meaning of *logos* stands in no direct relation to language. The original meaning of *logos* is “to gather” or “to collect”. He quotes from the fragments of Heraclitus to justify his claim:

[E]verything becomes essent in accordance with this *logos*. . . . Therefore it is necessary to follow it, i.e., to adhere to togetherness in the essent; but though the *logos* is this togetherness in the essent, the many live as though each had his own understanding (opinion).¹²

But did not Heraclitus himself say that “If you have heard not me but to the *logos*. . .” etc.? Heidegger says that the hearing mentioned here has nothing to do with lobes of our ears; rather it is used in the sense of paying heed. Because men do not pay heed to the *logos* as gathering, they fail to see that “all is one” and hold different opinions. Moreover, Heidegger opines that *logos* in Heraclitus (and also in Parmenides) is rather opposed to words (or speech) and interprets the above as “do not listen to the voices (others opinions) but pay heed to the *logos*”.

In what sense *logos* is gathering? Heidegger offers several senses of the term. “Gathering” does not mean a mere driving together and heaping up. Meaning of “gathering” he gives in different places of *An Introduction to Metaphysics* may be listed as following: unity, harmony, bond, relation, disclosing, making manifest, etc. If *logos* means “gathering” and “gathering” means “unity”, then what is united? Wherein lies this unity? It is the unity of what? Since “being as *logos* is basic gathering”,¹³ unity is that in becoming, it is the harmony among appearances. As a bond, it does not let the opposites and the conflicts in the essent to fall apart. It rather “. . . by uniting the opposites maintains the full sharpness of their tension.”¹⁴ The unity or this basic gathering is not however an independent objective phenomenon. Without the apprehension of such gathering, there is no unity or harmony. It is interesting to note that one of the dictionary meanings of “gather” is “to understand”. Heidegger also finds in Parmenides that “There is a reciprocal bond between apprehension and being.”¹⁵ *Logos* is both the apprehension of the unity and the unity apprehended. Heidegger takes language so much into consideration because human understanding of being is reflected in language and language is constructed in accordance with this understanding. Language relates subject to the object. However, the distinction between subject and object is rational. Heidegger’s interpretation is pre-rational. According to this interpretation, language unites, gathers. *Logos* in this sense is language as well as thinking. It is “thinking” not in the sense of “reasoning” but “apprehending”. The relatedness of being to apprehension makes it clear why *logos* is also “unconcealment” or “manifestation”. Thus, Derrida’s critique of logocentrism is meaningful only in the context of tradition in which thinking has the priority over being and the two are separated, i.e., in the context of Platonic tradition. For Heidegger, Plato is the beginning of the fall of Western civilization. He apprehends the inseparable bond between thinking and being.

HUSSERL'S INFLUENCE ON HEIDEGGER

Heidegger's interpretation of tradition and his concept of *logos* as well as of being are influenced by the philosophy of Husserl, although the former is not always expressive of the fact. Husserl once said, "Phenomenology, that is me and Heidegger." Heidegger worked with Husserl as the latter's *privatdozent* and surely had played a significant role in developing phenomenological movement. Heidegger dedicated his *Being and Time* to Husserl. However, by moving away from "Cartesian emphasis" and *epoché* of Husserl, and by putting more emphasis on "being-in-the-world", Heidegger sought to give phenomenology a new dimension. Nevertheless, "At least two of Husserl's concepts were to prove especially important for Heidegger: the concepts of evidence and categorical intuition".¹⁶ I perceive that the concepts of "phenomena" and "intentionality" are two most important influences not only on Heidegger, but on a number of philosophers to come immediately after Husserl in the continent. Heidegger's explanation of the relation between being and thinking is a result of this influence.

HUSSERL'S CONCEPT OF LOGIC

Husserl was not as harsh against traditional and formal logic as Heidegger was. What Heidegger calls a matter of "schoolteachers" is for Husserl a matter of technicians of logic. He considered himself as a philosopher of logic and therefore, devoted himself to the semantic aspect of logic rather than the syntactic aspect. He was concerned with propositions, not with sentences.

Propositions are ideas expressible in language. Formal logic deals with the forms of expressions, whereas, Husserl's concern is the forms of ideas which are expressed in language. Ideas, according to Husserl, are of two kinds: subjective and objective. Subjective ideas are those of which Frege writes "...every idea has only one bearer, no two men have the same idea."¹⁷ The world of subjective ideas is the inner world of the person comprised of sense impressions, imaginations, sensations, feelings, desires etc. This world is extremely personal and cannot be shared by others. If Logic is all about language expressing subjective ideas, then there would be no explanation about how communication is possible. Formal logic can only show the validity of certain reasoning, but cannot explain why such logic is valid for everyone. That is why Husserl leaves subjective ideas for psychologists. He deals with the other sort of ideas, called by him "objective ideas", which again in Frege's terminology known as "thought". Objective ideas are propositions or otherwise known as ideal meaning (*sinn*). In perceiving a tree, one certainly has private sensations of the tree but there must be some ideal meaning without the transfer of which there could be no communication about the tree. Logic, according to Husserl, is to discover the structure of this ideal meaning or "thought", i.e., the *logos*, which is the ground of all the other meanings.

PHENOMENOLOGIC

Husserl was strongly convinced that logic is objectively valid and that psychology does not and cannot address this. The real task of a philosopher is to discover the structure which makes logic valid and communication possible. To fulfil this aim, one must assume a method so that psychologism may be eliminated. The method Husserl assumes is Phenomenology which is to discover and analyse only phenomena. A phenomenon is that which is immediately given to consciousness or in other words, that what is directly evident. We must recognise phenomenon before it is interpreted. To ensure the purity of description, he again takes recourse to the mechanism of bracketing or what is more popularly known as *epoché*. *Epoché* is the technique of suspending our belief in actual existence of worldly objects which we experience. It is to bracket out all that are interests of empirical sciences. If psychological confusion is avoided, transcendental phenomenology allows us to notice that *epoché* with respect to worldly beings does not alter the fact that our manifold cogitations relating to worldly beings still bear this relation within themselves. It is revealed then that every conscious process is consciousness of something, no matter whether this "something" actually exists or not. This characteristic of aboutness of consciousness is known as intentionality which is the most universal and fundamental property of consciousness. Every directional conscious act, which is otherwise known as *noesis*, bears within itself its content or *noema*. The philosopher as a disinterested ego is to provide us with *noetic-noematic* description of this most universal structure.

Consciousness is always consciousness of something. But that is not all. "This something . . . in any consciousness is there as an identical unity belonging to noetically-noematically changing modes of consciousness. . ."¹⁸ Something as a content of *noetic* act becomes "something" only as a result of synthesis of various changing *noematic* modes into "one" thing. This unity also involves a simultaneous synthesis of the cogito present in every *noematic* mode into one identical ego. The synthetic act not only enables us to perceive this die as "this" die, it is also there in consciousness that is intended to non-identicals (e.g., plurality, relational complexes, etc.). More to say, a synthetic unity of cogito is not exhausted with particular subjective process. Every actuality involves its potentialities. These potentialities are marked by a horizon of the actual process itself. A horizon changes when potentialities marked by it are actualized. Thus, "Every subjective process has a process horizon."¹⁹

INTENTIONALITY AS GATHERING

Let us reiterate that for Heidegger, being, whether it is *seinds* or *dasein*, is to be understood not as separated from but with respect to its relatedness to its counterparts like becoming, appearance, thinking and ought. In the context of his elucidation of the relation between being and thinking, he interpreted *logos* as gathering. It is gathering in the sense of unity or bond or collection which establishes the necessary relation between being and thinking. He did not claim novelty but

maintained that this was the original sense of *logos* in the pre-Socratic tradition of philosophy. I also repeat that Heidegger's interpretation of *logos* derives its sense from Husserlian phenomenology. Not only that Heidegger expressed his indebtedness clearly; neither Husserl uses and explains "*logos*" as gathering directly. But in going through Husserl's works, I perceive that the most universal structure of consciousness which Husserl discovers and in accordance to which everything becomes meaningful is nothing but what Heidegger calls "gathering". That is, I perceive intentionality as *logos*.

- A. By introducing the concept of phenomenon, Husserl overcame dualisms that have created so many problems in the history of philosophy. As Sartre points out in his *Being and Nothingness* that in the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger, there is no being as opposed to becoming, neither there is any appearance behind which being lies. Phenomenon is "absolutely indicative of itself" and does not hide any Kantian noumenon behind it.
- B. Analysis of phenomena reveals that consciousness is intentional. Intentionality rejects subject-object dualism and establishes a bond between consciousness and its content. Heidegger's rejection of the dichotomy of being and thinking is to be understood in the background of intentionality.
- C. That intentionality is gathering is also evident from its essential characteristic of synthesis. The apprehension of being as content is not exhausted in a momentary act. Being is not some static existent, "being" is not a common noun. Being is an event every moment of which indicates to many other possibilities of *noetic* acts of which one will be actualised. Being thus, is gathered as a synthetic *noematic* whole, a process which never points to a dead end.
- D. Synthesis of being is at the same time synthesis of cogito. As being is a synthesis of various momentary aspects (appearances) of an essent, the "I" involved in the apprehension of that very essent is a synthesis of self awareness involved in each of the said moments. The real meaning of synthesis of intentional acts is that these are acts of one consciousness.²⁰

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Any effort to understand consciousness as opposed to and as separated from its objects is to objectify consciousness. Failure of such an endeavour is obvious because knowing-consciousness is never an object. Neither would it lead to a proper understanding of the object of consciousness. An object gets its sense only in relation to the consciousness. Thus, anything becomes meaningful only under the most universal structure of intentionality. The only meaning a knowing-consciousness can have for itself is that it is the meaning provider to its objects without being meaningful like any of its contents because of the necessary and unidirectional nature of intentionality. The presence of this signifier in any meaning, any sense and any interpretation is unavoidable.

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NOTES

- 1 Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri C. Spivak (Delhi: MLBD, 2002), p. 3.
- 2 Introduction to Jonathan Barnes *Early Greek Philosophy* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. xxiii.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 50.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- 5 Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. Hugh Lawson-Tancred (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 4.
- 6 *Ibid.*, Alpha 6, p. 23.
- 7 Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (Delhi: MLBD, 2005), p. 75.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 118.
- 11 *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 127.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 133.
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. 134.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 167.
- 16 Richard Polt, *Heidegger: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 14.
- 17 "The Thought" by Frege in *Phenomenology and Existentialism*, Edited by R. Solomon (New Delhi: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 101.
- 18 Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), p. 41.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 41–42.

THE AXIOLOGY OF ONTOPOIESIS
AND ITS RATIONALITY

A B S T R A C T

Ontopoiesis is a fascinating concept introduced by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka in the phenomenological context to express a rich range of meanings. In this chapter I would like to draw its rational bounds. Especially, what I aim to show is the relationship between *ontopoiesis*, *logos* and *antiquity*. In effect, I would like to sketch in the balance between creative energies of *ontopoiesis* and the layers of reality on which they are applied. From a phenomenological point of view, namely from an Husserlian one, Tymieniecka shows a path by which the phenomenologist marks out the meaning of this concept. Here, I am going to be focused particularly on Husserl's definition of spiritual and creative life. Effectively, in the sixth chapter of *Husserliana* XXXVII, he talks about the spiritual life by the hermeneutic instrument of *dynamis*, pointing up its rational and irrational aspects. In fact, it is not clear if Husserl conceives this kind of *dynamis* as rational at all. Therefore what I want to examine here is whether *ontopoiesis* might be enlivened by irrational sentiments like ancient *ate* or *menos* or if it is an Apollinean energy that inspires our souls.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Ontopoiesis is a polyhedral term purposely introduced by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka within the phenomenological context to express a rich range of meanings.¹ It has been applied by scholars on many fields of research, mainly belonging to the domain of spiritual life. Its meaning goes from a philosophical or a pedagogical to a religious one and it denotes always a very creative power of our spirit. In this chapter I would like to draw the rational bounds of this term. What I aim to show is the relationship between *ontopoiesis*, *logos* and *antiquity*.

From an etymological point of view, *ontopoiesis* means the creation (*poieō*) of being (*on*). In Greek, we have different verbs to indicate the action of doing something, for example *prattō*, *ergazomai*, *draō*. Every verb stands for a specific kind of acting: *draō* for performing, *ergazomai* for working, *prattō* for taking care of. On the contrary *poieō* means a creative original deed. It points to a free and absolute creation of being from the origin. It depicts the action nearly in a biblical denotation. Therefore, the questioning of its meaning, above all in reference with the *logos*, is very challenging. In fact, how can an act of creation be *logikos*? How might this power give origin to different explicable layers of reality?

As Dodds wrote in *The Greeks and the Irrational*, the spiritual power of creation was regarded by Greeks as a complex concept. In Homer for example *menos* is a form of psychological interjection performed by Zeus in order to infuse power in the soul (or *thumos*) of injured hero.² In *Odyssea*, *ate* is another kind of sway hurled by Erinyes to accomplish a *moira*. Both represent a sort of blindness through which human archetypes (performed by Homeric characters) mold their life. Next to these irrational powers, Greek spiritual pantheon took into consideration also *Apollinean* energies, as Nietzsche called them, which explained the human *kosmos* and *nomos* in a harmonic and rational way.

Therefore in this work, I would like to sketch in the balance between these creative energies and the layers of reality from a phenomenological point of view, namely from an Husserlian one. In the sixth chapter of *Husserliana XXXVII*, Husserl grapples the issue of spiritual life employing the hermeneutic instrument of motivation to figure out the rational and irrational aspects of life.

DYNAMIS OF "ONTOPOIESIS"

In a work entitled *Impetus and Equipoise* Tymieniecka tackles the issue of ontopoiesis from its point of origin. She sketches out it as a sort of energy which belongs to the human life and brings forth to a stream of different energies. It is nor an intellective nor a blind whole of all the subjective energies which can be freed along with a subjective perception.³ As she wrote: "The balance of impetus and equipoise is the innermost law of logos, its First Principle. This is the first principle of becoming and beingness, the first principle of ontopoiesis of life. When we ponder the progress of life, from its initial outburst through its unfolding, we see a tremendous impetus sending infinite streamlets through life's arteries – an impetus that once in motion reinvigorates itself at each step and diversifies its proficiencies in ever new radiation".⁴ Ontopoiesis and life seems to be posed on the same stage: ontopoiesis is a sort of infinite life. Indeed, it represents the beginning power of human development and life constitutes its actual result. The *logos* represents the link between the two. Indeed, it is that law which rules the living power of ontopoiesis. In every act of life there is "an ontopoietic principle that functions as an axis for the coordination of the preconscious, vitally significant life carrying operations that, although they remain at the circuits of the pre-intellectual, carry on the mute order of nature that will then nourish and launch the intentional system. This principle may be called equally (a) the point of reference for the distribution of the sense initiating operation at horizontal level (. . .) (b) the entelechially charged indicator of direction for the genetic construction of individual beingness and (c) (. . .) the measuring rod for the constructive attainment of types of complexity".⁵ Thus, the ontopoietic principle works at the pre-intellectual stage and it gives sense in a sort of horizontal way. It is the initial burst of signification by which life takes its rational power and it is linked up to the logos because of its aims. As the word entelechia means, every act is directed to one goal. By *entelechia* we intend a sort of equipollence between one action and one aim. Etymologically this term comes from Greek, namely from the

numeral adjective *en* (one thing), and the substantive *telos*, in English goal. Thereof the rationality of ontopoiesis lays in the scope of its ends.

Besides, interpreting Husserlian analysis of *Erfahrung und Urteil* and *Crisis*, Tymieniecka describes the historical perspective in which the impetus of *ontopoiesis* operates.⁶ “It is Husserl’s last work, the *Crisis of Culture*, that has sharpened the phenomenological stand on all these matters. Husserl (...) brought his vast inquiry into the human powers, human rationality, human cultural/scientific/technological unfolding to the culminating concept of the human life word. (...) Husserl sees the great difficulty into which the present world has got (...) with a loss of a firm point of reference for human individual existence given the ‘artificiality’ (...) of scientific cultural development. (...) Husserl searches for the sedimentations of rational cultural foundations (...) really aims at reaching the border between human constitutive activity (...) and rudimentary, elementary, pre-human Nature”.⁷ From this point of view, for Husserl *ontopoiesis* is a rational power that has to be recovered in the different layers of a human and historical present of crisis. Everyone can grasp it in order to overcome the blind significance of culture and its loss of sense. The practical life and the theoretical praxis should be addressed to recover the belief in a meaningful world. This is the sole condition by which we can find a rational principle of self-determination helpful to build up our identity according to our experience.

“Already Husserl, nutring some hints at the inventive nature of the mind, rejected radically any identification of cognition so understood with the ‘constitution’ in which, according to him, the objectivities are formed and devised; the referential dependence of the cognitive processes (understood as constitutive) on any assumed ‘referent’ lying outside of the cognitive process is disclaimed. (...) Objectivity as such is shown by Husserl to be precisely the effect of constitution”.⁸ In *Erfahrung und Urteil* Husserl “attempted to show how the last instance of *dynamis* that he invokes, (...) is par excellence constitutive and opens upon the all-embracing and fundamental ‘ontopoietic schema of the self-individualization of life’”.⁹ According to this analysis, in Husserlian vocabulary *ontopoiesis* corresponds to *dynamis*. It is always a power that makes actual the outburst of our life. But we wonder if there is a blind side of *ontopoiesis*, also from an Husserlian perspective. In effect, if this power is a strong and creative one, is it possible to find its irrational part? Could it be enlivened by irrational sentiments like ancient *ate* or *menos*? In the following paragraphs we seek to go through the rationality of this power.

“ONTOPOIESIS” AND LOGOS

In the paragraph seven of *Experience and Judgment* Husserl claims that before every movement of cognition, the object of cognition is potentially present as a *dynamis*. The Aristotelian term is employed here to explain the sense of the creative and rational movement which is before every epistemological act. As we saw before, the logical rationality of this power is strictly connected to entelechy and teleology. These two terms denote a synthetic continuous movement from potency to act, from

dynamis to entelecheia, from potency of act to the object of knowledge. As some studies remarked, the creative power of *dynamis* can be explained as a kind of *impulsive intentionality* (Husserl, Ms E III 5) addressed always to a *telos*.¹⁰ Intentionality is a very rich and complex word by which we may intend the act of consciousness to refer to an object. Thus, for Husserl every spur of consciousness seems to be intended to a form of self-creation and determination, e.g. to an ethical entelechy and teleology. This could mean the following statement: the creative *dynamis* of subjective life is rational since it represents an ethical power referred to a *telos*, that is to a *summum bonum*.¹¹ Accordingly Husserl's *ontopoiesis* could point to a principle which enlivens human world and rules all subjective creative acts thanks to its teleological direction, establishing a sort of equipollence between action and aim. A *poietic* act should be rational whenever it is addressed to an ethical goal. In the following paragraph, we would verify this inference.

SPIRITUAL ACTS

It is not clear if Husserl retains *dynamis* as rational at all. In Husserlian work it is possible to detect many references regarding the general idea of this concept. Indeed, whenever he raises the issue of active and passive intentionality, he paves the way for a questioning in *ontopoiesis*. Nevertheless, here we would like to focus just on the sixth chapter of Husserliana XXXVII, where Husserl draws the question of intentionality by the topic of spiritual acts and their motivations.

This chapter is entitled “Die eigentümlichen Entwicklungsgesetzmäßigkeiten des geistigen Sein. Das Reich der Motivation” For Husserl, the link between legality, *ontopoiesis* and motivation passes through the crucial concept of spirit. In fact it is the spirit the main subject of Husserlian *dynamis* and legality represents the key of its rationality. The spiritual life makes up the main path by which we can explicate the acts of human soul (Husserl 2004, pp. 105–106). In effect Husserl divides human soul in a spiritual and natural life. While the latter encompasses passive and a-subjective life, the former is an active form of life. Natural life is a sort of not-controlled life, dominated by instincts, emotions and habits. On the contrary spiritual life is the result of all the decisions made by a subject and its intention. Husserl calls spiritual all the acts of an intentional subject. Thus spiritual acts are those acts which belong to the pure rational and intentional side of consciousness. He wrote: “Die eigentümlichen Wesen alles Geistigen führt zurück auf das Wesen der Subjekte aller Geistigkeit als Subjekte von intentionalen Erlebnissen” (Husserl 2004, p. 104). In this text Husserl intends for *Geist* the pure, active, personal and explicable part of consciousness. It is a meaningful word which stands for the subjective life spoiled from all the empirical acts accomplished by persons and it encompasses all the intentional lived of consciousness. “Bewusstseinstätig leben, d. i. in diesem Bewusstsein von irgendetwas Bewusstsein haben, von diesem Etwas bald affiziert sein und eventuell den Affektionen passiv nachgeben, bald aber sich aktiv dazu verhalten, dazu in eigentlichen Ichakten Stellung nehmen, theoretisch oder praktisch” (Husserl 2004, p. 104).

From this point of view spiritual life can be active or passive. In fact it can be an active or passive movement of a personal subject. For passive movement Husserl means that movement which has not a genesis. “Geistige Kausalität oder Motivation ist daher etwas durchaus Verständliches und steht in jedem Schritt unter Wesensgesetzen, denen gemäß alle geistige Genesis, prinzipiell gesprochen, durch und durch verständlich zu machen ist” (Husserl 2004, p. 108). Spiritual activity implies a chosen motivation (Husserl 2004, p. 108) which compels us to deed. Rationality of our deeds lays on our motivation to deed.

Verständlich im Geiste ist alles, was eine geistige Genesis hat, alles im Geiste, was motiviert auftritt, also auf ein Motivierendes verweist. Damit ist gesagt, dass es auch Unverständlichkeit geben kann. Ich erinnere (...) etwa ein Knall, ein sinnliches Datum überhaupt hereinbricht. Der Knall tritt auf und verläuft im Bewusstsein, aber im exakten Sinn hat er keine ‘Genesis’ (Husserl, 2004, 109).

Motivation is rational when it has an intentional or explicable genesis. Husserl asserts that we have two kinds of motivations: rational and irrational. The latter is the one which cannot be immediately explained because it is empathic and affective. It is felt and not chosen. On the contrary, the former has always a rational aim and root which makes the act legitimate and rationally founded (Husserl 2004, p. 105). Accordingly we can understand the power of our action when we choose to comply that *motus* following a specific direction. Every motivation is understandable since it has a genesis.

Moreover, every subject is a permanent flow of lived. “Das Ich-Sein ist beständiges Ich-Werden” (Husserl 2004, p. 104). In this sense being a subject means becoming a subject, that is a person with different ways of being or relationships within surrounding world (Husserl 2004, p. 102). “Die Subjektivität baut sich in ihrem passiven und aktiven Bewusstseinsleben ihre Umwelt auf, die ist, was sie ist, vermöge der immer neuen intentionalen Charaktere (...). In diesem Prozess entwickelt sich zugleich das Ich selbst als Persönlichkeit relativ bleibenden und doch immerfort ich wandelnden Habitus, seinen Charakter mit den verschiedensten Charaktereigenschaften, bleibenden Kenntnissen, Fertigkeiten usw” (Husserl 2004, p. 105). The origin of a personal spiritual life comes from its capability to deed according to an intention which has a reckonable genesis. Thus, for Husserl every spiritual act can be rational, whenever it is actively motivated according to a genesis. Indeed, the spiritual subject can choose what to do and its activity is the result of a choice accomplished by a practical, logical or a axiological reasoning.

The equipollence posed by Husserl between rationality and spiritual *dynamis* is accounted for the subjective reasoning. According to the philosopher, our spiritual life can be *logikos*, just when it is grounded on a legitimate movement. “Motivationen der Vernunft (...) stehen selbst unter Fragen der Vernünftigkeit und Unvernünftigkeit, der Rechtmässigkeit oder Unrechtmässigkeit, und das in dem verschiedenen, durch die Grundart der betreffenden Akte und Aktsetzungen vorgezeichneten Sinn, also nach dem Sinn der Schönheit als ästhetischen Rechtmässigkeit, der theoretischen Wahrheit als logischen Rechtmässigkeit und ebenso der ethischen” (Husserl 2004, p. 112). The reason of an act is consistent with the motivation which compels the subject to act. The motivation can be moved

by an active or passive association of ideas. Following Husserlian example I can choose that it will be a good day because I saw the high level of barometer. My theoretical decision is motivated by an active association of ideas. The personal actions of the spiritual part of subjective life can be always explained and understood by the reason of the act (Husserl 2004, pp. 103–104). “Jede geistige Tatsache ist motiviert. (...) Geistige Tatsachen erklären heißt, nach Aufklärung ihres eigenen geistigen Gehaltes, also nach Analyse und Aufweisung ihres ‘Sinnes’, die in der einzelnen oder sozialen Subjektivität liegenden Motive” (Husserl 2004, p. 106) Thus every causality of act is linked up to a specific issue of reason (*Vernunftfrage*). The rightness of an act is founded on a reasoning belonging to the same field of the act. The rationality of a motivation is given by this reason itself. As Husserl wrote, if the act is a theoretical one its fundament is given by the pure idea of truth. The comparison between the actual deed and its fundament is possible thanks to a pure reason and its contents. In the example of a barometer and the judgment “it is going to be a good day!”, the evident fundament of this proposition is given by the theoretical reason which aims to the truth and by the right connection between facts and ideas.

“Zu jeder spezifischen Aktkausalität gehört die Vernunftfrage; d. h. jede solche Kausalität kann ich in die Form einsichtiger Begründung überführen, in der in den Begründungsgliedern etwas Neues auftritt (...) Kurz jede Aktmotivation unter Fragen der Vernunft” (Husserl 2004, pp. 112–113) Considering what has been highlighted up to this point, the question we pose is the following: How can an act find its rational justification? On what is it grounded?

A X I O L O G Y , O N T O P O I E S I S A N D R A T I O N A L I T Y

We might sum up what we reached in the previous paragraphs as it follows: for Husserl spiritual life represents the active and rational life of consciousness. It is ruled by a connection of motivations that holds an understandable and explicable sense. These connections exist when the motivations are legitimate, that is when they are founded on reason.

Now, we want to understand in what consists the rational justification of the act. According to Husserl, I can deed in a spiritual and rational way when I am motivated, that is when I follow a right idea, a rationally grounded idea. But when is an idea right or wrong, true or fault? Consequently when is an act rational or irrational moved? Let Husserl’s words explain:

Vornherein muss man also darauf achten, dass Mittel und Endzweck (...) intentionalen Charaktere sind, Sinnescharaktere, die man befragen, die man aufwickeln kann, und diese Aufwicklung ist ein Hervorholen angezeigter, aber allererst zu klärender Akte und Aktmotivationen (...). Hingegen gehört zum Wesen eines Endzweckes, dass er vom Ich vermeint ist als in sich wert (...). Gewiss kann ein früheres Mittel zum Selbstzweck werden, aber dann nur in einer geistigen Motivation (...), ich erkenn, dass das Mittel in sich einen Wert hat, für den ich vorher keine Auge hatte (...). Also durchstreiche ich den früheren Zweck, ich gebe ihn als minderwertig auf und erstrebe das, was bisher Mittel war, um dessentwillen als eigenwertigen Zweck (Husserl, 2004, pp. 115–116).

The sense of a spiritual act and thus its rational motivation is enclosed in the relationship between medium and aim. “I am motivated to do something” means “I want to reach an aim by a specific medium”. This relationship is ruled by the hierarchy of values: “I choose to swim instead of eating because the former end is on higher stage of values than the latter”; “I use a car than a bike to go to the swimming pool because now it is a better medium for me than the others”. The rational fundament of the act is based on a reasoning articulated on the relationship between medium and aim. The reason’s evidence about which Husserl talks, entails an axiological evidence. The sense of motivation and rationality is rightful when it is axiologically well founded and not when it is “ein blinder, irrationaler Instinkt” (Husserl 2004, p. 116). Every rational act is always motivated and active intention.

In this sense Husserl seems to reprove that we deed rationally when we deed following an ethical code. Rationality means axiology in a certain way. “Alle ethischen Fragen sind – he wrote – Rechtsfragen, sind Vernunftfragen” (Husserl 2004, p. 116). An act seems to be legitimate when it is an axiological or, at large, an ethical one (Husserl 2004, pp. 109–110). We use the verb “to seem”, because here it emerges an ambiguity. It is not clear, in fact, if the axiological reason encompasses generally all the reasons (included the logical reason too) in virtue of the structures of *Verflechtung* and *Parallelisierung* employed by Husserl’s ethical lectures of 1914.¹² For example here, when he tackles the reasoning of medium and aim, he seems to consider the axiological reason interlaced with the logical one (Husserl 2004, p. 118). But, when he has to apply the results he reached, he bounds them only on the axiological domain of reason.¹³ Until now Husserl seems to explain the rationality of motivation by the axiological relationship of aim and medium (which is at the basis of every kind of reason) and he seems to read the proposition we are going to cite as a sort of tautology, i.e. “Alle ethischen Fragen sind Rechtsfragen, sind Vernunftfragen” (Husserl 2004, p. 116). An action is ethical when it is aimed to the accomplishment of a value and this value makes the act ethical. Moreover, we can infer from tautology that an ethical act (when axiologically well grounded) is rational and a rational act is ethical (when it is axiologically well grounded). Axiology, ethics and rationality are deeply linked up in a sort of identity.

In the same way, a spiritual act is motivated when the act accomplished is rightful, e.g. when it is founded on a value and it is moved by it (Husserl 2004, p. 113). Thus, it could be possible to answer the questions posed before by this path. The truth of a theoretical motivation, or the beauty of an aesthetical gesture or finally the correctness of practical deed lies in an axiological hierarchy, which is exploited by a subject in every connection between medium and aim. Every choice is rationally founded on a reasoning which entails this kind of connection.

Being nearly impossible to explain rationally the meaning of the evidence, Husserl sweeps the reign of axiology in order to establish the meaning of a rational choice. Every value can be a cultural product, that can be just lived by the human community. Nevertheless, it can be the rational fundament of our spiritual life, along with all the acts and motivations we can conceive, when it is posed as a medium or

aim of an intentional act according to a specific (personal) hierarchy. In a certain sense the justification of our practical life comes from rational values which bear the wisdom of our society.

The natural life is based on values that are not always intentionally comprehended. “Natur ist das Reich der Unverständlichkeit. Das Reich des Geistes aber ist das Motivation” (Husserl 2004, p. 107). The layers of spontaneous and passive or a-subjective life represent the layers of irrational and instinctive creative *dynamis* of subject. These layers can be called antiquity, since they are all that occur before every kind of analysis or questioning. It is not possible often to recover this antiquity, because it is moved by an irrational kind of motivation, “Motivation der niederen, der passive dort affektiven Geistigkeit” (Husserl 2004, pp. 107–108). Indeed, in the layers of our past we can detect the actual reason of those values which account for the motivations of our acts. This antiquity is described by Husserl on one hand as a complex of intersubjective layers resulting from our choices and lives, on the other hand as a natural, passive and a-subjective life which remains out of our comprehension (Husserl 2004, p. 105).

The main path that allows us to approach the creative life of a subject is that of a spiritual and active life. Therefore the *dynamis* of *ontopoiesis* is *logikos* when it is legitimated by motivation, e.g. when it is ruled by an axiological relationship between medium and aim in which the correctness (or not) of the choice accomplished lies.

CONCLUSIONS

Therefore *ontopoiesis*, that is the energetic flow whereby subject builds up itself, can be always clarified because a great part of this energy can be founded. All the acts can be brought under the normative domain of a scientific axiology.

Albeit the reign of passivity is not taken into consideration, Husserl retains that it is always possible to explain what is passively lived. Every causality is rationally founded, also the passive one. When there is an evident foundation, there is an appropriation which let the subject show the reason of what he lives. The foundation of the immediate correctness of a proposition compels to understand all the historical layers that make the life of everyone understandable. The truth consists just in this ability to explain the value posed in every human goal.

Ontopoiesis is *logikos* when it can be disclosed by motivations of spiritual acts. Namely, the creative power coming out from the energy of our spiritual life can be investigated by the axiological *motus* of our will. This movement on its turn is a product of antiquity which can be just partially explained. The mystery of human nature lies exactly in the antiquity of natural life that provides the fundament of our acts. Yet, it cannot be always grasped because of the scope of our consciousness. The reason of antiquity and the power of beingness gives origin to an endlessness work of comprehension and creation.

NOTES

- ¹ See: A.T. Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life* (Netherlands: Springer, 2000); Louchacova, 2006, Springer, pp. 289–331. D. Verducci, “The Human Creative Condition between Autopoiesis and Ontopoiesis in the Thought of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka”, *Analecta Husserliana*, LXXIX, 2004, pp. 3–20; F.J. Varela, *Unknow-how per l’etica* (Bari: Laterza, 1992).
- ² See: Dodd, in *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Firenze: Nuova Italia, 1997), p. 13.
- ³ A.-T. Tymieniecka, op. cit., pp. 39. 256.
- ⁴ Ibid., p. 39.
- ⁵ Ibid., p. 259.
- ⁶ See: E. Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1985), p. 74, A.-T. Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 259.
- ⁷ A.-T. Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 101.
- ⁸ Ibid., p. 190.
- ⁹ Ibid., p. 216.
- ¹⁰ See: N. Ghigi, “Creativity in Husserl’s Impulsive Intentionality”, *Analecta Husserliana*, LXXXIII, 2004, pp. 553–564; Nenon, *Phenomenological Approaches to Moral Philosophers* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002), p. 255.
- ¹¹ Namely we refer to the telos of God and Love as it is remarked by U. Melle, “From Reason to Love; in *Phenomenological Approaches to Moral Philosophers* (Netherlands: Kluwer, 2002) pp. 229–248.
- ¹² See on this point: my “Ethical Project and Intentionality in Husserl”, *Analecta Husserliana* (Dordrecht, Holland: Springer, 2009), pp. 161–177.
- ¹³ See: E. Husserl *Logische Untersuchungen*. Erster Teil. *Prolegomena zur reinen Logik*. Text der 1. und der 2. Auflage, Halle: 1900, rev. ed. 1913, hrsg. von Elmar Holstein (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975); E. Husserl *Vorlesungen über Ethik und Wertlehre, 1908–1914*, hrsg. von Ulrich Melle (The Hague: Kluwer, 1988); E. Husserl, *Einleitung in die Ethik 1920–1924*, hrsg. von Hennig Peucker (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer, 2004). Hua XIX, p. 41, Hua XXXVII, pp. 112–113.

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ORIGINATING THE WESTERN WORLD: A
CULTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF HISTORICAL
CONSCIOUSNESS

A B S T R A C T

The paper investigates Husserl's account of Greek Antiquity as the origin of Western civilization in order to explicate his notions of the "spiritual surrounding world" (*geistige Umwelt*) and the "spiritual objects" (*geistige Objekten*) that are the elements of this world. The spiritual objects are proposed to be interpreted as cultural forms that play a crucial role in meaning-formation processes. Whereas Husserl sees the spiritual objects as intentional objects of a special type, the paper proposes to pay attention to their functioning, as what Husserl calls "grasping sense" (*Auffassungssinn*), by means of which an intentional object is constituted. This leads to re-examining the notion of *noema* and reading it as a "spiritual sense" that is shared by the members of a common "spiritual surrounding world", i.e., to reading *noema* as a socially shared cultural form that makes an object to be identified as an object of a certain type within a particular community. Thus *noema* is not the object as it is intended, as suggested by the East-coast interpreters, but a socially shared sense which belongs to the symbolic structures of a culture, and which makes the object to be intended *as* something meaningful in a given social context. In the end of the paper these findings will be applied to Husserl's own attempt to make sense of such a spiritual object as the unique character of European culture.

Antiquity is not a thing. It is specific way of thinking about Western (or European) civilization, of Western philosophy, literature, arts, economics, war craft, etc. Antiquity is also a cultural horizon for the European Renaissance and modernity. And what is more, antiquity can be seen as providing (and at the same time hiding) the specific nature of Western civilization if viewed as its historical origin. An origin is not just any starting point; it is the source of what comes from it, and as such, it determines its essence. At least this is how Antiquity is understood by Husserl in his "Vienna lecture", held in May 1935 under the title "The Crisis of European Humanity and Philosophy".

This paper investigates Husserl's account of Greek Antiquity as the origin of Western civilization in order to explicate his notions of the "spiritual surrounding world" (*geistige Umwelt*) and the "spiritual objects" (*geistige Objekten*) that are the elements of this world. I will interpret these objects as cultural forms that play a crucial role in meaning-formation processes. If Husserl sees the spiritual objects as intentional objects of a special type, then I propose to pay attention to their functioning as what Husserl calls the "grasping sense" (*Auffassungssinn*), by means of

which an intentional object is constituted. This leads to re-examining the notion of *noema* and reading it as a “spiritual sense” that is shared by members of a common “spiritual surrounding world”. Thus *noema* is not the object intended, but a socially shared sense which belongs to the symbolic structures of a culture – a cultural form that makes the object to be intended *as* something meaningful in a given society. As a consequence, an object will be identified as an object of a certain type according to the typification that is commonly held in a given society. In the end of the essay I will apply these findings to Husserl’s own attempt to make sense of such a spiritual object as the unique character of European culture.

Husserl sees the uniqueness of Europe as being based on new type of cultural ideals that were discovered by Ancient Greek philosophers and on a new type of attitude towards life that was formed on the basis of these ideals. But before we go into Husserl’s account of European culture, let us clarify a few terms he is using here. The uniqueness of Western civilization is to be found, according to Husserl, in the European *geistige Gestalt*, translated as “a spiritual shape” of European culture.¹ Husserl explains the notion of *geistige Gestalt* by the concept of *Umwelt* – the “surrounding world”. As he puts it in his “Vienna lecture”, *Umwelt* is not the “objective world”, nor the world of mathematical sciences and physics, but the world of valid realities (*geltende Wirklichkeiten*) for the subjects belonging to a particular historical cultural community. Thus for example “the historical surrounding world of the Greeks is not the objective world in our sense but rather their ‘world-representation’, i.e., their own subjective validity with all the actualities which are valid for them within it, including, for example, gods, demons, etc.”² Further he describes *Umwelt* as something essentially spiritual (*geistig*):

“Surrounding world” is a concept that has its place exclusively in the spiritual sphere (*geistige Sphäre*). That we live in our particular surrounding world, which is the locus of all our cares and endeavors – this refers to a fact that occurs purely within the spiritual realm (*in der Geistigkeit*). Our surrounding world is a spiritual structure (*geistige Gebilde*) in us and in our historical life.³

Elsewhere the notion of *Umwelt* is not defined as being something purely “spiritual”, but is seen as consisting of both material and spiritual entities. Here, however, Husserl talks about a spiritual *Umwelt* that can be seen in my view as a layer of a wider concept of *Umwelt*. What does the word *geistig* mean in these contexts? The English translation of this adjective has usually been “spiritual” in philosophical texts, and this is also David Carr’s choice here, but clearly Husserl is not talking about something ethereal, or pertaining to religious or otherworldly matters. Rather, Husserl is talking about a set of representations and typifications commonly held in a society. That explains best how our *Umwelt* is *present in us*, i.e., in each individual belonging to a society, as the *geistige Gebilde*, “the spiritual structure”. All social representations exist in no other way than in the minds of individuals, yet they are not private fantasies or subjective particularities, but exist as objectively valid in a given community, and as pre-given for the individuals born into this community. As Husserl claims, if social representations include acting gods and demons then there *are* gods and demons in the *Umwelt* of a particular society. But the *Umwelt* is *geistig* not because it includes collective representations about

religious matters, but it would be *geistig* even if its elements did not include any representations of religious deities. Thus the term *geistig* refers here to any type of collectively held idealities that are real and valid in a given society. Husserl makes it clear that *geistige* phenomena have a historical existence, which means that they are created by particular individuals in a particular point of time, after which they can become “communalized”, institutionalized, and possibly spread to other cultural *Umwelten*. Thus the adjective *geistig* refers also to this cultural and historical character of the collectively held idealities.

However, translating *geistig* as “cultural” is complicated in this text, because Husserl also uses the term *Kultur*, and in some contexts (but not always) he differentiates between *geistige* and *kulturelle* phenomena: the terms *Kulturgestalt*, *Kulturgebilde*, and *Kulturform* designate the “real”, materialized, and institutionalized social activities in which *geistige* phenomena are brought to the level of praxis, whereas *geistige Gebilde* and *geistige Gestalte* designate the collective representations themselves – commonly shared ideas, ideals, norms, and other elements forming the *Umwelt* that “has its place exclusively in the spiritual sphere”.⁴ Thus for example Husserl distinguishes between philosophy as a *geistige Gebilde*, and philosophy as a cultural formation (Husserl uses *Kulturgestalt*, *Kulturgebilde*, *Kulturform*). The first refers to the ideas discovered by philosophers, the second to the real deeds of historically particular individuals who practiced philosophy in their real historical life, and discovered and developed these ideas in their particular “vocational communities”.⁵ Thus the first term refers to idealities discovered by philosophers, and the second to the real historical forms of practicing philosophy, creating and communicating these idealities in real life. In the second volume of *Ideas* Husserl discusses the examples marriage, friendship, student union, and parish community (*Gemeinde*) as cultural institutions within which we can distinguish between the level of everyday social praxis and the level of spiritual essentialities.⁶

Perhaps the most well-known discussion of the nature of the “spiritual” elements of cultural *Umwelt* comes from the “Origin of Geometry” where they are named idealities (*Idealitäten*) – as in the “Vienna lecture”, but also spiritual products (*geistige Erzeugnisse*), ideal products (*ideale Erzeugnisse*), ideal objectivities (*ideale Gegenständlichkeiten*), and spiritual formations (*geistige Gestalten*).⁷ The use of words here suggests that *geistig* is a synonym for ideal. What kind of ideality is it, and what kind of ideal objects is Husserl talking about? Put shortly, it is again the ideality specific to the products of culture. For as Husserl explains, they do not exist as private conscious representations of a singular individual,⁸ but are available and objectively given for everyone within a particular spiritual *Umwelt*, yet their objectivity does not derive from their empirical existence (i.e., from the fact that they can be given to us in a form of empirically existent physical things). Rather, they possess a specific “‘ideal’ objectivity (*‘ideale’ Objektivität*)... proper to a whole class of spiritual products (*geistige Erzeugnisse*) of the cultural world (*Kulturwelt*), to which not only all scientific constructions (*Gebilde*) and the sciences themselves belong, but also, for example, the constructions (*Gebilde*) of fine literature”.⁹

In the second volume of *Ideas* Husserl distinguishes between three types of objects; (1) the “real” objects, or the objects of nature, (2) purely ideal (*ideale*) or

spiritual objects (*Geistesobjekten*), such as works of literature and music,¹⁰ and (3) “spiritualized objects” (*begeistete Objekte*) that are both real and ideal,¹¹ such as a printed book that “contains” a literary work or, to use a modern example, a CD which “contains” music. Thus there are two types of cultural objects according to Husserl besides the natural or “real” objects: first, pure idealities, or purely spiritual objects that can form purely ideal/spiritual formations (*Gebilde*), such as scientific conceptions; and second, “spiritualized objects” and institutionalized forms of social praxis that instantiate pure idealities.

This dichotomy between pure symbolic idealities and materialized social phenomena coincides with the main structuralist insight of the social theories of the twentieth century about the existence of symbolic networks or cultural structures that give shape to social life and all cultural artifacts. Starting from Durkheimian “forms of classification”¹² social scientists have discussed the nature of cultural idealities that give form to the empirically particular social world. Thus social psychologists claim that our actions and thoughts, individual and collective self-identification, decision-making, and habitual life-styles – are all structured by nets of social representations, stereotypes, and interpretive schemes. Max Weber called the social idealities simply ideas. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz prefers to call them symbols. I will propose to name them cultural forms, because they are cultural constructions that have been created in the course of historical cultural praxis, but once created they structure the understanding of the world and social action in a given society.

Karl Popper and John Eccles, in their book *The Self and its Brain* present a view about the nature and ontological status of the “ideal objectivity” that is specific to the purely ideal objects of the cultural world. They draw a distinction between three different ontological domains; the world of physical entities (World 1), the world of mental states (World 2), and the world of the products of human mind (World 3).¹³ The elements of World 3 bear a strong similarity to Husserl’s notion of ideal objects, for they also include scientific theories, contents of the works of art, etc. The point of making the objects of World 3 a separate ontological domain is to insist that World 3 cannot be reduced to Worlds 1 and 2, even though the elements of that world obviously can take the form of material bodies, and can be become the contents of human mind. However, Popper and Eccles suggest that they have independent objectivity of their own, for “as World 3 objects, they may induce men to produce other World 3 objects and, thereby to act on World 1,”¹⁴ and, “they may have, objectively, consequences of which nobody so far has thought, and which may be discovered”.¹⁵

It seems that Husserl, at least in the “Origin of Geometry”, is in agreement with these features about the objective idealities explicated by Popper. In addition to that, Husserl emphasizes a specific feature of cultural idealities that he calls their “singular uniqueness”. Thus for example the Pythagorean Theorem does not come into existence each time anew when it is uttered, expressed, used, or thought of, but its existence is singular and precedes its particular expressions and applications (except perhaps when it was expressed for the first time). “It is”, Husserl argues, “identically the same in the ‘original language’ of Euclid and in all ‘translations’;

and within each language it is again the same, no matter how many times it has been empirically uttered.”¹⁶ Husserl notices that in fact language is thoroughly built up from such “ideal objects”, as for example the “the word ‘lion’ occurs only once in German language; it is identical throughout its innumerable utterances by any given persons.”¹⁷

Similarly, when Husserl discusses the ideal nature of *geistige* phenomena in the manuscripts to his lecture series on passive synthesis, he also mentions that language is made up of these ideal formations that have the characteristic of singular uniqueness: “In a treatise, in a novel, every word, every sentence is singularly unique, and it cannot be duplicated by a repeated reading, be it aloud or to oneself.”¹⁸ For obviously we distinguish between the treatise itself and the manifold of its uttered reproductions and written documentations. And it is because of this distinction, Husserl argues, that we are able to say, for instance, that these particular editions and printed books are *of one and the same* work.¹⁹ The same applies to non-lingual spiritual products of the cultural world, as for example to the Kreutzer sonata:

Even if the sonata itself consists in sounds, it is an ideal unity, and its sounds are no less an ideal unity; they are not for instance physicalistic sounds or even the sounds of external, acoustic perception; the sensuous, thing-like sounds, which are only really available precisely in an actual reproduction and intuition of them. Just as a sonata is reproduced over and over again in real reproductions, so too are the sounds reproduced over and over again with every single sound of the sonata in the corresponding sounds of the reproduction.²⁰

Thus we may conclude that when Husserl talks about spiritual or ideal formations of a common surrounding world, he means intersubjectively accepted and objectively valid idealities that are produced by human beings in the course of history, and thus stem from a particular psychic existence in some individual, yet they are relatively independent from their consequent subjective and objective manifestations. They are *geistig* in a sense that they constitute ideal contents of the empirically sensible expressions and ideals of social praxis. In this sense, *geistig* means the same as ideal, but not as a standard of perfection, as in the expression “this is an ideal home”, but ideal as opposed to something materialized or embodied, and therefore multiplied. They are intersubjectively valid and pre-given from the point of view of an individual, and yet they are historical products that have their empirical origin – their first occurrence in an individual mind of somebody, – the event of which we are most often unable to track.

The ideal elements constitute, as we saw above, the “spiritual sphere” of the surrounding world, or as put in the “Vienna lecture”, the surrounding world itself. In the “Vienna lecture” Husserl claims that the surrounding world is a wholly spiritual phenomenon, but in other texts the surrounding world is seen as the world that includes both objects of World 1 and World 3. In the *Ideas II* and elsewhere Husserl claims that *Umwelt* also contains other subjects, as well as subjectivities of a higher order, – “social subjectivities” (*soziale Subjektivitäten*) or what is the same, communities of subjects of different levels.²¹ However, we are still entitled to talk about a specific “spiritual sphere” of *Umwelt* that is constituted by spiritual idealities. Numerous thinkers before and after Husserl have suggested a concept for the repository of such symbolic idealities that constitute cultural structures, such as

the “collective consciousness” of Émile Durkheim, “collective memory” of Maurice Halbwachs, “cultural memory” of Jan Assmann, “collective unconscious” of Carl Jung, and, of course, their forerunner, *Volksgeist* and “objective spirit” of Herder and Hegel. Therefore it is no coincidence that Husserl talks about the spiritual *Umwelt* in connection with the cultures of nations. In the “Vienna lecture” he mentions the “spiritual space” (*das geistige Raum*) of a nation, which forms the spiritual *Umwelt* of a national society as a whole.²² A short discussion of the surrounding world of a nation can also be found in a Husserl’s manuscript from 1933 where he talks about a “national surrounding world” (*völkische Umwelt*) and mentions even a “surrounding world of fatherland” (*vaterländische Umwelt*) that each nation possesses. The national surrounding world is defined here as generatively accumulated common validities constituting the whole sense of the being (*Seinssinn*) that is valid for everyone among national fellows (*Volksgenossen*).²³

Now that we have gained some understanding of the nature of cultural idealities and the surrounding world constituted by these, we can return to Husserl’s claims about the uniqueness of European civilization. As said above, this uniqueness is to be found in the *geistige Gestalt*, the “spiritual shape”, which is specific to the Western world and which influences the whole cultural formation (*Kulturgestalt*) of Europe. Needless to say, the “spiritual shape” of Europe cannot be defined geographically.²⁴ Thus Husserl says that the United States belongs to Europe, whereas some nations and cultures that are actually situated within the geographical domains of Europe, do not; he names Eskimos, Indians and Gypsies.²⁵ European culture is trans-national: Each European nation may well have its own national *Umwelt*, but “the European nations nevertheless have a particular inner kinship of spirit (*Verwandschaft im Geiste*) which runs through them all, transcending national differences”, and in this sense Europe provides the consciousness of the common homeland of all Europeans.²⁶

The uniqueness of European culture can be recognized by the representatives of other cultures, as well as it can be felt by Europeans themselves, according to Husserl, as a “spiritual *telos* of European humanity” (*das geistige Telos des europäischen Menschentums*).²⁷ It does not mean, of course, that this *telos* occupies all Europeans all the time, or that it is the main goal of all of its cultural institutions.²⁸ It is just the essential ideal of European culture as a whole. This *telos* was discovered and established by the Ancient Greeks in the seventh and sixth century B.C. in the course of activities that they called philosophy. From that time on, it has created of “a new sort of attitude of individuals toward their joint *Umwelt*”.²⁹ Husserl describes instituting this new attitude as a cultural revolution – as a “transformation of the whole praxis of human existence.”³⁰

What happened there in Ancient Greece that can be seen as a creation and institution of a unique spiritual shape of European civilization? What kind of spiritual *telos* did the Greek philosophers discover? – It was, as Husserl tells us, the discovery of cultural idealities of a new type, namely the infinite cultural forms:

The spiritual *telos* of European humanity . . . lies in the infinite (*Unendliches*), in an infinite idea (*unendliche Idee*) toward which, in concealment, the whole spiritual becoming (*geistige Werden*) aims, so to speak.³¹

No other cultural formation (*Kulturgestalt*) on the historical horizon prior to [Ancient Greek] philosophy is in the same sense a culture of ideas (*Ideenkultur*) knowing infinite tasks, knowing such universes of idealities (*Universa von Idealitäten*) which . . . bear infinity within themselves. . . .³²

Let us recall that each culture has a spiritual *Umwelt* that consists of cultural forms of all sorts, such as collective representations of deities, social norms, etc. And even mythic cultures have, as Husserl says, certain “linguistically structured ‘knowledge’ of the mythical powers” that govern the world according to a particular spiritual *Umwelt*, – the knowledge that is cultivated among priesthood.³³ What was specific about the idealities produced by Greek philosophers that make the European spiritual *Umwelt* different among all others was their infinite and otherworldly nature. The idealities of all cultures prior to Greeks, and of all other civilizations besides European until today are finite in a sense that they are drawn from the particular life-world itself; the “ends, activity, trade and traffic, the personal, social, national and mythical devotion – all this moves within the sphere of its finitely surveyable surrounding world”.³⁴ All within a surrounding world of a traditional culture is taken for granted “. . . with its traditions, its gods, its demons, its mythical powers, simply as the actual world”.³⁵ But the Greek philosophers, starting from the idealization of magnitudes, measures, numbers, figures, etc. (that became first applied to cosmology, and thus the first non-mythical accounts of it were created)³⁶ discovered a whole sphere of infinite idealities that formed as if a parallel world that differs from the empirical world in the same way as Plato’s world of ideas differs from the world of shadows. The latter one is finite, yet non-persistent and constantly changing, the first is unchanging, eternal, and universal. Based on these universal idealities “the new question of truth arises: not tradition-bound, everyday truth, but an identical truth which is valid for all who are not blinded by traditions, a truth-in-itself.”³⁷ These otherworldly universal and in this sense infinite idealities soon became applied to the other areas of life, including ethics and politics. “Hence”, Husserl argues, “there are, for us Europeans, many infinite ideas . . . which lie outside the philosophical-scientific sphere (infinite tasks, goals, confirmations, truths, ‘true values’, ‘genuine goods’, ‘absolutely valid norms’), but they owe their analogous character of infinity to the transformation of mankind through philosophy and its idealities.”³⁸

Thus according to Husserl the uniqueness of European culture consists in discovering a specific non-empirical universality and in attempting to yield all aspects of empirical life to it. It was the discovery of the theoretical gaze, a new “purely theoretical attitude” (*rein theoretische Einstellung*) that replaced the religious-mythic attitude of all previous cultures.³⁹ This was achieved due to the infinite nature of the new cultural forms. And it is precisely as infinite that they function as *logoi* of the whole life of European culture, so that their embodiment has become the unachievable (in the sense of not being able to reach completion) *telos* of all of the cultural life, including its ethical life and politics. And indeed, even European politics today attempts to be grounded on the infinite. Thus when we go to war we do it not just in order to accomplish some particular results – empower a regime and establish another. Rather, or at least this is what we say, we go to war for infinite ideals, such as freedom or justice. And, it is commonly accepted and expected that our wars should

have such grounds. Those whose wars are not based on such grounds do not belong to the spiritual surrounding world that defines “us”.

Thus the task of the meaningful relating of particular deeds and individual thoughts to infinity has become an automated task of meaning-formation of Europeans – the Europeans who are, of course, defined “spiritually”, i.e., by the cultural structures of their surrounding world. By means of the infinite nature of our cultural forms we cross the line between infinity and mundane finiteness. Being infinite in themselves, these cultural forms are applicable to particularities that are finite, and they make them infinite on the level of how they are perceived. We could say that our cultural forms constitute a surplus of infinity that comes to define *as what* the particular and finite is perceived. This is how a statue of god, or a crucifix, can become more than just a material finite shape. And this is also how a war can be launched in the name of the eternal peace.

Today when we are used to be much more critical of such claims about the exclusivity of Western civilization, we need to take notice that Husserl cannot be accused of claiming that the European culture *is already* based on universal truths. Rather, he claims that it is a cultural ideal of Western civilization to attempt to do so in all spheres of life. In real cultural life, he says, it is an infinite task.⁴⁰ Thus in a way he is a cultural relativist – he sees Western civilization as having its culture-specific and historically contingent beginning that establishes cultural forms that distinguish the European spiritual world from all others. At the same time, it is true that he sees the West as the only civilization that attempts such universality (and therefore he claims that what is called Indian or Chinese philosophy is essentially different from the Greek one)⁴¹ – a claim that can be easily criticized. However, Husserl does not attach any axiological superiority to the idea of the uniqueness of Western culture.

Let us now turn to Husserl’s theory of meaning in order to prepare ourselves for the phenomenological analysis of Husserl’s claim about the uniqueness of European culture. We know already from the *Logical Investigations* that the intentional object (*intentionale Gegenstand*) transcends the very act of experiencing it (*Erlebnis*), as well as the immanent contents (*immanente Inhalte*) of this act.⁴² This is because of the following: what we intend, or the intentional object, is essentially different from the sensational content (*Empfindungsinhalt*) that is literally contained in the corresponding act of experience.⁴³ In other words, the immanent contents of consciousness are not what we are conscious of; or what is the same – the appearing of the thing (*Dingerscheinung*) is not the thing which appears (*erscheinende Ding*). While things appear (*erscheinen*) to us, the appearing itself does not appear (*erscheinen*), but we live through (*erleben*) it, not being thematically conscious of it.⁴⁴

Thus there is a basic phenomenological distinction between what appears and the processes within individual consciousness that provide for this appearance. These processes make the appearance possible, or in Husserl’s vocabulary, they *constitute* the intentional object. Now, what is the nature of these processes? – The ability of consciousness to be a consciousness *of* something, i.e., the ability to constitute intentional objects, is based on various kinds of syntheses that operate on its immanent contents of consciousness and produce various unities.⁴⁵ One of the most important

effects produced by these syntheses is the constitution of the identity of an object, within which various visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, and other sensations, remembrances, future projections and expectations, and any other particular contents of consciousness, are brought together *as* being sensations, remembrances, and projections of one and the same intentional object. Thus the function of synthesis is to produce the effect of different appearances of a thing to be the appearances of one and the same thing, and as its result an intentional object is constituted.

If we look more closely into the nature of these synthetic processes we see that in the act of appearing *of* a thing, its meaning (Husserl uses both *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*) plays a decisive role in these processes, i.e., meaning seems to be a decisive element in creating the synthetic unity and thereby constituting an intentional object. Thus Husserl writes in the *Cartesian Meditations*:

The “object” of consciousness, the object as having identity “with itself” during the flowing subjective process, does not come into the process from outside; on the contrary, it is included as a sense (*Sinn*) in it – and thus as an “*intentional effect*” produced by the synthesis of consciousness.⁴⁶

Here and elsewhere Husserl seems to suggest that the object’s identity, as well as its intentional objectivity, is produced by means of its meaning.⁴⁷ It does not imply that the intentional object is reduced to its meaning, for we do not experience the meaning of an object, but the object itself.⁴⁸ Rather, Husserl argues that meaning constitutes the identity and objective validity of the experienced object, because there is no other way of being conscious *of* something than being conscious of it *as* something. And the creation of this “*as*” is the function of meaning, as Husserl suggests.

Up to this point there seems to be a general agreement among commentators about Husserl’s theory of meaning, but we need to go a little further into the details. In the 5th Logical Investigation Husserl offers us an account of how exactly the consciousness *of* something by means of its meaning is achieved:

We concede that such a [sense-complex (*Empfindungskomplexion*)] is experienced (*erlebt*) in the act of appearing, but say that it is in a certain manner “interpreted” (“*aufgefaßt*”) or “appereived”, and hold that it is in the phenomenological character of such an animating interpretation (*beseelende Auffassung*) of sensation that what we call the appearing of the object consists.⁴⁹

In the *Logical Investigation* Husserl calls the element of consciousness that performs the function of unification of appearances *as* the appearances *of* one and the same object the matter (*Materie*), or interpreting sense (*Auffassungssinn*). Later, most notably in the *Ideas*, a similar function is taken over by the concept of *noema*. Husserl gives us several explanations of this concept, which has caused a lot of controversy among interpreters. Two sides have been taken about the nature of *noema*; one party of interpreters, the so-called East Coast position hold by Gurwitsch, Drummond, and others, sees *noema* as the intentional object itself, simply considered from the phenomenological point of view, i.e., as it is intended. The other party of interpreters, the so-called West Coast interpretation hold by Føllesdal, Dreyfus, Smith, and McIntyre, sees *noema* as an intermediary entity which mediates the act’s relationship to the intentional object. The latter interpretation enables us to see the connection between *noema* in the *Ideas* and the *Auffassungssinn* in the

Logical Investigations. In the *Ideas* Husserl indeed introduces the notion of *noema* in connection with meaning-bestowal (*Sinngebung*) that produces the object that is “meant” (“*gemeinte*” *Gegenstand*);⁵⁰ and uses often the word meaning (*Sinn*) to define it. In the case of perception, for example, *noema* is its perceptual meaning (*Wahrnehmungssinn*), and in other types of acts, such as remembering, judging, or liking the “noematic correlate” of the act is to be seen as sense (*Sinn*) in the extended meaning of the word.⁵¹ Husserl also claims that the core of full *noema* is formed by its objectifying sense (*gegenständliche Sinn*).⁵² Dagfinn Føllesdal summarizes the function of *noema* as following: (1) *noema* is a generalization of the notion of meaning. (2) It is that by virtue of which an act is directed towards an object; i.e., it is the objectifying device (the device constituting the objective validity) of an intentional object; and (3) *noema* is responsible for the self-identity of an object constituted in a complex act.⁵³

Thus *noema* is not a part of the physical thing, nor a part of the intended object as intended, but that which “animates” the intended object by forming its identity, and by the same move constituting that *as what* the object is perceived. Now, I wish to claim that the Føllesdalian interpretation works best if we connect Husserlian account of meaning-bestowal with the concept of pure spiritual idealities, or cultural forms. This connection is most obvious in the case of an act of perception of cultural object, or “spiritualized” material objects, as Husserl called them. Husserl himself did not systematically work through this idea, but let us look at his own example of dice.

What are the phenomenologically observable processes behind the perception of such a thing as dice? – Obviously there have to take place all the timely and spatial, internal and external, as well as kinesthetic, syntheses of the sensuous contents that are given to me looking at the different surfaces on my side of the object. In the course of such synthetic activities, Husserl claims, I constitute a self-identical object including its horizontal potentialities that are not yet actualized in perception. But how do I know that the object before me is what we call “dice”? How do I know that such a word, and consequently such a concept is applicable to this thing here? For something like dice is a cultural object; and my knowledge of such word and concept must also have a constitutive effect in recognizing this object as dice, and not just as a cube with black dots on it. We must distinguish between dice as this object here – an object that is both spiritual and real – a spiritualized object, as Husserl says, and the dice in a purely spiritual sense that functions as the grasping sense of this object as dice. It must be precisely this spiritual dice that forms the “spiritual sense” that animates the sensuous appearances, fuses with them and unites them into this particular object – the dice.⁵⁴ Otherwise I would at best recognize the object before me as a cube; or perhaps even not, if the notion of a cube is required for recognizing something as cubical. Therefore, in order to complete the analysis we need to make a step Husserl did not make: we need to transcendentalize the notion of purely spiritual objects; and to view them as “grasping senses”, or what is the same, the cultural forms. As cultural forms, these purely spiritual objects function as *noemata* – as symbolic surplus of meaning by virtue of which an object is identified *as* that object.

As a *noema* dice is a cultural form that functions not as an intentional content of experience, but as a transcendental figure that belongs to the “spiritual sphere” of ideal objects of a culture that form a “spiritual structure” present in all of us – those who can recognize this something as a dice. For something can be a dice only for the community of subjects for whom this word has an identifiable meaning – subjects who share a common spiritual *Umwelt*. And what is more, as the *noema* of the dice belongs to the traditions of the society, the identification that it enables is automatic in most cases. Thus, with transcendentalizing ideal objects we arrive at a cultural phenomenology with its new account of meaning-formation. Husserl himself was perhaps on his way towards revisions of his phenomenological project in this direction, as his manuscripts about generative phenomenology and intersubjectivity suggest, but there is no room here to discuss this trajectory of his thought.

In conclusion I propose to return to his account of the uniqueness of Western civilization in order to illustrate the transcendental function of cultural forms. What happens if we apply Husserl’s own theory of meaning-formation, adjusted to the analysis of spiritual objects (i.e., if we read *noema* as a cultural form) to Husserl’s own history of Western civilization. What is the *noema*, or the cultural form, of this story? It must be that element of the story that causes it to make sense, i.e., the element that constitutes the identity and meaning of the story as a whole.

As we saw, Husserl argued that the uniqueness of Europe is founded on a particular historical phenomenon – the discovery of a purely theoretical attitude by the Ancient Greek philosophers: “The theoretical attitude” as he puts it, “has its historical origin in the Greeks.”⁵⁵ A particular historical event has become the origin of the culture that was then – in 1930s when Husserl presented his lecture, and perhaps continues to be now, in crisis. What does it mean for something to have an origin? How does having an origin differ, if it does, from a simple starting-point? Obviously having an origin particularizes and historicizes the phenomenon by giving it spatial and temporal coordinates. But that could be accomplished by any starting point. The question of an origin goes further than that; it establishes the ground for a phenomenon, and sees it as grounded on it. Being grounded, however, does not just belong to the past. The ground is there as long as the phenomenon that is grounded by it is; that is, the ground functions as a non-historical and timeless essence of the phenomenon that is itself historical and particular. Being able to see and comprehend the ground – and this is what Husserl accomplishes in his lecture – gives us the essence of the phenomenon that we are dealing with.

Thus Husserl himself established the “interpreting sense” by finding the origin of Western culture – the origin that defines the essence of Europeaness. It is, of course, difficult to know whether cultures and civilizations have origins and essences, or whether these essences can be discovered by philosophers, but we know for sure that they can be created and successfully presented in our (world-) historical narratives. And if these narratives become widely accepted, then these essences will become commonplaces in cultural surrounding worlds, even if only retroactively attributed to the real historical beginnings.

An origin thus construed starts to function as an automated interpretative machine in the historical consciousness of a narrator, as well as in the consciousness of

the listeners. In other words, positing an origin forms an active center of meaning-formation, but once posited, it starts to function as a meaning-creating agency of its own right, and as such, it determines the meaning of the story, as well as the meaning of what is narrated about – *as* revealed in this story. Thus originating a phenomenon on something means turning the origin into a meaning-automaton of a historical narrative, the procedure of which is a typical “spiritual” feature of European historical consciousness. For cultural forms are not simply what we think about, but that by means of which we make sense of what we think about. As we know, the historical narrative with its origin defined as Antiquity has long ago acquired a normative status within the Western spiritual surrounding world. We will never reach any pure presentation of this cultural form, however, because something like an origin can only be presented in terms of what is already originated. The originating activity itself will remain hidden. Applied to our case, it means that we can only approach the essence of European uniqueness from the perspective of the narrated consequences of it, and in this sense it is these narratives that give the unique European “spiritual shape” its real birth. But what we can discover is the transcendental mechanism of this birth – which is not something the Greeks did, but something that Husserl accomplished in his account of it.⁵⁶

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NOTES

¹ See Edmund Husserl, “The Vienna lecture” (“Die Krisis des europäischen Menschentums und die Philosophie” – Abhandlung nr. 3 in the *Husserliana* vol. 6), pp. 318–319/272–273. The number(s) before slash refer to the page numbers in Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, ed. Walter Biemel, *Husserliana* 6 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954), pp. 314–348. The number(s) after slash refer to page numbers in Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. David Carr, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), pp. 269–314.

² Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 317/272.

³ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 317/272.

⁴ Sometimes Husserl also mixes these terms when he mentions *Geisteskultur* or *Kulturgeist*.

⁵ See Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 321/276 and 333/286.

⁶ Edmund Husserl, *Die Konstitution der geistigen Welt. Text nach Husserliana, Band IV*, ed. Manfred Sommer, Philosophische Bibliothek (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1984), / *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book. Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer, 1989), Zusatz § 51, pp. 31/210–211. From here on cited as *Ideas II*.

⁷ See Edmund Husserl, “The Origin of Geometry”, pp. 368/356–357 and 373/363. (“Der Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem”) – Beilage III in the 6th volume of *Husserliana. Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaft und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, pp. 365–386./ *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, pp. 353–378.

⁸ Husserl, “Origin of Geometry”, pp. 367/356.

⁹ Husserl, “Origin of Geometry”, pp. 368/356–357.

¹⁰ Husserl, *Ideas II*, pp. 74/255.

- ¹¹ Husserl, *Ideas II*, pp. 70/251.
- ¹² See Émile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss, *Primitive Classification* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
- ¹³ Karl Raimund Popper and John C. Eccles, *The Self and Its Brain: An Argument for Interactionism* (London, New York: Routledge, 1993), 36–38.
- ¹⁴ Popper and Eccles, op. cit., p. 39.
- ¹⁵ Popper and Eccles, op. cit., p. 40.
- ¹⁶ Husserl, “Origin of Geometry”, pp. 368/357, changing the translation of *sinnlich* – sensibly for empirically.
- ¹⁷ Husserl, “Origin of Geometry”, pp. 368/357. See also the discussion of language in Husserl’s manuscripts to the passive synthesis: “The word itself . . . is . . . an ideal unity that is not duplicated with its thousand-fold reproductions” 359/12. The numbers before and after slash refer to Edmund Husserl, *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis: Aus Vorlesungs- und Forschungsmanuskripten (1918–1926)* (*Husserliana, Band 11*), ed. M. Fleischer (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966). / Edmund Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*, trans. Anthony J. Steinbock, 1st ed. (Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer, 2001), from here on cited as “Analyses Concerning Passive Synthesis”.
- ¹⁸ Husserl, “Analyses Concerning Passive Synthesis”, pp. 358/10.
- ¹⁹ Husserl, “Analyses Concerning Passive Synthesis”, pp. 358/10–11.
- ²⁰ Husserl, “Analyses Concerning Passive Synthesis”, pp. 358–359/11. See also Husserl’s discussion of real and ideal objects (*reale und ideale Gegenstände*) in the in the manuscript number 29 in the from 39th volume of *Husserlina*, where he says that the real objects have each their unique location in time and space (*raumzeitliche Lokalität*), but “the ideal objects also have the spatial and timely manifestations, but they can manifest themselves in several time-spatial places at the same time, and yet remain identically the same.” – Edmund Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt: Auslegungen der vorgegebenen Welt und ihrer Konstitution. Texte aus dem Nachlass*, ed. Rochus Sowa, *Husserliana 39* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), p. 298. From here on cited as Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt*.
- ²¹ Husserl, *Ideas II*, pp. 26–30/205–208. See also Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität: Texte aus dem Nachlaß. Zweiter Teil. 1921–1928*, ed. Iso Kern, *Husserliana 14* (The Hague: Springer, 1973), p. 209.
- ²² Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 322/277.
- ²³ Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt*, Text nr. 35, pp. 345–349.
- ²⁴ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 318/273.
- ²⁵ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 318–319/273.
- ²⁶ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 320/274.
- ²⁷ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 320/275.
- ²⁸ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 322/276.
- ²⁹ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 321/276.
- ³⁰ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 325/279 and 333/287.
- ³¹ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 320–321/275.
- ³² Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 324/278–279.
- ³³ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 330/284.
- ³⁴ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 324/279.
- ³⁵ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 332/286.
- ³⁶ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 340/293.
- ³⁷ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 332/286.
- ³⁸ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 325/279. See also pp. 334/287: “If the general idea of truth-in-itself beomes the universal norm of all the relative truths that arise in human life, the actual and supposed situational truths, then this will also affect all traditional norms, those of right, of beauty, of usefulness, dominant personal values, values connected with personal characteristics, etc.”
- ³⁹ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 326–331/280–285.
- ⁴⁰ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 336/289.
- ⁴¹ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 325/279–280.

- ⁴² Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen [1900–1901; nach Husserliana XVIII, 1975 und XIX/1–2, 1984]*, ed. Elisabeth Ströker, 1st ed. (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2009) / *Logical Investigations, Vol. 1–2*, trans. J.N. Findlay, New edition. (London, New York: Routledge, 2001), V, §11, p. 387/Vol. 2, p. 99.
- ⁴³ Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, V, §14, pp. 395–397/Vol. 2, pp. 103–104.
- ⁴⁴ Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, V, § 2 pp. V, 359–360/Vol. 2. p. 83.
- ⁴⁵ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen: eine Einleitung in die Phänomenologie*, ed. Elisabeth Ströker (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1995) / *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns, 10th ed. (Dordrecht, Netherlands, Boston, MA: Kluwer, 1995), § 17–18, pp. 41–48/39–46.
- ⁴⁶ Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, §18, pp. 44/43; translation modified.
- ⁴⁷ In the *Logical Investigations* Husserl also suggests that consciousness produces an intentional relationship, and thereby constitutes an intentional object, by means of its meaning. See I, §13, pp. 54–55/Vol. 1, p. 198; and § 15, p. 59/Vol. 1, p. 201.
- ⁴⁸ See Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, I, §34, pp. 108/Vol. 1, p. 232.
- ⁴⁹ Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, V, §2, pp. 360–361/Vol. 2, p. 84, translation modified.
- ⁵⁰ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch. Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, ed. Elisabeth Ströker (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2009) / *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book. General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. Fred Kersten (The Hague, Boston, Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983), § 88, pp. 202/213–214. From here on cited as *Ideas I*.
- ⁵¹ Husserl, *Ideas I*, §88, pp. 203/214.
- ⁵² Husserl, *Ideas I*, § 91 pp. 210/221–222.
- ⁵³ Dagfinn Føllesdal, “Noema and Meaning in Husserl,” in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 50 (Autumn 1990): pp. 263–271.
- ⁵⁴ Husserl, *Ideas II*, § 56 h, pp. 69/250.
- ⁵⁵ Husserl, “The Vienna lecture”, pp. 326/280.
- ⁵⁶ This research was supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Center of Excellence CECT).

THE RECOVERY OF THE SELF. PLOTINUS
ON SELF-COGNITION

A B S T R A C T

According to numerous interpretations, Neoplatonism was a recovery of the spirit of man and of the spirit of the world. The philosophy, whose founder was Plotinus, influenced German classical philosophy as well as phenomenology considerably. For Plotinus, the “spirit of the world”, i.e., *Logos* is real, objective being, and also forming principle, and principle of explanation. Additionally, it is causal principle of unity and organization, and according to this aspect, the being of *Logos* is universal creative activity (*ontopoiesis*). Following Plotinus, it is the soul of the world, and as such it underlies reality. All beings – insofar as they participate in *Logos* – are able to contemplate. This applies specially to man who, exiled from the Absolute, has to return to it. Human restoration leads only through contemplation. The latter is the process directed to unity and identity between being and cognition. Due to the contemplation, the cognizing subject identifies itself with the cognized object. According to Plotinus, insofar as acts of cognition are intentional, namely they are directed towards external objects, unity between knower and known object cannot occur in the case of the cognition of external world. Such an unity is possible only in the case of self-cognition. When human mind knows itself, it attains the unity between object and subject, and the identity between being and knowing is established.

According to Hans Meinhardt, the German historian of philosophy, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was to say that Neoplatonism “has discovered spirit of the man and spirit of the world” (Gatti 2006, p. 23). However, before Hegel Plotinus’ philosophy, as well as philosophical theories of many other Neoplatonists had been regarded as the theories which deformed the original thought of Plato for a long time. Nevertheless, since the 18th century mostly in Germany Plotinus and his philosophical system has been appreciated as the independent and autonomous philosophy of its own unique value.

The influence of Plotinus’ philosophical ideas upon the German thought seems to be apparent. One can even hazard the guess that the German philosophy has its roots in Neoplatonic thought. Indeed, while exploring modern and contemporary German thought, one can find many various references to Plotinus; the Neoplatonic concept of “being in the world” might be compared to the Martin Heidegger’s claim that we encounter ourselves as immediately and unreflectively immersed in the world (Thomson 2010). Also, there is similarity between Plotinus’ and Heidegger’s concepts of time. Additionally, Plotinus’ question about the possibility of freedom in

the determined material world resembles a question which underlies Fichte's philosophical system, whose primary task was to explain how freely agents can at the same time be considered as a part of the world of causally conditioned material objects (Breazeale 2006). Moreover, Plotinus' observation that man is able to develop himself only as being temporal is parallel to Schelling's claim that eternal potentialities have to become temporal in order to fulfill and realize (Schelling 2000). Finally, we could validly and convincingly maintain that Plotinus' concept of the spirit of the world, i.e., Logos, anticipates Hegelian concept of the Absolute Spirit.

Although the problem of Plotinus' influences concerns the German philosophy in general, this article asserts that such influences can be seen within the problem of self-cognition in particular. Inasmuch as Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and Heidegger tried to express human experience of self-cognition, also Plotinus referred to the problem significantly. Therefore, the aim of this article is to explore Plotinus' idea of self-cognition. The problem of self-consciousness or self-cognition is the specific problem of modern and contemporary philosophy. The idea of René Descartes that knowledge about self could be the basis of all knowledge has found its developments in later theories of self-cognition in Fichte, Schelling and Hegel (Halfwassen 1994, p. 5).

According to Jens Halfwassen, late medieval theories of intellect (theories of Dietrich of Freiburg, Nicolas of Cues and Master Eckhart) anticipate idealistic theories of subjectivity. Nevertheless, the medieval theories have their sources in antique philosophy, namely in Aristotelian and Neoplatonic metaphysics of spirit (Halfwassen 1994, p. 5). One can assume the idea of self-cognition takes central place within Plotinus' philosophical system, and hence, it helps to explain not only human ambiguous position in the world, but also the metaphysical structure of the universe.

The very first paragraphs of *The Enneads* present the bundle of questions concerning human nature. However, Plotinus does not assume what exactly human nature is. Rather his point of departure is the mere observation of particular human feelings, thoughts, desires and pains.¹ All of these mental acts are human, nonetheless, can man be the compound of these mental acts, or rather is he something more than his mental acts? While considering relations between mental representations of the objects and ourselves, Plotinus poses the question: Whether the intellect while cognizing its mental representations cognizes itself simultaneously.² The issue is important for Plotinus in his formulation of the crucial question concerning self-cognition. If the answer to the question was affirmative, it would mean that the concept of self can be defined as a collection of mental events. But, does the man identify himself with his own mental states?

In order to solve the puzzle, Plotinus describes the following thought experiment: "Suppose the hypothetical thinker to be considering any group of mental acts, any possible content for the consciousness (. . .). Now, since the thinker is not a separate substance apart from his own thoughts, the mental states of this thinker are in some sense a part of the thinker" (Rappe 2006, p. 263), but still, they are not identified with him. Plotinus emphasizes that one should distinguish between mental acts as contents, and "the sphere". The latter is for Plotinus the metaphor of consciousness,

which contains mental events as its contents. Thus, Plotinus insists that behind mere mental states there has to be a subject or substance. Why is he so certain about the existence of the subject? The fact that hypothetical thinker is able to relate to his own mental states and cognize them as well, guarantees that there is such a subject behind the mental events. As Sara Rappe points out, “the person, qua knower, or subject of consciousness, will identify with the sphere, rather than with any of its contents” (Rappe 2006, p. 266). “I am not my own mental states” – Plotinus could have said.

However, such a view lays itself open to the charge of infinite regress. If we assume the existence of a certain observer who relates to his mental events, in consequence, we state the necessity of the next observer who relates to the observer perceiving his mental events, and so *in infinitum*. The argument has its sources in the sceptic tradition, namely, it has been formulated by Sextus Empirist. Nonetheless, Plotinus does not seem to solve this sceptic puzzle satisfactorily. He only says that in order to refute the sceptic argument, one has to assume self-cognition, namely one must assume that at least intellect cognizes himself. Thus, Plotinus’ question is not whether man is able to cognize himself, but rather he asks how is self-cognition possible?

Plotinus’ discernment between self and his mental states leads to the question about the self-identity.³ Such a lack of self-identity arises from the distance between the subject and his own mental events. Let us notice, that the problem of the lack of human self-identity has its sources in the constitution of human nature. Plotinus says, that since the human being is a kind of compound of his *substance* and *distinctive feature*, he cannot identify himself. Therefore, according to Plotinus, human being is not self-identified with his own substance, what means that he is not merely the substance.⁴ Plotinus (1991, p. 524) contrasts human nature with the One: Whereas the latter is what it is, and it does not differ from itself and does not differ as the substance, human nature, on the contrary, is not undistinguished, rather it differs as such from itself. But, one may ask, why is not human nature undistinguished? Plotinus (1991, p. 4) replies that if it were undistinguished, why would it need a cognition or desire? Any kind of the act of cognition or desire damages the internal, united and integrate structure of the self, and therefore, man cannot be undistinguished in himself, and as the compound he cannot identify with himself. The Plotinus’ account of man, as the compound of substantial identity and distinctive feature leads to the explanation of what human nature is: Since the unity of man is permanently disturbed by external acts of cognition or desire, and since the disturbance is specific for man, namely it defines man, human intellect is essentially ecstatic (Plotinus 1991, p. 4). Hence, the ecstasy defined as the intentional mental act directed toward the external empirical objects, is crucial for being a man.

Plotinus considers the problem of ecstasy while explaining the Aristotelian theory of perception, for which the concept of passive intellect is its main notion. It is worth to notice that Aristotle treats perception as the case of interaction between two elements: objects capable of acting and capacities capable of being affected (Shields 2008). Let us remind that according to Aristotle, human intellect is such a “capacity capable of being acted”, namely it is the mere passivity, which is actualized by its

object (capable of acting). Hence, the Aristotelian intellect becomes active only if it confronts with its object. In other words, the intellect is an active power only in its acts of cognition. The process of cognition consists then in receiving forms of the object by intellect; Stagyrite uses in the context the metaphor of a seal impressed in wax to explain this concept. However, Plotinus rejects definitely such a conception (Plotinus 1991, p. 329). Instead, he presents four arguments against the Aristotelian theory of impression. First of all, Plotinus points out that to be able to receive such an imprint the soul would have to be in some way material, and of this there can be no question. Secondly, when we perceive an object by means of sight, we see where the object is, and we direct our power of vision to that point; it is clear, Plotinus says, this is how the perception takes place. Thirdly, Plotinus notices that the soul looks outside just because there is no impression in it, and it takes on no stamp. If it did it would have no need at all to look outwards, for it would already possess the form of the object. Finally, Plotinus claims that of the impression theory of sense-perception was correct, it would mean that we do not see the objects themselves but only some sort of images of them (Blumenthal 1971, pp. 70–71).

In Plotinus rejection of the Aristotelian foundations of psychology, we might find reemphasis on an active aspect of human intellect. Again, Plotinus stresses that human intellect is defined by the acts of ecstasy. If we accepted the Aristotelian theory of cognition, how could we explain the ecstatic acts of the human soul? Plotinus (1991, p. 329) says, that the soul observes what is outside, and not impressions inside it, because they are not there.

While exploring the concept of human ecstatic acts, Plotinus describes nature as undistinguished and self-identified. Such a nature lives in unity and eternity, and it does not move. As Andrew Smith (2006, p. 198) suggests, “eternity remains in unity”, what also suggests “rest”. Let us remind that the idea of eternity as a being in rest has been provided by Plato’s *Timaeus* (Smith 2006, pp. 199–200). Indeed, Plotinus follows Plato when he says that time is an image of eternity.⁵ Nevertheless, so far as Plotinus points out that nature has to become temporal in order to develop itself (and cognize itself as well), his vision of time and eternity differs from Plato’s view. Thus, whereas the Platonic man raises up from temporal empirical being towards eternal ideas, the Neoplatonic man moves in the opposite direction: from eternal unity he descends towards empirical (and temporal) world. Descent from eternity is some kind of motion, therefore, so far as rest corresponds to eternity, motion corresponds to time (Smith 2006, p. 199). Thus, the moment of the nature’s descent is also the moment in which time has come to existence. In other words, ecstatic acts are the source of time (Plotinus 1991, p. 227).

Plotinus rejects the Aristotelian definition of time as the measure of motion. According to Smith, “the doctrine of Aristotle is deemed inadequate precisely because it commences from and does not rise above an empirical analysis of time, an attempt to find an adequate account of how time operates rather than to ask what it is” (Smith 2006, p. 197), whereas Plotinus hopes for answering the question concerning the essence of time. Aristotle states that time is the measure of movement of heavens circuit. Such a movement would never cease, and it seems to be a good candidate for identification with time. Thus, time is measure of sunrises and sunsets.

Let us notice that the concept of time as a measure of heavens circuit movement has been maintained by Plato and his followers as well. Therefore, as a Platonist Plotinus refers to this idea of time. Nevertheless, he proposes his own view.

Plotinus' discussion with Aristotle's concept of time begins by rejecting the claim that time is movement of heavens circuit. First of all, he observes that movement can be regular as well as irregular, and he asks how is it possible to measure something which is not regular (Smith 2006, p. 207)? Moreover, he notices that the movement of heavens circuit can lapse, but time cannot. According to Plotinus, if the heavenly circuit should cease to move (and hence all physical movement cease) even its rest would be in time (Smith 2006, p. 211), and this rest would be measured by soul.

Plotinus' conclusion is the thesis that time is not a movement of the world, but rather it is a movement of the soul. Precisely, time is the life of the soul. According to Plotinus, time exists on two levels; on the one hand, it exists on the level of soul's life, on the other hand, it can be perceived in the physical world, when worldly things exist "in time". And since world exists in time, and since time is soul's life, as Plotinus concludes, the world exists in the soul (Smith 2006, p. 210). Thus, unlike Aristotle and Plato, Plotinus shows that time is internal to the soul, not external. He stresses that "we should not imagine the time as something being outside the soul, and similarly, we should not imagine the eternity as something <out there>" (Plotinus 1991, p. 227).

However, in Plotinus' view time is not only the life of the soul, but also it has its origin in the soul. Plotinus explains that as soon as nature desires "something more" than presence and stillness, it has made itself temporal. It is so, because, according to Plotinus, only being in time guarantees an authentic human experience. As Plotinus says, understanding what time is helps us to understand what we are (Smith 2006, p. 210). Hence, only in its ecstatic acts, the soul undergoes the changes, and within these changes it becomes temporal. In consequence, within becoming temporal, the soul creates the empirical temporal world as well.

While remaining in the unity and rest nature does not desire anything, and hence, it is self-sufficient. And the crucial question is: Why does nature want to disturb its unity and stillness by its ecstatic acts? And why does nature want to abandon its eternity and become temporal? According to Plotinus, the source of the soul's descent as well as beginning of time is nature's desire of mastering itself and belonging to itself. In order to do that, it has decided to achieve "more than presence" and has set itself in motion (Plotinus 1991, pp. 227–228). According to Blumenthal, "the soul must descend (. . .), but it does so by its own dynamism: it comes down by reason of its power to organize subsequent being, starting from an impulse of its own free will" (Blumenthal 1971, p. 5). Therefore, the source of the soul's descent is some "restless power", as Plotinus says, inside nature, and due to this power, the nature wants to spread itself in ecstatic acts.

Let us notice that this movement of nature can be regarded as a metaphysical explanation of human freedom. Georges Leroux, while considering the concept of freedom in Plotinus' thought poses the question: "Does the soul descend voluntarily, that is, does it freely move toward the lower states of its realization, and in particular toward the body?" (Leroux 2006, p. 295). But it seems that it would be better if we

claimed that soul moves toward the lower states of its realization, because of its freedom. In other words, the process of emanation is entirely free process; the soul emanates and thus it moves towards lower and external states. Such movement is also the manifestation of freedom.

Plotinus' emphasis on the ecstatic character of the soul aims at the understanding of what the human being is. As he points out, this ecstatic property of man is not the property of man considered as a whole compound, but rather it is a property of mere intellect. Therefore, as Plotinus puts it, our intellect is our truest self (Blumenthal 2006, p. 96). This intellect is defined as *διανοία*, the real human intellectual capacity, the power of reasoning and judgment, with which Plotinus often says we are to be identified with Blumenthal (1971, p. 43). It may thus be regarded as the meeting place of the sensible and intelligible worlds (Blumenthal 1971, p. 111), and this is the psychic level when human concept of the self is being constituted.

Plotinus shows that in order to see and understand our intellect as our truest self, one should purify himself of all desires, thoughts, memories and material body. After such a purification, he would see himself as a pure and immortal intellect (Plotinus 1991, pp. 336–343). Hence, the first step of self-cognition is to recognize oneself as the intellect. In order to make this thesis clear, Plotinus creates the second part of his “hypothetical thinker” thought experiment: let us remind that hypothetical thinker was supposed to consider all his mental acts and contents of consciousness: “No matter how diverse the causes that initially produced these elements in the external world, as for the contents of the sphere considered solely as objects of thought, it is true to say that their productive cause is singular, namely, the hypothetical thinker himself” (Rappe 2006, p. 263). This is the very crucial moment in Plotinus' work, because he claims that we are able grasp the reality as it appears in our consciousness. And if we concentrated on our consciousness events, it would turn out that our consciousness is the “productive and efficient cause” of its contents. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the empirical material world is somehow dependent on our consciousness. Plotinus does not maintain anything like this. He only says that there are two ways of perceiving the world: as the macrocosm and the microcosm. “The macrocosm is a publicly available world, inhabited and experienced by countless sentient beings, each with a diverse perspective. The microcosm is that same world, seen from within the confines of an individual consciousness” (Rappe 2006, p. 262).

Since Plotinus claims that consciousness contents can be individuated in a complete independence of empirical objects, this thought experiment might be interpreted as a kind of internalism: mental states have their only cause and source in thinking intellect. However, how Plotinus can claim both that the human intellect in his very nature follows external objects in cognition, and the cognized world is just the totality of consciousness contents? Let us notice that Plotinus makes use of special notions of “externality” and “internality”, which are crucial to his concept of self-cognition. He tries to show, as Rappe puts it, “how the soul constructs a (...) sense of self when it conceives the world as outside of the self; (...) the thought experiments reveal a way of conceiving the world as not external to the self” (Rappe 2006, p. 265). Thus, the world is not external to the intellect, it is rather

internal: worldly objects are perceived as the contents of consciousness. Therefore, since the world is internal to the human intellect, the latter cognizes himself in his ecstatic acts.

Since borders of myself are simultaneously the borders of the world, self-cognition would be cognition of the world, which is identified with the self. If we look closer to the Plotinus' notions of internality and externality, we might ask whether there is any kind of external world in a strict sense, totally independent from the intellect. Plotinus states that the world of matter is such a world, because matter would never become internal to the intellect. Matter, as the last emanation from the One cannot be regarded as any being, because the latter, for Plotinus, is only that what is intellectual. On the contrary, matter is the end of the intellectual world, and therefore, it should be regarded as a nothingness. Plotinus compares matter to the mirror: the same as the mirror is indispensable for reflections, matter is indispensable for reflections of real beings. Matter as the mirror is not visible itself, it is only visible due to its reflected images of real intellectual beings (Dembińska-Siury 1995, p. 54).

The concept of the self which is identified with the mere intellect is exactly a result of Plotinus' doctrine of matter. It is so, because the statement applies to human body as well: since the human body and its organs are material, they cannot be regarded as the parts of the self. While describing the process of perceiving, Plotinus notices that we perceive only the external objects. But he asks about perception of the internal processes of an organism. Do we perceive our bodily experiences as internal to ourselves or rather external? Plotinus distinguishes power responsible for the perception of external objects from the power of perceiving what goes on within us. Plotinus talks of the power of internal perception. However, all sensation is of externals because the affections of the body which such a faculty cognizes are also external to the soul (Blumenthal 1971, p. 42). Thus, according to Plotinus, every time we experience any kind of "bodily disorder", we used to experience it as if it came from outside (Plotinus 1991, p. 309). Therefore, the body is not a part of myself, but the part of the external – material world (Plotinus 1991, p. 367). "I am not my body, I am only my intellect" – Plotinus might say.

The specific notion of externality in Plotinus' thought is a result of habitually identifying with the body (Rappe 2006, p. 265). Let us stress, following Rappe, that "gradually the boundary that separates self and world is erased, when the demarcations of selfhood are no longer around the body, but around the totality of any given phenomenal presentation" (Rappe 2006, p. 265). In consequence, "every cognizable fact about the knower's identity as subject is converted to the status of an external condition: body, personality, life history, passions, and so forth" (Rappe 2006, p. 266). Within Plotinus' works, these qualities have received the status of mere modifications of the self. Behind the modifications, there is an authentic self. Cognition of the authentic self is for Plotinus the proper self-cognition.

However, having established our self as the intellect, Plotinus goes one step further and asks about the principle of the unity of the self. Our intellect has been defined as discursive potency, namely as $\delta\iota\alpha\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$. Moreover, since its movement has been defined as circular which means that the intellect moves from intelligible

rules (Νοῦς) to the sensible world and back, it is not united and thus not one. In consequence, the intellect has been also defined as Dyad: it is duality of a cognizing subject and a cognized intellect, it is also indefinite and unlimited. Intellect's position between intelligible and sensible world, as well as its other attributes are precisely the reasons of deficiency of its unity. Therefore, Plotinus poses the question about the grounds of self-unity: On what grounds do we cognize ourselves as one?

Let us emphasize that relation to ourselves is being constituted in reciprocity of thinker and thought. The unity of self-thinking is not absolute unity, because, as Plotinus says, the unity in multiplicity is primary the multiplicity. Thus, Plotinus' aim is to introduce some kind of the third element which would unite thinker and thought in an act of self-cognition. It has to be the principle of both unity and multiplicity, and as such, it would be the ground of unity of the self in self-cognition (Halfwassen 1994, p. 9).

Plotinus answers that we perceive the unity of ourselves in the light of Νοῦς (Halfwassen 1994, p. 22). How do we discover presence of Νοῦς within us? Plotinus shows two ways of our participation in Νοῦς: firstly, Νοῦς is the power which unites multiplicity of our thinking, namely it unites variety of λογῶν. And secondly, we become Νοῦς through intellectual insight. According to Halfwassen, there are two concepts of self-cognition which are joined to these two ways of participation in Νοῦς. Therefore, self-cognition can be regarded either as the cognition of the essence of discursive thinking, or as an intellectual self-insight which relies on intellectual turn to Νοῦς with complete omitting discursive potencies of intellect (Halfwassen 1994, p. 22). Plotinus definitely chooses the second option. Thus, the man does not cognize himself as a discursive thinking which is aware of its reception of external truths. Preferably, not only he cognizes himself as a principle of his own unity, but also while participating in Νοῦς he ceases to be indefinite and unlimited.

To sum up, let us stress that Plotinus claims that the very nature of human being consists in ecstatic acts. Because of these intentional acts, directed towards external objects, the man cannot be self-identified. Thus, transgression describes human condition in the world, and it derives from freedom. While transgressing his unity and self-identity, man becomes temporal. Plotinus would agree that only being in time helps the man to develop and cognize himself. Therefore, in order to cognize himself, the man has to be in time. Since ecstasy is the intellectual property, Plotinus claims that intellect is the human truest self. Plotinus' "hypothetical thinker" thought experiment has led him to the conclusion that the world is internal to the man. This applies to the body as well, which is just a part of external and empirical world. And as far as the man is able to recognize himself in his pure intellect, and as far as he knows that the world, time, his body, memories, personality and mental events are only modifications of himself, and he is something behind all these qualifications, then he would cognize himself. This pure intellect has been defined by Plotinus as δῶναι, nevertheless the principle of its unity is not himself, but Νοῦς understood as an intellectual intuitive insight.

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NOTES

- ¹ “Pleasure and distress, fear and courage, desire and aversion, where have these affections and experiences their seat?” (Plotinus, 1991, p. 3).
- ² “Are we to think that a being knowing itself must contain diversity, that self-knowledge can be affirmed only when some one phase of the self perceives other phases and that therefore an absolutely simplex entity would be equally incapable of introversion and of self-awareness?” (Plotinus, 1991, p. 364).
- ³ According to Blumenthal, there is another explanation why Plotinus had problems with answering the question “who we are”: “Our soul does not descend completely, but a part stays up in the intelligible world” (Blumenthal, 1971, p. 6).
- ⁴ “This is a compound state, a mingling of Reality and Difference, not therefore reality in the strictest sense, not reality pure. Thus far we are not masters of our being; in some sense the reality in us is one thing and we are another. We are not masters of our being” (Plotinus, 1991, p. 524).
- ⁵ “For Plotinus himself one important and central element of this is the linking of eternity with the unchanging and transcendent intelligible world and time with the physical world of becoming. Clearly Plato lies partly behind this” (Smith, 2006, 196).

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SOCIAL CONNOTATIONS OF THE CATEGORY
OF THE «NOW» IN THE LATE WRITINGS
OF EDMUND HUSSERL VS. J. DERRIDA
AND B. WALDENFELS

“The concept of time, in all its aspects, belongs to metaphysics, and it names the domination of presence. Therefore we can only conclude that the entire system of the metaphysical concepts, throughout its history, develops so-called ‘vulgarity’ of the concept of time [. . .], but also that an other concept of time cannot be opposed to it, since time in general belongs to metaphysics’ conceptuality.”¹

A B S T R A C T

The author analyses the late Husserl’s phenomenology of time giving a new interpretation of the «now» which is based on statement that the «now» should be expressed by non-temporal terms. According to the author, this process of temporal devoid is present in the very late Husserlian considerations on *lebendige Gegenwart* and this process is threefold. The third level of freeing the «now» from temporality is “being of the form of the pure non-temporal «now»”. Derrida’s temporality of origin discloses the simultaneousness of objective ontology and objective consciousness. Dialectics of conversion of subjectivity into temporality, which is present in Derridean philosophy, requires a direct and an original insight in the difference. The Husserlian solution of the problem is reduced by the author to an explanation of the «now» as a noun. According to the author, this interpretation overcomes Derridean apories. Also, the paper shows the basic significance of the category of the «now»—that is devoid temporality on the most basic level—in the constitution of the consciousness of time. Double character of the «now»—temporal and non-temporal—is a source of a cognitive tension but also it is a level of sociality.

The philosophy of pure consciousness—the Husserlian phenomenology of time—is strictly related to the notion of time as the core of the consciousness. This paper shows the basic significance of the category of the «now» in the constitution of the consciousness of time. The most essential issues of this topic are presented in the analysis of the consciousness. *Lebendige Gegenwart* is described as a cognitive tension released by the depiction of the constitution of the flow of time. This flow is temporalized within a-temporal surroundings.

A POLEMIC AGAINST DERRIDEAN
ANTI-PRESENTIALISM

A pre-social and a primordial sphere is not a result of a reflection although it means that it is not a domain of intersubjectivity. In other words, the origin or the genesis of the transcendental "I" cannot create itself. Jacques Derrida explains this problem in the introduction to his book *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*.

Without recourse to an already constituted logic, how will the temporality and subjectivity of transcendental lived experience engender and found objective and universal eidetic structures?²

The eidetic reduction and the transcendental reduction lead us to the suspension of our knowledge about facts. This suspension conducts us to define the internal consciousness of time on an eidetic level. Thus, the temporality is a point of the phenomenological arrival. There are the phenomenological rudiments.

Derrida argues that the phenomenology of time ought to stay on a non-temporal level in its attempts of taking up temporality—it seems to be directed against Husserl's intentions to portray the phenomenology as a dialectics of temporal "moments" between phenomenology and ontology.

According to Derrida, the Husserlian phenomenology is reduced to a dialectical depiction of temporal "points" in its relation to the phenomenological and ontological background. Husserl's source temporality *a priori* synthesises the existence of time with the constituted sense of time. Husserl does not intend to discuss the problem of temporality any further because he considers it to be an eidetic structuralization, and additionally points out at the non-temporality of this problem. In other words, one may recall an emblematical opinion of Derrida: Husserl is still a prisoner of the classic tradition. This tradition reduces an individual to the isolated cases of the universal history of the universal conception of man. In this configuration, it seems that temporality manifests itself in an actual eternity existing within *periechon*—a container like this would include an internal consciousness of time.

Husserl is the first philosopher to change the grammatical qualification of the category of the «now». He defines the «now» as a noun. The «now» is a noun not only as a specific term of philosophy of time, but also as a part of speech, in which we ask a question "what?" not "when?". The «now» is not a noun because it is a category which is added to our philosophical vocabulary. The Husserlian «now» is a noun because, substantially, it answers the question "what" or "who"? For this reason, we cannot find any contradictions in the evolution of the «now» in the works of Husserl. What we can see is only how he shifts in the categorizing of the «now». In my opinion, one of the most important breaking points in Husserl's work is giving up his diagrammatic depiction of the theory of time. The category of the «now» which is constituting time is a background of an intentional act which is characterised retentionally and protentionally. Giving up a retentional↔protentional time is not actual but methodological.

According to Husserl, the flow of time is represented by a sequence of the consecutive and successive points of time. In his theory of time, the future is later than the past, the past is earlier than the «now». The past and the future, on the one hand,

and the «now», on the other, do not possess the same nature: the «now» is not a border between the past and the future, but the only present time of the creator of time. The main difficulty lies in the fact that this sequence cannot be characterised in a temporal terminology for two reasons.

- (1) The «now» (also in the retentional↔protentional setting) is the smallest “unit” that the consciousness constitutes.³
- (2) Consciousness cannot measure constituted time by means of the «now» defined as category of time.

The «now» does not answer to question “when?”. Well, the «now» must answer other questions than “when?”. According to Husserl, (in his definition of the «now» in the retentional↔protentional setting as well as in *lebendige Gegenwart*) the «now» answers to question “what?”. Let me use a birth of individual consciousness as an example (supposing that an individual is not the eternal monad). I am not taking into consideration the time as the factor which is constituting my universal sense of the world—the sense which relates to my retention–protention, to my consciousness of the flowing time, as well as to the socialised and the inter-subjective time. I am only interested in a feeling of time in its specific «now».

Let’s analyse the problem of the actual phenomenon (a subjective aspect) and *a priori* nature of consciousness (an objective aspect). One of the main objectives of Husserl is to try to define as well as to precede an experienceable—but not yet predicative—way of *Zeitigung*: it can be called temporality independent from consciousness. Derrida, who was inspired by Husserl’s phenomenology of time in *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl’s Philosophy*, is searching atemporal *a priori* which is an underlying foundation of phenomenology. However, it does not imply returning to a substantial originality of the subject in relation to consciousness. In other words, Derrida claims that what an origin is—is not substantial.

Jacques Derrida’s pre-predicative absence—analysed in a temporal context—becomes complicated in the retentional↔protentional context of category of the «now» and becomes complicated in the atemporal infinity in Husserlian understanding. Pre-predicative origin of Derrida’s philosophy differs from a-temporal ones and becomes limited to *lebendige Gegenwart* origin of Husserl phenomenology of time. Derrida’s temporality of origin discloses the simultaneousness of objective ontology and objective consciousness. Dialectics of conversion of subjectivity into temporality, which is present in Derridean philosophy, requires a direct and an original insight in the difference. The dialectics of being and sense goes hand in hand with the dialectics of being and time. The essence of this issue lies in the fact that primary temporality of passive pre-constituted being is more important than immanent temporality of consciousness. That is, primary temporality of passive pre-constituted being is mixed with being and thus it precedes every phenomenological temporality, which is a background of this pre-constituted being.

We can quickly notice the bipolarity of such structure:

- (1) (a) The existence in the *Nullpunkt* is the pure (pre-temporal) and unconditional reception of reality, and (b) we deal with a reference to the *Nullpunkt* as a basis of the interpretation. On the one hand, the consciousness is blind because it

does not known retentional \leftrightarrow protentional perspective, on the other hand, the consciousness outside retentional \leftrightarrow protentional time is the intentional correlate for the consciousness of time.

- (2) The objectivisation of the first level takes place outside the time; the objectivisation of the second one takes place above the time. The second kind of the objectivisation exceeds the monolinear pattern of a sheer succession in «now» of the acts since each reference to primordial temporality supposes a continuity of an action. The action is deprived of a limited perspective of retention-«now»-protention and is potentially referred to a “future” by «now»; moreover, an action does not take place in the «now» noticed in the prism of *before*.
- (3) (a) The consciousness (as a *being of the form of the pure non-temporal «now»*) is anonymous and is not non-individual (as only individual consciousness can enter the reality). The creation of the consciousness of internal time is a derivative process that leads to the consciousness, which is inherently atemporal—which means that the first «now» is recognised only into perspective of *before*. An experience of the first «now» is a temporal *unconscious*.⁴ We can say so because the consciousness has not experienced the internal time in the retentional \leftrightarrow protentional perspective, the consciousness was not motioned in the objective time. Also, an experience of the first «now» is temporally *conscious* because the consciousness participates in reality in a pure way and this process takes place without the participation in the temporal character any «now». The consciousness as the pure *Einfühlung* of reality wins the memory of reality; and it wins the internal and temporal perspective of social communication. Simultaneously, the consciousness loses a part of its nature (namely—its atemporal character) as a result of the transcendental reduction and the pure consciousness appears as absolute). (b) There is an existential tension (in *being the form of the non-temporal «now» between before and after*), which appears at the moment when the consciousness recognises «now» in the context of the future. There is the existential tension between non-temporality in pre-cognition and cognition into perspective of retention-«now»-protention, between *before* and *after*. The «now»—as a basis for the temporal «now»—exists and the *before* and the *after* fix its borders.

We may therefore say that the temporal «now» is the product of the intensive-ness to the non-temporal «now», that it is essentially and necessarily an identifying synthesis. Time is a result of individual *Zeitigung*. The temporal «now» is a result of constitution of the pre- and beyond-temporal «now». But this can only be possible because the retentional \leftrightarrow protentional structure constituting time in the proper sense, and mental living as inherently temporal, is objectivated as the identical time at each intermediary level of constitution. According to Kersten, the process of “self-temporalization”, the process of “self-constituting” of transcendental mental living as past, present, and future in the manner described does not, however, reconstitute itself or multiply itself.⁵ That is to say, that at the level of the oriented constitution peculiar to time, transcendental mental life is transcendently temporalized, with

the identical structure of a transcendental intensity to time. Given schema of a transcendental mental life-process with respect to process, as a whole is objectivated as an unflowing frame consisting of future, present, and past. The current extent flows through this frame so that the relation of any portion of the extent to each part of the frame changes continuously. The tense of the posited characteristic of each portion changes continuously from “will be later”, to “will be soon”, to “is”, to “was recently”, to “was earlier”, to “was still earlier” etc. The change in tense of the positioned characteristics of the extents is a consequence of the flow out of the future, through the present into the past. If it is not the case, the mental life-processes would be nothing but a continuous recurrence, hence would provide no basis for building up the real and the objective world within which mental life-processes find them. It is the condition for my transcendental life. However, the change/flux in tense is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition for existing in the world. It is true, but the mental construction of time, or in other words, the transcendental mental living which constitutes «now», disappoints when we try to define the pure «now». This Husserlian construction does not take into consideration a pure concept of flowing time. The unity of an enduring extent of any mental life-process is possible only in so far as it presents itself in the correlation with something identical presented as well as through a multiplicity of different temporal extents continually changing in the orientation and tense. The consciousness of the internal time relates to the present (the consciousness of time and its reference to the wider, retentive ↔ protentive context is built by the sense of «now») but in the contrary—the social time is built by the reference to the past and the past experience. The centre of gravity of immanent temporality moves into the past. But the past, although being temporal, does not impose its own temporalization on the «now». The «now» constitutes the temporality into the perspective of the past, and the «now», as a moment, cannot be separate from time, because the pre- and temporal «now» does not answer to the question “when?”.

Let us consider the following question: is an ideal sphere—which is purposefully given by a genetic interpretation of what we recognise as a sphere of objective validity—temporal or a-temporal? If it is indeed a temporal and original sphere the subjectivity cannot be simultaneously constituted in the present. If it is temporal it is historical and psychological. In that case the constitution is reduced to the formal norms.

This kind of temporality in an original sphere in Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* and in *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft* is more clearly showed than in *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, but we can notice a discontinuousness in reply to this question. There is a difference between the objective and subjective temporality. The objective temporality depends on a temporal constitution taking place in the individual (constitution) of time. This objective temporality can be only accomplished when consciousness constitutes its beginning in a temporal sense. An attempt at finding the beginning in the opposite direction—in terms of the becoming in an ontological sense—does not bring the required results apart from the necessity of being. In other words, Husserlian

lebendige Gegenwart—in contrast to Derrida’s dialectics of difference—is given as a source and it is constitutive.

From the beginning of Husserl’s analysis of time and his study of phenomenology in *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, his theory has become a call for searching for the secondary basis of the transcendental philosophy. Derrida changes this “Platonic” method of a philosophical investigation and finds it in the dialectics of genesis. The “ineradicable” *aporiae* of the transcendental *Schein*, which Derrida radicalises, shows that the evidence is always given in person as something.⁶ The opposition between the transcendental and the mundane, non-presence⁷ and presence is the non-*arché* and non-*telos* origin. According to Lawlor,

the metaphysic of presence is a discourse that presupposes a sense of being, the sense as presence.⁸

This unfortunate anticipation in the sphere of dialectics gives as the beginning without the beginning; in other words, it presents itself as a dogmatism of presence. A change of Husserlian ontic presence for the presence as origin, is in fact, only a verbal transubstantiation. Derrida did not only fall into a temporal presence, but also lost his sight of self-evidence in time. Husserl transcendental method led to some language difficulty to express self-evidence. Derrida—being convinced of the impossibility of self-evidence—has accepted the method of a dialectical and recurrent approach to self-evidence. In other words Derrida, has combined the metaphysic of presence with the self-evidence by means of an infinite chain. One end of this chain spreads out in the subjective evidence, the other one vanishes in a quasi-sensitive and infeasible self-evidence. Certainly, the difference between the radical discontinuity (and subjective retention) and the objective time, which exists without any intervention of a subject, is of no importance.

Husserl distinguishes between the psychological, objective (*sic!*) and phenomenological understanding of time. This rudimentary statement put in the context of consideration about non-conditioned foundation of phenomenology is quite surprising. However, if you have in mind the socially conditioned Waldenfels’ concept of *Zwischenreich* this statement suddenly becomes entirely clear.⁹ It seems that the most important argument against Derridean metaphysic of presence can be explained by the fact that Derrida assumes that the empiricalness is dialectically mixed by the source juxtaposition of the ontic continuity with the temporal discontinuity. If Derrida treats the temporality as—*activeness*—derivative of intentionality and, at the same time, as—*passiveness*—subject of sensual perception, it falls in *aporiae*. Every experience of the external world processes in internal stream of time consciousness, which has not beginning and the end. Derrida gets bogged down in details of time, it means that he loses the beginning and the end of retentional ↔ protentional time. But to get bogged down in details and to know that there is no beginning and the end, these are two different matters. The same starting point—Husserl and Derrida consider in what way individual act of consciousness, so to say specific and limiting temporality, can be a grounds of depiction of infinity of time—leads to so much different results. Husserl in point of view of individual consciousness (the late Husserl) extends this schema to temporal horizon of the participation of latent monads, while Derrida writes:

What does this flux of lived experience mean, taken in its infinite totality and nevertheless distinct from every piece of lived experience in particular? It cannot be lived as infinite. On the other hand, its infinity cannot be constituted from finite lived experience as such.¹⁰

Let us examine the Husserlian senses of infinity. Husserlian phenomenology of internal time uses the term “infinity” as at least a threefold meaning.

- (1) *Infinity is an extension of the protentionality of the «now».* In this sense infinity is a synonym of the lack of knowledge about future events. A homogeneous tone of ticking of the grandfather clock if finished, that is—it can be separated in the retentional↔protentional «now», and simultaneously—this is why it can be separated—the tone emphasises the infinity that does not exit because on the basis of the tone, one cannot know what will be continued. This part of the analyse can be characterised by the term of the atemporal and unmeasurable infinity.
- (2) According to Husserl, *infinity is a fulfilment of the retentionality of the «now».* The constituted time is not an interval time. Retentionality is a total reflection of what had occurred in the finished past. The perspective of the past is not described in terms of remembering [*Erinnerung*]*—and remembering specific things in the past does not possess the characteristic of infinity.* According to Husserl, a latent monad becomes an active monad. It can be interpreted in the way that it fixes the temporal caesura, or a “moment” which is adequate to (and in) time, in which this “transition” was accrued but—for the sake of the actual state of the monads (and their reference to the acts in the «now»)—it is necessary to the past. A similar situation happens with the infinity of the “past”, which has a border called the «now». The consciousness in the «now» is a non-thematic consciousness of the infinity of the monads.
- (3) According to Husserl, *infinity is (in) the «now».* The «now» is not a moment but a beyond-temporal lack of time. In that sense the «now» is infinitive as well as atemporal in a manner of the phenomenological time that does not have a temporal value, or which can be used in the physical calculations where infinity is not a temporal infinity. What is in time is subjected to time, what is equipped with the change and an aftermath is a basis of the constitution of the immanent time. The misunderstanding is caused by Derrida’s argument that Husserl tries to define the phenomenology of time by means of temporal categories. Derrida leads his own argument in the same way as he treats infinity as temporal.

“The «now»”—“no longer than the «now»”—“not yet the «now»”, are the three fundamental *modi* of the phenomenological time. The «now» is the punctually inexpressible *modi* of time; the «now» is additionally specified in the retentional↔protentional context. According to Husserl, retention and protention do not have any temporal extension recognition of the cardinal importance of the «now» that seems obvious. Thereby self-identification of the consciousness originates in the experience of the flow, in which a retentional fall into the past takes place. The category of the «now» is not only an original impression but also an entity that includes an individual and actual interest of a subject—a limited horizon of experience by *lebendige Gegenwart*.¹¹ In this context *lebendige Gegenwart*

becomes a temporal present of the «now» and it is expressed as invariability. The «now» given as non-reflective is anonymous. The anonymity of the «now» is identical with the impossibility associated with the specific temporal “place” of the «now» in time. The «now» is universal, the «now» is always.

Contrary to Husserl, Derrida claims that the constitution of time cannot be limited only to the passive synthesis which derives its own temporality from retentive guiding of the «now». He asks:

What radical discontinuity is there between this already constituted past and objective time that imposes itself on me, constituted without any active intervention on my past? Husserl will not pose this fundamental question in the *Vorlesungen*.¹²

In what way the multiplicity of the experience of time can be reconciled with its immanent coherence?¹³ If it is only the unity resulting from the multiplicity experience of time of individual consciousness it would be difficult to explicate in what manner the internal consciousness of time fulfils the condition of the source included in the infinite flow of time. The internal consciousness of time is finished and limited.¹⁴ According to Derrida, the infinity of time is neither universal nor noematic in the internal experience. The question is if the pure time of a pre-predicative experience is a form of a completely non-determined «now» and the future. The “I”—as transcendence in lived immanence—cannot appear in a pure monadic *ego*. The “I” is between retention and protention, it is in the infinity reference to the past and the future and as a noetic and noematic ontic ground. According to Derrida, Husserl remains in the noematic temporality, the importance of which is constituted. The time of the lived immanence is the time that is reaching much deeper, because it is a time of individual consciousness.¹⁵ This time is a time *for me*. This time is not contaminated by the empirical character of retentionality. In Husserlian phenomenology of time the “I” has got only access to an updated and non-original experience of history the in retentionality of act of constitution. In Derrida’s criticism of phenomenology, the freedom as the basis of temporalization is not an abstractive and formal freedom, but it is a freedom that is essentially temporal by a direct reference to retentionality of time.¹⁶ Husserl claims that the flow of time has a feature of an absolute subjectivity, what does not necessarily mean that he connects absolute subjectivity with absolute temporality. Derrida on the other hand, is not able to confine his consideration to this statement. He claims:

Freedom and absolute subjectivity are thus neither *in* time nor *out* of time. The dialectical clash of opposites is absolutely ‘fundamental’ and is situated at the origin of all meaning; thus, it must be reproduced at every level of transcendental activity and of the empirical activity founded thereon.¹⁷

Derridean criticism of Husserlian phenomenology of time includes a false interpretation of Husserlian dislocation of epistemological sense of the immanence.

In the Husserl’s early phenomenology of internal consciousness of time, time is described as retentive (in the past of the actuality of the present «now»). The retentive «now», in a temporal life of the “I”, makes it possible for the reflective incorporation of intentional acts to happen. Derridean anti-presentism is based on a recognition that the origin of time is non-present but temporal. Husserl claims that the core of time lies in the non-temporality which is identical with the

«now». Derridean proposal, contaminated by untranslatability of terms, as well as Husserlian *lebendige* (also *stehende*) *Gegenwart* remains within the limits of a classic philosophical tradition. There are no solutions for the fundamental problem of time in the «now».

Husserl started to analyse the term of *lebendige Gegenwart* at the beginning of 1930s. This term—seemingly ignoring a retentional↔protentional context of the “punctual” «now» (as Derrida claims)—is a final solution of the problem of the constitution of time. The procedure of uncovering of the life of the transcendental “I” lies in the *lebendige Gegenwart*.

H U S S E R L I A N P E R S P E C T I V E O F P L A T O ’ S
M E T A X Ý – I C H - S P A L T U N G

The depiction of the constitution of time which was shown above does not explain adequately the constitution of time and temporalization [*Zeitigung*]. It seems important to differentiate between the passive and the active temporalization of consciousness of time. Husserl tries to put a bigger stress on this difference by using the notion of the separation of the “I” [*Ich-Spaltung*]. This notion refers to the term of common presentness [*einfühlende Vergegenwärtigung*] being a circumstance of temporalization of the stream of the consciousness of the Other. It consists of the separation of individual consciousness on the “I”-subject and the “I”-object. The first mentions of this statement can be found in Husserl’s notes descended from 1930. Later on Husserl writes about the “I” as a subject in the context of directness [*Zentrierung*] to the whole relived life of the conscious “I”.¹⁸ The consciousness of time is on the border between these two kinds of the “I” which connects what was given with what is retentional in the context of the actuality of the present «now». As I tried to show above, there is a cardinal difference between the first and non-retentional «now» and the «now» in the retentional↔protentional context. Finding these parts or aspects of identity is dynamic. It could be said that the “I”-object is always taken under consideration and reflected after the «now». The presentness of this “I” is a secondary presentness but it does not mean that it has secondary significance. My interpretation of Husserlian *Ich-Spaltung* is very similar to the Waldenfels’ interpretation of ancient *pathos*. In his statements given during the conference entitled “Actuality of Husserl Thought” (held on 22nd of November 2003) Waldenfels claims:

we understand *pathos* of astonishment which appears on the border between what we know and what gives us new optic of depiction and which is not non of these former ones.¹⁹

This is not Husserlian *nuns stans* but it is *nunc distans*. According to Husserl, “I” is beyond-temporal. Obviously, there is no sense that ‘I’ is treated as temporal. “I” is beyond-temporal—it is a pole of reference to the temporal, it is a feature of a subject. (author’s translation)²⁰

and

“I” in its original primordially is nothing temporal—it is constant as living modally original presentness in present. (author’s translation)²¹

Waldenfels puts the carriages before the horses and depicts this temporal diastase in the context of the “I”. The “I” is analysed in the context of the first reflection on the “I”-object. The temporal separation of time in the “I” permanently starts from the beginning—from a temporal diastase.²² *Ich-Spaltung* shows the second aspect of the constitution of time which overlaps with the constitution of time known from *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*.

The constitution of time based on a primal impression, retention and protention is not enough to describe a variety of the world experience. All what can be described as such experience can be depicted in universal horizon of the world in which outside and inside horizons are contained. Also, a question comes to mind—how the complex horizon of the world can be created in the transcendental subject.

According to Husserl (1933), the transcendental ego is beyond time. Its is an atemporal being which is a carrier all of different kinds of time (primordial, intersubjective, immanent, objective and so on). The ego is an original source of all temporal modalities. There are not objects that are put in time but only appearing of objects which are strictly connected with their temporalization. In this context Husserl refers to the notion of a passive synthesis. He claims that temporalization in transcendental subjects (as primal impressions, retentions and protentions) is original passive occurring without active participation of the transcendental ego. In comparison, in his early writings Husserl claims that retention embraces only a very close horizon of the «now» directed into the past, belonging to the *lebendige Gegenwart*. According to Husserl who depicts the notion of the passive synthesis as a part of a constitution without any participation of the transcendental *Ego*, a pre-predicative unity is created and it refers to the immanent world and the self-reference of the “I”. This is an anonymous process which is a phenomenon based on the consciousness of creation of the transcendental subjectivity. In this interpretation, Husserl treats the original synthesis of the original consciousness of time of the transcendental subject as something that is beyond the subject. The core of this depiction is the notion of the style of the world [*Weltstil*] and sedimentation [*Sedimentierung*]. Sedimentation means that the subjective sense is deposited in a phenomenon due to flow of time. Sedimentation has got an influence on the retentive modification of an original impression and protentional intention of expectation. In his *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*,²³ Husserl describes the world as being a temporal modality that had transformed from a static and structural analysis to the genetic and dynamic depiction of immanence. He shows in his genetic phenomenology that in the background of the experiences structure of the subjective sense lies the original structures of temporal relations which—in his universality—depict the existence of the immanent world. The only sense of genetic phenomenology is drawing out intentional implications of horizons and giving the sense of conscious experiences.

The his late writings Husserl puts a strong emphasis on the issue of time. In the centre of his analyses of time are temporal horizons. Every horizon describes *a priori* presentness in its genetic effect by the sedimentation of the sense. For Husserl, a temporal horizon and its sedimentations of the sense are the connotations of the past and historicalness of the transcendental subject. He names these connotations

“monads”. An individual sense of temporality, namely, the internal relation with transcendental temporality gives us the sense of a monad. There is no succession in the flow of time or any unity of any coexistence of temporal places or moments.²⁴ Although we can find in Husserlian *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*.

In the object there is duration: in the phenomenon, alteration. Thus we can also sense, subjectively, a temporal succession where, objectively, we must confirm a coexistence.²⁵

and

The break in qualitative identity, the leap from one quality to another within the same genus of quality at a temporal position, yields a new experience, the experience of variation; and here it is evident that a discontinuity is not possible in every time-point belonging to an extent of time.²⁶

The original time is not time, it is a previous stage of time as a form of coexistence.²⁷

In staying flow takes place the first self-constitution of ego as temporal flowing constant unity. (author's translation)²⁸

According to Husserl, *lebendige Gegenwart* is a multiplicity of phases of non-successive retentions and protentions. It is a continuous and a flowing change. Simultaneously, this flow is a non-temporal and a non-spatial constancy. Also, a reduction to the *lebendige Gegenwart* is a strictly transcendental. This reduction gives us a possibility to reach the transcendental *Ego* as an anonymous being. The Identity of the “I” is not the identity of something that remains in time but it is some kind of constancy of finite functioning in the temporalized time.

Identity of “I” is not simple identity of duration—it is a pole of “I”—and when «in everyness of staying of pole of “I”» also «will be as» the constituted, it also remains only the unity—it is called identity of executor [of “I”].

The identity of the transcendental “I” is covered for a philosophical reflection. The reflection stops before the original “I” and it reaches only the “I”-object.³⁰

According to Held, the question about a manner of being of the transcendental “I” tied with time issue is validated. However, Held indicates an aporiae of the Husserlian depiction of time. On the one hand, *lebendige Gegenwart* is finally functioning “I”, namely, it is an atemporal and constant “I” in the flow of time, on the other hand, the transcendental “I” is anonymous and possible to be depicted only on the pre-predicative level of cognition. There are two opposite aspects of *lebendige Gegenwart* which give the notion of the transcendental “I” if connected. The anonymity of the transcendental “I” means that it is not directly connected with any “place” and any “moment” of time. The Husserlian *nunc stans* of the transcendental “I” is an expression of the universal dimension of temporalization of change and succession. It is everywhere and nowhere at the same time.³¹ Everywhere is an atemporal constancy and nowhere is nothingness which is understood as the anonymity of atemporality of time places.³² The unity of the flow of temporal experiences can be defined as a Kant's idea in which the transcendental “I” constitutes its

time as something to which “I” is getting closer—I am using a baroque expression at the moment—the actuality of the presentness of the present «now» (Held).

Also, can one say that the transcendental “I” constitutes the flow of time? To the contrary, focusing on temporal reality of *lebendige Gegenwart* as *nunc stans* could be a stage toward a recognition of the original and passive character of time which has no reference to the constitution of time as an activity of the transcendental “I”. Temporalization of the original flow of time—as the first transcendental stage of an activity—is primarily an act of the transcendental “I”. This is a new outlook of phenomenology of time given by Husserl in the middle of 1930s. This phenomenology of time is based on the primordial *Ego. Ego*—in atemporality of constancy of the flow of the constituted time, moves its centre of gravity from an individual subject to a monad and co-presentness. According to Held, the most important notion is *nunc stans* used by Husserl has three different meanings. It means

- (1) *lebendige Gegenwart* or
- (2) staying “I” or
- (3) the habitual “I”.

It is very difficult to verbalise the idea of staying flow [*strömend–stehenden*] of “I”. According to Husserl, a connection of these opposite terms indicates the main position of the «now». The «now» as non-retentional and non-protentional notion is given by Husserl as a reference to the stream of consciousness. In other words, the question is: does the «now» include a simultaneous *continuum* of original content of the consciousness and *continuum* of depiction? According to Husserl,

I am as flowing present but my being-for-me is constituted itself in this flowing present.³³

Husserl’s twofold depiction of time consists of the realisation of the constitution of time as (1⁰) the stream of consciousness constituted in the manner of a temporal unity fixed by retentionality and (2⁰) as a reference to the appearing objects in the context of time and beyond directly given continuum temporal duration, change, and succession. There are no two independent streams of consciousness in the Husserlian phenomenology of time but two aspects of the epistemological relation of the complementation of the consciousness of time. The apperception of the object proceeds in a dynamics and in the flow of stream.

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NOTES

¹ Jacques Derrida, “Ousia and Grammē: Note on a Note from Being and Time” [in:] Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1982, p. 63.

² Jacques Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl’s Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago — London 2003, p. 2.

³ The smallest notion is used in its epistemological sense, not in the sense of temporal duration.

⁴ Also, I refer to the interpretation of Bernet’s understanding of the term “unconscious”. According to him, “[...] the Unconscious as the presence of the non-present is first of all a matter of the particular

type of act-intentionality, called 'presentification' (*Vergegenwärtigung*), which characterizes the acts of fantasy, memory and empathy. It can be shown that the possibility of these acts is ultimately grounded in the temporal structure of inner consciousness and that a correct phenomenological understanding of the Unconscious is first opened up through the analysis of this inner consciousness. Then, of course, the essence of the Unconscious can no longer be understood on the basis of the mere absence of inner perceptual consciousness. Instead, its appearance, and thereby its phenomenologically determined essence, results from the possibility of another form of inner (time-) consciousness, namely, the reproductive form. Husserl himself did not develop this new phenomenological understanding of the Unconscious any further, although he prepared for us all the means for doing so. It was never difficult for Husserl to think about the possibility of the presentification of something non-present because he always understood consciousness as the subjective achievement of intentional apperception and appresentation and never as the mere presence of sense data. In his early work in the *Philosophy of Arithmetic* and the *Logical Investigations*, presentifications were still understood as inauthentic, that is, non-intuitive forms of *thought*. According to this theory, which withdraws from the intuitive or authentic thought but is presentified by means of a sign that functions as a surrogate or by an image that represents by similarity. It is not surprising therefore that initially, and up to and including the 1904/05 lecture on the *Main Issues in the Phenomenology and Theory of Knowledge*, 5. Husserl conceived of the acts of sensuous presentification, like memory and fantasy, as types of pictorial consciousness (*Bildbewusstsein*). He could base this view on an already extensive exploration of perceptive pictorial consciousness, one with which he continued to occupy himself with later, especially in the connection with the analysis of aesthetic pictorial consciousness. Thus, fantasy and memory were forms of pictorial consciousness in which an inner pictorial image (later called by Sartre the '*image mentale*') takes place in a physical perceptual picture. A past occurrence or an unreal fantasy-world would therefore come to appearance in a present depiction without thereby forfeiting its absence from this present." Rudolf Bernet, "Unconscious consciousness in Husserl and Freud", *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences 1*, p. 331.

⁵ Cf. Fred Kersten, *Phenomenological Method: Theory and Practice*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht — Boston — London 1989, pp. 269, 273.

⁶ Cf. Leonard Lawlor, *Derrida and Husserl, The Basic Problem of Phenomenology*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN 2002, p. 21.

⁷ Author use notion "presence" as peculiar kind of present. Presence is taken out from the presentness as a peculiar aspect of the present ontologically "later" than the presentness.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Cf. Bernhard Waldenfels, *Das Zwischenreich des Dialogs, Sozialphilosophische Untersuchungen in Anschluss an Edmund Husserl*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Haag 1971, *passim*.

¹⁰ Jacques Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago — London 2003, p. 95.

¹¹ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität, Texte aus dem Nachlass, Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Haag 1973, p. 174; Bernhard Waldenfels, *Das Zwischenreich des Dialogs, Sozialphilosophische Untersuchungen in Anschluss an Edmund Husserl*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Haag 1971, pp. 149–151, 204–205.

¹² Jacques Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago — London 2003, p. 56.

¹³ Cf. Jacques Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago — London 2003, p. 95.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ Cf. Jacques Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago — London 2003, p. 96.

¹⁶ Cf. Jacques Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago — London 2003, p. 65.

¹⁷ Jacques Derrida, *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago — London 2003, p. 65.

¹⁸ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Manuscripts*, C 3 III, p. 1 (1930) [quoted after:] Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, p. 4.

¹⁹ *Actuality of Husserl's Thought*, conference organized by Polish Phenomenological Association, The Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of Polish Academy of Sciences, and Goethe-Institut Warschau.

²⁰ “Das Ich ist unzeitlich. Natürlich hat es keinen Sinn, das Ich als zeitlich zu betrachten. Das Ich ist über-zeitlich, et ist der Pol von Ich-Verhaltungsweisen zu Zeitlichem, er ist das Subject, das sich zu Zeichem verhält.” Edmund Husserl, *Manuscripts*, E III 2, p. 50 (1920 or 1921), [quoted after:] Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, p. 117.

²¹ “Das Ich in seiner ursprünglichsten Ursprünglichkeit ist nicht in der Zeit—hier der beständig als lebendige urmodale Gegenwart sich zeitigenden gezeitigten Gegenwart.” Edmund Husserl, *Manuscripts*, C 10, p. 21 (1931), [quoted after:] Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, p. 117.

²² *Actuality of Husserl's Thought*, conference organized by Polish Phenomenological Association.

²³ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Ergänzungsband, Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934–1937*, hrsg. von R. N. Smid, *Husserliana*, Vol. 29, Dordrecht 1993.

²⁴ Although, the reference to the spatial exemplifications is not ontologically correct reference.

²⁵ Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p. 8.

²⁶ Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, p. 91.

²⁷ Cf. Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, Den Haag 1966, pp. 115, 135.

²⁸ “In ständigen Strömen vollzieht sich «überhaupt erst» die Selbstkonstitution des Ego als «zeitlich—» strömend verharrender Einheit.” Cf. Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, Den Haag 1966, p. 135.

²⁹ “Die Identität des Ich ist nicht die bloße Identität eines Dauernden, sondern die Identität des Vollziehers—das ist der Ichpol—und wenn «der in der Jeweiligkeit verharrende Ichpol» schon auch «als» eine Dauereinheit konstituiert «wird», so bleibt es «doch» ein einzigartig Eigenes, was da Identität des Vollziehers heißt.” Edmund Husserl, *Manuscripts*, C 10, p. 28 (1931), [quoted after:] Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, Den Haag 1966, p. 118.

³⁰ Cf. Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, Den Haag 1966, p. 139.

³¹ Cf. Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, Den Haag 1966, p. 143.

³² *Ibidem*.

³³ “Ich bin als strömende Gegenwart, aber mein Für-Mich-Sein ist selbst in dieser strömenden Gegenwart konstituiert.” Edmund Husserl, *Manuscripts*, C 3 III, p. 33 (1931), [quoted after:] Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Haag 1966, p. 115.

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SECTION V
COGNITION, CREATIVITY, EMBODIMENT

POUND, PROPERTIUS AND *LOGOPOEIA*

“My job was to bring a dead man to life, to present a living figure”¹

A B S T R A C T

Ezra Pound’s “Homage to Propertius” is an unusually free translation of selected poems by the Roman poet Propertius which has generated a fruitful debate about the translator’s task. Among the qualities Pound meant to find in Propertius, and consequently strove to recreate, was *logopoeia*, “the dance of the intellect among words”. Tantalizing though it sounds, this definition remains somewhat vague, as does Pound’s other references to the concept. The present paper seeks to clarify the meaning of *logopoeia*, which is done by first revisiting Pound’s own statements and then juxtaposing the opinions of previous scholars. The scholars chosen include classicists as well as scholars on both Pound and Laforgue, the French 19th century poet who was Pound’s initial inspiration for the concept. The conclusion reached is that *logopoeia* is not to be understood as locally limited wordplay, as some classicists have assumed, but rather as a more general detached attitude towards the language used which often includes an element of irony and humour.

When modernist poet and literary critic Ezra Pound finished his “Homage to Sextus Propertius” in 1917,² it represented something quite new in the modern use of the classics. Twelve poems were offered as translations from selected poems by Propertius, a Roman poet of notorious difficulty who had until then been little appreciated outside the ranks of classicists, but whose dense imagery and tortuous syntax seemed to have much in common with the developing modernist aesthetics.³ Besides the unorthodox choice of author, the main novelty of the collection lay in the approach taken to the task of translation. Rather than trying to mirror the idiom of the ancient language as closely as possible, the aim of traditional translation, Pound sought to give the text a modern flair in a process that has been labeled “creative translation”.⁴ The precise nature of the approach, as well as the level of success achieved, has been the subject of much controversy. The present study, however, deals with one famous particular quality which Pound meant to have discovered in Propertius and consequently strove to recreate. That quality is *logopoeia*, which was never satisfactorily defined by Pound himself and consequently has sparked off a debate of its own. In the following a clarification of the term’s meaning is sought by first revisiting Pound’s own statements and then juxtaposing a number of later views. A main aim of the latter part is to integrate insights developed within fields normally kept apart: responses from classical scholars with an expert knowledge

of Propertius, Pound-scholars and scholars working with the French poet Laforgue, whose relevance will soon become clear.

POUND'S OWN DEFINITIONS

Beginning now with Pound himself, his most extensive definition of *logopoeia* is to be found in the essay "How to Read", originally published in the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1929:⁵

Logopoeia, "the dance of the intellect among words", that is to say, it employs words not only for their direct meaning, but it takes count in a special way of habits of usage, of the context we expect to find with the word, its usual concomitants, of its known acceptances and of ironical play. It holds the aesthetic content which is peculiarly the domain of verbal manifestation, and cannot possibly be contained in plastic or music. It is the latest come, and perhaps most tricky and undependable mode.

In *ABC of Reading* in 1934 he elaborates:⁶

You take the greater risk of using the word in some special relation to "usage", that is, to the kind of context in which the reader expects, or is accustomed, to find it. This is the last means to develop, it can only be used by the sophisticated. (If you want really to understand what I am talking about, you will have to read, ultimately, Propertius and Jules Laforgue).

Tantalizing though the catchy "dance of the intellect among words" sounds, the two passages do not make it entirely clear what Pound has in mind with the concept, and it is this which has generated the scholarly debate. In the following I shall first review the response of two classical scholars, whose opinions I shall find to be inadequate. Then I shall proceed to a third classicist, whom I shall find to have a more convincing view. I shall find support for his view in central scholars within the field of Pound studies, and finally in work done on the French poet Jules Laforgue (1860–87), who is mentioned together with Propertius in the quotation just above.

THREE CLASSICAL SCHOLARS

The first classical scholar I take a look at is Mark Edwards.⁷ He finds the term *logopoeia* to be "quite unacceptable",⁸ although sadly not explaining why this is so. Further, he argues that the concept is in any case not as unique as Pound makes it out to be since there has already been done quite a lot of work on what he calls "intensification of meaning", both in Propertius and in other classical poets. Developing a list of various subcategories, he finds as the third kind of "lexical ambiguity" "cases where the straightforward effect of a word is enhanced by consciousness of another meaning or a common association". This, according to Edwards:⁹

is true "logopoeia" – use "of habits of usage, of the context we *expect* to find the word, its usual concomitants, of its known acceptances" – and I think some fairly certain instances can be found in Propertius, though I am not sure that they justify Pound's lavish praise of him.

The second classical scholar I take a look at is Niall Rudd.¹⁰ Having quoted Pound's definition, he first remarks:¹¹

This is all very general, and (understandably enough) those who have tried to elaborate the concept theoretically have not always made it clearer.

Rudd then performs a learned analysis of specific instances where the Propertian original shows novelty in the use of the Latin language and whether or not Pound in his translation seems to perceive and respond to this. His conclusion¹² is that Pound often does and that

It was surely this novelty, in its various manifestations, that Pound had in mind when he spoke of *logopoeia* – a term which might be translated as “creativity in language”.

Leaving Rudd, I arrive at John Patrick Sullivan, the classical scholar who has worked most extensively on the relationship between Pound and Propertius, resulting in a fundamental 1964 monography on the subject.¹³ *Logopoeia* is, as could be expected, given extensive treatment,¹⁴ and I find that Sullivan’s discussion improves upon those of Edwards and Rudd in two ways. Firstly, he draws into the discussion the French poet Jules Laforgue, who is mentioned together with Propertius in the second quotation from Pound above, but is conspicuously absent in Edwards and Rudd. Secondly, Sullivan takes a broader view of the concept, finding in it not merely a narrow play with words, but rather a general attitude on the author’s part.¹⁵

Logopoeia is not, as one might immediately think, simply “wit” of the Augustan or even metaphysical kind (even though Rochester is in the direct line of the metaphysical tradition). Nor is it the sort of verbal ambiguity analyzed by William Empson or the very rhetorical “wit” we normally associate with Tacitus. It is something more subtle than these. It is much more a self-conscious poetic and satiric attitude which is expressed through a certain way of writing.

As support for this claim, he quotes Pound’s great contemporary T.S. Eliot, who in the preface to the *Selected poems* of Pound, says of the *Homage*:

It is also a criticism of Propertius, a criticism which in a most interesting way insists upon an element of humour, of irony and mockery, in Propertius, which Mackail and other interpreters have missed. I think that Pound is critically right, and that Propertius was more civilized than most of his interpreters have admitted.

On this basis, Sullivan’s own definition of *logopoeia* becomes:¹⁶

I suggest then that *logopoeia* is a refined mode of irony which shows itself in certain delicate linguistic ways, in a sensitivity to how language is used in other contexts, and in a deployment of these other uses for its own humorous or satiric or poetic aims, to produce an effect directly contrary to their effect in the usual contexts. Thus magniloquence can be deployed *against* magniloquence, vulgarity *against* vulgarity, and poeticisms *against* poeticizing. *Logopoeia* is not simply parody, for it may even be directed against the poet himself, but a very self-conscious use of words and tone which would be requisite for parody. Despite its sporadic appearance in other periods it must strike us as an extremely “modern” style of writing – which may explain why Pound thought that it was the latest come and the most tricky to handle.

If one compares Sullivan’s definition to those of Edwards and Rudd, a major difference is as mentioned the level at which *logopoeia* is thought to operate. For Edwards and Rudd it is a play with words on a level very close to the text, whereas Sullivan finds it to be a more general attitude towards the kind of language chosen.

When I find myself in support of Sullivan, it is partly because of a further comment on *logopoeia* made by Pound immediately after the definition in *How to Read* quoted above:

Logopoeia does not translate; though the attitude of mind it expresses may pass through a paraphrase. Or one might say, you can *not* translate it “locally”, but having determined the original author’s state of mind, you may or may not be able to find a derivative or an equivalent.

Key expressions are of course “attitude of mind“ followed a little later by “state of mind”. Equally important in the present context, though, is in my opinion the comment that *logopoeia* cannot be translated “locally”. Sullivan does quote the addition, and, as will become clear below, he makes use of it later on in a critique of the Pound-scholar Kenner’s explanation of *logopoeia*. Here, however, I suggest that it can be used as an argument against the views of Edwards and Rudd, whose closeness to the text seems to lead to a focus on precisely “local” translation. Perhaps telling is the fact that they both leave out the addition in their quotations from Pound’s passage.

SCHOLARSHIP ON POUND AND ON LAFORGUE

Leaving the classicists I now take a look at two other separate scholarly fields that have concerned themselves with Pound’s *logopoeia*. The first is scholarship on Pound himself and the second studies of the French poet Laforgue, whose inclusion in the debate was mentioned as the first improvement of Sullivan above. As will become clear, the results from both fields give support to the view of the term developed by Sullivan. Moreover, some studies of Pound stress the point that the phenomenon defies “local translation”, which lends support to my own critique of Edwards and Rudd.

The first Pound-scholar I take a look at is Hugh Kenner, who mentions *logopoeia* twice. The first time is in connection with puns on the Latin.¹⁷ *Logopoeia* is here defined as “elaborate contextual wit” based on discovered parallels in the Latin. Kenner quotes the passage about “local translation” and concludes that: “hence it is useless to try to expose the dimensions of the Latin in which he is interested by direct rendering”. The second mention of *logopoeia* is in connection with a certain quality in Pound’s later *Cantos*.¹⁸ Beginning with the *Homage*, Kenner first finds that

It is impossible to represent by quotation the enormous freedom and range of tone, the ironic weight, the multiple levels of tongue-in-cheek self-deprecation everywhere present in the *Propertius*.

Then he singles out as one of these devices “the ironic use of Latinate diction”, which he finds to exemplify *logopoeia* in the *Cantos*:

If the reader, by frequenting the Propertius sequence, will acquire a sensitivity to the weight of Latin abstract definition in unexpected contexts, he will find it easier to see how large stretches of the *Cantos*, in which for reasons of decorum rhythmic definition is diminished to contrapuntal status, are organized as it were from the centre out, by stiffening and relaxing the texture of the vocabulary.

Reviewing Kenner's two references to *logopoeia*, the first is in fact criticized by Sullivan, who writes thirteen years later.¹⁹ A major point in his critique is the passage that *logopoeia* does not translate locally, but as seen Kenner *does* make room for this passage in his explanation, making Sullivan's critique appear unjust at least in this respect. The second passage, moreover, seems to express a view on *logopoeia* that clearly comes close to that of Sullivan, presenting the quality as an attitude that has an element of irony and even self-mockery. Finally, one can note another place where Kenner sees a link to Laforgue in a formulation which again stresses attitude and humour:²⁰

it is impossible, after Laforgue, to be unaware of a calculated excess of atmospherics, to miss risible implications.

Moving on from Kenner, I arrive at Donald Monk,²¹ who turns out to give important support to the idea that *logopoeia* is about an attitude rather than local instances of verbal play. In discussing the concept,²² he first points out that "*logopoeia* is necessarily much more a matter of tone than paraphrasable content". Then he quotes the passage on "local translation", on which he comments:

He is looking at an "attitude" or "state" of mind as his material, and cutting totally loose from any idea of "local" translation. *Propertius*, then, is already firmly a matter of atmosphere, not fact.

Earlier on he has stated that "it is unhelpful to quarrel with Pound on the level of local mistranslation".²³ This, indeed, seems to be precisely the level on which Edwards and Rudd have been found to operate, so that the evidence from Monk strengthens my present case against these two classical scholars.

The last Pound-scholar I turn to is Donald Davie. He has some rather extreme opinions, claiming for instance that "Pound's poem is *in no sense* a translation"²⁴ so that Sullivan's book is as a whole "vitiating by this assumption that Pound's dealings with Propertius are a model of what the translator's should be with his original".²⁵ Furthermore, he dismisses any significant relationship to Laforgue:²⁶

It is true that Pound was later to claim that Propertius and Laforgue were two of a kind, and to define the kind as "logopoeic". But this is unconvincing, and irrelevant to the *Homage*.

As can be seen, the dismissal seems to include a rejection of the term *logopoeia*, but it is a pity that Davie does not offer any argument for his assertion. Instead, he makes an observation that may have relevance for the view of *logopoeia* argued here when he discusses an interesting passage in a letter to Thomas Hardy dated March 31, 1921:²⁷

I ought – precisely – to have written "Propertius Soliloquizes" – turning the reader's attention to the reality of Propertius – but no – what I do is to borrow a term – aesthetic – a term of aesthetic *attitude* from a French musician, Debussy – who uses "Homage à Rameau" for a title to a piece of music recalling Rameau's manner. My "Homage" is not an English word at all. (. . .). I ought to have concentrated on the subject – (I did so long as I forgot my existence for the sake of the lines) – and I tack on a title relating to the treatment – in a fit of nerves, fearing the reader won't sufficiently see the super-position, the doubling of me and Propertius, England to-day and Rome under Augustus.

Pound, it is clear, expresses doubt about the title he has chosen for the *Homage*, and Davie shows that this may be understood as part of a more general uncertainty

generated by the harsh critique the work had been met with. Personally, however, Davie has

come to suspect that the whole business about “the doubling of me and Propertius” is a rationalization after the fact, a fiction uneasily promoted by Pound to meet a parrot-cry for “contemporary relevance”.

In other words one should expect that the actual title gives a better impression of Propertius’ original perception of his project. If one re-reads the passage with this in mind, it becomes clear that the *Homage* is primarily about the recreation of an aesthetic attitude, which comes very close to *logopoeia* as understood by Sullivan and Monk in particular.

Leaving now scholarship on Pound for scholarship on Laforgue, one should initially note the mention of this French poet in the quotation from Pound’s *ABC of Reading* above. The only denial of any true relationship is as just demonstrated to be found in Davie, who does not offer any argument. Better, then, to accept the majority view, which is that it was the encounter with Laforgue that made Pound first discover the quality he would then find in Propertius²⁸ and later label *logopoeia*:²⁹

sometime after his first “book” S.P. ceased to be the dupe of magniloquence and began to touch words somewhat as Laforgue did.

At one point he was not quite certain that *logopoeia* was to be found in Propertius, but claimed that it was in any case undoubtedly present in Laforgue:³⁰

Unless I am right in discovering *logopoeia* in Propertius (which means unless the academic teaching of Latin displays crass insensitivity as it probably does), we must almost say that Laforgue invented *logopoeia* observing that there had been a very limited range of *logopoeia* in all satire, and that Heine occasionally employs something like it, together with a dash of bitters, such as can (though he may not have known it) be found in a few verses of Dorset and Rochester. At any rate Laforgue found or refound *logopoeia*.

However, he seems always to have seen a close connection between Propertius and Laforgue, as is made clear negatively just below in the same passage:

Laforgue is not like any preceding poet. He is not *ubiquitously* (my emphasis) like Propertius.

The close connection between Propertius and Laforgue in Pound’s thought means that it should be possible to gain further insight into his view of Propertius through a separate study of his Laforgue. In particular it should be possible to learn more about Propertius’ *logopoeia* through studying that which Pound found in Laforgue. The full potential of this approach seems so far not to have been realized, for even in Sullivan little is said beyond the mention of Laforgue’s name, and no study of *logopoeia* in either Propertius or Pound that I have come across makes use of scholarship on Laforgue. In the following I shall take a small step towards rectifying this situation by taking a look at two different Laforgue-scholars, and it will become clear that these have reached views on *logopoeia* that are surprisingly similar to those of Sullivan, Kenner and Monk.

The first scholar I take a look at is Warren Ramsey,³¹ who treats the relationship between Pound and Laforgue without any mention of Propertius. Moreover, he neither himself mentions scholarship on Pound and Propertius, nor is he mentioned by

Sullivan or any other of the scholars above, so that he can give important independent support. As indicated already by the title of his book, his focus is on Laforgue as an ironist, and *logopoeia* is consequently presented as an ironic quality.³² Laforgue's irony is based on "an attitude of detachment", and "logopoetic ironies" arise from incongruous oppositeness in the use of language.³³ On Laforgue's poetry he finds in general:³⁴

The Latinisms that Laforgue relished – "alacre" from "alacer", "albe" from "alba", "errabundes" from "errabundus" – are regularly pressed into ironic service, and clash with colloquial vocables in the same or proximate lines.

In connection with certain poems of Pound he claims that:³⁵

They represent a kind of intellectual discussion that can be pertinently described as "logopoeia". (. . .). The cliché, "march of events" is pressed into ironic service, according to characteristic Laforguian procedure.

If one takes a closer look at these statements, it is striking how similar they are to the views on *logopoeia* in Sullivan, Kenner and Monk. The stress on irony Ramsey has in common with Sullivan and Kenner, and the conception of *logopoeia* as an "an attitude of detachment" is central to the whole discussion above. The focus on Latinisms he has in common with Kenner, and finally comes the incongruous oppositeness, which compares with a statement by Monk so far not quoted: "Juxtaposition is at the heart of *logopoeia*".³⁶

Leaving Ramsey, a more recent treatment of the relationship between Pound, Laforgue and *logopoeia* can be found in Jane Hoogestraat. As to the nature of the concept, she has the following to say:³⁷

With remarkable consistency in his definitions of *logopoeia* and his criticism of Laforgue, Pound distinguishes between ordinary irony and the irony he discovers in Laforgue, and he takes care to emphasize the particular qualities of the Laforguean ethos: a specific attitude of an identifiable speaking subject toward the language that subject employs.

A little later she writes:³⁸

All the examples of *logopoeia* he alludes to or cites directly share a particularized ethos on the part of the poetic speaker: an extremely self-conscious, overintellectualized voice directed toward relentless social satire. The diction in this poetry ranges from the clichés of popular culture to abstract Latinate terminology from numerous nonliterary disciplines. This aspect of *logopoeia*, the sharp ethos which holds no subject immune from poetic ridicule and no language out of bounds for use in a poem, was a necessary and direct reaction to sentimentalized or bourgeois aesthetics.

Among the wealth of references to Laforgue is a comment on his poem "Complainte sur certains Ennuis":³⁹

The speaker further questions whether his own ennui would be of sustained interest, achieving both a distance and a self-mockery that would be impossible in, say, a Baudelaire poem, or in the larger tradition Laforgue satirizes.

Finally, Hoogestraat has a single short comment on Pound's Propertius: "*logopoeia* and Laforgue operate in a fairly straightforward way behind *Homage to Sextus Propertius*".⁴⁰ In the present context one can of course only lament the absence of a further elaboration of this point.

Summing up, Hoogestraat's view gives ample support to the view of *logopoeia* that has by now been established. There is the fact that the concept is about a general attitude rather than local wordplay and the element of irony and humour. There is the play with Latinate language central to Kenner and the distance which allows for self-mockery emphasized by Sullivan. However, one should realize that Hoogestraat is not quite as independent a source as is Ramsey. The brief mention of Propertius can perhaps be overlooked, as can the small number of references to Davie and Kenner in the notes. Not to be overlooked, however, is the note which explicitly mentions Sullivan's book as an "excellent discussion of *logopoeia* and Pound's *Propertius*".⁴¹ Although hardly independent, then, the important fact remains that Hoogestraat arrives at the same conclusion as Sullivan, and so there exists a quite recent study of Laforgue that gives support to the view of *logopoeia* in Pound and Propertius argued here.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The term *logopoeia* was introduced by Ezra Pound in order to describe a quality he meant to find in the Roman poet Propertius and consequently sought to recreate when translating him. Tantalizing though it sounds, Pound's own definition of the term as "the dance of the intellect among words" remains unprecise, and the present paper has aimed at a clarification by first revisiting Pound's other statements about the concept and then juxtaposing the views of a number of earlier scholars. The context being a Roman poet, it has been natural to begin with the views of three classicists, whereafter have come three Pound-scholars and two scholars on the French poet Laforgue, the contact with whom was Pound's original inspiration for the concept. The main line of argument has been that the two first classical scholars, Mark Edwards and Niall Rudd, are wrong in explaining the concept as isolated local instances of verbal play, a position against which Pound himself seems explicitly to warn. Rather, one should understand *logopoeia* as a general attitude towards the kind of language used, an attitude which moreover often involves an element of humour in the form of irony, satire or even self-mockery.

To explain *logopoeia* as an attitude is of course not to say that one does not need to approach the phenomenon at a local level as does Edwards and Rudd. To analyze in detail the use of single words in relation to the words around them must remain the necessary, indeed the only sensible, way of approaching a poem. My point here, however, is that such a word-by-word local analysis is just the first step towards a full study of *logopoeia*, which must take into consideration also how each individual case as well as all the cases taken together both relate to and contribute to the general attitude lying behind the poem. Particularly demonstrative of the exclusively local approach seems Rudd, who has been seen to find that Pound seems to perceive and respond to novelties in Propertius' use of the Latin language. In itself this analysis is splendidly done, and it throws much light on a particular aspect of Pound's skill as a translator. However, I am not so certain that Rudd is right in identifying this

quality as *logopoeia*, nor that this kind of analysis has any potential for increasing our understanding of the concept.

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NOTES

¹ Pound to Alfred Orage, in *The selected Letters of Ezra Pound: 1907–1941*, ed. D.D. Paige (New York: Harcourt Brace and co., 1950), p. 149.

² Publication did not take place until 1919, perhaps because these witty love poems seemed unfit for printing before after the war, see D. Davie: *Studies in Ezra Pound* (London, 1991), p. 77.

³ “There is something in the Umbrian poet that appeals to the modern mind”, writes classicist Georg Luck, “whether it is the rich texture of his imagery or rather the desire to avoid the banal and conventional at all costs”, *The Latin Love Elegy* (London: Methuen, 2nd ed. 1969) p. 121. It should be noted, though, that the affinity with modernism can be overstated, as seems to be done by D.T. Benediktson, in *Propertius: Modernist Poet of Antiquity* (Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), see the reviews of J.L. Butrica, *The Classical Review*, New Series, 40:2 (1990), pp. 266–8, and F.H. Mutschler, *Gnomon* Vol. 63/5 (1991), pp. 461–3.

⁴ J.P. Sullivan, in *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius: A Study in Creative Translation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), which remains a fundamental study of the subject. Invaluable for further research is also Sullivan’s inclusion of the complete text of the *Homage* with the Latin original running in parallel. Those not acquainted with Latin can use the Loeb parallel text (G.P. Goold, *Propertius: Elegies*, Harvard, 1990) for a more literal translation, which can then be compared with the translation of Pound. A schematic overview of the corresponding passages is to be found in K. Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound* (Norfolk, CT: New Directions, 1951), pp. 150–1.

⁵ Now available in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T.S. Eliot (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), pp. 15–40, present quotation from p. 25. N. Rudd correctly points out that the original year of publication, 1929, is over a decade later than the *Homage*, *The Classical Tradition in Operation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), p. 140. However, appreciation of the quality may come before the eventual theoretical elaboration. J. Hoogestrat finds that the influence on Pound from the French poet Laforgue, which will be seen below to be the origin of his thinking about the concept, began around 1914–15, which is just before the *Homage*, “Akin to Nothing but Language: Pound, Laforgue and Logopoeia”, *ELH* 55/1 (Spring 1988), pp. 259–85, present point p. 265. W. Ramsey also goes back to 1914, although pointing to F.S. Flint rather than T.S. Eliot as the catalyst, *Jules Laforgue and the Ironic Inheritance* (Oxford, 1953), p. 204.

⁶ E. Pound, *ABC of Reading* (New Haven, 1934), pp. 37–8.

⁷ M.W. Edwards, “Intensification of Meaning in Propertius and Others”, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 92 (1961), pp. 128–44.

⁸ M.W. Edwards, op. cit., p. 128.

⁹ M.W. Edwards, op. cit., p. 137.

¹⁰ N. Rudd, op. cit., pp. 140 ff..

¹¹ N. Rudd, op. cit., p. 140.

¹² N. Rudd, op. cit. p. 146.

¹³ J.P. Sullivan, op. cit. The topic is taken up again in Sullivan’s *Propertius: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 147 ff., which does not, however, contribute much new, consisting mainly of text taken directly from the earlier book.

¹⁴ J.P. Sullivan, op. cit., pp. 64 ff..

¹⁵ J.P. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 66.

- ¹⁶ J.P. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 67.
- ¹⁷ H. Kenner, op. cit., p. 149 n.
- ¹⁸ H. Kenner, op. cit. pp. 158–60.
- ¹⁹ J.P. Sullivan, op. cit., p. 103.
- ²⁰ H. Kenner, op. cit. p. 147.
- ²¹ D. Monk, “How to Misread: Pound’s Use of Translation”, in *Ezra Pound: The London Years*, ed. P. Grover (New York: AMS Press, 1978).
- ²² D. Monk, op. cit. pp. 80–1.
- ²³ D. Monk, op. cit. p. 73. The comment is admittedly made about another and more general quality in poetry Pound calls *melopoeia*, but since the point is that *melopoeia* does not translate either it should apply to *logopoeia* as well.
- ²⁴ D. Davie, *Studies in Ezra Pound* (London: Carcanet, 1991), p. 73, in a chapter originally printed in *Ezra Pound: Poet as Sculptor* (London: Routledge, 1965), pp. 77–101.
- ²⁵ D. Davie, *Ezra Pound* (New York: Penguin, 1975), p. 58 n. 20.
- ²⁶ D. Davie, 1991, p. 79.
- ²⁷ D. Davie, 1975, pp. 46–8.
- ²⁸ As mentioned in note 5, the discovery took place around 1914–5.
- ²⁹ E. Pound, *Selected Letters*, op. cit., p. 178.
- ³⁰ E. Pound, *How to Read*, op. cit., p. 33.
- ³¹ W. Ramsey, op. cit., see particularly pp. 204 ff. for the relationship between Laforgue and Pound.
- ³² W. Ramsey, op. cit., p. 135.
- ³³ W. Ramsey, op. cit., pp. 135–6.
- ³⁴ W. Ramsey, op. cit., p. 138.
- ³⁵ W. Ramsey, op. cit., p. 207.
- ³⁶ D. Monk, op. cit., p. 85.
- ³⁷ J. Hoogestraat, op. cit., pp. 259–60.
- ³⁸ J. Hoogestraat, op. cit., p. 263.
- ³⁹ J. Hoogestraat, op. cit., p. 272.
- ⁴⁰ J. Hoogestraat, op. cit., p. 276.
- ⁴¹ J. Hoogestraat, op. cit., p. 284 n. 34.

PHENOMENOLOGY: CREATION AND
CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

A B S T R A C T

This paper proposes a discussion about the creation and construction of knowledge through the phenomenological way of searching for meaning. Individuals continuously deal with creating meanings of their own lives. Each individual follows a unique way in order to create and construct meaning in any situation. The ability of learning that can be defined as a natural and inner intention of becoming self in the world can improve individual's learning. The learner, as a meaning maker, creates new knowledge of the whole life process. Constructing the meaning of a phenomenon is the individual's self-inquiry. Descriptions of concepts continuously change and new meanings of concepts are acquired. Self-inquiry about life can be described as the individual's self-learning. Creation and construction of new knowledge corresponds with the individual's ability of learning. Learning improves the capability of the individual as a self-creator and develops phenomenological understanding of life. Creation and construction of new knowledge is also concerned with individual's learning ability, creative capability, freedom, subjectivity, way of thinking and perception of a phenomenon.

Phenomenological investigation is a key method of searching for meaning of life. This search develops personality so that the individual is interested in not only materialistic aspect but also spiritual aspect of his/her personality. This search can also help the individual to form his/her own personality depending on the creation and construction of the meaning of the world. Phenomenological learning should motivate the individual to form his/her personality for searching and constructing the meaning of life. Self-inquiry about life can promote creation and construction of new knowledge. Meanings develop within the endless conscious and unconscious processes in which new knowledge and products are created. The process of creation and the results of phenomenological inquiry cannot include verifiable knowledge. This process and results occur uniquely and authentically because of the individual's self-interpretations of the world.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Knowledge is the abstract of the individuals' experiences corresponding to searching for and capturing the meaning of the phenomenon. Individuals construct their own meanings in order to create their own knowledge. Knowledge can be created in different ways depending on the individualistic bases such as capability of intuition,

perception, imagination and creativity. Thus individualistic bases are established upon ready-made knowledge such as scientific studies, cultural heritages of humans, historical process, social rules and customs of societies. Individuals also observe phenomena in daily life in order to create and construct knowledge. Moreover, they criticize and analyze past events, current situations and future possibilities while creating and constructing knowledge. Following this process, individuals create their own philosophies and values; make their own choices and preferences in their own lives. According to Tuomi “Knowledge consists of truths and beliefs, perspectives and concepts, judgments and expectations, methodologies and know-how knowledge has to be extracted from its raw materials, and in the process, meaning has to be added to them” (1999, 110). As the individuals create and construct their own knowledge by using different tools from their lives, they become self-interpreters.

Individuals mostly create and construct knowledge by referring to their own inner and outer worlds. The inner and outer worlds of individuals change from one individual to another. It is very difficult to explain the individuals’ inner worlds due to the complexity of inner worlds. Inner world is comprised with the metaphysical world which involves mystical and secret issues for human comprehension. Moreover, there is no clear explanation of how the individuals create and construct knowledge by means of their own inner and outer worlds. In this context, knowing is essential for humans to become self-beings in their own lives. Human beings are always busy with creating and constructing the knowledge of phenomenon to catch the meaning of life. Furthermore, knowing enables formation of personality and self-being. It supports individual development and triggers creative capability of humans and this provides them with the opportunity of self-actualization. Dewey stated that “. . . knowledge, even the most rudimentary, such as is attributable to low-grade organisms, is an expression of skill in selection and arrangement of materials so as to contribute to maintenance of the processes and operations contributing life” (1958, 290). It means that all organisms have their own processes that they need to realize activities and exist as self-beings. Similarly, individuals need very high levels of human activity and creativity for creation and construction of knowledge.

Knowledge is an essential tool for organizing the individualistic and societal life. But, it is not easy to decide about what type of knowledge is needed. The type of knowledge needed may change depending on the lives of individuals. Bonnett (1999, 316) asks the question of “what kind of knowledge will best illuminate and equip us to deal with issues of sustainability?”. This question is very important for creating and constructing knowledge in lives of individuals. Different types of knowledge can introduce different receipts for managing the life process. Individuals may need a certain type of knowledge in certain stages of their own lives.

The way of constructed and created of knowledge may change based on the shifts in dominant paradigms. It is known that positivist and qualitative research paradigms were dominant in the past whereas the qualitative research paradigm has been dominant for the last thirty years. Changes in the current research paradigms affect current research methods and this is called as paradigm shifts. A research paradigm introduces different ways of searching for meaning. A shift in a research

paradigm may result from shifts in the types of knowledge and the ways of searching for meaning. “The research paradigm shift has to do with major shifts in the way of knowledge is constructed and created” (Campbell 2010). The research paradigm introduces different ways of creating and constructing knowledge. The aim of this paper is not explaining the past and the current paradigms and paradigm shifts. The individualistic ways of searching for meaning, the pathway for and stages of creating and constructing knowledge are discussed in this paper. This paper aimed at discussing only the creation and construction of knowledge based on the phenomenological way of searching for meaning.

THE WAYS OF SEARCHING FOR MEANING

Phenomenological understanding follows the hermeneutic methodology while creating and constructing of new knowledge. The hermeneutic methodology is the way for catching new meaning of phenomenon based on the individualistic perceptions and experiences. Individuals become self-creators while creating and constructing knowledge by means of hermeneutic methodology and phenomenological understanding so that every individual becomes a researcher and reflects his/her own meaning. Phenomenology has been adopted as the appropriate way of exploring “the essence of lived experience” in order to find a way of constructing knowledge (Campbell 2010). A phenomenologist who studies in different disciplines may create new research methods based on the experience that did not exist before. The method of searching for meaning can be differentiated based on the phenomenological research paradigm. Phenomenological inquiry methods different from the ones applied in the present and past will be applied in the future owing to the fact that phenomenological search for meaning will be important for creation and construction of knowledge.

Phenomenology associates prior knowledge with everyday experience. Individuals interacting with phenomenon catch and construct new meanings based on their past and current experiences. The constructivist thought, that is interested in creation and construction of knowledge, prevailed in 1990s. Piaget, Dewey, Husserl, Kuhn and Vygotsky are the well-known constructivists who has tried to explain how individuals create and construct their own knowledge. According to Dewey, a learner actively constructs in his/her knowledge by means of his/her own learning experiences in his/her environment (cited in Morphew 2000). An individual utilizes his/her own subjective life and environment in order to catch and construct new meanings. In the process of creation and construction of knowledge, the individual may use his/her own subjectivities.

Subjectivity is the main source of knowledge for individuals. “Subjectivity is defined as naturalistic, anarchic and authentic human perceptions which are abstractions of the knowledge of life experiences” (Selvi 2009, 8). The subjective knowledge can be defined as the individual’s first perspective in which no scientific test based on the positivist understanding is applied to individualistic perceptions. Thus, many of the artistic, scientific and creative studies root in the subjectivity

of individuals. Some scientists and artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Voltaire, Rousseau, Lessing, Hegel and Chernyshevsky viewed creativity as the subjectivization of the idea (Kurenkova et al. 2000). Subjectivity provides unique perspectives of individuals and this is a way of getting their authentic bases. These authentic bases enable creation of subjective knowledge that corresponds to the first phase of creation of scientific knowledge. Dewey pointed out a method of knowing and he called this method as the “introspection.” That is totally different from the concept of observation. This method is an inquiry about the meaning of phenomena and it is totally different from the epistemological inquiry. Subjectivity is the main source of creating and constructing authentic and new knowledge as can be seen in Figure 1.

In Figure 1, it can be seen that different individuals can create different knowledge even if they can perceive the same phenomenon. The main question is why different individuals create different meanings and construct different knowledge when they perceive the same phenomenon. The answer to this question is that individuals become authentic and subjective self-beings while creating and constructing knowledge. Another question is what affects individuals’ construction process of knowledge and why the knowledge constructed process differs from one individual to another. The answers to these questions can be related to the subjectivity of individuals. But, there is not an adequate answer to these questions.

Subjectivity of individuals may lead to differentiation in the process of creating and constructing knowledge.

In order to explain the subjectivity and authentic bases of creating and constructing knowledge, an example from daily life can be given. Many radio listeners may listen the same radio program and the same song *x* at the same time as seen in Figure 1. However, each listener’s feelings, sensations about the same song, tastes of the same song and meaning he/she gives to the same song can be different from one another’s. While listening or after listening the song *x*, one individual’s feelings and imaginations and experiences related to the song *x* must be unique. For example I am a listener of the song *x*, I know just my inner situation, my own

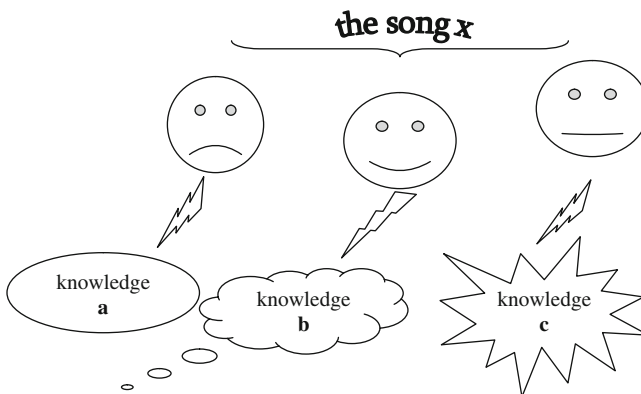


Figure 1. Subjectivity and authentic knowledge

experiences, feelings and have knowledge and these can be different from other listeners' immediate experiences of the song *x*. Anyone's senses of the song *x* can not be same with my senses of the same song. I have knowledge about the meaning of my self-experiences. Only I have totally awareness of knowledge about my experiences related with listening to the song *x*. Each individual's experience of the song *x* and creation and construction of his/her knowledge about it are private for him/her. What happens when each individual listens to the song *x* and reaches new meaning of the same song? Learning theories may give some answers to this question but, these answers may not provide adequate description of phenomenological understanding. It is very clear that only individuals themselves are aware of the knowledge of the song *x* and why their knowledge differs from others' knowledge. According to Dewey (1958, 301–308), knowing occurrences of the only existence able to know its “own” states and process that immediate and intuitive self-knowledge of the individuals. Each individual's knowing in its particularity can be explained based on his/her own subjectivity.

THE PATHWAY AND LAYERS OF SEARCHING FOR MEANING

Meaning can be actively created by means of individual's conscious perception of it. The individual can create his/her knowledge based on his/her own social, biological and metaphysical being. These features of the individual can affect his/her own meaning of the phenomenon. Thus, creativity and construction of knowledge become very complex tasks for the individual.

Searching for meaning, composed of seven layers, has a complex structure that is too ambiguous for individuals to comprehend and thus it is explained by means of Figure 2. The Figure 2 is prepared to provide visual description and presentation of the layers and pathway about individualistic ways of searching for meaning and creating and constructing knowledge. The pathway of individualistic searching for meaning may be explained in seven layers such as spirituality, will to know, intuition, perception, imagination, creativity and knowledge. These layers are discussed briefly in this paper. These layers are ranked in a linear and curvilinear pathway as can be seen in Figure 2. This pathway begins with spirituality and ends with knowledge but each layer can feed all the others layers. For example, if individual reaches new knowledge of phenomenon, this knowledge can be feedback for the other six layers. That is, the relationship is not only liner but also curvilinear.

Searching for meaning, creation and construction of knowledge can be explained as “learning” or “experience” of individuals. It is known that many learning theories give some explanation of the forms, process and models of the learning. Nevertheless, learning theories do not provide sufficient and adequate explanation about the phenomenon of individualistic ways of learning. Therefore, new explanations about individuals' ways of learning are needed. The act of learning may be explained in terms of layers as shown in Figure 2. Current forms and models of

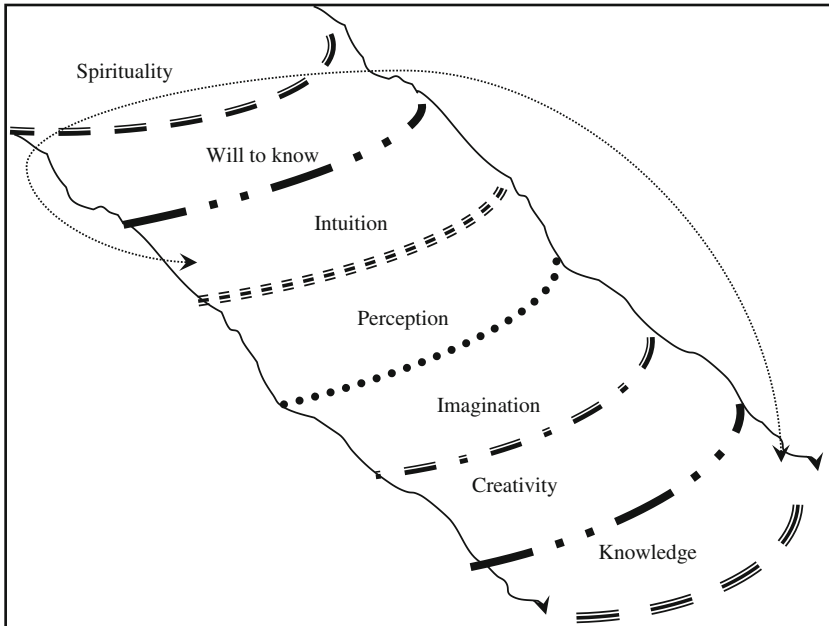


Figure 2. The layers of searching for meaning

learning should be reanalyzed in order to improve pathways of learning or searching for meaning.

Spirituality of the individual is the first layer of the searching for meaning. Spiritual nature of the individual has a broader aspect that is not restricted with the individual's belief, values and understanding of mysticism. Spirituality may be composed of two courses. The first course is the inner process or inner side of individuals, that is mystical and spiritual aspect of individualistic life.. The second course is social experiences about individual's outer world including social rules, cultural heritages, and daily life experiences. The individual's inner world is the outcome of human soul and mind that is the individual intentionality becomes a self-being in his/her life. Inner process of the individual works based on his/her sense of knowing his/her existence. Spiritual nature of the individual can affect his/her self-value, ethical and moral aspects. Spirituality of the individual can explain metaphysical world for human. According to phenomenologist, phenomenological search develops personality so that the individual is interested in not only his/her materialistic side but also spiritual side (Cozma 2007). It means that individual should develop his/her materialistic and metaphysical sides to realize self-actualization.

Spirituality refers to super-natural power of humanities and it covers the knowledge about mind, body, intellect, mentality and soul of the individual. It is not easy for the individual to get this kind of knowledge from his/her spiritual world in his/her

life. It is believed that the real knowledge about the universe is held in the spiritual world and the individual with a strong spiritual nature may capture a certain amount of real knowledge from his/her spiritual world. Although the individual becomes a spiritual being in his/her life, he/she cannot fully understand becoming a spiritual being. The first layer is so mysterious that it is concerned with ontological knowledge for the individuals. The first layer can be defined as the metaphysical knowledge about the nature of reality. Metaphysics deals with trying to understand the meaning and nature of the life and the reality about the universe. The individual is full of senses and eager to gain knowledge about his/her spiritual perspective. He/she is always ready to jump into spiritual world but capability of him/her may create barriers for him/her to touch or enter into his/her own spiritual world.

Spirituality is the power for individualistic and societal development. According to Saeed, "in the broader sense, spirituality is an inner uplift for the individual as well as society" (2008, 267). Spirituality is a necessity for the individual in the sense that it feeds up the mystic side of the human. The human is always concerned with mystic world and desires to know about it. This desire encourages the individual to create and construct knowledge for organizing his/her own life. Cozma stated that "...the man being interested not only about his material, but also about his spiritual welfare" (2007, 31).

The will to know is the second layer of the searching for meaning. The will to know is the individual's intrinsic power which can stimulate him/her to act for knowing. The individual's act for knowing activates inner process of the individual and this can be called as the will to know. The will to know is related to becoming a self-being in life and it promotes self-actualization of the self-being. And it is also that it can create energy in the life process of the individual. The will to know encourages the individual to acquire knowledge from his/her inner and outer worlds and to manage and accomplish his/her own life. The individual becomes a self-being by means of his/her own will to know and accomplishes his/her existence.

Davis (1995) stated that the individual's experiences and knowledge about world comes from the individual actively being in the world. It means that as the individual is as a biological creature, he/she has a tendency to act to know. The will to know has been a main topic of all philosophical and scientific studies beginning with the Aristotle. According to Tymieniecka (2004, 7) "philosophy and the other sciences have followed distinct but parallel paths, partly nourishing each other, partly promoting each other's progress." It means that the philosophy and sciences are deal with understanding individual's will to know in order to support self-actualization. The will to know is a tool for the fulfillment of both the individual and the others. Fulfillment of the self-actualization is the main goal for the individual and the will to know is the main force for it. Will to know can be defined as the energy that supports the individual's self-actualization. It is said that will to know comprises very important issues for philosophy and positive sciences.

Intuition is the third layer of the searching for meaning. It can be defined as the ability to acquire knowledge without inference, the use of reason or results. Intuition corresponds to the inner powers of individual and the individual may not need outer supports to know about phenomenon. The intuition has a mystical aspect

that “looks inside” while focusing on the senses of the will to know. The intuition activates the individual to gain knowledge that may not be needed to justify. The intuition, a special observation through the mystical and the metaphysical world, activates innovative acts and creativity of the individual. It refers to the internal energy for perceiving the phenomenon to catch new and authentic knowledge. The ability of sensing of the phenomenon can be fostered by means of the intuition of the individual. It is connected with the spiritual nature of the individual and the spiritual nature of the individual is an inscrutable process, there is not sufficient knowledge to explain the process of intuition. The results of the intuition process can be seen as innovative and creative acts of individual but the process of the intuition can not be visible for individual. However, the intuition promotes the search for meaning and the self-learning in life.

The layers of spiritual nature, will to know and intuition are not clear issues for human understanding and they compose of the hidden capacity of the individual. These three layers are related to the nature and self-being of the individual. It can be very hard to explain how these layers affect the process of creation and construction of knowledge. These three layers composing a hidden space for materialistic world can be defined as the metaphysical world for the human being. It seems like there is a horizon between the first three layers and the last four layers. This horizon may occur in different places, as seen in Figure 2, depending on the power and vision of the individual. The layers of spiritual nature will to know and intuition may work unconsciously and spontaneously.

Intuitions and perceptions compose the source of data in phenomenological descriptions. That is, intuitions and perceptions are used to form phenomenological knowledge. The intuition leads individual to the object that will be described. Following this, the individual is consciously inclined towards the object and the process of perception begins. The intuition makes events and objects ready to be perceived. According to phenomenology, intuitions and perceptions provide the basis of knowing and the knowledge based on intuitions, perceptions and observations should be reflected in appropriate forms. Phenomenological knowledge constructed by the individual becomes available by means of the phenomenological reflections. Phenomenological perceptions, phenomenological experience and phenomenological reflections comprise the parts of a whole.

The fourth layer is the perception of life to search for meaning. Perception can occur in two ways and the two ways have different patterns in the process of searching for meaning. The first way is related to the individual's internal sensations that inform him/her about developments in his/her body such as being trusty, walking, feeling hungry. The second way is related to the individual's external *sensations* that inform him/her about the world outside his/her body. These two ways provides senses based on which the individual can create and construct knowledge. The process of searching for meaning is connected with the first and the second ways. Both ways of sensing support the process of searching for meaning and interpretation of life and this means creation and construction of knowledge.

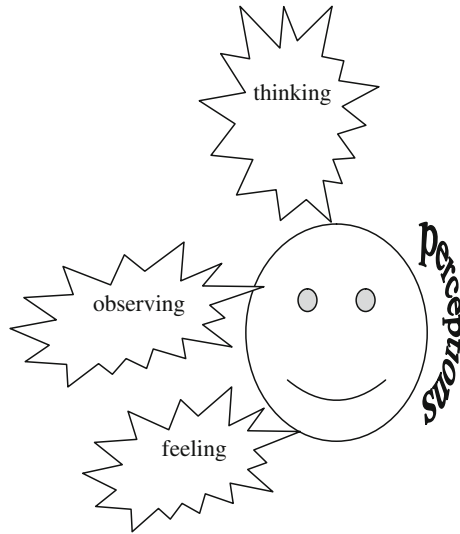


Figure 3. The perception of searching for meaning

The fourth layer is the perception of life during the search for meaning as seen in Figure 3. According to Barbaras (2003, 160) “meaning of life is linked to possibility of perception from life; thus the meaning of this life will take shape in contact with perception.” The ability of perceiving is the main force behind creating individualistic meaning of phenomenon. Creation of meaning results from individual’s interpretation of his/her own perception. Perception may occur within the individual’s inner world. If the individual reflects his/her perception of the phenomenon to other individuals, the others can understand what and how he/she perceives. Perception becomes the main gate between inner and outer worlds of the individual because it can provide the knowledge from external and internal worlds. The power of perception gives a chance for creating and constructing knowledge.

The fifth layer comprises the imaginative nature of the individual and imagination is a primary means of knowing about phenomenon as shown in Figure 4. It has been mentioned that there are seven layers in the pathway of searching for meaning. But there is a ambiguity about whether the creativity, the sixth layer, comes before the imagination, the fifth layer, or not. In this paper, there isn’t any explicit answer to this question. However, it is only assumed that the imagination comes before the creativity.

Imagination is a kind of mental experience including reality and unreality and images. The individual doesn’t need any equipment, any place, any action, anybody while imagining. Imagination is the colorful, enjoyable, creative and silent experience of the mind. It is referred as the freedom of human mind and the mental experiences of the individual and corresponds to the untouched and hidden gardens of human life. Imagination corresponds to the uniqueness of mental activity and

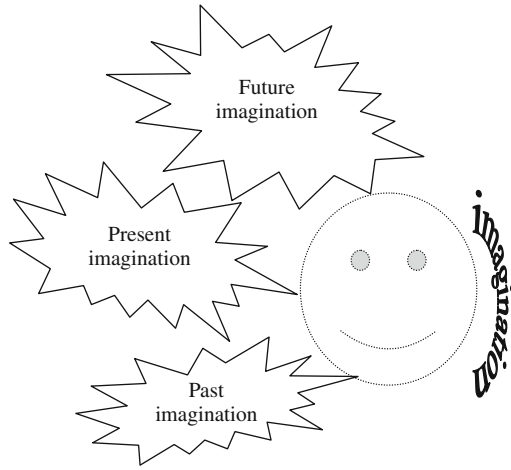


Figure 4. The imagination of searching for meaning

depends on the individual capacity of spirituality, will to know, intuition and perceptions of life (Selvi 2006). Imagination is the ability of analyzing past, present and catching future possibilities.

Depending on the time of imagination, imagination can be grouped as past imagination, present imagination and future imagination. Past imagination comprises the imaginative experience the individual had in his/her past. It is also said that the individual catches imaginative ideas and thoughts by means of his/her imaginative past experience. Imaginative experience the individual had in the past forms the basis of the present and future imagination. Past imagination can be defined as the individual's history of searching for meaning in his/her life. Present imagination is composed of the individual's immediate experience about phenomenon. When the individual perceives a situation, he/she can imagine his/her perception. Present imagination might enable solution of problems, changes in direction of the current patterns and nourishment of the future imagination. Imagination of the future refers to creativity of the individual and is mostly called as the creative imagination. Future imagination is more important than other imagination types because it provides the individual with the possibilities of searching for meaning in the future.

Capability of creativity is the sixth layer in the pathway of searching for meaning. Creativity is not only a philosophical and aesthetical problem but also the main problem of scientific study and knowledge. Creativity can be defined as the ability to remember past, live in present and foresee future and create unique forms of things and/or processes of becoming as shown in Figure 5. If an individual forms frames of his/her past experience, he/she will find many solutions to problems and show very creative acts (Selvi 2006). Nevertheless, mature creative experiences of others become barriers to the individual's new creations and he/she does not act creatively in his/her life. The main delusion about creativity is that only certain

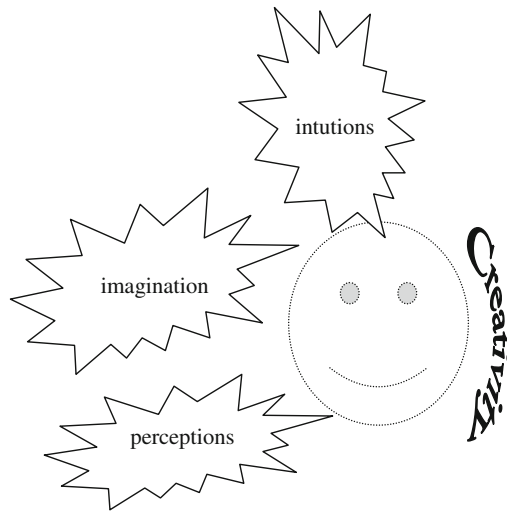


Figure 5. The creativity of searching for meaning

individuals have creative capabilities. Every individual has the power of creativity but only certain individuals know how to reflect this power. Cozma stated that "... creativity not only in artistic achievement, but in self achievement self-fulfillment" (2007, 37). Self-actualization of the individual is composed of totally creative acts in his/her life and the capability of creativity is the main source of becoming a self being in life.

The individual has the power of creativity because he/she becomes a self-being in the creative process. Since the individual has creative experiences related to becoming a self being in life, creativity is the vital force for him/her. "Creativity was seen there as the human capacity hidden in an irrational depth of the human being-in intuition, will vital force, vital spontaneity the unconscious, etc." (Kurenkova et al. 2000). It means that creativity reflects the individualistic capability of catching new meaning of phenomenon. As the individual has the unique capability of creativity, he/she creates new and authentic ways, processes, products, methods, and ways of thinking, questions and answers to questions. Moreover, creativity comprises new and authentic reflections.

Creativity can support creation of new and authentic knowledge. Individual is creative in his/her whole life because creativity works very well in each stage of his/her life. Creativity provides the individual with the autonomy and freedom of creating and constructing of knowledge. In the course of creativity, creative imagination becomes more intense compared to other acts of the individual. This situation is very common in artistic studies in which knowledge is created and reflected. The search for meaning, corresponding to self-interpretation of the phenomenon must comprise creativity. Creativity reflects the uniqueness of the individualistic base, that is, the individual's own experiences in life.

The seventh layer of searching for meaning is the knowledge. It can be referred as the individualistic interpretations of life. Individual's self-interpretation of the phenomenon or life is unique to him/her. And, this can be the individual's aim of existing in the world, as a creative being. Self-interpretation is very important for the individual to actualize the aim of becoming a self-being. But it is known that the individual becomes aware of the phenomenon by means of others' interpretations of the world before his/her own interpretation. Since education system promotes the adults' interpretations of the world, the individual may not be to the self-interpreter of the world. Coucerio-Bueno stated that "educational theorists fail to highlight the aspects of human sensitivity and intelligence and from an early age, children become aware that the world is interpreted by adults" (2007, 373). This reality can establish barriers to the individualistic ways of creating and constructing knowledge through self-interpretation.

In the last century, the empirical model has been heavily criticized by, several prominent philosophers of knowledge, such as Bergson, James, Husserl, Heidegger, Mead and Merleau-Ponty. Criticisms of the empirical model have focused on the problem of objectivistic and empiricist knowledge from somewhat different directions (Tuomi 1999). These criticisms reflect that the individual can not be free to create and construct his/her own knowledge. Phenomenology clarifies the ways that individual constitutes his/her reality and life. The ways followed by an individual to create knowledge may not be applied by others. Thus the ways followed by the individual is unique to him/her.

The individual has the chance to self-actualization depending on what he/she experiences in his/her own life. Experiences of the individual refer to his/her total effort to search for meaning in the seven layers. The concept of "experience" connotes a very broad and complex process of human endeavor to create and construct knowledge. The meanings of "experience" and "learning" are the same. The individual becomes a self-creator within the pathway composed of layers of the search for meaning and the process of learning. The individual as a self-creator becomes an interpreter in life. At the end of the interpretation process, new knowledge can be created and constructed by the self. This process includes learning and creation and construction of knowledge.

The pathway and the layers of searching for meaning constitute a very discussible and hard topic for philosophers and scientists who give some explanation about searching for meaning as seen in Figure 2. In this pathway, the first, second and third layers might be mistier than the other layers for creation and construction of knowledge. It seems like there is a wall occurring as a frosted glass and it is called as a horizon after the first three layers of the pathway in this paper. This glass wall hides the layers of spiritual nature, will to know and intuition and the individual may see some reflections of the last four layers. However, it is hard to see what happens in the first three layers. The individual at the last four layers may catch some reflections if he/she has power or some senses such as intuitions but these reflections are too ambiguous for him/her. The reflections are the evidence of the fact that some layers come out of the individual's visions. The individual's awareness of the knowledge of some layers is hidden and a secret for him/her and there is some horizons or borders

between the first three layers and the last four layers that activate the individual's perception to create and construct new knowledge.

The wall between two groups of layers might force the individual to search for meaning in order to realize moral development and self-actualization. If we look at the horizon between two groups of layers, we can not see what happens or what becomes before the horizon. But we know that even if our vision can not go beyond the horizon, many different things may occur there. The layers of spiritual nature, will to know and intuition can be hidden behind the individual's vision. The horizon is the changeable depending on the point of the individual's vision and perception. Individuals may have the capability of forming images behind this horizon. These images may turn to personal knowledge and experiences about metaphysical world. It can be said that the power of the individual's perception introduces new horizons for new searches of meaning of life.

DISCUSSION

Philosophy and science follow different pathways of creating and constructing knowledge and this has created many problems of fully understanding the phenomenon. Different ways of searching for meaning may lead to crises for the individual who follows an unnatural trend for creating and constructing of knowledge. Philosophers and scientists make their own explanations but try to avoid touching on each others' explanations. They also follow different pathways while creating and constructing knowledge. This attitude results in total differentiation in the ways of searching for meaning. According to Bolton (1979, 255), empirical research results and subject matter understanding become dominant in the educational area that includes too abstract knowledge existing in various forms. Whereas philosophical discourses and explanations are carried out by some philosophers, these philosophers are not forced to follow scientific research methods. This tendency has led to crises in the scientific studies as well as the field of philosophy. To cope with the crises of the scientific and philosophical studies, paradigm shifts have begun to be discussed.

Dominant paradigm of searching for meaning is based on the positivist understanding which is criticized in terms of the crisis of the science. The method of searching for meaning of phenomenon has shifted from the positive research paradigm to the qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research paradigm is based on the descriptive analysis that relates to spontaneous and intentional experiences of the individuals. Qualitative research reflects the subjectivity of the individual in the process of creation and construction of authentic knowledge and it is related to phenomenology. Phenomenology has the potential to use different forms of creating new and authentic knowledge. According to Tymieniecka,

... the new philosophical paradigm, with actual transformations going on in scientific research, method, is course, there is possible, and has begun, a most illuminating dialogue between philosophy and science. I mean here the dialogue that phenomenology/ philosophy of life has begun with sciences of life (2004, 11)

Tymieniecka points out that scientific approach is in the way of great changes and the new paradigm mostly regards that the individual's subjectivity and authenticity comprise the way of creating and constructing knowledge. The new paradigm supports the human subjectivity that develops new and authentic meaning of phenomenon. This subjectivity also includes a high level of creativity and imagination. The pathway and the layers seen in Figure 2 reflect totally new and authentic creation and construction of meaning based on the subjectivity of the individual. The creation and construction of knowledge presented and discussed depending on the pathway in Figure 2 is also very similar to the phenomenological way of thinking and searching for meaning. It is said that phenomenology provides the opportunity to investigate the meaning of life. The individual constructs meanings in his/her life and guides his/her own actions and experiences depending on meanings he/she constructs. Phenomenology is concerned with the nature of the meaning of phenomena.

Creation and construction of new knowledge corresponds to the concept of phenomenological learning. Thus, learning can be defined as the creation and construction of the meaning of phenomenon. Ability of learning can help individual's learning that can be defined as the natural and inner intention of becoming a self-being in the world. Learning is a dynamic process in the individual's life and it is also the energy needed for becoming a self-being and the source of this energy is comprised of the individual's body and soul. This energy supports the internal and external conditions of the self. If learning doesn't find good supporters in the external world of the individual, his/her ability to learn can be damaged. A part of learning occurs in school and learning is planned and applied based on certain principles in the learning-teaching environment. As an educator I ask the question that how the ability to learn can be supported by means of the external learning environment, especially in school. It is known that creation and construction of new knowledge is related to learning ability of individual, freedom of individual, subjectivity of individual, individual's way of thinking and perception of phenomenon. Learning can also support the individual to construct his/her self-being on his/her own.

I struggled to find the meaning of the concept of "learning" while I was preparing the paper and this was really hard for me because I had some sense of or intuition about learning. But, it was not easy to catch, explain or reflect my own meaning of learning. I had just some sense of learning and I wasn't able to explain it. This was an ambiguous situation and it also disturbed me. I asked myself why I decided to write about this topic. I decided to leave the topic because I felt that my explanation was not clear for me and I wanted to search for meaning of the concept of "learning" while I was preparing my paper. But after I left the topic for a while, again I came back to the same topic, because this issue was unconsciously on my mind. This situation really disturbed me and I decided to write and find some descriptions of and solutions to my own problem about the concept of "learning." This process has taken almost five years of my life.

I had a sense that it was very important to reflect my perception of the concept of learning. However, sense of anyone else who has a perception of this topic

should be important as much as my own senses. This sensation is based on the phenomenological perception of the phenomena. I have been brave to reflect this kind of phenomenological self perceptions. It is said that firstly phenomenological learning occurs and then phenomenological reflection comes out. Individual's learning needs to be reflected and discussed in order to catch the new meaning of the phenomena that is creation and construction of new knowledge.

Learning improves the behaviors of the individual as a self-creator and develops phenomenological understanding of life. Since searching for meaning is a new method of learning and gaining new knowledge, the individual becomes a creator of the new knowledge. Phenomenological investigation might be a key method of searching for meaning of life. This search develops personality so that the individual is interested in not only his/her materialistic side but also spiritual side (Cozma 2007). This search can help the individual to form his/her own personality. Phenomenological learning should activate the individual's self-creation to search and construct the meaning of life.

Construction of the meaning is related to learning that continually improves the meaning. Learner, as a meaning maker and a self-creator creates new knowledge of the whole life process. Constructing the meaning of phenomenon can be defined as a kind of self-inquiry and is related to descriptions of meanings that always change and reach new meanings. The meaning develops within the endless conscious and unconscious process in which new knowledge and process are created. The creation process and the results of phenomenological inquiry can not include verifiable knowledge. This process and these results occur uniquely and authentically because of the individual's self interpretations of the world.

The individual expresses his/her own ideas, intuitions, concerns, feelings, emotions, reasons, interests, desires, needs, aims, ideas, senses, thoughts, actions, intentions through self-interpretations of the meanings he/she learns. Self-interpretations of the meanings are completely creative self-knowledge about life. Self-interpretations help the individual to reach the unique self-knowledge depending on his/her self-basis that includes spiritual nature, will to know, intuition, perception, imagination and creativity of him/her. The meaning of phenomenological life is connected with the individual's ability to learn by using the phenomenological method and this can make the individual a self-creator.

The individual searches for catching the deeper meaning of his/her own experiences while applying the phenomenological method. Phenomenological method helps the individual to construct his/her own new knowledge. Learning is the individual's creative function that improves the creative potentiality of his/her life. Learning takes place in the individual's life composed of social, physical and mental situations. Learning has cognitive, affective and social dimensions. These kinds of multiple constituents can affect the individual's learning preferences which refer to individual's unique learning styles. The pathway and layers of searching for meaning are also related with the individual's learning styles. The individual's self-creation of the meaning can comprise all of the seven layers of searching for meaning. But these layers may not be sufficient to explain the search for meaning for creation and construction of knowledge. These layers must be improved by means of different discourses on the topic. These layers and the

pathway of creating and constructing knowledge also need to be re-analyzed in a deeper and broader sense based on the pathway of individuals' searching for meaning.

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PERSPICUOUS REPRESENTATION:
 A WITTGENSTEINIAN INTERPRETATION
 OF MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S VIEW OF TRUTH

ABSTRACT

Martin Heidegger criticizes the representational view of language and truth from the perspective of phenomenological ontology. Primarily he criticizes the presupposition that the content of an idea is an object it stands for and that judging is related to having a representation of an object in our minds, in our consciousness. Heidegger's critique of the representational theory of truth and language goes hand in hand with his critique of modernity. He thinks that in the West, thought about thinking resulted in a discipline of logic gathering special knowledge concerning a special kind of thinking, which is called logistics. Logistics is considered to be the only possible form of strict philosophy because it is integrated with the technological universe, which exercises power over other disciplines in our era. As a result of this, thinking is transformed into one-track thinking generating an absolute univocity. In this paper, I concentrate on Heidegger's critique of the representational view of language and truth by correlating it with that of Wittgenstein, and by focusing on what sense Heidegger's critique of the representational theory of truth is related to his critique of modernity. The first part of the article discusses the critique of the representational theory of truth, the second part of the article presents Heidegger's alternative and the third part deals with his critique of modernity.

Heidegger presents a different approach for an analysis of knowledge and truth one which does not require traditional distinctions. In both *What is Called Thinking?* and *Being and Time* Heidegger concentrates on the question of whether we can identify knowledge and truth in terms of assertion and judgment. He criticizes the view of truth that necessitates an agreement between a judgment and a fact, which presumes that judging is a "Real psychological process" and that which is judged is an ideal content (Heidegger 1962, 258–259 [216]). The basic question of the view, assuming that there is an agreement between the ideal content of judgment and the real psychological process, is "What is the ontological relation between an ideal entity as a fact and real psychological process?" (Heidegger 1962, 258–259 [216]).

Heidegger thus questions an established opinion in philosophy that assumes that an idea is called correct in case it conforms to its object. This correctness in the forming of an idea is equated with truth. For example, the statement "It is raining," is correct in case it directs the idea to the weather conditions. In terms of the contemporary cognitivist John Searle, the direction of fit is from words to the world or from the mind to the world in this case (Searle 1979, 3).

Heidegger states that judging is forming ideas correctly or incorrectly according to this established view. Forming an idea or a representation, on the other hand, is supposed to be having a representational idea of related objects in our minds or in our consciousness or in our soul (Heidegger 1968, 38–39). Hence, when we say “That tree is blossoming” our idea has, again in John Searle’s terms, “the direction of fit” from words to the world namely toward the object of the blossoming tree. The crucial question here is whether the ideas inside us answer to any reality at all outside ourselves.

Traditionally, this event of forming ideas is correlated with the process taking place in the sphere of consciousness or in the soul, as some philosophers such as Descartes presume. Heidegger questions this cognitivist attitude by saying, “But does the tree stand ‘in our consciousness,’ or does it stand on the meadow? Does the meadow lie in the soul, as experience, or is it spread out there on earth? Is the earth in our head? Or do we stand on the earth?” (Heidegger 1968, 43).

In what ways does Heidegger criticize this concept of truth and what is his alternative? The next section discusses Heidegger’s critique of the representational theory of truth.

CRITIQUE OF THE REPRESENTATIONAL THEORY OF TRUTH

Heidegger criticizes the representational theory of truth that assumes a true judgment regarding a fact corresponds to a real psychical process. His critique focuses on several implications of the representational theory of truth. One of the implications of the representational theory of truth is that it requires the definition of thinking and logic by means of propositions. Heidegger says, “When we ask our question ‘What is called thinking?’ . . . it turns out that thinking is defined in terms of the *λόγος*. The basic character of thinking is constituted by propositions” (Heidegger 1968, 163). According to this view, which finds a clear expression in Plato and Aristotle, only the part of language dealing with propositions is important.

Heidegger’s critique of the traditional understanding of truth goes hand in hand with his critique of a traditional view of language that implies that every sentence is proposition. In a Wittgensteinian manner, Heidegger underlines that every proposition is a sentence, but not every sentence is a proposition. In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein, like Austin, states that not all of our sentences are statements: there are questions, commands, exclamations, which do not fit into the form of statements (Wittgenstein 1967 §§§ 23–25–27). Stating is just one form of telling there are other types. Heidegger says that the sentence “The moon has risen” when used as a part of a poem is neither a proposition, nor a sentence. He criticizes logo-centric view of language, which claims that stating and thinking through propositions are the most obvious things in the world (Heidegger 1968, 196).

Heidegger challenges not only the idea that thought or logic is possible by means of propositions, but also the idea that sentences have determined meanings. He implies that meaning changes depending on contexts. For example, “The moon

has risen” may be used in its literal sense as an assertion and means exactly what it says, and can be correct if it is the case that the moon has already risen, or it may be used as part of a poem without carrying any literal sense of the sentence. However, its metaphorical, or indirect or sarcastic use does not show that it is not a part of thinking. Actually, the problem here transcends the distinction between literal and nonliteral uses of sentences. The problem here is, as Searle discusses in detail in his article “Literal Meaning,” that even literal meaning is contextually dependent (Searle 1979, 117). Heidegger criticizes traditional understanding of logic that presupposes a causal connection between the units constituting a proposition. Like Wittgenstein and Austin, he emphasizes the pragmatic aspect of language by implying that stating is telling and it tells only in a context. For example, the copula “is” makes sense only in a referential whole and in a context. Hence, he presents a nonessentialist view of language by drawing an analogy between “moving within language” with moving on shifting ground, or moving on the “billowing waters of an ocean” (Heidegger 1968, 192).

Heidegger implies that when we predicate something of a thing, our attitude is affirmation. This is in contrast with a view that presupposes that an asserted proposition represents causal relations imposed upon us by nature. He says, “To predicate does not mean here primarily to express in speech, but to present something as something, affirm something as something” (Heidegger 1968, 162). This remark reminds us of the later Wittgenstein’s discussion of seeing something as something. Similarity becomes obvious when we consider that instead of using the term “idea” Heidegger sometimes uses the concept “aspect” (Heidegger 1977, 20). Seeing something as something is related to aspect-seeing. Two points are significant here: one is in propositions predication or conjunction does not serve to represent the necessary relations between subject and a predicate. Therefore, Heidegger says, “Such presentation and affirmation is ruled by a conjunction of what is stated with that about which the statement is made. The conjunction is expressed in the ‘as’ and the ‘about’ ” (Heidegger 1968, 162). The second point Heidegger stresses is that predicating something as something is affirmation. “Affirmation” requires human confirmation. Hence, a proposition is said to be correct not because it shows causal and necessary properties of the world having a reference to a decontextualized world, but because we affirm it. Like Wittgenstein, Heidegger emphasizes the context-dependency of meanings.

The second problematic aspect of the representational theory of truth is that it intellectualizes our existential position in the world. When we say “That tree is blossoming” we stand outside of science, and stand in front of the tree, it faces us. We stand face to face with the tree. Heidegger does not incline to define this as “ ‘ideas’ buzzing about in our heads” (Heidegger 1968, 41). On the contrary, he interprets the Greek word “idea” in a different way. He states that the word “idea” in Greek means to see, face and meet -in other words to be face to face. When we are in that position, in front of the tree, we are out of the realm of science and philosophy. We are not in the realm of science because our connection to the world in this case cannot be described by appealing to psychology or cognitive science. We are not in the realm of philosophy because a traditional philosophical approach questions

whether we are in a position to assert and justify the existence of the blooming tree standing in front of us.

Heidegger implies that our position in this case is immediate enough not to allow sophisticated explanation and justification. Hence, intellectualization or scientization of our immediate existence, or experience is useless.

Heidegger's concern regarding "the blooming tree" overlaps with that of the later Wittgenstein, who in *On Certainty* questions the attitude of skeptical philosophers that doubt the existence of a tree standing in front of them (Wittgenstein 1969 §§§ 349-350-352). Heidegger underlines the immediacy of our experience by denying the intellectualization of our existential condition.

In *On Certainty* Wittgenstein emphasizes that it is nonsensical to question the existence of things and tools with which we are immediately coping by being in the world. Heidegger, in the same manner, says; "What is the use of such questions concerning a state of affairs which everybody will in fairness admit immediately, since it is clear as day to all the world that we are standing on the earth and, in our example, face-to-face with a tree?" (Heidegger 1968, 43).

Objectification of "tree" in sciences, and cognizing it in philosophy result in dropping the blooming tree by reducing our relation with the tree to "a pre-scientifically intended relation" (Heidegger 1968, 44).

Heidegger, on the contrary, claims that the concept "stating" was used in the sense of "laying out," "laying before," and "laying to" in ancient Greece (Heidegger 1968, 199). What does he mean?

Heidegger's correlation of "stating" with "laying before" and "laying to" paves the way for an alternative concept of truth. In the next section, I concentrate on Heidegger's alternative to the representational theory of truth.

HEIDEGGER'S ALTERNATIVE

Heidegger's definition of truth diverges from the traditional view that presumes that "truth" is a property of correct propositions, which can be true or false by a correspondence relation with facts. According to Heidegger, the essence of truth is not an empty "generality" of an "abstract" universality, rather it is an inner possibility of the correctness of statements identified as freedom, which in his terminology is directly related to "*letting beings be the beings they are*" (Heidegger 1998, p. 144). "Letting beings be," on the other hand, is not related to indifference or neglect (actually neglect implies the negative meaning of "letting alone"), but is associated with engaging oneself with beings or engaging oneself with open region. Open region, which is identified with "unconcealedness," is associated with truth and freedom. How is it associated with truth and freedom? As discussed earlier, this is related to opening ourselves to things standing in front of us such as a tree to let them disclose, rather than withdraw, their aspects. "Withdrawal" here is in contrast with "a turning to the thing in hand according to its nature, thus letting that nature become manifest by the handling" (Heidegger 1968, 195) (Dreyfus Tue, Nov 20, 2007, Lecture on Truth I). "Nature," on the other hand, should not be understood as the essence of a thing or a tool, which manifests itself in a use, but is related to

aspect-seeing. In the process of dealing with tools ready-to-hand we are confronted with aspects of these tools. In case they are used properly they do not withdraw and reveal their aspects (Dreyfus 1991, 65). Here, “properly” is understood as the elimination of automation and alienation, which result in covering up the genuine articulation of tools. Non-transparency is mutual here, in the sense that things, tools and human beings are covered up in their bilateral relations.

Heidegger says “to use” is first “to let a thing be what it is and how it is” (Heidegger 1968, 191). He implies that in case a used thing is cared for in accord with its essential nature, then “the demands which the used thing makes manifest in the given instance” is fulfilled (Heidegger 1968, 191). This is also a key to understanding Heidegger’s concept of truth, which requires freedom. His concept of truth is related to freedom in the sense that truth does not manifest itself under the conditions of abuse. In order not to abuse we should let a thing reveal and articulate itself. I correlate it with Habermas’s concept of strategic action. Of course, there are significant differences between the view of Habermas and that of Heidegger. However, their views overlap with respect to emphasizing the controlling nature of technical action. Heidegger calls it “technical reason” whereas Habermas calls it technical action and contrasts it with communicative action.

Habermas correlates strategic action with technical action. I draw parallels between what Heidegger calls “logistics” and what Habermas calls strategic action. Our relations with tools, things and human beings lose their transparency in case they are abused strategically so as to cover up their genuineness.

There is a difference between “use” and “abuse.” “Use” is associated with “useful.” Heidegger quotes one passage from the hymn of Hölderlin’s *The Ister River*;

“It is useful for the rock to have shafts,
And for the earth, furrows,
It would be without welcome, without stay” (Quoted by Heidegger 1968, 192)

He says that “useful” here indicates an essential community of rock and shaft as well as earth and furrow. This community, on the other hand, is determined by welcome and stay.

As mentioned earlier, Heidegger questions the complete separation of object and subject. This separation can be overcome by opening ourselves and our hearts to the world in order to let things and tools display themselves as they are. This is defined as “clearing” or “thankful disposal” (Heidegger 1968, 147 and Dreyfus 1991, 165–166).

Heidegger says that “Considered in regard to the essence of truth, the essence of freedom manifests itself as exposure to the disclosedness of beings:” (Heidegger 1998, 144–145) in other words, “freedom is engagement in the disclosure of beings” (Heidegger 1998, 145). Engagement in the disclosure of beings, on the other hand, is linked with “attunement,” attunement, in its turn, is correlated with a bringing into accord. “[A] bringing into accord, prevails throughout and anticipates all the open comportment that flourishes in it. Human comportment is brought into definite accord throughout by the openedness of beings as a whole” (Heidegger 1998, 147).

In what sense this is different from the traditional understanding of truth and how it is connected to knowledge. Since knowledge is an engagement with true propositions, consideration of truth requires correlating it with knowledge. As already said, Heidegger does not define truth as an agreement between the psychological and the physical; he uses the concepts “unconcealed” or “uncovered” in order to explain truth. What do these words signify? Assertion is true in case “it uncovers the entity as it is in itself” (Heidegger 1962, 261 [219]). This is not an agreement between a cognitive process occurring in a knowing subject’s mind and a fact. On the contrary, truth or uncovering is possible by Dasein’s being-in-the-world. However, this is not an epistemological position, but an existential-ontological position. As Heidegger emphasizes this does not mean that Dasein is introduced to “all the truth,” rather it means that “*Dasein is ‘in the truth’*” (Heidegger 1962, 263 [221]).

Heidegger is critical of the Cartesian and the cognitivist tradition that separates subject from object. Absorption in the world and absorbed coping with things and tools eliminate the distinction between not only subject and object, but also language and the world as the later Wittgenstein taught us. Therefore, Heidegger correlates truth with freedom. Until now thought and cognition never let the tree stand where it stands, only when this is achieved, can we talk about freedom. Rather than intellectualizing and objectifying the tree we should let it stand where it stands and let ourselves get in touch with an open region, which may free us by affirming life and the free existence of the tree. We may free our minds by means of this affirmation of life, which paves the way for eliminating transcendental illusion and thereby allows us not to question the existence of the tree. It also helps us eliminate an appeal to a private object in our mind to prove the existence of the tree. This Nietzschean affirmation of life will free both our minds and the tree. Heidegger, in a Nietzschean manner, underlines the affirmation of life to question the cognitivist approach and the representational theory of truth based upon logo-centric view of language that presupposes that externalization of “internal outward” is what we expect from language.

Truth is neither below, nor above the world, on the contrary, we encounter truth by being-in-this world. Heidegger says, “Truth is neither somewhere *over* man (as validity in itself), nor is it in man as a psychological subject, but man is *‘in’ the truth*” (Heidegger 2002, 55). However, truth in this world is covered up. In this world, we are exposed to truth and untruth at an equal strength. In this sense, “everything that lies before us is ambiguous” (Heidegger 1968, 201). Truth is covered up by idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity (Heidegger 1962, 264 [222]). The task of thinking and philosophy is to uncover truth concealed, by questioning. Questioning helps us uncover truth. Therefore, truth does not mean an agreement between a proposition residing in the mind of a subject and a fact taking place in the world, on the contrary, by being-in-the-world Dasein uncovers truth. Of course, this suggests a different methodology.

If our method is not to compare propositions with facts to see whether they agree with one another, then what kind of method or attitude allows us to uncover truth? One method is related to hermeneutics. Heidegger says, “Assertion and its structure (namely, the apophantical ‘as’) are founded upon interpretation and its structure (viz, the hermeneutical ‘as’) and also upon understanding-upon Dasein’s

disclosedness” (Heidegger 1962, 265–266 [223]). He also appeals to phenomenological ontology, which allows us to see connections within referential totality. This point is similar to the later Wittgenstein’s assertion that rather than evaluating sentences one by one to see whether they correspond to facts in the external world it is important to see connections. Certainly, Wittgenstein does not appeal to ontology. He refrains from answering questions regarding ontology. Therefore, where Wittgenstein says “This is simply what we do,” Heidegger concentrates on the question of how we do it. However, with respect to evaluating individual facts in a whole and in a relational totality, their approaches resemble one another. Their approaches are also similar regarding the critique of the foundationalist presupposition that there is an edifice underneath, supporting and forming a ground for our existence. Hence, it is pointless to attempt to go beyond relational totality, into the context of Being, which provides the support for this totality (Heidegger 1962, 258–259 [216]). Our main starting point is this world; truth can be uncovered in this relational totality and by being in the world. In this sense, truth is not understood by grasping universals, but as Wittgenstein says, when “Light dawns gradually over the whole” (Wittgenstein 1969, §141). In other words, only if we see the connections in relational totality can we uncover truth. As already said, Dasein is in truth, and untruth at the same time. Truth is uncovering in this world. How is it possible to uncover truth?

As already mentioned, according to Heidegger, truth is uncovering by taking entities out of their hiddenness and by letting them be seen in their unhiddenness (Heidegger 1962, 261–262 [219]). Heidegger defines it as a kind of robbery. He says that “Entities get snatched out of their hiddenness. The factual uncoveredness of anything is always, as it were, a kind of *robbery*” (Heidegger 1962, 264–265 [222]). This is similar to taking masks off to reveal a person as it is. As Michael Gelven points out, “we say that our understanding and awareness of someone is true if there are no masks, and we see him as he is” (Gelven 1989, 129).

Dasein is both in truth and in untruth. In order for Dasein to get out of a Platonic Cave and uncover truth, she should not only understand relational totality by means of absorbed coping and circumspective concern, but also take a stand on her life to make a projection. This requires a questioning attitude. Heidegger defines the mission of philosophy as questioning because only a critical or questioning attitude helps us uncover truth. It also requires a way of being in the world. Authentic existence or existential authenticity is a form of life allowing us to uncover truth. “The goddess of Truth who guides Parmenides, puts two pathways before him, one of uncovering, one of hiding. . . . The way of uncovering is achieved only in. . .distinguishing between these understandingly, and making one’s decision for the one rather than the other” (Heidegger 1962, 265 [223]).

Choosing the way of uncovering requires a genuine existential way of being. Therefore, Heidegger says, “In so far as Dasein *is* its disclosedness essentially, and discloses and uncovers as something disclosed to this extent it is essentially ‘true’” (Heidegger 1962, 263 [221]).

Truth, on the other hand, cannot be considered independently of Dasein as independent of any human existence. “*There is’ truth only in so far as Dasein is and so long as Dasein is.* Entities are uncovered only *when Dasein is*; and only as Dasein *is*, are they disclosed. Newton’s laws, the principle of contradiction, any

truth whatever-these are true as long as Dasein *is*. Before there was any Dasein, there was no truth; nor will there be any after Dasein is no more” (Heidegger 1962, 269 [227]).

According to the traditional approach, “laws of thought are . . . valid independently of the man who performs the individual acts of thinking” (Heidegger 1968, 115). Heidegger is reminiscent of Nietzsche in saying that the rules of logic such as the principle of the excluded middle, the principle of contradiction and the principle of identity are functional devices organizing Dasein’s existence in the world, rather than having necessary and causal relations to the structural organization of the thing-in-itself. Hence, it is difficult for us to transcend our phenomenological existence and to be in the position of claiming that they refer to something deeper.

In order to develop his alternative further, Heidegger reinterprets the concept “stating.” He correlates “stating” with “laying out,” “laying before,” and “laying to” (Heidegger 1968, 199). He defines logic as having a relation with “clearing.” What does this mean? Heidegger says when we say something about something, in other words, when we state, we make an object visible: for example when we say that “The tree is blooming” we make the blooming tree disclose itself in front of us. So, the essence of *logos* cannot be defined by a correspondence relation between statement and fact, but it is disclosing (Heidegger 1968, 202). What lies in front of us, on the other hand, is actually perceived, and this perceiving is not a passive receiving, rather it is active in the sense that we take what is perceived to heart and keep it at heart (Heidegger 1968, 203). In contrast with the Platonic idea that understanding is grasping, Heidegger asserts that this taking to heart is letting come what lies before us (Heidegger 1968, 211). What is taken in, on the other hand, is safeguarded and kept in memory. In other words, it is kept in our heart first, and then cognized. This taking to heart, on the other hand, is neither grasping, nor apprehending. “For instance, when we let the sea lie before us as it lies, we . . . are already engaged in keeping in mind and heart what lies before us. We have already taken to heart what lies before us” (Heidegger 1968, 209). As stated earlier, this is related to Heidegger’s critique of the cognitivist approach of trying to bridge the gap between psychical and physical by our intentional attitude. Heidegger reverses the order (if there is any order at all) by trying to get us to see that engaging oneself with an open region is possible by opening our heart to nature and leaving it there as it is, without cognizing or theorizing it. When we do this we leave things where they stand, and have harmonious relations with nature. Only when we allow things to be seen as they are, and only when we let them disclose themselves, can we get a perspicuous representation.

Heidegger’s critique of the representational theory of truth is related to his critique of modernity. In the next section I concentrate on this issue.

C R I T I Q U E O F M O D E R N I T Y

Heidegger’s critique of the representational theory of truth and the cognitivist approach go hand in hand with his critique of modernity. He sees a connection between an approach regarding logic as the fundamental rules of thinking and logistics

“developing into the global system by which all ideas are organized” (Heidegger 1968, 163). Heidegger’s critique of modernity is stated in a small article entitled “A Question Concerning Technology” (Heidegger 1977). However, even in *What is called Thinking?* he is critical of the attitude belittling the value of disciplines other than science. This belittling is built upon the idea that science has a representative value, which explains nature and allows us to predict and control it, while other disciplines do not have such a privileged position. However, Heidegger thinks that science does not think in the sense in which thinkers think (Heidegger 1968, 134) and he also says; “The Enlightenment obscures the essential origin of thinking” (Heidegger 1968, 211). What does he mean? Is he an obscurantist philosopher, who does not appreciate the value of scientific knowledge in our time? In what sense, does he say “science does not think”? In order to understand his concern we must briefly concentrate on his analysis of “thinking.”

According to Heidegger, thinking cannot be defined, because the mere reflection objectifying “thinking,” is fruitless. Just as it is not possible to know what swimming is by reading a treatise on swimming, it is not possible to “remain outside that mere reflection which makes thinking its object” (Heidegger 1968, 21). Heidegger thinks that thinking is “the handicraft *par excellence*” (Heidegger 1968, 23). As mentioned earlier, for Heidegger, the starting point is not intention, but action. As for the later Wittgenstein, Goethe’s assertion that “In the beginning was the deed” is valid for Heidegger too. We comport ourselves in this relational totality with our deeds and acts. Hence, thinking is not accomplished by the correspondence relation of a proposition in our minds and a fact in the world, but it is rather the result of our deeds and acts in the process of dealing with tools, things and human beings in this hurly-burly of daily life. Correlatively, understanding is not possible by grasping universals, but it is possible by engaging oneself with an open region so as to take a stand on one’s life.

Heidegger diagnoses that the “[m]ost thought provoking in our thought-provoking time is that we are still not thinking” (Heidegger 1968, 6). As mentioned earlier, he also says that science does not think. This is related to Heidegger’s critique of modernity and technology. Heidegger depicts a gloomy picture of modernity. He quotes Nietzsche’s saying, “The wasteland grows,” in order to show the deterioration in literature and the world (Quoted by Heidegger 1968, 29). Just because our age is gloomy, dark, and threatening it is the most thought-provoking age (Heidegger 1968, 29). Heidegger says that “what properly gives food for thought, has long been withdrawing” (Heidegger 1968, 25). He is critical of logistics integrated into technical reason, which results in withdrawal. Withdrawal is the result of not dealing with tools and things in a crafty manner to let them articulate their aspects properly, which in turn provides us with thought. Because of this withdrawal, we find ourselves in a Platonic Cave. Automation which results in alienation eliminates genuine relationship, and leads us to live in untruth.

Heidegger’s concern overlaps with those of other philosophers criticizing modernity such as Herbert Marcuse and Jürgen Habermas. Like Habermas, he thinks that technical reason, which is identified as purposive rational action by Habermas, predominates over other forms of knowledge in a way that science and technology are

at the top of the pyramid in the hierarchy of knowledge. Besides, because science is in the service of technology, it becomes a mere means in technology's revealing itself; therefore it does not think.

Heidegger not only criticizes science for not evaluating its place in the world properly by doing a projection, he also criticizes "one-track" thinking created in modern societies. He says,

The expression "one-track" has been chosen on purpose. Track has to do with rails, and rails with technology. We would be making matters too easy for ourselves if we simply took the view that the dominion of one-track thinking, which is becoming ever more widespread in various shapes, is one of those unsuspected and inconspicuous forms. . . in which the essence of technology assumes dominion-because that essence wills and therefore needs absolute univocity (Heidegger 1968, 26).

The essence of modern technology, which is identified as "enframing" (Heidegger 1977, 26–27) by Heidegger is hidden, and it creates "one-track" thinking. As discussed earlier, in the West, thought about thinking resulted in a discipline of logic gathering a special knowledge concerning a special kind of thinking, which is called logistics. Logistics is considered to be the only possible form of strict philosophy because it is integrated with a technological universe, which exercises power over other disciplines in our era. As a result of this, thinking is transformed into a one-track thinking generating an absolute univocity. This dominion of one-track thinking, "reduces everything to a univocity of concepts and specifications the precision of which not only corresponds to, but has the same essential origin as, the precision of technological process" (Heidegger 1968, 34).

Heidegger's critique reminds us of his student Marcuse saying that we become one-dimensional human beings and society in modernity.

CONCLUSION

Heidegger criticizes the representational view of language and truth from several perspectives. He questions the view that there is a correspondence relation between an idea and its object. A complementary assumption of this view is that forming a judgment entails having representational ideas of related objects in our minds. This, assumes that judging and thinking is propositional.

In a Wittgensteinian manner, Heidegger underlines that although every proposition is a sentence, not every sentence is a proposition. Hence, stating is just one form of telling, and there are other types.

The second critique is that when we look at a tree, or a mountain, we stand face to face with the tree and therefore we are out of the realm of science and philosophy. Our position, in this case, is immediate enough not to allow for sophisticated explanation and justification.

Heidegger's alternative is based upon a critique of the Cartesian inclination that assumes a strict separation between subject and object as well as language and the world.

According to Heidegger, the essence of truth is not an empty "generality" of an "abstract" universality; rather it is an inner possibility of the correctness of

statements identified as freedom. Freedom is actualized by engaging oneself with open region. In this sense, “stating” is associated with “laying out,” or “laying before,” which is related to disclosing. Disclosing is accomplished, in case what is perceived is taken to heart.

Heidegger’s analysis of truth is related to his critique of technical reason that is implicit in modernity because he thinks that only if we let things disclose themselves as they are, can we uncover truth, which is masked with idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity.

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ORIGIN AND FEATURES OF PSYCHICAL
CREATIONS IN AN ONTOPOIETIC
PERSPECTIVE

A B S T R A C T

In psychology of depth, the unconscious is often opposed to consciousness, as it is the place of what goes beyond rational thought, but at the same time – both in Freudian psychoanalysis and in Jungian analytical psychology – the unconscious is the first cause of consciousness, and also the unlimited memory of culture; in it we can find the numerous symbolic forms through which human thought can express itself. In fact, the productions of collective imagination can be considered an expression of the development of “forming spontaneity” which is rooted in the wide field of phenomenology of life, that is to say “the universe of human existence within the unity-of-everything–there-is-alive”; both the “inward givenness of the life progress common to all living beings” and “cognitive processes of human mind” (in other terms *eidōs* and fact, *logos* and *mythos*) simultaneously spring from it. In fact, the logic of self-individualization of life can express itself in human creative actions, by referring to the pre-human; in such an outlook, consciousness and reason appear to be in a close relation to the “world-of-life”, as in the archaic periods of human history. We have to bear in mind that both dream phenomena and fantastic creations – associated by the original creativeness and by the transformer energy characterizing them – can be analysed and interpreted only through their stories; this explains the fundamental function of figurative (metaphorical and symbolic) language, which is used in them. According to psychoanalysis, symbols are visual representations of unconscious contents, a sort of phylogenetic heritage referring to ontogenesis; in analytical psychology they become real teleological factors, as the archetypes of the collective unconscious (“a priori” forms common to the whole human kind) can find expression above all through symbols.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

In psychology of depth, the unconscious is often contrasted with consciousness, as the place of all that transcends rational thought, but at the same time – both in Freudian psychoanalysis and in Jungian analytical psychology – the unconscious is the first “cause” of consciousness, as well as the unlimited memory of culture, where it is possible to trace the numerous symbolic forms through which human thought expresses itself. In fact, here rational or conceptual thought coexists with

fantastic or symbolic thought: if the conscious is the detailed memory, for the most part directed to a practical purpose, the unconscious is potential and unbounded memory of culture in which all the symbolic forms are present (...) and all the metaphors with which, in the course of the hominization of history, man has spread his natural cosmos, the narrow riverbed in which nature placed him.¹

An ontopoietic outlook is particularly congenial to explaining these phenomena, as well as presenting them in ontogenetic and phylogenetic continuity. In fact, from this perspective, the products of collective imagination (including dreams, but above all myths and fairy tales) can be considered expression of the development of the “forming spontaneity” that is unleashed, as the phenomenology of life demonstrates, from the “universe of human existence in the unity-of-every-thing-that-lives” as bearer of the creative function that is capable of sparking the very progress of life. On the other hand, in it are rooted both the putting-into-act-of-life and the most specifically cognitive functions of the human being, both *mythos* and *logos*. It is precisely in the human creative acts that the logic of self-individualization of life is manifested, in which consciousness and modern reason also are placed and thus put into intimate relation with the world-of-life, on the same level as what happened in the most archaic phases of humanity.

CHARACTERISTICS AND STRUCTURES OF THE
CREATIONS OF THE PSYCHE

*DREAM AND MYTH: SIMILARITIES
AND DIFFERENCES*

When investigating objects such as dreams, myths, and fairy tales – more in general, the creations of the human psyche – we must always keep in mind their intrinsic nature. For example, in the interpretation of oneiric products, we do not have the opportunity to analyze the original dreams, but only the “stories,” the reconstructions provided by the dreamers and formed of their “recollections” (in psychoanalytical terms, the “manifest content” of the dream, which, however, is not the same as its “latent content.”) It is evident that the words used to tell the dream have a contingent and in any case instrumental value: they could also not exist, and yet the dream would still remain, at least in the mind of the individual who dreamed it; when there are words, their function is limited to transmitting, to making known to an interlocutor a representative product that is already complete, beyond and independent of the words used to communicate it.² The same holds for mythological productions: investigation needs must be conducted on the “narrations of myths,” passed from generation to generation orally, which have become the collective patrimony of a people or a society, or have been collected in literary works. Part of the content of oneiric tales and mythological stories, and thus also of their “cognitive value,” is inevitably lost. Even so, it can be fruitful to compare them and look for recurring symbols.

Finally, we must not forget that both oneiric products and mythological creations have in common their “original creativity.” In fact, both are charged with “poietic,”

transforming potential, and draw upon the springs of imagination, even if with differences. While the dream is a “spontaneous” product of sleep and an individual creation, mythological construction has a collective value and happens, so to speak, under conscious control: in the myth, every society glimpses the paradigm and the creator crucible of its own culture and, in the final analysis, of the common destiny of all humanity. Perhaps it is not so far-fetched to assert that dreams and myths can be considered associable realities, given that in many myths we find news of dreams (which play a role that is anything but secondary), just as numerous mythic images seem to derive from dreams.

In addition, we should keep in mind – inasmuch as we never study or interpret the myth or dream itself, as it was created, but always a text formed of words – the essential role played by language that is essentially symbolic: the mythic and the oneiric have in common this structure of dual meaning: the dream as nocturnal performance is unknown to us; it is the narration upon awaking that renders it accessible to us and that the analyst interprets by substituting another text that in his way of seeing is the thought of desire, what desire would express freely in a *prosopopeia*. Since it can be narrated, analysed, and interpreted, it must be admitted that the dream is in and of itself close to language. . . .³ Both dreams and myths can thus be analyzed exclusively in the form of narrations, often characterized by a spiral structure. In fact, they often present various attempts to rework one theme; it follows that the very personages or forces of the human psyche can take on roles that appear completely different, but that are of the same kind, and comment on, diversify, and clarify each other.⁴

From the perspective of depth psychology, we can compare and associate dreams and myths on two main levels:

- on the level of structure;
- on the level of language.

On the level of structure, both exclude the categories of space, time, and causality. In addition, both psychoanalysis and analytical psychology hold that the mechanisms operating in myths are analogous to those in dreams (condensation, shifting, etc.). In fact, in dreams the first infantile impressions are condensed into atemporal images, enabling the past to unite with the present in a symbolic structure in which diachrony and synchrony fuse; a structure of analogy is also traceable in myths. In addition, from the point of view of content, all the affectively strong symbols (be they of trust or anguish, joy or suffering) have the ability to open to the fundamental themes of existence and express in their singular configuration archetypal contents: the dream of the single individual thus broadens to become the great dream combining the individual and the collective.⁵

Thus it seems possible to hypothesize a reciprocal convertibility between the individual and the collective; to the degree to which the problem of a dream and the attempts at its symbolic reworking are valid for the experience of life of a human group or a people in a certain period or for an entire era, the oneiric symbols of one individual can condense, for example, in the form of poetry, the lived experience of all, and the deeper the representation and the solution offered by a given theme,

the more this theme expresses itself radically and substantially in the individual's dreams and poetry, the more universal is its validity and the vaster is the interest it finds in humanity.⁶ For that matter, it should be noted that some themes that are central in oneiric experiences as well as in mythological expressions often reflect "conflicts" that belong *a priori* to human existence and that have eternal and universal validity precisely because they can never be resolved definitively: deep down, in both dreams and myths, human beings represent and experience themselves.

On the level of language, both myth and dream have in common the use of symbolic and figurative language, based first of all on the use of archaic images and symbolic portrayals. Symbolism plays an important role both in oneiric phenomena and in mythologic productions, characterized by atemporality and symbolic condensation of humanity's fundamental questions about its existence: seeking to express the forces and conflicts that inform history, staying in the background, the myth re-makes *itself into cover memories*, into certain historic fragments that, owing to their affective, but above all symbolic, density, impress themselves particularly on the collective imagination, and condenses them into atemporal images, representations of the essence of that given human group or in archetypes of human existence.⁷

From the formal point of view, the myth is composed of individual motives that can combine in various ways, and that all tend to the timeless present through cyclic representation of time. This characteristic, which for that matter is typical as much of dreams as it is of myths, is generally explained by depth psychology on the basis of the "repetition compulsion". Just as the dream, returning to the earliest times, seeks to introduce a renewal or a completion of current experience, so the myth, too, does nothing other than revisit events (primordial) of humanity or a people in order to experience, recalling the past to mind, its renewing power and its eternal presence. The instrument for accomplishing this actualisation is, as in the dream, symbolic representation, which, however, now presents itself as actualised, dramatized dream, as rite.⁸

DREAM AND MYTH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY

From the perspective of depth psychology, these products of the psyche seem at once to reveal and to hide the unconscious; they are marked not only by a dual nature (expressed in the distinction between manifest content and latent thoughts) but also by overlapping layers. The dream is at once memory of the past, awareness of the present and perspectival harbinger of the future; thus it enables self-representation of the unconscious in all its multiple functions. It should also be borne in mind that though classical psychoanalysis considers it an essentially regressive phenomenon, it can nonetheless also acquire a perspectival value, and in this sense instrumental, for the conscious dimension. For that matter, while certain manifestations of the human psyche such as dreams and myths provide valid instruments for inquiry into the unconscious that help us in the attempt to penetrate its complex nature, the study of the unconscious, in turn, can, if not transform, at least influence our own vision of dream and myth.

It should be specified first of all that the parallel between myth and dream established by depth psychology does not indicate just a relationship of cause and effect; the fact that we can observe dreamed myths, dreams that contain myths, visionary cults or rites with mythic foundations, that is, the fact that myths and dreams mix incessantly, can be explained by the fact that there is a common substratum represented by a world of the soul that makes itself into image.⁹ Thus, one cannot simply assert that myths derive from dreams or vice versa, because a bond of reciprocal dependence between them enables us to trace undeniable similarities, explainable on the basis of their common origin. Myths and dreams would thus be experiences that can be associated with each other because of their very nature (the fact that both are classifiable as “creations of the psyche”), even though they present differences that do not allow us to overlap them completely.

Dreams differ from myths first of all because of their purely individual character and because of the regressive tendency that can be found in them (often in the Freudian conception of oneiric phenomena); on the contrary, mythological creations are distinguished by a collective dimension and an essentially progressive tendency, inasmuch as they are oriented more toward the future than the past. Thus, while dreams appear principally suited to represent and interpret individual experiences, myths flow from the projection of certain oneiric images on the life and the lived experience of entire social groups. According to Drewermann, the myth is born when the dream, the vision, the poetry of the individual rise to the rank of great dream, because in this case the symbolic language of oneiric images does not mirror only the sediment of individual experiences, but at the same time condenses the living experiences of a vaster human group, interprets them, or anticipates them.¹⁰ This outlook makes it possible to pass from the individual dream to the collective myth. Thus, in the perspective developed by depth psychology, the dream becomes “model” not only of myth but also of other narrative forms that can be related to it (such as fairy tales, sagas, and legends) and that nonetheless have far from negligible differences. For example, unlike the myth, which, tending to the divine, the religious, is thus by nature non-historic, the fairy tale also expresses atemporal truths, but ones that are “human” and thus not transcendent.

The relationship between dream and myth that both Freudian psychoanalysis and Jungian analytical psychology identify seems definable essentially as a “relation of conjunction,” inasmuch as it supports the associability of these two phenomena both on the level of the meaning and function they carry out, and on the level of the structure and language used. This is a “biunivocal relationship,” or we could say bi-directional, in the sense that one can find a relationship between myth and dream, as already mentioned, based on reciprocity: in fact, it is possible to identify the presence of mythological motives in dreams, but at the same time many collective mythological creations seem to derive from individual oneiric experiences.

It should be noted that the Freudian method, based as it is on a more objective type of interpretation, perhaps is better suited to analysis of “narrations” from the individual character, such as dreams, while the Jungian method, which tends toward a more subjective type of interpretation, seems more appropriate for analysis of the collective patrimony of peoples, that is, of myths. Even so, the similarities between

these two complex realities (dream and myth) and the parallelism identified by depth psychology permit us to assert that “all myths are first of all ‘great dreams’ of single individuals and, vice versa, all ‘little dreams’ also have in themselves the power to become the great myth, similarly to the way poetry is truth”.¹¹

Notwithstanding the difference of approach (essentially causalistic and deterministic as we have seen for Freud and the Freudian school, and in contrast finalistic and perspectival inasmuch as it is oriented toward the search for meaning for Jung and his followers), and in spite of the partially different theory developed for oneiric experience (one can speak of “dream as symptom” for Freud and instead “dream as symbol” for Jung), it should be observed that both acknowledge that the dream has typical characteristics, shared more in general with the processes of the unconscious, the most important of which seem to us to be atemporality and the substitution of external reality with that of psychic reality. The myth is simultaneously connection between the individual and the collectivity, the present with the past and the future, and finally, the human being with external reality and internal reality; it enables a unitary vision of nature and culture, of the divine and the human, the eternal and the temporal.

DREAM AND MYTH FROM AN ONTOPOIETIC PERSPECTIVE

Naturally, we must keep in mind that oneiric phenomena and creations of the imagination, which have in common the original creativity and essentially “poietic”, transformative potential that marks them, can be analysed and interpreted only through their narrations, hence, the importance of the role played by the language they use, which is first of all figurative (metaphorical and symbolic). According to psychoanalysis, the symbol is a visual representation of an unconscious idea; thus it is a phylogenetic inheritance referable to ontogenesis, inasmuch as it is an archaic process of thought preceding the development of individual language. Symbols generally represent unconscious ideas subject to removal that would have no other way of emerging to consciousness; Freud thus grasps the essence of the symbol in the constant relationship between the manifest expression of a dream and its latent reference. In analytical psychology, the symbol takes on a more specific dimension, inasmuch as it is thought to derive from the collective unconscious; archetypes (*a priori* forms common to all of humankind) are thought to find expression (in particular, imaginary creations of the human psyche such as myths or fairy tales) in symbols, which can thus be defined as teleological factors that express meanings that are difficult to know and comprehend from the merely rational point of view.

Both psychoanalysis and analytical psychology have contributed to recognizing an “original importance,” restoring a deeper value also on the cognitive level, to all the manifestations (individual and collective) of culture, in particular to the products of the unconscious, among which an essential role is played by dream and myth. From analysis of how depth psychology views myth and dream, it emerges

that both psychoanalysis and analytical psychology have established a relation of conjunction (analogic for Freud and his school, more clearly dialectic with Jung and his followers) between myth and dream. As we have seen, they have elements in common both on the level of structure and of language, and symbolism plays a fundamental role in both. One of the essential merits of depth psychology is having indicated the essential function of symbolic language found in all creations of the psyche.

On the basis of the association established between dream and myth by depth psychology, it seems possible to us to trace in the latter a value that is hardly negligible on the cognitive level, more accentuated in the Jungian conception than in the Freudian one. In psychoanalysis, myth seems essentially the gratification of removed unconscious desires and the expression of the deepest human impulses that the conscious tries to ignore in order to control them, but that re-emerge in dreams on the individual level and in mythological creations on the more collective one. In contrast, according to analytical psychology, it is not limited to being a kind of substitute satisfaction, but reveals its capacity to express the complex inner reality of a person in all its multiple components, also providing access (inasmuch as it configures as a kind of self revelation) to transcendent truths, and thus enabling the individual to progress in awareness of himself or herself and of the world.

The poietic and transformative nature typical of creations of the psyche find foundation in the phenomenology of life of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, which opens the possibility to grasp the *logos* first in its constructive impetus and then in its unfolding in life, which self-individualizes precisely on the measure of the *logos*. The *logos* of life, in fact, refers to the creativity of the human condition and the creative act, inherent in our condition, taking part in the deepest intense activity of life, and reveals the original "modelling" of the preconscious and reflective functions that characterize human nature in its most intimate essence.

The human condition offers us the key to access being in its living fabric, that is, continually becoming, productive of increasingly more articulated and diversified forms. In fact, human beings not only follow the spontaneous and already traced patterns of universal life, but also incessantly invent and produce new ones, creating devices for life, products of work, works of art, exalting and transfiguring the tremor of existence into the throb of creation. Opening itself to the perspective of the human creative condition, the conscious, which in turn has discovered itself living and vital, thus finds itself witness to the very emergence of life, and at the same time involved in it. When it reaches the level of the human creative condition, therefore, life no longer limits itself to reproduce itself, but in the acts of life of human beings always interprets itself in existence, giving rise to forms of life that not only are new and unimaginable previously, but also are congruent and suitable to the becoming being of life, of which it alone holds the key feature.

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NOTES

- ¹ M. TREVI, *L'altra lettura di Jung [The Other Reading of Jung]*, Cortina, Milano 1988, p. 90.
- ² G. LAI, *Un sogno di Freud [A Dream of Freud]*, Boringhieri, Torino 1977, p. 62.
- ³ RICOEUR, *Dell'interpretazione. Saggio su Freud [On Interpretation. An Essay on Freud]*, Italian translation by A. Renzi, Il Saggiatore, Milano 2002, p. 27.
- ⁴ DREWERMANN, *Psicologia del profondo ed esegesi [Psychology of Depth and Exegesis]*, Italian translation by A. Laldi, Queriniana, Brescia 1996, p. 317.
- ⁵ Ibidem, p. 90.
- ⁶ Ibidem, p. 91.
- ⁷ Ibidem.
- ⁸ Ibidem, p. 93.
- ⁹ E. DREWERMANN, op. cit., p. 90. Cfr. H. ELLENBERGER, *La scoperta dell'inconscio. Storia della psichiatria dinamica [The Discovery of the Unconscious. History of Dynamic Psychiatry]*, Bollati Boringhieri, Torino 1976.
- ¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 89.
- ¹¹ Ibidem, p. 316.

SECTION VI
NATURE, WORLD, CONTINUITY

NATURE AND ARTIFICE IN
MANIFESTING/PRODUCING THE BEING

A B S T R A C T

In the ancient thought, a great importance is given to the notion of nature. Nature is what remains in what becomes and at the same time it is what allows every becoming-being to manifest itself in its proper determination. Nature is thus a principle of identity and a principle for protecting the forms of becoming from contradiction, in so far becoming means the becoming of what is, and the becoming towards what is (in the form of its *telos*). In the modern thought nature is what resists against the transformation promoted by the artifice: therefore nature is a starting point that needs to be overcome to the advantage of the enhancement of what is originally defective. In this framework the way is open towards the criticism of an essentialism, which is stiffened up in the representation of the fixity of nature. However the dynamism of the artifice, which is untied from an orientation to the being of what becomes, can lead to the negation of any eidetic principle, particularly to the negation of the idea of the human being to the advantage of a post-human, that could even contradict the human being in its essential structure, as it is emerged through the historical process. How then can phenomenology and the onto-poietic vision of becoming give value to the dynamism of life and, at the same time, to the exigencies of permanence of what becomes in the process? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to rethink the distinction between generation (as manifestation of the being) and production (as construction of the being), so that the former is not entirely subsumed under the latter.

T H E H U M A N B E I N G A S A P R O B L E M

This paper aims at tackling the issue of nature and artifice in relation to the manifestation and production of the being. The being which is investigated here is above all the human being, that is situated in a historical situation characterized by the transition from the human to the post-human. This theme is relevant both for the classical thought and for phenomenology. In the *Crisis of the European Sciences*, as it is well known, Husserl referred to the Greek concept of *human telos* in order to give sense to the elaboration of modern scientific knowledge. In Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's thought, human finalism is placed at the core of vital dynamism, since the latter cannot be thought without the former. Through the affirmation of artifice the human being becomes a problem. We do not have guarantees that the post-human, which is linked to the artificial technologies, keeps continuity with the human, according to

the *eidetics* that derives from his history and at the same time consists in some essential components. Wilhelm Dilthey, surely a philosopher of life, has identified these components in the articulation of knowing, feeling and willing. To these connotations are linked the capacities of autonomy and choice. Without these connotations it seems that we can think neither the sphere of individual subjectivity, nor the relationships of individuals to each other. However it is important not to take for granted that this human *eidōs* should continue in the future, nor that the continuity between past, present and future (that is the dimension of temporality, which constitutes the *human being*, that hovers between the conscience of finiteness and the tension towards a transcendental horizon) persists. The twofold perspective of the finite and the infinite, that – through either exclusion or inclusion of both terms – has always been the fundamental anthropological tonality, could be cancelled to the advantage of an ontological production entrusted in the power of techniques, which are indifferent to the “conceptual vetero-European apparatus”, as Niklas Luhmann defined it. The functional systemic universe would not need the dramatic scenery cultivated by a restless consciences, but rather the docile ability to adapt to already given situations. Probably an ethics of means disconnected from ends would prevail, and the Kantian imperative would be overturned and would sound as follows: treat your post-human essence, whether in your own post-person or in the post-person of any other, always as a mere means and never at the same time as an end. Full reality and full legitimacy would be given to the overturned world represented as an *exemplum vitandum* in Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s famous painting of 1559 entitled *Dutch Proverbs*, which is exposed in Berlin *Gemäldegalerie*.

MANIFESTATION OF THE BEING AND PRODUCTION

The alternative to the above mentioned catastrophic outcomes is surely an equilibrate relation between nature and artifice, that needs to be carefully calibrated. Thanks to such a measure, what we have always known as *human* and what advances as *post-human* could turn into an ontological and anthropological enhancement and not into an absolute discontinuity, that we could not even indicate through adequate words, being it so extraneous from us. At stake here is the permanence of what is authentically human, its manifestation at higher levels indeed, that do not negate but complete the having-become-in this way of the human. But this is not an automatic process; it rather depends on an increased ethical awareness, that can both appreciate the contribution that technologies can give to the disclosure of human essence, and at the same time can control technologies in order to avoid the risk that their instrumental role takes the place that is due to the ends.

The onto-poietic dynamics of the human, which has assumed a speed that cannot be compared to the one of previous periods, needs to be consistent with its own possibilities. The latter should be based on the idea that the being that can be produced is measured by the unconditioned being. The unconditioned being is not the object of a production, but is the foundation of any productive effort and provides any construction with the positive direction of meaning. In fact producing, as the

historical experience teaches us, can also lead to negative or destructive outcomes. Orientating it towards the positivity of the being depends on us.

In this perspective of ontological positivity, producing can be understood as leading to manifestation the part of the being that is not yet manifest, such as the *hervorbringen* that Martin Heidegger opposed to the *herausfordern* in his work of 1954 entitled *Die Frage nach der Technik*. The manifestation of the being would thus be against a provocation that abuses its power, the construction of the being would lead to light the being itself, that is the part of the being that we are allowed to bring to light, being aware that the being that depends on our conditions is not the unconditioned being.

THE WEAVE OF NATURE AND ARTIFICE

In the background of this precomprehension, let us think in a coherent way the weave of nature and artifice within the human condition. In fact the human nature is both a starting and an arriving point, that is a “vectorial” concept, that connotes a basic equipment, a way to scour and an hoped fulfilment. Therefore nature, in the human, is always *more than* nature. Nature’s *ecstatic* character introduces us to the notion of artifice. Artifice belongs to human nature itself: it blends in the intentionality of the *hand* and thus of the entire corporeity. To sum up, the human is at the same time nature and artifice.

This clarification allows us to see, through a brief genealogical reconstruction, how the ideas of nature and artifice have expressed themselves and have developed in the framework of western thought.

NATURE AS A FACT AND NATURE AS ESSENCE

It is important to remark the distinction between nature as a fact and nature as essence. Nature as a fact is the “*what is*” (that which is). Nature as essence is the “*what for*” (that for which) or, better, the “*what for*” in the “*what is*”. This distinction dates back to the Aristotelian vision of the *physis* that presented the concept of nature dynamically, especially in the books of the *Physics* but also in other works. Nature as essence is an end that can be fulfilled, starting from the already given; is does not overlap with an absolutely non-deformable structure.

In our times, the contemporary research in the field of biology has made any firm representation of nature fluid: today we can no longer support a pre-constituted essentialism, that abstracts from the mobility which is attested by a progressing study of phenomena.

The distinction between nature as a (already given) *fact* and nature as essence (an arriving point to strive towards) entails important speculative implications. In fact it highlights an ontological condition which is signed by finiteness and limit. If there were already a full synthesis between the “*what is*” and the “*what for*”,

the distinction between these two aspects would disappear. We would thus have the perfect coincidence of existence and essence, such as in the divine condition.

It is the non-adjustment of essence and existence (and it does not matter here to establish whether the essence precedes the existence or vice versa) that allows that the “*what is*” differs from the “*what for*”. This difference makes the “*what is*” restless and puts it in tension with the “*what for*”.

NATURE AND POWER OF THE WILL

The non coincidence, within the being, between the being that already is and the being that is not yet, is maybe the fundamental premise of what we consider as an artifice. If the finite being always needs to be beyond the being that already is, it is always open to the artifice. The artifice, in its constitutive structure, is the intervention on nature as a fact, in view of nature as essence, or in other words it is the intervention on nature *as it is*, in view of nature *as it ought to be*. In the dimension of the artificial, nature as it is disestablished in view of our *idea* of nature.

The artifice, that historically had the function to realize the natural order, has not raised accusations of negation of the human. Problems arose when the intervention of the artifice was no longer lead by the idea of what nature ought to be in continuity to what nature effectively is, but started to be lead by the idea of what we *would* like that nature becomes beyond its objective order, or beyond ends that are not realized yet, but are nonetheless inscribed in the nature itself. Nature, once deprived of its intrinsic form, would be assumed as a *material element* of a form which is dependent from the power of the will, since the latter has knowledge and operative procedure at its disposal, that can allow it to realize its project, or even *any* project.

To sum up, once nature becomes the object of a human free will that finds its law in itself, the will to intervene through the artifice is no longer a bridge between nature as a fact and nature as *eidōs*, but is even legitimated to modify the starting and arriving points that are, on the one side, the factuality and, on the other side, the essentiality of nature.

NATURE AND HUMAN CREATIVITY

Let us try to better articulate the character of a position in which nature becomes completely *relative* to the act of will. In this position the initial dimension of nature is recognized only if it is wanted. The begin, if it does not exclusively arise from the will, is not binding with regard to its acceptance. The initial fact or event is not only modified so that it is also wanted, but it can also be refused or annulated if it is not completely convertible with what is wanted. Therefore the will also determinates the ought-to-be of what already is. In this framework, the artifice intervenes as a tool that allows to modify both the initial and the final conditions of the dynamics of development of nature.

These problems cannot be solved through an obtuse reaffirmation of nature as absolutely disconnected from the will. It is important to admit that nature is not inclusive of the entire consistency of the human. Its objective constitution is always mediated through a subjective spontaneity which is in relationship with other subjectivities. We could say that, beyond nature as the set of the already given objectifications, leans out a nature as a dimension of spontaneous and *self-moving* intentionality. Therefore human nature – as we can argue also in the light of the contemporary neuroscientific research when it is not inclined to the naturalistic reductionism – is not only an *explanandum* for the human, but always also an *interpretandum*, or better something that *can be interpreted*. It can be approached hermeneutically. The concept of human nature thus entails the role of a threshold-concept: it is something that is given, which refers to a not-given, and the latter is not completely inscribed in a codex *a priori*, and emerges as the fruit of a capacity of an autonomous, or even creative, increase.

PERMANENCE AND MUTATION OF HUMAN NATURE

The previous considerations should make the often apodictic use of the concept of nature less peremptory, and should also favour a greater availability to revise its meaning. It would be necessary to respect both *fires* that are involved in the never-ending interpretative undertaking of human nature. The one fire is the constant reference, within human self-reflection, to something which remains and thus combines the different expressions of the human. The other fire refers to the fact that the statements of the expressions of humanity can change with regard to both time and space: furthermore any single individualisation has an irreducible character and when it gives form to its own self-interpretation, it becomes an autonomous principle of free declination, both in the similarity and the dissimilarity, with respect to nature as a set of already given conditions. The capacity to give an individual form to what is common belongs indeed to the nature proper to the human. The Aristotelian definition of *physis* as «principle of movement and quiet in something» is very apt especially with regard to the human.¹

GENESIS AND POIESIS

What is natural, in the human, is integrated by the *power (Macht)* of the enhancement of the already given conditions. Going on with the analysis of the artifice and tackling it from the above described point of view, we can argue that the artifice discloses itself as the field of human acting in the framework of the enhancement of the already given conditions. In fact the human being can be understood as an indivisible duality of *genesis* and *poiesis*. The *genesis* is a process of manifestation of the being according to internal principles; the *poiesis* is an ontological process that has its principle in an author's *techne*.

The expansion of technique as a systematic and pervading *technological* apparatus has led to two consequences. The first consequence is that technology has become the main road for the satisfaction of the normality of life, to the extent that it makes the natural normality marginal. This shows the paroxystic qualification of our civilisation as dominated by the essence of technique. The dominance of technique means that the technological normality becomes normative: adapting to the procedures of technique is not only a *habitus* of living, but also the norm to which life itself ought to adequate, its *concrete* moral law.

The second consequence is that the technological *poiesis* has widened to the extent that it entered in circle with the *genesis*. The power of *poiesis* can aspire to become a *generative* power, breaking the barriers that distinguished the *poiesis* (which is bound to the use of elements generated by the *physis*) from the *genesis*. Technique does not come back to nature, once it has fulfilled the task of correcting its deficiencies or highlighting its performances, but can be itself *naturans*.

The following question arises: is a *naturans poiesis* still governable according to an idea of permanence of human nature, according to an essential teleology capable of orienting and binding it, or can it be non responsible with regard to this idea? This is the core of a match that today is played especially on the mobile field of human corporeity, and not only in the different ways of intervening (or not intervening) on the initial and final phases of its manifestation, but also in the management of its middle states and daily performances.

THE HUMAN BEING AS AN END

The problem, in the technologised human, is to understand which should be the relationship between the sphere of generating and the sphere of producing, since the poietic activity can overcome the generative activity and thus lead to an outcome of non return. The productive activity, even if initially placed in the human, can disembed itself from its original matrix and can become a *sibi permissa* activity. Can then nature – understood as the dynamism of generation – maintain its normative control over production? Or, in the hierarchic overturning of their relation, does generation reduce itself to a means for productive finalities, that down-grade the human to a temporary moment of productive operativity? And would it be possible to contrast such a down-grading?

With regard to these issues, would traditional ethical concepts not become pathetic or illusory? The outcome would then be not the ethical relativism but rather the disintegration of the ethical codification of the anthropological experience and the condemnation of our moral vocabulary to insignificance.

The persuasion that has lead humanity, and especially western humanity, till now is the persuasion of the *insuperability* of the human being in the fulfilment of his tasks. Considering humanity (as Kant did), whether in one's own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means is a comprehensible prescription only if the human being remains the end of any action and does not become the instrumental means for a being which is different from

the human being himself. Human dignity, human rights and analogous “non negotiable” concepts need to be sustained by such a persuasion. Even in the messages of religious salvation, transcending the human is always in favour of the human. At another level, the Nietzschean figure of the overman, especially in *Also sprach Zarathustra*, does not turn into a cancellation of the human, but represents the *enhancement* of the human in order to avoid the «horrible haphazard» (*grauser Zufall*) and the mutilation of a one-sided development.²

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PROTECTIONS

However it is not enough to point out unpleasant consequences. The expansion of the technological artifice leads us to ask ourselves how the persuasion of a non transcendible human eidetics (incidentally, a persuasion that has been shared by the current of historicism too) can be justified. Michel Foucault spoke about the human – defined as an empirico-transcendental doublet³ – as a face drawn on sand, that can be cancelled by the pressing sea wave.⁴ How then can we support a will to humanity that is not a nostalgic fancy desire? We cannot escape from the weight to *have to* exhibit the grounds of our capacity to *continue* to be aware or conscious subjects, who are also morally responsible and capable of discerning the good to be done and the bad to be avoid.

In the conviction that the inherited human is also the human to perpetuate, we can refer to the anthropological tradition and defend or protect its fundamental traits: (a) not everything that can be done needs to be done; (b) changes need not to be ends in themselves; (c) we ought to guarantee to our followers at least the same opportunities of choice that we have enjoyed; (d) we ought to contrast the reduction of the human, in any human being, to a mere material for an extrinsic formal principle; (e) we ought not to allow that any individual becomes a mere means for ends that do not belong to him; (f) we ought to allow anyone the expression of each of his faculties or capacities, and of the set of his faculties. The catalogue could go on.

THE LIMITS OF EXPERIENCE AND THE VISUAL OF THE ENTIRE

How is it possible to provide a foundation for these anthropological *protections*, that derive from the traditional self-understanding of the human? We could cling to the religious message, as a message that promises the salvation of the human in God, and the ultimate protection of the aspirations to the human’s perpetuation could rest on it. We recognize the legitimacy of the option of entrusting the destiny of anthropological continuity to the hope deriving from a meta-rational announcement; at the same time we think that we need to bracket this option in order to give space to the autonomy of a rational reflection, able to face the threat of the negation of the human being, to which the excess of the artifice could lead. The following question arises: can the defence of human dignity from an instrumental reduction be a task of reason?

This is not an easy matter. At the level of empirical rationality, it is not easy to recognize to the human the power to perpetuate his constitutive *eidōs*, or his existential condition. Remaining within the limits of experience, the perspective of the failing of the human does not seem contradictory. Both single experiences and the experience of the human in itself are exposed to a destiny of death.

However the human is the guardian of a radical intentionality, that is the intentionality of the entire. This intentionality goes through experience and thus leans out through a movement that transcends the limits of experience itself. Always situated in the margin of a wait for death, human conscience intentionates the other from death too.

The leaning out on the destiny of death is an eminent case of the function of transcendence that the intentionality of the entire expresses, by opposing the narrow connotations of experience. In fact, any critique of the limits of experience is enabled by the pre-comprehension of experience itself from the visual of the entire. However the critical function of the limits of experience, that pivots on the entire, is an indirect way of searching for a *positivity*, thanks to which the unlimited openness towards the entire can be fully filled. These considerations lead to the following question, that breaks any empirical restriction: is there a *positive* correlate that is on a par with the unlimited openness which is proper to the intentionality of the entire?

THE UNCONDITIONED BEING AS NON PRODUCIBLE

It is the positivity of the unconditioned being that can be put on a par with the openness to the entire.⁵ But unconditioned with respect to what? With respect to any possibility to be produced. The unconditioned being is the being that escapes from producibility. It is not the outcome of an instrumental acting by someone or something else. Not only it is not produced: the unconditioned being is not producible too. This does not mean that it must be thought as static and without any dynamism.

If the unconditioned being cannot be produced by the human's productive power or, the other way round, if the human's productive power does not have any power on the unconditioned being, the question on the human condition arises, because the human is a producing subject that is exposed to the risk of being reduced to an object of production. The question is the following: is there an intrinsic relationship between the unconditioned being and the conditioned being? Is there a relationship that can take the human being away from a producibility outcome, to which he is exposed because of the excess of artificiality? In other words, how can the human being enjoy an irreducible unconditionality, being at the same time always conditioned?

THE RELATION BETWEEN CONDITIONED AND UNCONDITIONED

To the conditioned being can be assigned unconditionality thanks to a relation of participation. The unconditionality of the conditioned being derives from the participation at the unconditionality of the being which is posed as absolute.

In this participation the ontological dignity of the human being can rest on a stable foundation. As well as the unlimited being cannot be subjected to the logics of production by someone or something else, *analogously* the limited being, that is the human being, cannot be reduced to the logics of producibility. Therefore the human being too is a principle in himself and needs to be respected. It cannot become an object of production.

This is the ontological core of the anthropological protections from the absorption into the logics of instrumental production and at the same time it is the foundation of a way of considering production as an authentic ontopoiesis, that is a manifestation of the being that does not exhaust itself in the dominance of human productive power.

MEASURE OF THE ARTIFICE AND CHALLENGES OF THE POST-HUMAN

To sum up: from the idea of an unconditioned *being* that can be participated by the fullness of the human – a fullness which is inscribed in its nature and at the same is time open to a not-yet-given fulfilment – derives the measure of the power of manipulation that the human has, thanks to the disclosure of the artifice. The omnipotence of the artifice and its destructive involutions can be contrasted. The best antidote to the excessiveness of the artifice consists in the capacity to maintain the relation with the non producible being. From here follows a rule of life, which excludes that instrumental production becomes the totality of the experience for a finite being. This rule consists in *taking care* that the artifice does not overcome the limits which are proper to a partial dimension of existence.

The human's ontological dignity then ought to rely on the maturity of consciences that are able to discern between a *manifestative* production, which is open to the fulfilment of the being, and the production of an enslavement to instrumentality, that moves away from that fulfilment. This discernment is at the base of any choice that is done in punctual situations and contingent circumstances, which are never without opacity, uncertainty, and risk.

Thanks to these coordinates we can even face the challenges of the post-human, distinguishing that which is an enhancement of the human (through a coherent use of technologies and a *good* hybridation between the human and his growing artificial equipment) from that which could turn into his negation. It is not a matter of cultivating the “fear of the artificial” on which Emmanuel Mounier poured out his caustic antibourgeois irony.⁶ It is rather a matter of rethinking without “reactionary” prejudices the relation between human ontology and artificial dimension, moving towards the new frontiers of a hybridation that is in favour of the process of humanization.

NOTES

¹ On this issue the following comment by Robert Spaemann is very precious : «Fin dall'origine, nella filosofia greca, *physis* non significa [...] la pura oggettività di una materia passiva quanto un essere sussistente, pensato in analogia all'esperienza di sé propria dell'uomo: e cioè nel senso di una distinzione di un essere naturale da tutti gli altri, di un sistema vivente, come si direbbe oggi, da un ambiente, inteso come limitazione attiva, come autoaffermazione e autorealizzazione *spontanea*. *Physis*, natura, è secondo Aristotele l'essenza delle cose che hanno il principio, l'inizio del movimento in se stesse. In questo senso *physis* è certamente un concetto che fin dall'origine serve alla distinzione» (R. Spaemann, '*Naturale*' e '*innaturale*' sono concetti moralmente rilevanti?, in C. Vigna-S. Zanardo (eds.), *Etica di frontiera. Nuove forme del bene e del male*, Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2008, p. 88).

² A larger analysis in Francesco Totaro, "*Superuomo e senso dell'agire in Nietzsche*", in Totaro (ed.), *Nietzsche e la provocazione del superuomo. Per un'etica della misura*, Rome: Carocci, 2004, pp. 111–133.

³ Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*, Paris: Gallimard, 1966; engl. transl. *Order of Things*, New York: Vintage Books Edition, 1994, p. 318.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 386.

⁵ Parmenide's reflection on this issue has not been overcome yet. According to his formulation, «the being cannot not be». From this unconditioned formulation of the being derives the following affirmation too: «thinking and thinking that it is are the same thing», if thinking is above all intentionality of the entire that finds its fulfilment in an unlimited positivity of the being. For this reason Parmenides' intentionality of the entire does not embrace the multiple determinations. A further gain exactly consists in adding that the being can be predicated also with regard to the multiple determinations of the entire, and nonetheless the way in which the determinations are within the entire is not actually manifest, therefore the fact that they concretely belong to the entire does not appear. The being of the determinations, because of their opacity compared to the entire, differs from the being of the entire.

⁶ Emmanuel Mounier, *La petite peur du XX siècle*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1949.

SEMIOTICS OF BEING AND UEXKÜLLIAN
PHENOMENOLOGY¹

A B S T R A C T

German-Baltic biologist Jakob von Uexküll (1864–1944) did not regard himself as a phenomenologist. Neither did he conceive of himself as a semiotician. Nevertheless, his *Umwelt* terminology has of late been utilized and further developed within the framework of semiotics and various other disciplines – and, as I will argue, essential points in his work can fruitfully be taken to represent a distinctive *Uexküllian phenomenology*, characterized not least by an assumption of the (in the realm of life) universal existence of a genuine first person perspective, i.e., of experienced worlds. Uexküllian phenomenology is an example of – a special case of – a semiotics of being, taken to be a study of signs designed so as to emphasize the reality of the phenomena of the living. In the course of this paper, I will relate Uexküllian phenomenology to the eco-existentialism of Peter Wessel Zapffe (1899–1990), eco-phenomenology (including David Abram and Ted Toadvine), and semiotics of nature (biosemiotics, ecosemiotics, zoosemiotics). I will further make a few remarks on the partial resemblance between Uexküllian phenomenology and Tymieniecka’s “phenomenology of life”, and its difference from the “phaneroscopy” of Peirce.

This paper starts out with the notion of *Uexküllian phenomenology*. The attentive reader will notice throughout this text that the wide-ranging project I am investigating is the relation between phenomenology and semiotics, with the natural world – the world of the living – as a recurring theme. In the first section of this paper, I will make clear why such a phenomenology deserves the name “Uexküllian”, and how it differs from the phenomenology proposed by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914). I will then proceed to relate Uexküllian phenomenology to the eco-existentialism of the Norwegian philosopher Peter Wessel Zapffe (1899–1990), to eco-phenomenology, and to various brands of *semiotics of nature*.

Uexküllian phenomenology can be regarded as an example of – a special case of – a semiotics of being. A semiotics of being, in its turn, would be a study of signs (signification, communication, representation) designed so as to emphasize the reality of the countless phenomena of the living (where the latter are acknowledged as the true subjects of the phenomenal world at large). This paper thus presents programmatic statements for both semiotics and phenomenology. The general assumption is that unification of the two fields of inquiry can be mutually enriching.

Before endeavouring to pursue my main objective, however, I will make a few preliminary remarks on the relation between Uexküllian phenomenology and the phenomenology of life proposed by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. I am sympathetic

to Tymieniecka's statement at the 60th International Congress of Phenomenology that what should be fundamentally thematized as primary is life. This contrasts with competing prioritizations of thematizing of being and knowing, respectively (in an anthropocentric sense). That said, I must point out that the notions of "being" and "knowing" applied in the current paper contrasts with Tymieniecka's use of these (and with traditional use of them), and that I have tended to alter the signification of these terms so as to bring them in line. For me, then, "semiotics of *being*" denotes an approach with the whole sphere of life – all that lives in this planet, and possibly beyond – as its area of validity or relevance; and when and if I call any of these creatures "knowing", it is in a sense very different from that of the "knowing human" as it is usually conceived of.

In the interview Torjussen et al. (2009), Tymieniecka was asked about the metaphysical dimension of the ecological crisis, and how she relates to eco-phenomenology. "Actually," replied Tymieniecka, "my account of *ontopoiesis* is an eco-phenomenology." That statement makes sense, given that describing the self-individualization of life, as she calls it, "is the most fundamental ecology that can be done."

Upon pointing out a few commonalities I must disclose my lack of any detailed knowledge of Tymieniecka's phenomenology of life. It is nevertheless clear to me that the two approaches (her being much more developed than mine) share a number of basic convictions. First, I concur that "the order, selfordering, of the course of individualizing life is not a 'neutral,' automatic fitting together of matching elements. To the contrary, this ordering – effected by living intentionality, *vis viva* – is a sentient selection" (Tymieniecka 2007, p. xxiii). In my context this is related to what I call "semiotic causation". Second, I acknowledge that instead of classifying philosophical problems in separate realms of inquiry we should "approach their common groundwork, which is life itself at its basic onto-metaphysical level (...) wherefrom all scientific and philosophical problems have their common root." (ibid., p. xx). Third, I heartily agree that "the concept of what is 'human' cries out for revision", given that traditionally "the human being has been specified by its 'nature,' that is, identified by the salient features that *distinguish* us from other living beings" (ibid. – my emphasis). Despite these common convictions and aims, I am confident there are a number of points where these two approaches diverge as well.

U E X K Ü L L I A N P H E N O M E N O L O G Y

When Jakob von Uexküll extended the reach of the in part phenomenological epistemology and ontology of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) to the world of biology, i.e., the world of the living, he claimed to represent Kant, rather than to contradict him.² In actual fact, he did both. Uexküll's *Umwelt theory* (environmental – or, as we shall see, phenomenological theory) rests not simply on an adoption of certain Kantian terms – such as "phenomenal world" (*Erscheinungswelt*) – but on a radical revision of them.

His explicit, programmatic critique of Kant (cf. Uexküll 1928: 9) points straight to the crucial differences: The phenomenal world springs not from the mind in a rationalistic sense, but rather from the body as a whole. As we can see, Uexküll thus implicitly introduced a notion of *embodied mind* – well before Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962 [1945]). Uexküll further states that not only humans “have” phenomenal worlds – so do other living creatures. To be a living being implies being someone for which something appears. The concept of *functional cycles/circles* shows how subject (a living being) and object (its relevant surroundings) together forms an organic unit, and, by implication, how any acting creature is actively engaged in its lifeworld. Through this notion in particular, Uexküll demonstrated that “the phenomenal world” is a reality without which no living being can be adequately understood. The life world of an animal is an expression of its ecological situation along with its behavioural capacities, which in turn reflect its physiological constitution. The *subjective biology* Uexküll called for – not to be confused with most modern, objectivist adaptations of ethology – would not least entail theoretical reconstructions of various life worlds.³

For Kant, the phenomenal world was a human enterprise, and as such a uniform, singular entity. While a Kantian worldview is in this sense monist (or, if one stresses the category of the thing-in-itself, dualist), the Uexküllian worldview is inescapably pluralist. While for humans there are human-things, as Uexküll would have it, for the cat there are cat-things, for the tick tick-things and so on. One and the same thing can appear as very different phenomenal objects in different *Umwelten*. This is true not only of different species – and species-specific *Umwelten* – but furthermore with regard to individual *Umwelten*.

Admittedly, individuality is an emergent phenomenon which varies greatly in degree in the realm of life. Plants and fungi are diffuse cases. The coordination of their activities is not centralized in the same way as it is for either unicellular organisms or multicellular animals, and their parts may have a higher degree of autonomy with respect to the body (organism) as such. It might not be justifiable to say that plants and fungi *act* – i.e., that they display behaviour – and in consequence, there may not be any *Umwelt* objects in their lifeworlds (no plant things – no fungi things). Instead, their lifeworlds – their phenomenal worlds – are made up of various *meaning factors*. Some examples are humidity, temperature and light. These meaning factors – which typically fluctuate in strength or concentration, be it regularly or irregularly – may of course be present in the lifeworlds of animals and unicellulars as well. The difference between *Umwelt* objects and meaning factors is that while the former are identifiable (i.e., stand out, like a figure on a background) and typically require an immediate response, the latter leave traces of influence on the organism over time, and are only in exceptional cases (such as situations of sudden stress) immediately identifiable. Plants and fungi, in other words, respond for the most part to a floating aggregate of influences. Their phenomena are vague, compared with animal phenomena. Nevertheless, plants and fungi, too, constantly interpret and respond to their developing surroundings.

The realm of phenomena, then – and of the *semiosis* (action of signs, or sign exchange) that go along with them – range from the simpleminded orientation of

a nutrition-seeking bacterium, via the plastic improvisation of a plant, to the often incredible gap between conscious identity and actual behavior in the case of the human animal (a sign of great individuality). The realm of life is perfused with appearances and the agendas we apply to categorize them. Generally, animals with a nervous system can be assumed to have phenomenal worlds – *Umwelten* – of much greater detail and distinction than other creatures. In the human case, language plays a decisive role, further adding to the complexity of the things we are capable of expressing and handling.

As we can see, Uexküll differs from Kant in depicting a world where the spatial and temporal configuration of the phenomenal world, for one thing, varies from life form to life form. In this world of phenomena and phenomenal relations, there is a multitude of perspectives. The human perspective might very well be superior in terms of intelligence and abstraction, but it is not a perspective of total oversight. Instruments of various kinds no doubt add enormously to our knowledge and experience, but our human experience is nevertheless situated, in biological terms, as a limited perspective. There are other creatures that are capable of hearing or seeing above or below our sensory thresholds. And there are senses that we do not have, which other creatures have. These creatures can experience the world in a way we cannot. About these experiences we can acquire data, achieve a certain understanding – but we can never experience the world in that way firsthand.

If Merleau-Ponty (1962: viii–ix) was correct in stating that “we must begin by reawakening the basic experience of the world, of which science is the second-order expression” – and I believe he was – then no doubt firsthand experiences matter. Experiences in the 1st person, and 3rd person descriptions of them – which science offers – are two very different categories. It would be an illusion to think that a scientific worldview can ever achieve total oversight in the sense of “knowing all that there is to know”. In this context I adopt Michael Polanyi’s (1891–1976) position that the living exhibit “tacit knowing” in and through their actions and doings, cf. Polanyi (2009 [1966]).

A challenge to an Uexküllian worldview is how we can explain the constitution – the formation and structure – of what Polanyi called our “stratified universe”. In the world of the living it is clearly all the relations embedded in the life processes – somatic, social, and ecological – that bind it all together. Uexküll’s world is a relational world, a world of relations. A related challenge concerns the relation between biological parts and wholes. Like an organ is composed of tissue, which is composed of cells, so is a body composed of organs, and an ecosystem of bodies. The ecosystem constitutes an organic unit of sorts, as can also be claimed of species, populations etc. But there is a fundamental difference between the way an organ is part of a body, and the way an individual is part of an ecosystem.

The difference, which qualifies the level of the individual (organism) as privileged, is that it is the level of the individual which is properly speaking the level of phenomena (experience). I believe it makes sense to talk about aggregate phenomenal worlds, such as the phenomenal world (*Umwelt*) of human beings, or of bats, or of mammals – but there is a crucial difference between these kinds of

phenomenal worlds, and individual phenomenal worlds: In a word, the former are abstractions. No single creature actually experiences the world like that.⁴

Now it is time to make good on my promise to clarify why the phenomenology I am describing is deserving of the brand “Uexküllian”. I have previously (Tønnessen 2009a) argued that the Umwelt theory of Uexküll needs to be updated with regard to its neglect of the historical dimension of the life processes. At some other points, as well, his work is too marked by his time and his concrete influences – a case at hand is his relation to Kant. If one looks into the way Uexküll himself tried to generalize his biological findings and make them relevant for politics, the picture gets even gloomier (see Tønnessen 2003 and Harrington 1999). A general disclaimer is in place: Uexküllian phenomenology as I portray it is loyal not to Uexküll’s thought in detail but to his essential finding that nature is constituted by the intricate relations of all living creatures, which are all subjects of the phenomenal world at large.

The reason why it makes sense to propagate a phenomenology under the label “Uexküllian” is that Uexküll’s fundamental premises about the nature of life are desperately needed in our time – and in the life sciences of our time. While today’s life sciences are for the most part reductionist – neglecting the reality of the individual, the primary stakeholder in nature – Uexküll’s call for a subjective biology echoes Husserl’s call for a return to the things themselves. Whereas biologism is a potential problem in our society of “biological innovation”, an Uexküllian worldview is not in my interpretation biologicistic, because it portrays society not simply as part of nature but further as an emergent entity within nature, which thus has its unique operational rules on top of the general operational principles of nature.

Uexküllian phenomenology should be rigorously undogmatic. This applies not only to Uexküll’s work, but also to semiotics as a scholarly discipline. Its main axiom could here be that the phenomenon is a special case of semiosis. Semiosis, in other words, is the general entity, or process, of which phenomena are part. I will get back to the relation between semiosis and phenomena towards the end. The axiom just mentioned could be taken to imply that phenomenology can be regarded as a subdiscipline of semiotics.

If reading that last sentence provoked you, you should look up how dismissive certain other semioticians can be of phenomenology. A common attitude is that semiotics is more progressed than phenomenology, and many would hold that phenomenology is largely a dated enterprise. In the following I will relate in some detail to the work of Charles Sanders Peirce, the chief source of inspiration for most contemporary semioticians – not least his idea of a field named *Phaneroscopy*. Perhaps my disclaimer on Uexküll should be accompanied at this point with a similar disclaimer concerning Peirce: Uexküllian phenomenology as I conceive of it is loyal not to any specific interpretation of Peirce, nor to his general philosophical outlook, but rather, to the extent that it is of any use, to some basic concepts of his such as those of *symbolicity*, *iconicity* and *indexicality*. It is absolutely crucial that such concepts are not fetishized.⁵ As we will see in the following, Uexküllian phenomenology is not necessarily aligned with Peirce’s ideas about phenomenology.

In a paper entitled “Is Phaneroscopy as a pre-semiotic science possible?” André de Tienne (2004) treats the prospects of Peirce’s phenomenology, which the latter named *Phaneroscopy* in order to distinguish it from Hegel’s thought. Peirce’s papers on phenomenology and the theory of perception date for the most part from the period 1900–1908 (Luisi 2006). “Phaneroscopy as a research activity”, observes de Tienne, “isn’t practiced anywhere and hasn’t attracted any wide following [. . .] Peirce scholars are divided about what that science is supposed to be and to do, and about how exactly it relates to semiotics.”

“Phaneroscopy”, said Peirce (1931–1958: 1.284) in his Adirondack lectures in 1905, “is the description of the phaneron; and by the phaneron I mean the collective total of all that is in any way or in any sense present to the mind, quite regardless of whether it corresponds to any real thing or not.” Here, the “phaneron” apparently corresponds to the combined phenomena of an individual phenomenal world.

If you ask present when, and to whose mind, I reply that I leave these questions unanswered, never having entertained a doubt that those features of the phaneron that I have found in my mind are present at all times and to all minds. So far as I have developed this science of phaneroscopy, it is occupied with the formal elements of the phaneron.

The common interpretation of Peirce on this point is that his Phaneroscopy was intended to be applicable on the human mind only – a marked difference compared with Uexküllian phenomenology. If that interpretation is correct, Peirce appears to have envisioned a phenomenological world – a world of phenomena – just as limited in its reach as that of Kant. If it is wrong – or, if one were to disagree with Peirce and call for a “Phaneroscopy of the living” – one would have to revise him to the same extent as Uexküll had to rework Kant. We can further observe that Peirce promoted a monistic, not pluralistic, understanding of the phenomenal world – like Kant, but unlike Uexküll, and that his preferred worldview is timeless – like in Kant and Uexküll alike (but unlike an up-to-date Uexküllian phenomenology).

“It will be plain from what has been said”, wrote Peirce (1931–1958: 1.286–287) in “Logic viewed as Semeiotics”, “that phaneroscopy has nothing at all to do with the question of how far the phanerons it studies correspond to any realities.” Uexküllian phenomenology differs from Phaneroscopy (or, it *should* differ) by emphasizing, rather than neglecting, relations between phenomena and the rest of empirical reality. In my take on Uexküll, that implies treating “world history” (human history) as well as “natural history” as organic wholes – the former being part of the latter. The phenomenal world at large has a history, and a reality, and as such it is emergent, historical, and empirical. Distinguishing phenomena that do correspond to something real from those that do not *is* a task for phenomenology – and this task is more crucial than anywhere else in the symbol-heavy human realm. But that enterprise should not be taken lightly. Here, the Peircean notions of symbolic (conventional), indexical (causal) and iconic (similarity-based) relations come in handy, in effect providing the base variants of *semiotic causation* (a dominantly associative logic – cf. Peirce’s notion of “abduction” in particular).

ECO-EXISTENTIALISM, ECO-PHENOMENOLOGY, AND SEMIOTICS OF NATURE

In what follows I will treat Uexküllian phenomenology in its relation to the eco-existentialism of Peter Wessel Zapffe, the eco-phenomenology of David Abram and Ted Toadvine, and various brands of semiotics of nature, biosemiotics included.

*THE ECO-EXISTENTIALISM OF PETER WESSEL
ZAPFFE*

On a personal note, it was in Peter Wessel Zapffe's Norwegian language *magnus opum* *On the Tragic* (Om det tragiske) that I first encountered the Umwelt theory of Jakob von Uexküll (Zapffe 1996 [1941]). Zapffe is one of the three classical eco-philosophers of Norway, along with deep ecologist Arne Næss (1913–2009), who also to some extent referred to the work of Uexküll. For Zapffe, Uexküll was *the* biologist, and thus important for carving out his “biosophy” – philosophy of biological wisdom. From Uexküll, Zapffe learnt that everything alive is fundamentally different from everything not alive (that which is alive is what matters), and that all that lives navigates along the lines of its interests. His infamous pessimism (Zapffe held that humankind should voluntarily stop reproducing) lies in his take on what is characteristic of human interests and abilities. Claiming that we, as a species, are over-equipped in terms of consciousness, his analysis of cultural life amounted to a series of observations of the various ways in which we delude ourselves in order to escape if not our predicament, then at least our awareness of it.

The core contribution from Uexküll in Zapffe's thought was the former's view that in the case of animals, there is a harmonious relationship between ability and need. Zapffe's philosophical innovation is his claim that this is not valid in the case of human beings. He thus establishes man as an exceptional creature in the living world (as have countless others, each in their own way). While the behaviour of most animals is more or less fixed, Zapffe observed, human behaviour is exceptionally unfixed – exceptionally plastic. More precisely, we have become fixed in being unfixed. Instead of having highly specialized limbs or organs, we have acquired an ability to apply tools and technology so as to extend our capabilities. We compensate for our bodily simplicity by innovations and armour. Over time, the specialization of labour and technology has gone so far that the development has long since spun out of control. The technological development is not regulated by any external force, but only by our own choices. Due to our near-global delusion, there is not much hope.

So far Zapffe. Honestly speaking, his portrait of the biological world is very biased, since he everywhere (except for in his humorous prose stories) emphasizes grief and misery and downplays delightful undertakings. He talked of a “brotherhood of suffering”, ranging from the amoeba to the dictator or artistic genius. Empathy or sympathy thus has a place in his worldview. But why not a “brotherhood of pure delight” as well?

Zapffe failed to see the true significance of Uexküll's attribution of phenomenological status to other mindful creatures. He was the first major figure in Norwegian culture to call for conservation measures – but like Uexküll, he did not observe, or foresee that the apparent harmony between animal ability and need turns out not to be a timeless fact. In the case of endangered species in volatile ecological situations – such as our current situation – the abilities of any animal can prove to be insufficient to meet their needs. In short, Zapffe's existentialism did not break with the tradition of focusing solely on the *human* existence, despite the fact that it – perhaps for the first time – incorporated the value of nature (though first of all for recreational purposes) in existentialist thought.

THE ECO-PHENOMENOLOGY OF DAVID ABRAM AND TED TOADVINE

It is a peculiar fact that even proclaimed environmental phenomenologists – eco-phenomenologists (see Brown and Toadvine (eds.) 2003) – mainly or exclusively reason from a human point of view. That is not a promising start, as a matter of methodology, in dealing with issues of ecology. The contribution of Uexküll's thought, as a possible foundation for eco-phenomenology, is that it carries with it the theoretically modelled perspective of each and every living being. It offers elements of a pluralist, ecologically informed worldview in a form which allows us to come to terms with the manifold diversity of nature. It offers an image of nature as incredibly much richer than our human perception of nature. If we believe that eco-phenomenology, or environmental philosophy in general, is all about human perceptions, we commit a categorical mistake, and miss out on the heart of the matter.

The contemporary eco-phenomenologists David Abram and Ted Toadvine are highly different in style, method and outlook, yet are both first-rate representatives of this emerging field. I consider *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World* (Abram 1997) to be a modern classic, a great source of inspiration, and in many ways a work that can help bringing phenomenology forwards. My one reservation – apart from the general point mentioned above – derives from Abram's defence of animism. I am glad that *someone* is giving philosophical credibility to the worldview(s) of oral cultures, and Abram is a highly articulate voice – but in his case the defence of animism gets in the way of an even richer perspective. To the sensing body, observes Abram, nothing presents itself as utterly passive or inert. And from that he concludes that nothing *is* utterly passive or inert. That is animism in a nutshell.

“In the derivation of this word [phenomenology],” wrote Peirce (1931–1958: 2.197) in 1902, “‘phenomenon’ is to be understood in the broadest sense conceivable; so that phenomenology might rather be defined as the study of what seems than as the statement of what appears. It describes the essentially different elements which seem to present themselves in what seems.” Here, both Peirce and Abram are aligned with a part of the phenomenological tradition which we should break free from: Namely, the conception that phenomenology should be a study of what seems. Such a conception is truly deserving of the label “pre-semiotic”. In Abram's case, I

consider this a flaw in an otherwise brilliant work. I do, however, sympathize with his project of reengaging with perceptual reality. That is a cornerstone for modern environmentalism, and modern thought in general.

Like Abram, Ted Toadvine is following in the footsteps of Merleau-Ponty. He has investigated to what extent meaning can be attributed to nature (Toadvine 2003: 273), arguing that “the ontological continuity of organic life with the perceived world of nature requires situating sense at a level that is more fundamental than has traditionally been recognized.” Much of his project resonates well with biosemiotic and Uexküllian thought. Rather than to the world-subject conjunction, Toadvine theorizes, “sense would be more accurately attributed to the meeting point of world and life. All life carries with it an evaluative projecting into the world. [. . .] Life values and chooses; it throws a world up before itself and is therefore already intentionally engaged rather than merely causally connected.”

SEMIOTICS OF NATURE (BIOSEMIOTICS, ECOSEMIOTICS, ZOOSEMIOTICS)

There are in the main three established brands of semiotics of nature – biosemiotics, ecosemiotics and zoosemiotics – and this is not the place to go into detail about any of them.⁶ While the International Society for Biosemiotic Studies is only a few years old, the conference series *Gatherings in Biosemiotics* is now in its tenth year – but biosemiotics as a field dates back to the 1980ies, and zoosemiotics, from which biosemiotics grew, all the way back to the 1960ies. The story can hardly be told without mention of Thomas A. Sebeok (1920–2001), a prominent 20th century semiotician who coined “zoosemiotics” and was a mobilizing figure for biosemiotics.

What is important in the context of this paper is that the Umwelt theory of Jakob von Uexküll has had a renaissance as a work of foundational importance for contemporary semiotics of nature (cf. Kull 2001). For biosemioticians, writes Jesper Hoffmeyer (2004: 89), there is “nothing mysterious about the phenomenal world, for it is deeply embedded in bodily semiotics”. That is largely due to the influence in biosemiotics of Jakob von Uexküll. One reason why I find it worthwhile to campaign for an Uexküllian phenomenology – in phenomenological as well as in semiotic circles – is that even in biosemiotics there is a continued need for stringent thought in these matters. Hoffmeyer provides a good example – he is perhaps the one biosemiotician I share most views with; and yet, his thinking around Umwelten (phenomenal worlds) is at times inconsistent.

To the *phenomenological reduction(s)*, at any rate, where the problem with perceptual biases is attempted solved by way of a suspension of judgment – the phenomenological *epoché* – etc., I would add a *biosemiotic reduction*. We could perhaps say that the phenomenological reduction, as it has hitherto been conceived of, aspires only to achieve (or approach) an unbiased perception of *our own*, human Umwelt. We cannot but commence (and continue) our journey into the phenomenal world at large *in, by and through* the human Umwelt, but current eco-phenomenology is testimony to the fact that a second step, a second reduction, is required in order to reach beyond the domain of human prejudice. The biosemiotic

reduction, as I have defined it in Tønnessen (2010), is “the movement in thought whereby we reduce observed material in the life sciences to the meaning-content constituting the lifeworlds (and their constituent parts, down to the level of the cell) of biological organisms. Semantic, syntactic and pragmatic noise is to be done away with.”

Earlier in this paper I have established that semiosis (the action of signs, or sign exchange) is the general category of which phenomena are part. In conclusion, we will now consider the relation between semiosis and phenomena in a little more detail, by way of an example. But first, I should delimit the realm of each of these two meaning-constituted notions, however provisionally. For now, I assume that *semiosis* occurs at all levels of biological organization from the cell and up. *Phenomena*, on their hand, occur firsthand (as experiences in the 1st or 2nd person)⁷ on the level of the individual (organism) only. In our stratified universe, we can conceive of phenomena as one layer of semiosis, constituted by semiosis at lower levels of biological organization (not least the semiosis of our sense organs, and of our brain).

The example of the tick is classical in Uexküll studies (cf. von Uexküll 1957 [1934]: 7). In a few words, the tick is interesting because it is capable only of recognizing a few elements – such as the butyric acid, hair, and heat. All mammals have butyric acid, so in consequence the tick is able to recognize any mammal – though not to distinguish between them. For the tick, there are no “wolves” and no “sheep”, but only “mammals”. Uexküll’s illustrative point was that the tick is equipped so as to perform exactly the actions it needs to perform in order to get by.

Let us now consider a tick attack on a mammal – say, Larry David. First, receptors of the tick recognize the butyric acid evaporating from Larry David. That is semiosis. At some point – when passing a certain threshold – this semiosis gives rise to a phenomenal experience: The tick senses a (olfactory) sign of a mammal. It responds – acts – accordingly, by letting go of its twig, and fall. After landing somewhere on the surface of Larry David – an event which is reflected in semiosis triggered in tissue surrounding the spot of impact – receptors of the tick may (if the tick is lucky) recognize some hairs (semiosis, converted to a phenomenon). The tick then crawls deeper, until it recognizes the heat radiating from Larry David’s skin. That is semiosis – which again gives rise to a phenomenon, as the tick senses yet another sign of the mammal, and responds by penetrating Larry David’s skin. Soon thereafter, the tick sucks his blood. At this point Larry David may or may not have become aware of the presence of the tick, or of the pain caused by it. If he has, he has phenomenal experiences (with or without the tick figuring as an Umwelt object). If he has not become aware of the tick or its doings, only the affected tissue is in a state of knowing: That is semiosis.

CLOSING REMARKS

My assertion that semiotics may be conceived of as more comprehensive than phenomenology may strike many as absurd, given that Husserl, for one, held that phenomenology envelops all the phenomena of mind. The difference between

Uexküllian and strictly Husserlian phenomenology on this point is that the former operates with a vastly wider notion of “mind”. While a Husserlian phenomenologist may find Uexküllian phenomenology to be absurdly broad, speculative, or conceptually bewildered, an Uexküllian phenomenologist may find Husserlian phenomenology to be unduly narrow.

Within my familiar theoretical framework, the world’s “non-reducible presence” is represented by the life worlds – Umwelten etc. – of the organisms of planet Earth, however one chooses to categorize them. Admittedly, it is a paradox that while philosophy has traditionally been devoted to the most general of questions, a pluralistic, ecologically-oriented ontology entails that what *distinguishes* each one kind of the living, and each one individual or cultured population, matters just as much as what we have in common with other living creatures (note that this observation does not, as part of a balanced world view, contradict my former appraisal of Tymieniecka’s emphasis on what is common for all that is alive). There can thus be no sharp distinction between philosophy and the life sciences, but rather a gradual transition from the more-or-less philosophical/generic to the more-or-less scientific/specific.

As we have seen, Uexküllian phenomenology differs from the Phaneroscopy of Peirce in that it emphasizes, rather than neglects, relations between phenomena and the rest of empirical reality. In parallel with this point, while Peircean phenomenology is explicitly monistic (as is the “phenomenology” of Kant), Uexküllian phenomenology is as mentioned unequivocally pluralistic. In the line of thought of Uexküllian phenomenology, diversity and differences is to be highlighted, not disregarded. The value of life is perhaps first of all shown in its rich variety. And regardless of the incredible manifold of the living, the human kind remains unique and dignified in its own way – all the while being so deeply intertwined with the situation and existence of other living creatures that to attempt to describe the human species without reference to others would be a truly hopeless task.⁸ Such “vacuum-anthropologies” are so remote from life as to be not only philosophically questionable but further ethically *harmful* descriptions of reality. As Francesco Totaro remarked at the Bergen conference, ontology can indeed become a tool for transformation. In other words, how we describe and conceive of the world does indeed influence the way in which the world is turning out to be, in its unfolding process of becoming. In that sense, “the world” – whether qua global ecosystem or qua social system – is at present truly a material extension of our all-too-human thought processes.

I will end this paper with a reply to Ane Faugstad Aarø’s critique of my approach in phenomenology at that same congress. She asks whether Uexküllian phenomenology as outlined here is capable of being telling of human reality, given that it tends to present simple, universal models, and pinpoints the absence of a notion of “freedom”, which is crucial in human affairs. Part of my response is constituted by biosemiotician Jesper Hoffmeyer’s concept of “semiotic freedom” (cf. Hoffmeyer 2008). Semiotic freedom is so to speak our “interpretative freedom”, or “perceptual freedom”, and it appears wherever there are semiotic agents, i.e. creatures capable of relating to their meaningful surroundings. As I have argued elsewhere (Tønnessen 2009b) in a discussion of the implicit self (embodied in

the behaviour of a creature) and the explicit self (manifested in the identity of a creature), while for simple (non-social) creatures the implicit and the explicit self converge, for complex (social) creatures they diverge, to an extent that broadly speaking corresponds to their level of semiotic freedom. With our unprecedented sociality and semiotic freedom, we human beings are apt to experience, at times, an equally unparalleled gap between behaviour and identity. This idea provides us with a biological, or ecological, or evolutionary perspective on alienation etc. Human perception is incredibly more sophisticated – and potentially self-deceiving – than the perception of “lesser” creatures, surrounded as we are in our life worlds by layer upon layer of cultural and sub-cultural filters and amplifiers. This immense freedom in interpretation (and expression), which is usually thoroughly tied up in cultural terms, can easily overwhelm us. We choose who we are to be (some more conventionally than others) – not because we like making choices, but because life forces us to, lest we be lost in eternal qualm. The phenomenology of the human kind is no doubt complex, and any outright telling portrayal of it requires knowledge of both culture and ecology (in Tønnessen 2003 (p. 290) I referred to the *conceptualized Umwelt experience* of our kind). But at the very foundation it is nonetheless fundamentally similar to the phenomenology of other kinds of life. What distinguishes us from other life forms, I suggest, is not something that is alien to life-as-such, but rather this abovementioned gap between identity and behaviour, which is a product of our immense semiotic freedom. Our human freedom, therefore, is intimately tied to our special stature qua semiotic creature (a creature capable of navigating in a world of meaning) – and a semiotics of being should be able to portray that phenomenon in its proper context.

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NOTES

¹ The current work has been carried out as part of the research projects. The Cultural Heritage of Environmental Spaces: A Comparative Analysis between Estonia and Norway (EEA–ETF Grant EMP 54), Dynamical Zoosemiotics and Animal Representations (ETF/ESF 7790) and Biosemiotic Models of Semiosis (ETF/ESF 8403), and partaking in the Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory (CECT).

² Kant’s treatment of the objects of biology as a scholarly discipline is to be found first of all in *Critique of Judgment* (Kritik der Urteilskraft) (Kant 1987 [1790]), but Uexküll related almost exclusively to *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kritik der reinen Vernunft) [Kant 1996 [1787]].

³ The other book-length works by Uexküll of foundational importance are Uexküll 1985 [1909, 1921], 1957 [1934] and 1982 [1940].

⁴ Naturally, all theoretical reconstructions of lifeworlds are abstractions. My point is that if we model an individual lifeworld, we model something which is itself a model of the world for a particular individual. If, on the other hand, we model an aggregate lifeworld, such as “the Umwelt of 18th century Germans”, we model something which does not in itself have a reality in the same sense. Both reconstructions may

very well be telling, but there is a crucial difference between them, and we owe it to ourselves not to get lost in our abstractions.

⁵ In the cult around Peirce, some followers have built a solipsistic metaphysics around his concepts of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness. Such concepts may be of value when applied in their right context, but they perform poorly as objects of worship. The same holds true for anything with a triadic structure, which fits in so well with a simplistic Peirce interpretation.

⁶ Readers with an interest in engaging with these fields are referred to Barbieri (ed.) (2007), Kull et al. (2008) and Hoffmeyer (2008) (biosemiotics), Kull (1998) and Nöth (1998) (ecosemiotics), and Sebeok (1972), Sebeok (1990) and Martinelli and Lehto (Guest Editors) (2009) (zoosemiotics).

⁷ Whereas a 1st person perspective/experience corresponds to *perception*, i.e. *signification*, a 2nd person perspective corresponds additionally to *communication*, i.e. *social* (or *asocial*) *behaviour*. *Representations* of Umwelt objects may appear in either domain.

⁸ This is by and large in line with Tymieniecka's stand that "the human being cannot be defined by its specific nature but by the entire complex of individualizing life, of which complex it is vitally part and parcel" (Tymieniecka 2007, p. xx). In Torjussen et al. (2009) she explains the perspective in the following manner:

(...) human being can not be considered in itself as such (...) there can be no anthropology that considers human being as such, in the middle of other things almost by chance. On the contrary, human being should be considered as a human condition within the unity of everything there is alive. That means the human being unfolds and generates in a mutual contributive relation to all the other living beings.

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THE PLACE: WHERE WE SEE THE WORLD
AS A LIMITED WHOLE

A B S T R A C T

It is known that Wittgenstein read Heidegger and claimed that he could imagine his account of Being and Angst. It is not so surprising that it has been regarded as a scandal that admitting that Wittgenstein understood and even, to an extent, he combines it with his understanding of nonsense in the surprise of the existence of something, which also appears in his description of absolute sense of ethics. In this paper, rather than comparing Heidegger and Wittgenstein, there will be an analysis of our everyday moral acts by considering both Wittgenstein's and Sartre's examples, which will give us an opportunity to understand the phenomenological investigation of a moral dilemma. Later Wittgenstein's "somewhat" phenomenological investigation of moral acts can only be understood by fully comprehending his early works. The focus on questions such as: "How we see the world as a limited whole?" "From where do we observe the world?" will be bound by the concept of "place". By going back to Plato and investigating what "khora" means and whether it has some parallel to the place where we stand in the world in terms of Wittgenstein. Is it the everlasting place where we can see the world as a limited whole?

In 20th century philosophy it is common practice to refer to Wittgenstein and Heidegger. Their names are not only mentioned together because they are the great figures of 20th century philosophy but also because they had somewhat similar pursuits such as "seeking to revolutionize philosophy" by departing from modern rationalization as Stanley Cavell puts it.

It is known that Wittgenstein read Heidegger and claimed that he understood his account of Being and Angst. Friedrich Waismann recorded that, in 1929, at Moritz Schlick's house, Wittgenstein stated that:

To be sure, I can imagine what Heidegger means by being and anxiety. Man feels the urge to run against the limits of language. Think for example of the astonishment that anything at all exists. This astonishment cannot be expressed in the form of a question, and there is no answer whatsoever. Anything we might say is *a priori* bound to be mere nonsense.¹

It is not so surprising that it has been regarded as a scandal that admitting that Wittgenstein understood and even to an extent combines it with his understanding of nonsense in the surprise of the existence of something, which also appears in his description of absolute sense of ethics. Drawing a parallel with early Wittgenstein and early Heidegger would have been a crime for analytic philosophy, it is running up against the boundaries but not in the sense that Wittgenstein mentioned above. Although, with a totally different insight, Richard Rorty states

that there is no parallelism of their work in this period, but he suggests that Wittgenstein and Heidegger “passed each other in mid-career, going in opposite directions.”² Meaning that the Wittgenstein of *Tractatus*, or as Rorty puts it, “un-pragmatic”, “mystical” and younger Wittgenstein could have more similarities to older Heidegger than the more pragmatic, younger Heidegger or the Heidegger of the *Being and Time*, and vice versa.

Here, rather than comparing Heidegger and Wittgenstein I think, it would be a good opportunity to draw a parallel between Wittgenstein’s and Sartre’s everyday example of a moral problem to understand the phenomenological investigation of a moral dilemma. Although Wittgenstein discussed this dilemma in his later period, it is necessary to connect his early works and views on ethics. I will concentrate on early Wittgenstein’s views on ethics, although limited it is the only topic that Wittgenstein allows himself to talk about on what is unsayable and gives us a chance to draw a parallel with phenomenological tradition.

Wittgenstein’s choice of example to explain “taking up an ethical attitude” and Sartre’s example of “the state of abandonment” are almost identical. Both examples emphasize a similar ethical dilemma. To understand the nature of that dilemma and to seek a solution will pave the way to understand the way one sees the world and the way one sees oneself in the world, or more specifically for Sartre “in the world” or for Wittgenstein at the “limits of the world.”

In *Existentialism Is a Humanism* Sartre describes the condition of his student whose father is believed to be a “collaborator”; his brother died in the German offensive of 1940, his mother separated from his father, and lived with her son and depended on him. He, on the other hand, wanted to take revenge for his brother and fight for the independence of his country. He struggled between two choices, either staying with his mother and helping her to live or go to England to join the Free French Forces. Each alternative had both negative and positive consequences. If he chose to join the Free French Forces, he was not even sure whether he would be able to go to England, would be captured and end up in a prison camp or even be killed. He was not even sure about his feelings toward his country and his mother. What would motivate his choice? Sartre defines his situation as: “he was vacillating between two kinds of morality; a morality motivated by sympathy and individual devotion, and another morality with a broader scope, but less likely to be fruitful.”³

Wittgenstein’s case is one of a scientist, who must either leave his wife or abandon his work on cancer. The man struggles between his two roles, i.e., a husband and a scientist, and if he does not choose one, he will not be able to do either properly; he will be both a bad husband and a bad scientist. The man’s attitude would vary according to the way he looks at things. He might have the view that he cannot ignore the suffering of humanity so he cannot abandon his research and the wife will get over it. Or he might have a deep love for his wife and if he gives up his work he would not be a good husband anyway. On the other hand, he might think that someone else could carry on the research and choosing the wife would not be abandoning the suffering of humanity.

So what would help Sartre’s student and Wittgenstein’s scientist choose between two actions? Upon what would they depend? Christian ethics? Both Wittgenstein

and Sartre consider this option. Wittgenstein says that if we consider Christian ethics in this case, we would see that “should he leave his wife or not?” is no problem at all. The answer is clear, Christian doctrine tells him to stay with his wife and be a good husband, there is no other option. Then it alters the problem, now the problem is: “how to make the best of this situation, what he should do in order to be a decent husband in these greatly altered circumstances, and so forth.”⁴

For Sartre, Christian doctrine would not serve to clarify, he says that: “The Christian doctrine tells us we must be charitable, love our neighbor, sacrifice ourselves for others, choose the ‘narrow way,’ et cetera. But what is the narrow way? Whom should we love like a brother – the soldier or the mother?”⁵ Looking for certain ethical doctrines, is mainly searching for an “a priori”. Searching for the ultimate answer, in Wittgenstein’s terminology “an absolute sense” of ethics, that could answer that question. Is there such an absolute sense of good action? Both Wittgenstein’s and Sartre’s answer is No. Sartre asks: “Who can decide that *a priori*?” and he answers: “No one. No code of ethics on record answers that question” and adds “[n]o general code of ethics can tell you what you ought to do; there are no signs in this world.”⁶

To understand the complexity of this situation and the difficulty of the choice we must understand the meaning of such concepts as “abandonment”, “anguish” and “despair”. All these concepts are also closely related to our assumptions about the existence or non-existence of God.

For Sartre, accepting that God does not exist is a problem. What will happen to fundamental ethical values? Sartre wonders how could it be considered “obligatory *a priori*” to be honest? And he suggests that “if we are to have a morality, a civil society, and a law-abiding world, it is essential that certain values be taken seriously; they must have an *a priori* existence ascribed to them.”⁷ With a different approach, Wittgenstein also questions such an “a priori existence” and asks: “Can there be any ethics if there is no living being but myself?” and he answers his question with: “If ethics is supposed to be something fundamental, there can.”⁸ And the absolute sense of value judgements concern ethics as fundamental, independent of our pre-determined standards, regardless of a community’s agreement on what good is. For Wittgenstein such an absolute sense of ethics is what cannot be expressed. The distinction between the absolute sense and relative sense of value judgements somewhat helps Wittgenstein to escape the need for such an a priori’s existence or better to say to talk about value judgements that need such an a priori existence.

Richard Rorty’s distinction of type A and type B entities addresses the same problem. We need type A entities, such as Kantian categories and Platonic Forms, to make type B entities, like Kantian intuitions and Platonic material particulars, knowable or describable. Type B entities are the lower level entities “which stand in need of being related in order to become available . . . require contextualization and explanation but cannot themselves contextualize nor explain,” on the other hand, type A entities are “their own *rationes cognoscenti*, . . . that make themselves available without being related to one another or to anything else.”⁹ They explain but they cannot be explained. This problem also remains when we try to talk about logical structure, which helps the logical propositions to picture the fact, but it cannot be

pictured. Bertrand Russell in his “Introduction” to *Tractatus* explains this in relation to Wittgenstein’s doctrine of pure logic. He states that:

[A]ccording to which the logical proposition is a picture (true or false) of the fact, and has in common with the fact a certain structure. It is this common structure which makes it capable of being a picture of fact, but the structure cannot itself be put into words, since it is a structure of the words, as well as of the facts to which they refer.¹⁰

As Rorty puts it such type A entities “are in the same situation as a transcendent Deity.”¹¹ Thus, if we believe that God does not exist we will not have Rorty’s type A entities and we will be left alone with the type B entities that now cannot be related to anything and cannot be explained.

If we believe that God exists we would be able to identify ethical rules and be able to legitimise our acts. Our will and ethical choices will have a standing in God’s will. We will have God’s guidance in our choices. If God does not exist, then there are no values or commands that legitimise our choices. There is no external source of our moral choices or acts; there is no other justification or “excuse”. Thus we are left alone, “without excuse.” For Sartre, “man is condemned to be free”, which means that “man being condemned to be free carries the weight of the whole world on his shoulders; he is responsible for the world and for himself as a way of being.”¹²

The sort of responsibility that “abandonment” puts upon our shoulders limits us to relying upon “that which is within our wills” and there comes the “anguish”. Sartre gives the existentialist definition of anguish as follows:

[A] man who commits himself, and who realises that he is not only the individual that he chooses to be, but also a legislator choosing at the same time what humanity as a whole should be, cannot help but be aware of his own full and profound responsibility.¹³

Such a definition associates the sense of dignity with Kant. In the case of obeying a moral law the motive comes from “the idea of the dignity of the rational being, who obeys no law other than that which he himself at the same time gives.”¹⁴ According to Kant, the authority of the moral law is duty. In acting in compliance with moral law, because it is a duty, we are obeying because we give the law ourselves. So, the immediate value of compliance with moral law comes from oneself that has the satisfaction of complying with duty, not from outside and even not from our own desires.

Although the sense of freedom has its unique traits in Kant’s and Sartre’s philosophies, there are still common grounds. There is no doubt that freedom is an important concept in Kant’s ethics. Within it, it carries the concept of autonomy with respect to ourselves and respect for moral law. The definition of obligation and duty changes its meaning from the ordinary sense of duty in connection with the idea of freedom. Freedom is defined as “independence from the determining causes of the world of sense (which reason must always ascribe to itself).”¹⁵ Thus, when we talk of a free person we talk of a person whose actions are independent from any external determining sources. This is known as Kant’s Copernican Revolution, which changes the centre of laws of reason from an external source to human beings with the capacity of making laws.

Thus, similar to Sartre, Kant's rational being is condemned to be free, who also carries the weight of the whole world on his/her shoulders, even at the cost of his/her happiness because his/her actions not only bind her/himself together but also the world. Kant introduces the law as: "So act that maxim of your will could always hold at the same time as a principle in a giving of universal law."¹⁶ Sartre states how difficult such a situation is as: "So every man ought to be asking himself, 'Am I really a man who is entitled to act in such a way that the entire human race should be measuring itself by my actions?' And if he does not ask himself that, he masks his anguish."¹⁷

Surely, the main difference is while Kant replaced "a temporal Deity with a temporal subject of experience."¹⁸ Sartre does not replace God with anything else and faces that God does not exist. Sartre also puts it like that "Eighteenth century atheistic philosophers suppressed the idea of God, but not, for all that, the idea that essence precedes existence. We encounter this idea nearly everywhere: in the works of Diderot, Voltaire and even Kant."¹⁹ Thus, when you do not replace God with anything else and try to deal with the fact that God does not exist, there comes the feeling of anguish. Being "throwingly abandoned to the 'world' ",²⁰ left alone with the feeling of responsibility for all his/her acts, without an excuse. Thus Sartre's student and Wittgenstein's scientist are in such anguish when they are trying to choose the "right" act. So, what is the "right", "good" or "correct" choice/solution in each case?

For Sartre's student, there is no absolute good or bad to guide him, he is left alone and has the burden of his responsibility for his choice. When his student asked Sartre's advice, as for him there is no moral rule that could guide him in what he ought to do, he replied: "You are free, so choose; in other words, invent."²¹ Surely, there is no absolute good or bad for Wittgenstein's scientist either. Wittgenstein also states that there are no "higher" values in this world and we cannot talk about an absolute sense of ethical judgements. The situation of the scientist is what Wittgenstein calls "taking up an ethical attitude." Wittgenstein says that "[w]hatever he finally does, the way things then turn out may affect his attitude."²² This case is related to the attitude of the man towards life.

For Wittgenstein a change in attitude is an important notion in understanding the way ethics manifests itself. Wittgenstein emphasizes the importance of seeing things differently. "Noticing an aspect" is the key to seeing things differently, here noticing the difference is as crucial as noticing the similarity of the things in question. In order to see things differently we must change our "*way of looking at things*."²³ The notion of seeing things differently was examined to see whether this notion could give us room to have a discourse on ethics. When you change your way of looking at things this change manifests itself in your attitude. Our forms of life somewhat determine the way we look at things. If we accept the role of forms of life as a determinant of our attitude towards the world then we must presuppose the existence of others, the agreement in the language we use and the agreement of our form of life. If we presuppose an agreement on the expression of value judgements in the language we use, then this is the relative sense of ethics. In both examples, it would be easy to choose an alternative if there were the possibility of an absolute sense of ethics. Then what we need to search for is the possibility of a discourse on

ethics in the absolute sense, which seems to abandon us to the idea that God does not exist.

Wittgenstein states that when we speak of God, we use a language that “represents him as a human being of great power.”²⁴ In ethical and religious languages we use similes, and in order to legitimately express the value judgements by using “a simile must be the simile for *something*. And if I can describe a fact by means of a simile I must also be able to drop the simile and to describe the facts without it.”²⁵ And Wittgenstein concludes that as we cannot find facts behind the simile, so what seems like a simile turns out to be nonsense. Wittgenstein’s description of God as a human being and the notion of a miracle in 1944 seems to resemble “A Lecture on Ethics”. Take this remark for example:

A miracle is, as it were, a gesture which God makes. As a man sits quietly & then makes an impressive gesture, God lets the world run on smoothly & then accompanies the words of a Saint by a symbolic occurrence, a gesture of nature. It would be an instance if, when a saint has spoken, the trees around him bowed, as if in reverence. – Now, do I believe that this happens? I don’t.²⁶

Here, he uses the language of religion and the language he uses represents God as a human being as he says, this is what happens in the language of religion. For Wittgenstein, a miracle “is simply an event the like of which we have never yet seen.”²⁷ Wittgenstein states that he does not believe that such a miracle, that the trees bow to the words of the saint in reference, happens. He says that the reason he does not believe it is that “[t]he only way for me to believe in a miracle in this sense would be to be *impressed* by an occurrence in this particular way.”²⁸ Although he says that he is not impressed he does not say that it is nonsense. But the religious remarks he makes lose their miraculous appearance when he questions them. The method of verification of whether a simile (also a miracle) is nonsense or not, for early Wittgenstein, is to check whether it corresponds to facts or not. For later Wittgenstein, the criterion of verification seems to be the occurrence of a particular example of a language game and believing it. If we look at the following remark by Wittgenstein, we will see how believing effects the meaning of a word:

I am reading: “& no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but the Holy Ghost.” And this is true: I cannot call him *Lord*; because that says absolutely nothing to me. I could call him “the paragon”, “God” even or rather: I can understand it when he is so called; but I cannot utter the word “Lord” meaningfully. *Because I do not believe* that he will come to judge me; because *that* says nothing to me. And it could only say something to me if I were to live *quite* differently.²⁹

Separating an exemplar (the paragon), a spirit (Holy Ghost) and a supreme being (God) from a Lord seems to be related with the uses of these words. The first three (i.e., the paragon, Holy Ghost and God) are metaphysical uses but the last one, i.e., Lord, is a simile. A simile that makes us believe that the word in use corresponds to actual happenings, there are particular occurrences, practices that we can refer to. If we believe it, it becomes meaningful, but if not, like Wittgenstein, it is not meaningful. If I were to live quite differently then I might have a different attitude that would enable me to believe. This is like the difference between the life (world) of a happy man and an unhappy man.

Considering “the nonsensical use of language”, early Wittgenstein’s focus was going beyond the boundaries and what cannot be said, whereas later Wittgenstein’s focus of attention turned to “the non-rational grounding of religious belief”.³⁰ This is clear when Wittgenstein questions belief in Christ’s resurrection. He says: “But if I am to be REALLY redeemed, – I need *certainty* – not wisdom, dreams, speculation – and this certainty is faith. And a faith is faith in what my *heart*, my *soul*, needs, not my speculative intellect.”³¹ In “A Lecture on Ethics” Wittgenstein says that expressions of ethics and religious belief are not nonsensical because we have not yet found the “correct analysis” of religious and ethical expressions, “but that their nonsensicality was their very essence.”³²

The absolute sense of value could only manifest itself. To be a believer or not makes a difference. Wittgenstein says that:

If the believer in God looks around & asks “Where does everything I see come from?” “Where does all that come from?” what he hankers after is not a (causal) explanation; and the point of his question is the expression of this hankering. He is expressing, then, a stance towards all explanations. – But how is this manifested in his life?

It is the attitude of taking a certain matter seriously, but then at a certain point not taking it seriously after all & declaring that something else is still more serious.³³

The good in the absolute sense manifests itself in our attitudes towards the world. How can we see/notice that the absolute sense of ethics manifests itself? Is it by looking at things in a different way or from a different perspective as Wittgenstein would tell us?

How is it possible to look at things in a different way? Even if we can look at things differently is it possible to see the absolute sense of good in this world? Is it possible to have an absolute sense of good if God does not exist? Or its existence is not relevant at all?

In the “A Lecture on Ethics” Wittgenstein gives the example of an omniscient person, who carries most of God’s attributions with just a reporting capacity that knows everything, even “all the states of mind of all human beings that ever lived.” And Wittgenstein thinks that if this person writes a book containing “whole description of the world,” this book will not contain any ethical judgements because it will only describe the facts and “[t]here are no propositions which, in any absolute sense, are sublime, important, or trivial.”³⁴

But being omniscient is different than being omnipotent, having unlimited power. An omniscient person does not have any power over what he is reporting. Everything stands on the same level because even Wittgenstein’s omniscient person that knows everything will still be an observer that does not interfere with any of the facts s/he describes. Just as resembling the task of philosophy that was described in *Philosophical Investigations*. Louis E. Wolcher, referring this passage states that “[i]n this respect it is not difficult to recognise that the omniscient is a figure for Wittgenstein’s own conception of philosophy’s task.”³⁵

Since we are not omniscient observers and obviously not an omnipotent being that could have a “view from nowhere,” we are, as Husserl suggested when he claims that perception is perspectival, bound to a spatiotemporal point of view.³⁶ As we

see the object from a certain limited perspective, “the object never appears in its totality”³⁷ What is the phenomenological insight here? Dan Zahavi states that once we realise that “what appears spatially always appears at a certain distance and from a certain angle, the point should be obvious: There is no pure point of view and there is no view from nowhere, there is only an embodied point of view.”³⁸ Once again without an omnipotent knower we are left alone without a pure point of view, a point of view which might help us to talk about the absolute sense of ethics. With such a limited perspective, we see the world as a limited whole. That is what is mystical for Wittgenstein. In *Tractatus* 6.45 he states that:

To view the world *sub specie aeterni* is to view it as a whole – a limited whole.
Feeling the world as a limited whole- it is this that is mystical.

This is Wittgenstein’s fundamental thesis, as Russell emphasizes, “it is impossible to say anything about the world as a whole, and . . . whatever can be said has to be about bounded portions of the world.”³⁹ Speaking of the totality of things is speaking of necessity.⁴⁰ As what can be viewed is limited by the observer’s perspective, what can be said is limited by the propositions of natural sciences. This suggests a kind of awareness of the limits of the world, the limits of language. James C. Edwards suggests that: “To feel the world as a limited whole it is necessary to feel its limit, i.e., to be aware of oneself as that limit of the world”⁴¹

Then, how could we see the world as a limited whole? How could we view the world *sub specie aeterni*? How could we change the world without any change in the facts? How does the absolute sense of value manifest itself? At this point, investigating Wittgenstein’s understanding of a different sense of seeing would be helpful. To able to look at things in a different way is to be able to see the world *sub specie aeterni*.

We have already mentioned the concept of “noticing an aspect” now recalling it at this stage will give us another insight. Wittgenstein uses the duck-rabbit figure to illustrate the notion of noticing an aspect. The duck-rabbit figure was used by Joseph Jastrow (1863–1944), the American psychologist, to demonstrate that perception is not only a consequence of the stimulus, but also is a product of mental activity. This illustration also clarifies how Wittgenstein makes a distinction between the change of perception and the change of aspect. The duck-rabbit, Figure 1, which can be seen as a duck’s or rabbit’s head is shown below:

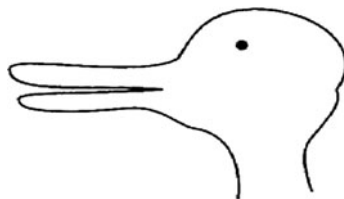


Figure 1. Duck-rabbit⁴²

If someone shows you the figure above and asks what it is, you could reply “It is a rabbit”, “It is a duck” or “It is a duck-rabbit”. For Wittgenstein, these answers are “the report of perception”. But on the other hand, if you reply “Now it’s a rabbit” your answer is not a report of perception; it is the expression of the change of aspect. While you are looking at the duck-rabbit figure you could see it as a duck and suddenly notice the other aspect and say “Now it is a rabbit”. “The expression of a change of aspect is the expression of a new perception and at the same time of the perception’s being unchanged.”⁴³ As stated in *Tractatus* 6.43, this is how “the good and the bad exercise of the will” do not alter the facts, but do alter the world.

This means to talk about a new perception, a new perception that suggests a noticing of the change of aspect. Wittgenstein expresses the difference between the usual and different way of looking at things as: “The usual way of looking at things sees objects as if we were from the midst of them, the view *sub specie aeternitatis* from outside.”⁴⁴

It is now getting more complicated, now we need to position ourselves so that we don’t see objects from the midst. Where is this “outside”? Where should I stand to view the objects from outside? From what kind of a place do we need to view the world under the aspect of eternity? From where do we observe the world? Where am I positioned in this world then? Am I placed in the world just at the edge of the limit suggested by Wittgenstein’s “eye” analogy? Or is it possible to have a “view from nowhere”?

In the search for a place, a place that could provide us a different view, let us notice the change of aspect, that has a view under the aspect of eternity, we should listen to what Timaeus of Locri in Plato’s *Timaeus* when he is explaining why he needs a third kind of discourse which later he named as *khôra* (χώρα). At a certain point Timaeus realises that the two kinds of discourse he had used to express his account of the universe are not sufficient for the full apprehension of the universe. He says: “The earlier two were sufficient for our previous account: one was proposed as a model, intelligible and always changeless, the second as an imitation of the model, something that possesses were becoming and visible.”⁴⁵

This third kind is “a *receptacle* of all becoming,” a “wetnurse”. It is not another kind of being, being is only used for the first kind, i.e., for the paradigm (the Ideas), whereas the second kind, i.e., copies of these paradigms (the phenomena), is becoming. The third kind is “a kind of kind beyond kind, kind of kind outside of kind.”⁴⁶

In a flash of inspiration, the description of “kind of kind outside kind,” a need for a third kind of discourse that is outside the kind invokes a reminder of Wittgenstein’s positioning himself not in the midst of the objects but outside in order to be able to see them differently. Which suggests a place that is outside that of which lets us see things from the outside. But this is too early a stage to make such connections. We need to let the third kind reveal itself to us.

Timaeus tells us that it is a difficult task to describe the third kind, one of the difficulties of such description is that phenomenal objects are not stable, they are in flux. He mentions the cyclical transformation that can be observed in fire, air, water and earth. “[T]hey transmit their coming to be one to the other in a cycle.

... what we invariably observe becoming different at different times.”⁴⁷ So the expressions “this” or “that” cannot be used to designate something unless it has a kind of stability. Thus rather than “this” we can only say “what is always such and such.”

This is almost the same difficulty as the “ostensive definition” that is described by Wittgenstein. First of all, “an ostensive definition explains the use – the meaning – of a word when the overall role of the word in language is clear.”⁴⁸ Here, we have Timaeus trying to clarify the language by searching for a way to express the objects in a “reliable” and “stable” account. Even calling, “what is always such and such” might not solve the problem, as Wittgenstein says in *Philosophical Investigations* exegesis 28, “an ostensive definition can be variously interpreted in every case.” Thus this is not the safe and reliable account.

At this point, Richard D. Mohr introduces the “double aspect” of the phenomena. He says: “The phenomena, then, have a double aspect. On the one hand, they are in flux; on the other hand, they are images of Ideas. Insofar as the phenomena are in flux, nothing whatsoever can be said of them.”⁴⁹ In relation with this “double aspect” John Sallis states that there are two levels of discourse at hand. At the first level of discourse the word uttered is applied to something “that can in fact only be seen (moving in the cycle of transformations) but *not said*, something that can be, at most, silently pointed out.”⁵⁰

That is what Wittgenstein suggests in the opening pages of *Tractatus*: “What can be said at all can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent.”⁵¹ But then later, he adds that although it cannot be said, it transcends the limits of language, it manifests itself. In *Tractatus* 6.522 Wittgenstein combines this with the mystical, he says that “[t]here are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical.” Timaeus introduced the third kind with the need for a medium in which what cannot be said manifests itself and might even provide a possibility of talking about the third kind. Finally the third kind is described as:

And the third type is space [$\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$], which exists always and cannot be destroyed. It provides a fix state for all things that come to be. It is itself apprehended by a kind of bastard reasoning that does not involve sense perception, and it is hardly even an object of conviction. We look at it as in a dream when we say that everything that exists must of necessity be somewhere, in some place and occupying some space, and that that which doesn't exist somewhere, whether on earth or in heaven, doesn't exist at all.⁵²

At this point we need to take a break to our investigation of what the characteristics of $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ are and clarify what the word $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ means in the Greek language. Even the translation of the word is disputed. As in the above passage it is, by some scholars be translated as “space” and by others as place, as land and as country. John Sallis in investigating the use of the word in different Platonic dialogues suggests that place rather than space would give a better picture of the word.⁵³ Following Sallis I too prefer the word “place.” Yet we still need to look at its characteristics, what kind of a place $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ is. The above passage tells us that it exists always and it is stable. Thus it is an “everlasting”, “perpetual” place. As it is not apprehended by sense perception it is invisible. Even its invisibility requires a different

understanding. It does manifest itself by being the medium of what cannot be said to appear.

Moreover, the third kind, $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$, is somewhat like the logical structure defined by Wittgenstein, as mentioned before, the logical structure enables logical propositions to picture a fact but it cannot itself be put into words. The third kind is formless, it is “an invisible and characterless sort of thing, one that receives all things and shares in a most perplexing way in what is intelligible.”⁵⁴

Finally, being formless, invisible and having no determinations nothing can be said about it and I would agree with Sallis that it makes both the third kind and its name have no meaning. One can only have an illegitimate “bastard” discourse on it. It is not surprising that $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha$ is not in the realm of nonsense. What can be said and what cannot be said is the criterion of nonsense in *Tractatus*. Nonsense is in the domain of what cannot be said. And Wittgenstein in *Tractatus* 6.53 suggests that “whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions.” This should be a warning for that person that now he is about to transcend the limits of language and go beyond the word and about to have a bastard discourse that will have no meaning.

This timeless, everlasting “place” does not give us an opportunity for a medium that enables us to say what cannot be said. But it is not useless. It provides a medium for what cannot be said to demonstrate/reveal itself. It is a standpoint it is where Wittgenstein could have positioned himself to see the world from outside, to have a new, different than usual, way of looking. It is a place where one could see how what can be said manifests itself, where one realises the double aspect of the phenomena and notice the change of aspect. It is the place where one can view the world as a limited whole. This everlasting place “doesn’t exist somewhere, whether on earth or in heaven” and in a dreamlike way it seems like a view from nowhere, that an omnipotent being would have. But as when awakening from the dream we realise that “it doesn’t exist at all”. Thus we still see the world as a limited whole, but this place provides a new way of looking things that manifest themselves in our attitudes.

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NOTES

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- ⁹ Richard Rorty, op. cit., p. 342.
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- ¹¹ Richard Rorty, op. cit., p. 342.
- ¹² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel E Barnes (London: Routledge Classics, 2009), p. 574.
- ¹³ Jean-Paul Sartre, 2007, p. 25.
- ¹⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 42. (AK 4:434). References to Kant give the pages in German Academy of Sciences (AK) edition of Kant's collective works.
- ¹⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 57, (AK 4:452). Kant states that: "With the idea of freedom the concept of autonomy is now inseparably combined and with the concept of autonomy the universal principle of morality" (AK 4:452).
- ¹⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 28 (AK 5:31).
- ¹⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, 2007, pp. 26–27.
- ¹⁸ Richard Rorty, op. cit., p. 340.
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- ²⁰ In *Being and Time*, Heidegger states that: "In its projection it reveals itself as something which has been thrown. It has been thrownly abandoned to the 'world', and falls into it concernfully." Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 406.
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- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- ³⁹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, p. xix.
- ⁴⁰ Russell in his "Introduction" to *Tractatus*, states that: "There is no way whatever, according to him, by which we can describe totality of things that can be named. In other words, the totality of what there is in the world. In order to be able to do this we should have to know of some property which must belong to everything by a logical necessity." (*Tractatus*, p. xviii).
- ⁴¹ James C. Edwards, *Ethics without Philosophy Wittgenstein and the Moral Life* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1982), p. 46.

- ⁴² Source: The duck-rabbit figure used by Jastrow originally published in *Harper's Weekly* (Nov. 19, 1892, p. 1114). The figure I used is taken from mathworld.wolfram.com viewed 1 February 2008 <<http://mathworld.wolfram.com/topics/Illusions.html>>
- ⁴³ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 167.
- ⁴⁴ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914–1916*, p. 83.
- ⁴⁵ Plato, *Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), p. 1251. (*Timaeus*, [49 a]).
- ⁴⁶ John Sallis, *Chorology* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 99.
- ⁴⁷ Plato, *Complete Works*, p. 1252. (*Timaeus*, [49 d]).
- ⁴⁸ Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), § 30.
- ⁴⁹ Richard D. Mohr, "Image, Flux, and Space in Plato's 'Timaeus'," *Phoenix* Vol. 34, No. 2 (Summer, 1980), p. 142.
- ⁵⁰ Sallis, p. 104.
- ⁵¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness (London: Routledge Classics, 2005), p. 3.
- ⁵² Plato, *Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), p. 1255. (*Timaeus*, [52 b]). In relation with the 'bastard reasoning' Sallis explains what does bastard means in Athenian usage, that is: "a child of a citizen father and an alien mother." (Sallis, p. 120).
- ⁵³ For a sound explanation of this dispute and the related dialogs see Sallis pp. 115–118.
- ⁵⁴ Plato, p. 1254. (*Timaeus*, [51 b]).

LINES FOR CONTEMPORARY
CONSTRUCTIVISM TO REVISIT
AND REINTEGRATE THE ANCIENT SENSE
OF CONTINUITY BETWEEN MEN AND NATURE

A B S T R A C T

This paper is meant to focus the attention on some assumptions of contemporary constructivism which, in line with the groundbreaking thought of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's phenomenology of life, allow to revisit and restore the ancient sense of continuity between natural macrocosm and anthropologic microcosm, which, in the scope of the unilaterally objectivist approach of modern epistemology, has fallen out of fashion. To this purpose this paper is essentially comprised of two parts: in the first the author means to outline the complex movement called "constructivism", which finds its place between innatism and empirism and establishes itself as a "third way" where subject and object are no longer the absolute and pre-existing poles of a relation, but the outcomes of a construction taking place in the continuum between natural macrocosm and anthropologic microcosm. In the second part, starting from the above assumptions on contemporary constructivism, the author shall draw some significant *lines of reflection* to restore the continuity between *logos and life phenomenology/ontopoiesis* subject of this International Congress of Phenomenology.

C O N S T R U C T I V I S M A S A C O M P L E X S C E N A R I O :
S U G G E S T E D R E A D I N G

The attempt to develop a comprehensive survey of what is currently defined in several areas as "constructivism" outlines as a multi-faceted process which is not always easy to define and most importantly is subject to continuous evolution and dilation in time and space. The same analysis of the semantic spectrum of the term "constructivism" as it manifests itself in different formulas, not yet come to an adequate definition, is extensive and still fruitful, though it may risk to appear as an alluring label, as a suggestive "fashion" or "slogan", rather than the actual acknowledgement of the various meanings that such term, be it from an ontological, epistemological or methodological standpoint, may take in theory and educational and didactic practise.

In general this boils down to a complex epistemological approach revolving around the analysis on the models of knowledge, which admits plural acceptations

and still stands as an *open paradigm*. To explore and provide an explanation to what D. C. Phillips defines as the *nightmarish landscape* (Phillips 2000, p. 7), that is, the intricate constructivist landscape, is a hard and sometimes slippery task, given the intense bundle of disciplines it is laden with and the disciplinary boundaries that in this sense are blurred in nature and not always well defined. The theoretical references are manifold – though we shall attempt at outlining them all – and may be taken from anthropological, ethnological, philosophical, linguistic, mathematical, pedagogical, psychological, sociological, etc. standpoints, though not necessarily connected. Such a trend contributed to coining and spreading several “labels” with reference to different settings and several theoretical branches, often traced back to the thought of several seminal authors.

With the support and reference to recent insight and publications (Giaconi 2008), this article is meant to analyse constructivism from the point of view of the reference scientific literature which from a first look that tends to see constructivism as opposed to previous epistemology according to a dualist logic, moves on to a more complex vision which defines it as a “third way” (Bocchi and Ceruti 1981, p. 256), allowing to re-propose the meaning of ancient issues.

FROM DUAL LOGIC...

Through several publications, scientific literature itself describes and corroborates this topology of theoretical pictures by means of blatantly different conceptual assumptions that alternate in time as the dominating vision of men and knowledge, all the way to the commonly agreed upon structures of the current debate, that is, a combination of old and new generation dualisms:

- Modern and objective vision vs. subjective and romantic vision;
- Endogenous perspective vs. exogenous perspective;
- Empiricism/logical positivism vs. rationalism/idealism;
- Objectivism vs. constructivism;
- Localism vs. globalism;
- Etc.

It follows that the classification logic deployed is “by contrast”, where the affinities and convergences between present and past are detected through the analysis of “opposed” movements with regard to the epistemological positions that arose throughout history. To this purpose the work and contributions of several authors take particular importance (Guba, Lincoln, Vattimo, Rovatti, Lyotard, Jameson, Usher, Edwards, Eagleton, Best, Kellner, Ceserani, Terrosi, Chiurazzi, Bauman, Mecacci, Rorty, Bagnall, Goodman, Forman, Pufall, Bernar, Duffy, Jonassen, Steffe, Gale, von Glasersfeld) as they propose a contrastive analysis between the epistemology of the past and the contemporary one, thus highlighting positions markedly identified by “strong” modern, axiomatic, regulatory, nomotetic, logical-formal, universalist, positivist, realist thought as regards to the past, as opposed to “weak”, “post-modern”, neopragmatist, antidogmatic, logically *fuzzy* or nuanced,

relativist, contingent, ideographic and *constructivist* tendencies for the current context. Similarly, R. A. Neymayer, in one of his contributions to the “Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology” (Neymayer 1993, pp. 221–234), focuses his attention on the *objectivism-constructivism* duality and the respective positions with regard to nature, validation criteria, cultural traits of knowledge and the very concept of human being and human interaction. Such conceptual binomial is taken in *Epistemologia e psicoterapia* also by M. Ceruti and G. Lo Verso (Ceruti and Lo Verso 1998), who highlight how currently, to a first perspective usually defined as “objectivist” (the world is antecedent to history), there is an opposed one widely defined as “constructivist” (the world is generated through history). In line with the above theories, J. Shotter, in his contribution to a text compiled by L. P. Steffe and E. J. Gale (Steffe and Gale 1995), shows the ontological and epistemological combination at the foundation of the *constructivist* discourse, marked on the one side by a modern and objectivist vision, that is, positivist and post-positivist, and on the other side by a romantic and subjectivist angle (relativist or rationalist). Similarly, in the writings of Kenneth J. Gergen (Gergen 1991) there is a contrastive combination of two perspectives persistently found in the Western philosophical and scientific tradition: on the one side the “exogenous” or “world-centred” one, typical of those theories of knowledge, such as empiricism and logical positivism, that see the outer world as the primary and essential source of the knowledge process; on the other side the “endogenous” or “mind-centred” one, leaning towards those theories of knowledge, such as rationalism/idealism, that give priority to mental process within the knowledge process itself.

Though theories abound that cancel or discredit such “double partitions” in favour of a indistinct condition, most of the history of the Western thought ran along these two major conceptual systems: empiricism or logical positivism and rationalism/idealism. It is within the latter, according to a number of authors, that a new “course” gained way which may be defined as “*constructivism*” and has massive impact in the Nineties thanks to the crisis of the dominating “*empiricist/positivist*” paradigm and the questioning of the “*representationalist*” perspective according to which knowledge is nothing but an individual representation of the existing real world per se. To this purpose E. Damiano states that constructivism is «the denomination the new version of idealism gave itself» (Damiano 2006, p. 130), thus opening to a debate which would allow to get rid of the plurality and sometimes dispersion of the phenomena that currently abuse of this label into a more inclusive category such as idealism.

The most recent developments pursue the goal of overcoming both poles and transcending the traditional subject-object duality, as we shall analyse in the following paragraph.

... TO THE “THIRD WAY”

A further attempt to understand the various pictures and directions of contemporary epistemology escape the “contrastive principle”, and takes a rather historical criterion that allows to trace back the connatural “paradigmatic and epistemological

transaction” of knowledge that marked our time. The basic theory to new epistemological awareness is hidden in the idea that the paradigms of knowledge are not replaced, though combine and interweave, and sometimes influence each other and take “new forms”.

In this scope the attempt of the scientific community to represent the position and sense of that epistemological phenomenon which is more and more frequently defined as “constructionism/constructivism” has remarkable impact, as it is a multifaceted movement going through a time of formidable expansion and at the same time offers a dynamic configuration which is ceaselessly evolving and articulating in different theoretical clusters (first and second cognitivism, constructivism, social cognition, cultural psychology, etc.).

In this second heuristic vision, the study on the distinctive traits of the cultural and scientific context of the present and past is performed within the logic of the “paradigmatic translations” that allow to grasp evolution and changes at ontological, epistemological and methodological level in the range of dominating perspectives. The studies by E. G. Guba (1990), Y. S. Lincoln (1995), T. L. Sexton (in Sexton and Griffin 1997) and B. B. Bichelmeyer (2000) are good examples of the above. In the Nineties E. G. Guba (1990) and Y. S. Lincoln (1995) devised and offered the main trends of the “traditional paradigms” and the “emerging paradigms”, that dominated, in their own view, the modern age and the current post-modern time. The authors provide a view on such tendencies initially as the expression of a modern and structuralist thought, with regard to positivism and post-positivism, and post-modern and post-structuralist, with regard to critical theory and constructivism. Finally, in his 2000 work (Guba and Lincoln 2000), Y. S. Lincoln offers a further paradigm, he defined as *participatory*, with regard to the work of J. Heron and P. Reason (Heron and Reason 1997). As a whole, the comparative analysis is carried out on three levels: the *ontological* one, that is, of the nature of reality and the knowable; the *epistemological* one, of the nature of knowledge and of the relation between the knower and the knowable; the *methodological* one, with regard to the systematic approach of the scientific and educational research (see Guba and Lincoln 2000).

Within the historical analysis on the nature of knowledge by T. L. Sexton (1997) there is a distinction between the following three phases of human history, each featuring a different ontological approach: pre-modern, modern and post-modern or constructivist. In pre-modern age, from the VI century before Christ to the Middle Ages, the pivotal role is played by faith and religion; in the modern age, from the Renaissance to the end of the XIX century, the main role is played by empiricism, logical positivism and the identity between objective truth and validity of scientific assumptions: scientific knowledge is thus the only source to know the world. Finally, the third phase, that is the present one, is dominated by the creation, rather than the discovery, of individual and social realities. The principle of validity (*validity*), which measures the solidity and reliability of a research, that is true correspondence between the real world and the conclusions of a research, is replaced by the principle of viability (*viability*) of assumptions, meant in the Darwinian fashion as “negative selection”, that is, all the elements that are redundant or useless are ruled out, so that all there is left is “adapt”, or viable. These scholars focus on what men think

but also how they think, and underline the importance of human participation in the construction of knowledge: the perspective of the beholder and the observed object are inseparable; the nature of meaning is relative; phenomena are “*context-based*”, that is, they may be judged upon the context in which they develop, and the process of knowledge and comprehension is “social, inductive, hermeneutic and qualitative”. Reality, thus, may not be considered as objective, independent from the subject that experiences it, because it is the very beholder that gives it sense by actively participating in its construction.

One further analysis perspective is provided by B. B. Bichelmeyer (2000), as she analyses the “educational philosophies” that supported and founded XX century education and didactics. The reference measures of the author are metaphysics – better yet, ontology – epistemology and axiology, through which she tackles the paradigms of behaviourism, constructivism and interactivism. *Behaviourism* considers reality as “objective”, permanent, static, unchanging, sees truth as external to individuals and also static and unchanging and finally assesses the actions that receive external awards as beneficial. *Cognitivism*, with reference to “non-ecological first generation” expressed by the HIP model, describes reality as always objective and permanent, though “subjectively experienced” by individuals, sees knowledge as knowable when we compare our internal cognitive patterns with the outer reality and as an instrument to the development of the schematic representations of reality. Constructivism, also considered as “second generation”, and “ecological” development of cognitivism as it considers the cognitive processes as they are immersed and integrated with the biological, evolutionary, social and technological contexts in which they live and operate, enhances and researches the relation between subject and context, sees the attribution of meanings to things, facts and events and the cognitive act as socially mediated and shared. The focus of the above paradigm is hence directed towards the “subjective reality”, that is, on the fact that each individual creates his or her own reality, on truth as a new construct, based on negotiated meanings, on what we deem true and on the agreement on the shared truth as good. The *interactivist* paradigm considers reality as objective but manifold, changing, variable, unforeseeable and “subjectively experienced among individuals”; it sees reality as mutating, changing; it values intentionality (*reflection and action*) through which we master change and unexpected circumstances. The author then researches the position of the three paradigms above and compares them with the emerging “interactivist” one with relation to learning, the role of the teacher, the role of the student and the methods for teaching-learning (see Bichelmeyer 2000).

Beyond single essays, such systematization goes towards the recognition of constructivism and the ensuing epistemology not as a mere alternative to traditional options but rather, to quote Bocchi and Ceruti (1981, p. 256), as a “third way” between the positions of innatism and empiricism, where subject and object are no longer the absolute and pre-existing poles of a relation, but rather the outcomes of a construction that takes place in the continuity between natural macrocosm and anthropological microcosm, a continuity which, in the scope of the unilaterally objectivist approach of modern epistemology, has fallen out of fashion.

In order to further investigate constructivism as the “third way”, we shall review the “ways” of constructivism as highlighted by the pedagogical and psychological literature and which allow, in a continuous and synergic vision, to draw some significant *lines of reflection* to retrieve the continuity between *logos and life phenomenology/ontopoiesis*.

THE WAYS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

THE INTERACTIONIST WAY

A mandatory passage to recognize this way of constructivism goes through the work of J. Piaget, seen by many (von Glasersfeld 1998; Bocchi and Ceruti, 1981; Varela et al. 1993; Varisco 2002) as the “cornerstone” or the father of the XX century constructivist school, with the consequent formation of a constructivist branch inspired directly by Piaget and defined by scholars in different fashions: “cognitive”, “interactionist”, “operational”, constructivism, etc.

Aware that I could not in but a few pages pay due homage to the extensive work of J. Piaget and the intricate knots it raises, which sometimes gave rise to misinterpretations or wrongful translations (Damiano 2006), my dissertation shall focus solely on what G. Bocchi and M. Ceruti (1981) define as the “constructivist itinerary”. First of all we start from his epistemological conception which, as again is pointed out by the authors, Piaget himself always defined as “constructivist”, construing it more generally as «the search for a “third way”, synthesizing and not merely juxtaposing, the positions of innatism and empiricism that long dominated the scientific and epistemological debate, also in our century » (Bocchi and Ceruti 1981, p. 256), that is, we search among those theories that prioritize unilaterally the subjective capacity and those that find the very origin of our knowledge in the environment. It was in this passage, according to N. Filograsso, that the big turn on the Seventies took place: «from an atomistic vision of knowledge, made of aggregates kept together by associative nexuses», to a «systemic, dynamic and constructivist vision where subject and object are interrelated in a continuous transformation process, a standpoint which is not too far from J. Dewey’s transactionalism» (Filograsso 1994, p. 55). To this purpose G. Bocchi and M. Ceruti (1981), as they outline the features of Piaget’s constructivism, detect a markedly philosophical and general characteristic with regard to its position as a *dialectic constructivism*: «constructivist given the pivotal role played by (. . .) the constituent novelties in the upper development levels and dialectic given the multi-factor and interactionist nature of the explanation to such development» (Bocchi and Ceruti 1981, p. 260). J. Piaget uses this paradigm to define the general philosophy of knowledge with particular regard to the relations between subject and object and their function in the “growth of knowledge”: «the circle of object and subject is taken as primary though not homogeneous, since it is considered from time to time according to specific modalities depending on the levels and fields of knowledge» (*Ibidem*). To this matter Piaget remarks, in *Les courants de l’épistémologie scientifique contemporaine* (Piaget 1967) how the constructivist or dialectic position shelters a concept of knowledge that is «tied to an action that

modifies the object and does not reach it but through the transformation triggered by the very action. In this scope (...) subject and object are located basically on the same plane, or rather on the same subsequent planes, according to the changes in the spatial scales and the historical and genetic development» (Piaget 1967, p. 124). Nevertheless all these different levels of reality «may be construed unitarily by the reconstruction of the genetic processes in which subject and object are built and defined complementarily» (Piaget 1967, p. 258). To the same extent E. Damiano underlines this concept and maintains that «subject and object are not the outcomes of a construction, they are not the pre-existing poles of a relation» (Damiano 2006, p. 134). Piaget's epistemology refused the empiricism-rationalism dichotomy and the fracture between the innate and the acquired, thus it is «*interactionist* and *constructivist*»: «(...) in the relation between subject and environment, it persuasively reports of the action of the subject, the forces withstanding the object and the functional results of such interaction, the *assimilation* – undergone by the subject –, the *accommodation* and finally the *equilibration* – with the subject –» (E. Damiano, in Filograsso, 1994, p. 153). Piaget's "third way" was pursued and achieved, according to G. Bocchi and M. Ceruti, through the key notion of *adaptation* between organisms and environment as the «dynamic equilibration between assimilation and accommodation» (M. Ceruti, in Filograsso 1994, p. 26). E. von Glasersfeld (in Ceruti 1992), too, points out that the value of J. Piaget's speculation lays in the concept of knowledge as a form of "adaptation" resulting from the "necessary interaction between conscious intelligence and environment". According to the author, J. Piaget grounded this instance by maintaining that "the mind arranges the world by arranging itself". This expression should not be wrongfully construed as a philosophical and idealist statement, as it did, because the world the mind arranges does not correspond at all to what idealist philosophers define as reality, but rather as "the world of individual practical experience"; E. von Glasersfeld states that J. Piaget's constructivism and his slightly diverging elaboration, serve the direct purpose of showing how children may ultimately develop knowledge (von Glasersfeld 1989). According to E. von Glasersfeld «Piaget always maintained that cognitive subject experience is moulded by its structures (assimilation) and that these structures are carried forward if they succeed in preserving the subject's inner equilibration, or changed (accommodation) if they do not succeed. Piaget defines it as "adaptation" and I tried to prove that adaptation should not be meant as progress towards better correspondence with the environment but rather in terms of finding viable ways » (E. von Glasersfeld, in Ceruti 1992, p. 200). In a stricter sense, closer to tangible and hard scientific research, Piaget's constructivist position is the result, in the words of G. Bocchi and M. Ceruti of a «local problem-solving strategy with regard to the relations and reductions among different levels of reality» (Bocchi and Ceruti 1981, p. 256). J. Piaget thus tackles the issues of ontogenetic (relative to the stages of intellectual development) and socio-genetic (for instance relative to the development phases of mathematics in different historical times) development, that are problems of relation and reduction among levels. In all the above instances, the author aims at «giving an explanation at once to the existence of factual discontinuity in the development processes and the relevance of the preceding phases to understand the

subsequent ones» (*Ibidem*) and is directly drawn to «research the unvarying traits to these solutions and more specifically the general and abstract constructive mechanisms which may operate within genetic development» (*Ibidem*). At a higher level from “constructivist-type local solutions” to generality, the “equilibration theory” may be defined as constructivist, as it «explicitly stands as the unifying moment of all stage-independent issues, hence unvaried with regard to them» (*Ibidem*).

The main trait of Piaget’s thought may be detected «in the research for empirical evidence of *knowledge as a form of equilibration*, in evolutionary continuity/discontinuity with the forms of equilibration all living forms consist of» (Damiano 2006, p. 115). The interpretation of Piaget’s work and the ensuing systemization, such as that carried out by E. Gattico and G. P. Storari (2005), brings out how J. Piaget focuses his entire work, on the epistemological assumption that provides an *isomorphic* relation between biological and cognitive evolution, a comparison tackled by J. Piaget himself in his *Biologie et connaissance* (Piaget 1983) which led to the image of J. Piaget as an “epistemologist” (Damiano 2006, p. 115), as well as between psychogenesis and sociogenesis. To this regard E. Damiano recommends to look at J. Piaget as the «researcher who turned epistemology into an empirical discipline, as he searched some of the unlimited fields one may resort to in order to study it: among them, men in the developmental age, for the construction of structures such as *number, space, time, symbols, object, causality, chance*», that is, cognitive categories that represent some «pivotal notions along the history of science» (*Ibidem*). This is how the Swiss “epistemologist” regards the evolution of the above categories as parallel from a psychogenetic and socio-genetic, individual and collective level, that is, both in the process whereby children become cognitively adult and where the knowledge stored by the scientific communities throughout history has been created. All this is governed by the “functional invariants” that J. Piaget describes as “assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration”. Assimilation and accommodation are two different yet connected functions referring respectively to a «process bound from the organism to the environment, from the endogenous to the exogenous (. . .) assimilation of the external elements» (assimilation) while «a process that goes right in the opposite direction, from the exogenous to the endogenous, from the environment to the organism» (accommodation). As J. Piaget himself explained in *Biologie et connaissance* (Piaget 1983, p. 25): «as well as there is no assimilation without accommodation, there is no accommodation without assimilation: this means that the environment does not simply triggers the recording of prints and the production of copies, but it stimulates active adjustments and as a consequence we speak of accommodation meaning the accommodation of assimilation patterns». To this regard N. Filograsso (1994, p. 65) argues that Piaget’s concept of “symbolic representation” is the «result of an important active structuring process» (*Ibidem*) and highlights the role of accommodation which, by determining the adjustment of the assimilation patterns, grows into imitation and gives place to symbolism. The assimilation activity is “internal from the very beginning” as at first it is expressed in the action patterns and then it strips itself of the reference contents and operates regardless of the external model, according to a process J. Piaget defines as an “interiorized imitation”, a forerunning behaviour to the mental image

and intermediate stage before accomplishing a full-fledged symbolic representation. The series of *echopraxia* phenomena that may be observed on the empirical plane evolves towards forms that are less and less dependant from external references, thus highlighting the «inexpressibility of the assimilation patterns from the modification drives of accommodation» (*Ibidem*). According to N. Filograsso *imitation* itself is construed by J. Piaget from a *constructivist* standpoint; as a matter of fact he writes that «there is no such thing as imitation instinct as well as there is no such thing as the recreational instinct, there is only a schematizing activity which may lean towards the assimilative pole giving place to the recreational phenomenon, or rather towards the accommodative pole, thus producing imitative behaviours», that are later «reintegrated in a constructive balance» (*Ibidem*). The function of the equilibration between assimilation and accommodation is meant as the «arrangement of the subject-system to relate appropriately with the environment through cognitive conflict, partial and discontinuous progression and stable transition to broader and more mature structures» (Damiano 2006, p. 115). This corresponds to *Piaget's stage theory* and the succession of stages as «factors operating at all organic and psychological levels, forming a key continuity factor among them» (Bocchi and Ceruti 1981, p. 274), as well as the evidence of «full-fledged *functional continuity* between the organic and the mental, between life and knowledge» (Bocchi and Ceruti 1981, p. 278) which would explain the presence of countless instances of isomorphism among the organic and cognitive structures. As a matter of fact, as writes E. Damiano (2006, p. 116), J. Piaget «deals with several structures of children and their ways of knowing to seek a confirmation to his theory on continuity between life and knowledge, hence it is not about the entire child nor the entire development». In addition the development of children, that in Piaget's language moves from an "a-dualist" subject to a individual capable of formal thought, stands as «one of the research areas on the forms of equilibration: it is not about observing children's development, but in the progressive growth into a subject capable of mastering knowledge ("*epistemic subject*")» (Damiano 2006, p. 115). Hence a subject as a «cognitive, *epistemic*, that is, *transcendental entity*», who, as Piaget and Beth point out, is common part to all subjects in the same degree of development, whose cognitive structures derive from more general mechanisms of action coordination (see Gattico and Storari 2005). In other words, the characteristics are common to the evolutionary phases taking place in every individual, with reference to globally shared general situations. In J. Piaget's genetic structure the *action* is at the foundation of the knowledge process and it is the surfacing awareness of the action that enables the subject to acknowledge itself as such and picture knowledge as the mutual implication of opposites: «Piaget's knower is an agent who evolves necessarily to grow into a theoretical *dualist*, starting from an *a-dualist* condition (...) Piaget, though constructivist, confirms to be (...) 'realist'» (Damiano 2006, p. 134). The fundamental concept that tells it apart from traditional approaches lays in the category of "time" given by the construct "genesis" it introduces in the cognitive processes: «(...) at the beginning there is a fleeting *back-and-forth* that progressively takes a direction and arranges itself, resulting in the difference between the subject from the external object through an interactive process – conflictive and from time to time

a-symmetrical on the one and/or the other side (“*accommodation*” and/or “*assimilation*”) – to effectively “construct” the two opposed and mutually implied polarities of knowledge (“*equilibration*”)» (Damiano 2006, p. 117). There is an interaction, a constitutive exchange between thought and action: «*action and thought “form” each other*, though following different modalities and by assuring the acknowledgment of their distinction, their relative independence and their intimate correlation» (E. Damiano, in Filograsso 1994, p. 154). According to this perspective the action could not be construed without the thought that regulates it, and if it were not return criterion for thought itself. On the contrary, thought would not be intelligible in its development if it did not produce new actions capable of revealing it, or if it should not be, on its turn, a control criterion for the action. In general the convergence between J. Piaget’s constructivist structure of cognitive development and von Foerster’s self-arranging theories, Atlans’ biological organization, etc. seems to be quite a fruitful one, as they all aim at overcoming the dichotomy of “chance and need”, today are taking shape in the research on the dialectic and circular relation between the couples chance/need, continuity/discontinuity and that will refer to the mentioned paradigm of «order from disorder» (Bocchi and Ceruti, 1981, p. 256). Finally, within the scope of constructionism, the epistemological severance with the object, once naively meant as a self-standing presence, may not be considered to suffice: «it is key to escape the temptation of subject» (Morf 1994, p. 40) and for this reason we move on to explain the variants of social and socio-cultural constructivism (Damiano 2006, p. 130).

THE SOCIAL WAY

The contribution of the Russian psychologist Lev Semënovich Vygotskij is pivotal in the current constructivist discourse with regard to the psycho-social and pedagogical fields, most particularly for that branch of constructivism named “socio-constructivism” (Pojaghi 2003) that involves within the knowledge construction process the dimension and mediation of the socio-cultural context and the importance of interpersonal relations. Commonly analysed by scientific literature in parallel with the intellectual dissertations of Piaget e Bruner (Sempio 1998), the Russian thinker focuses his attention on cognitive processes and the essential interaction they produce throughout the development between thought and *language*, a matter tackled with sheer consistency in one of his major works, aptly entitled *Thinking and speech* (Vygotskij 1976) which he develops by resorting to the work of Lurija, and Leont’ev (1975, 1977). From the point of view of the Russian neuropsychologist, between thought and language there are extreme unity and duality. They seem to develop along a path that stretches from the outside to the inside of the object, then, contrary to J. Piaget, they follow a direction that moves from *intersubjective* to *intrasubjective*. Such essentiality of speech and social communication in human development is quite evident during infancy, where speech is endowed with a *regulatory* directional function to control behaviour, first as verbal instructions and later as internal self-regulated language, “private” or tacit, which

may be defined as self-verbalization. It is thus that thought evolves from an interpersonal, oriented dimension where verbal instructions are external, to an intrapersonal one, interiorized and self-oriented and language displays its regulatory functions on human behaviour, hence, on thought. Any function – writes L. S. Vygotskij (1978, 1980) – appears twice in the cultural development of children, first at a social level and subsequently at individual level, first among individuals and later within the child. All superior functions appear as factual relations among human individuals», following a path going from social to individual, from interpersonal to intrapersonal. L. S. Vygotskij holds into equally important account the interpersonal dialogue and the “dialogic internalization” process, that is, the internal/intra-personal speech, an issue that recent theoretical interpretations value as an analogy to Piaget’s theory. Both, according to some authors (Shayer 2003), harbour the individual *internalization* process which, according to L. S. Vygotskij is meant as *dialogic internalization*, subordinate to the social use of speech and which in the mind of J. Piaget is the *interior/intrapersonal speech*, primary to social and communicative use, in synergy with the assimilation, accommodation and re-equilibration processes where, in an active, aware and constructive fashion, the mental patterns of subject are transformed and re-arranged for the “conflict” between what is already owned and the new concept.

The theoretical construct of internalization which, stimulated by social interaction pushes the subject to structuring new functions, pushes the thought towards an emergent area and goes back to the basic paradigm of the *proximal development zone*, defined by L. S. Vygotskij (1978, 1980) as the distance between the current level of development as determined by individual problem solving and the level of development as determined through problem solving under the guidance of an adult or in collaboration with more skilled peers or again, in general, on the wake of the support from an adequate cultural and communicative *milieu*, which, besides adults and peers, may include culture, books, communication etcetera. In general the educational and didactic practises that find inspiration in the socio-constructivist branch do not aim at «colonising the knowledge of students by means of the knowledge of scientists» (Damiano 2006, p. 132), but rather to «broaden the scope of possibilities», as it is advocated by H. von Foerster (1990) and to the acknowledgement of the plurality of knowledge games. This principle applies to all, scientists, students and teachers alike. Subject is no longer solitary, unchanging and static in its pre-ordained image, but it is plural, diverse, open to various possibilities, and creates material, technological and procedural constructs, etc.

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL WAY

Today’s scientific literature tends to outline constructivism as a broad *socio-cultural* expression and among the most recent contributions we may find the work of L. Moll, J. V. Wertch, D. Newman, P. Griffin, M. Cole, J. Bruner, M. Larochelle, N. Bednarz, J. Garrison, M. B. Varisco, etc. In this paragraph I mean to analyse in detail the contribution of J. Bruner’s cultural psychology and M. Cole’s approach, that enhance knowledge construction processes with regard to culture. J. Bruner (1997) is a prominent authority for his broad all-encompassing thought, from his

juvenile studies on perceptive functionalism to cognitivism in the Sixties and his more recent interest for constructivism. By expressing the position of culturalist psychology, the author, influenced by the theoretical work of the Russian scholars Lurija and Vygotskij, highlights how the construction of knowledge takes place in a hermeneutical process at the backdrop of the meaning taken by the reference culture, which he defines as *perspective*. This is how Bruner's idea that to know means "to do and negotiate meanings" takes shape; here, *to do* refers to a pragmatic, activist meaning, to *agency*, or Piaget's constructivism, while the "*meaning*" refers to the action of attribution of meaning to things which always originates with reference to possible collective and social cultural contexts. The other key parameter for knowledge is *negotiation*, that is, transmitting, mediating and comparing knowledge with culture and the others. Such concept of knowledge, as it is expressed by the author himself in his latest theoretical elaboration, is social in nature as well as intersubjective as it does outline through a personal process, though it is always taken from a cultural perspective or context and in the interaction with the others and culture. Following this approach, to tell, to *narrate*, stands as an action that follows the construction of knowledge, as it gives meaning to men's intersubjective nature. The author pushes this idea further deep and expressly stating the existence of a *narrative thought*, which takes shape just like a *thought mode* and is associated to the other mental work styles. It is mostly through our narration that we build a vision of ourselves and the world, and it is through its narrative that culture provides its members with models of identity and ability to action. In men it recognizes a natural attitude towards composing its experience, the knowledge of facts or things, in a narrative form that does not exclude the individual dynamic components, be it intellectual or affective. The main property of narration is found in its intrinsic "sequential" nature, as it is comprised of a sequence of events and the relevant mental states, or "events involving human beings as characters or protagonists". This is where the tangible meaning of things is found, that is, in the context of events and the simultaneous and ceaseless interpretation effort that informs the narrator and its recipient; narration should thus be construed in a scope of verisimilitude rather than realism or certainty and, most importantly, it activates an interpretative mediation between men and the world. With reference to the concept of knowing meant as "to make meaning", the narrative act is therefore enhanced as a process that lead well beyond the mere transmission of information, usually for an entertainment purpose, and it takes a broader cognitive value, a way of feeling that helps children to create a version of the world in which they can envision, at a psychological level, a world of their own, a personal realm. As a consequence it represents a high-level educational instance such as *to form a Weltanschauung*. Nevertheless narration is laden with a much more sizeable cognitive value, as it interprets a way of knowing, a mental strategy oriented towards the interpretation of human events that transcends the pertinence to human things and the historical connection with narrative arts in general that tradition has found in it. Another quite frequent reference within the socio-cultural framework is M. Cole's situationist approach (2004), which further highlights how knowledge takes place most prominently as an act of membership in a community and it is allowed and facilitated by the involvement

in its activities. The founder of the *Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition* (LCHC) at the University of California in San Diego, and developer of Vygotskij's ideas as well as the Russian contributions in the Twenties of the XX Century, Cole gives an essential role to *culture* and its function as a *medium* to the genesis and development of human thought. He maintains that all processes related to the *psychic* realm emerge from culturally mediated practical activities that are susceptible of historical development. The approach proposed by M. Cole revolves around a vision of the "context" as a "system of structured activities" where individuals interact and where individual performance differences must be construed in relation to the array of specific situations where such tasks are required and performed. Cognitive activity is thus meant as an intersubjective, socially organized process that is fulfilled by means of the interaction among individuals in a given context. From the above it follows that learning is a *situated* process, rooted in socially and culturally organized contexts and where the meaning of knowledge is negotiated among those who are involved in a cultural and social practise.

As a whole, the three following conceptual options stand for the most relevant acquisitions in the scope of the overview I am offering and more specifically are:

1. *Mediation through artefacts*, that is, human mental processes that emerge simultaneously with the human ability to modify objects, thus generating *artefacts*, or aspects of the material world that have been modified throughout the history of its incorporation in the human action aimed at a goal, and are at once *ideal* (conceptual) and *material*. They are ideal in that their material shape has been shaped by their partaking to the interactions they were previously part of and now they mediate.
2. *The historical development*, since next to the generation of artefacts, human beings organize into society and are involved in processes of rediscovery of artefacts that have been already generated and existing in the historical memory of every society. As a consequence every single person, in his or her social identity, is the result of what the preceding generation did and left as legacy to the generations to come.
3. *Practical and daily activities* as key for the analysis of the "psychic" and the overcoming of the duality between materialism and idealism, since it is in the activity that individuals experience the material/ideal residue of the activities carried out by the previous generations.

LINES FOR CONTEMPORARY CONSTRUCTIVISM TO
REVISIT AND REINTEGRATE THE ANCIENT SENSE OF
CONTINUITY BETWEEN MEN AND NATURE

The deep disappointment and theoretical intolerance ensuing the dualist positions of modernity, where the subject of classical rationalism, in its *a priori* shapes and categories, was opposed frontally by determinist trends in their evolutionary history, (since they themselves were "a priori" in an "objective world" preordained with regard to the subject), pushed constructivism beyond the polarity of "subject" and

“object” in knowledge, to reach the “*middle way*” that connects them and tells them apart (E. Damiano in Giaconi 2008, p. 11). This is not merely a compromise nor is it a “dialectic synthesis”, though an “interaction” that progressively generates, in a natural flow, the acknowledgement of a self, thus favouring a growing individualization of existence. Subject and object are thus no longer the absolute and pre-existing poles of a relation, though they are the outcomes of a construction taking place in the continuity between natural macrocosm and anthropologic microcosm. Knowledge itself establishes itself through complex and non-linear interaction of the subjective factor and the objective one, in a lengthy transaction between countless and composite elements (bodily, emotional, affective, operational, cognitive, symbolic, etc.), capable to shape autopoietic and ontopoietic structures derived though relatively autonomous and self-sustaining. Along this “middle way”, there is an evident *continuum* that traditional epistemology (Western, with well-known exceptions) had separated and partitioned (between “body” and “spirit” or “mind” or otherwise designated) or had allowed to proceed deterministically. Within the constructionist perspective, knowledge is “*engraved in the body*” and cognition no longer lives in an isolated condition but is embodied in the physiology of the subject. It is a constitutive integration, according to which “*the subject does not ‘have’ or does not ‘dwell’, but it ‘is’ the body*” (Damiano 2006, p. 12). To state the rearrangement of the knowledge issue in the “middle way”, more specifically as *mediation* of the pedagogical jargon, allows to hold into account the respective contribution of the two polarities that do not pre-exist but recognize and complement each other through the exchanges that generate the *co-construction* of knowledge. The focus is thus placed on the interaction process and on the products around which the connections arrange in clusters and give shape and structure on the weave of knowledge. This is how the “return of subject” should be meant, as one of two vectors, jointly necessary and reciprocally implied in activating knowledge. By starting from this assumption, I do believe that what was previously outlined allows to strengthen some meaningful *lines of reflection* to restore the continuity between *logos and life phenomenology/ontopoiesis*, the main focus of this International Congress of Phenomenology. First comes the re-visitation of life ontopoiesis and of human condition as creator, that is, the ability of human beings to activate a “constructive process of individual becoming” which, within its world, is the expression of a “specific type of constructivism”, where the cognitive act is the “creative act” and where at once “while being ‘generates’, it also manifests the logos of its continuous ‘letting itself be’”. Secondly the acknowledged mutual pervasion between logos and life, which escapes dualist and static play to position itself in what, with other words, we defined as the “middle way”, allowed us to strengthen and restore, from another standpoint, the ancient sense of a synergy between logos e life.

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SECTION VII
LOGOS AND THE SELF



PAUL RICOEUR: CRITICAL CONSENT OF *LOGOS*
TO LIFE

A B S T R A C T

The central aim of the article is to make evident the critical relevance of consent in the framework of the phenomenological dialectics of the voluntary and the involuntary, according to Paul Ricoeur. Consent is the theoretical-practical form of knowledge, which aims at a fundamental alternative facing being, through the absolutely involuntary, where the decision for existence is at stake. After analytically-existentially recovering the forms of necessity that hang upon human existence, to free them of their monist or dualist anthropological marginalization, the analysis aims at grasping them in their sense and thus bring them to the incarnated and broadened exercise of freedom. The theme is introduced by means of the confrontation between consent and creativity, for the latter has been repeatedly proposed by Ricoeur as central issue of the background of his thought. We start from the devaluation that the current concept of creativity would try to exercise upon the value of consent as expression of freedom. We answer back to the shallowness of that questioning, showing the critical conscience of consent, for freedom to appropriate itself creatively of the figures of the absolutely involuntary. In the very hard core of the absolutely involuntary, reflection bumps into the paradigm and the source of creativity: life itself as the sense of being. Finally, the rejection of the absolutely involuntary by a [form of] freedom that [vindicates] itself as abstract, the hyperbolic acceptance of necessity in orphism and the unilateral acceptance of necessity in stoicism are analysed, to discern what integral consent implies to creativity of life as expression of *lógos*. Summary: 1- The paradox of consent and creativity. 2- Consent and critical reason. 3- Topics of consent. 4- Life as *lógos* and paradigm of creativity. 5- From reversed to creative consent.

THE PARADOX OF CONSENT AND CREATIVITY

On multiple occasions Ricoeur declares that rationality of creativity is the permanent question on his fundamental ontology of human reality, attested, verified and widened along the long road of language configurations (poetical-metaphorical, mythical-symbolical, historical-narrative, literary-narrative and aesthetical-theological), of the methodical forms of consolidated knowledge (conflict of systematic interpretations) and of time concatenation in the living present of initiative and respondent-responsibility in the religious, ethical and political fields. Ricoeur indirectly explores the meta-categorial background

of “original creation”, through the “multiple modalities of regulated creation”, articulated at a “philosophical anthropology” level.¹

Conversely, consent appears, at first sight, in the whole of Ricoeur’s work, to be a concept held up in the first stages of his it, at the end of the treatment of the dialectics between the voluntary and the involuntary. Consent would give the impression of being an anti-creativity, the resignation of the lordship over one’s own life, and a deficit of freedom and critical rationality. In front of a supposed olympic leap of creativity towards the new, breaking and order and liberating a generative energy causing a certain anarchic chaos of the existing, and of the preventions of an eventual projective and dominant subject, consent would appear to represent the caution of obeying the established with certain resignation, accepting with a pseudo-sensible balance, an order held to be closed and indefectible, in ourselves and in the world. On the one hand, we would not be able to definitely tell, whether it would be a wiser or a more fatuous order than that which perhaps could make a subject prevail, starting from his idealizations. On the other hand, as is very well known, in the end this indefectible order brutally imposes itself on us.

In this preliminary sketch, which, to the meaningfulness of our issue—critical consent—, opposes the subjacent theme that threads up Ricoeur’s thought—human creativity—, it is necessary to warn that the latter is not thinkable or operable, but respective of its *other*, of what is given and regulated, the pre-disposition of which causes incarnated reason to be attentive to the emergence of diverse forms, from the possible to the impossible: “Nous ne connaissons pas plus par voie immédiate la créativité—dice Ricoeur— que au début de mes recherches le *cogito* ne m’apparaissait pas transparent à lui-même; nous ne connaissons la créativité qu’à travers les règles qu’elle explique, déforme ou subvertit”.² The expressive creativity and the novelty of each *cogito* that breaks into the world is not the laboriously searched for result of an originality produced by the *tabula rasa* of a gesture of evasive breaking. Rather, that creativity is the endowment that comes up towards a fidelity to the deep of being, which inhabits man as retroaction and horizon. The novelty of the singular *cogito* does not manifest itself in the leap to the empty transparency or self-reflection, but when it embraces with intelligent friendliness the ontological density of its incarnation. The *cogito* is not an act of pure self-positioning, but one that lives in acceptance and dialogue with its own conditions of establishment. Critical distance is at the same time an act of participation in the reactivation of settlement.

The creativity that leaves its mark is neither ephemeral and reactive spontaneity, nor pure idea or sentiment. “Wanting is not creating” Ricoeur says, towards the end of *The Voluntary and the Involuntary*. There is no creativity, if the idea and the wishing do not assume in their flying movement the regulated density of the real involved in it. Even more, because of creativity, a given order of existence takes place again; it reappears enhanced in its irreplaceable uniqueness and its attractiveness, for instance, a genial work of thought or music enhances the human signification of a given order of knowledge or art. Creativity does not emerge from the ideal postulated as radical negation of the real, labelled as inert. In this sense, Ricoeur confesses and asks himself in relation to a piece of work: “*L’Être et le Néant* de Sartre ne suscita en moi qu’une admiration lointaine, mais aucune conviction: un

disciple de Gabriel Marcel, pouvait-il assigner la dimension d'être à la chose inerte et ne réserver que le néant au sujet vibrant d'affirmations en tous les ordres?"³ What is inert is not the dimension of being as such, but the declining of our relation with it. The moment of negation – that admirable boldness – is necessary but secondary, in that it emerges from a feeling of positivity that progressively turns into a conviction as it goes through the tests or reality. Favouring that precedent positivity, negation turns away prejudices that shrink the gaze of reason and block the way to recognition of the event that renews a poetic relation with the real. There is no creativity without a self inspired and questioned by something *other* that precedes it and towards which it goes. "Sous la pression du négatif, des expériences en négatif, nous avons à reconquérir une notion d'être qui soit *acte* plutôt que *forme*, affirmation vivante, puissance de exister et de faire exister."⁴ The co-implication between creativity, as observing distance between the given to follow the suggestion of the new, that emerges from the inspired heart of the self through the impact of being, and consent, as critical distance regarding the prosaic surface of appearances, to let speak the signs of the new appearing of being for the intensity of the self's life, is evident.⁵

CONSENT AND CRITICAL REASON

Our purpose here is to point out the rationality of consent, its criticality attached to the experience of self.

To begin with, consenting is an act that breaks the dividing line between the theoretical and the practical: "Ce qui déconcerte c'est que le consentement semble avoir le caractère pratique de la volonté, puisque c'est une espèce d'action, et le caractère théorique de la connaissance intellectuelle, puisque cette action vient buter à un fait qu'elle ne peut changer, à une nécessité."⁶ The deep rationality of consent which turns into a higher sphere, expressive of a consolidated and bearing freedom, is fulfilled in the recognition of the challenge raised by the mostly "other" and most irreducible there is in reality, because it is a decisive indicative dimension of the self's own reality that comes to it, [but] without it. Then: "Le consentement est ce mouvement de la liberté vers la nature pour se joindre à sa nécessité et la convertir en soi-même."⁷ Recovering the original friendship in and with being as an act, just as it has been quoted in the preceding paragraph, is in its turn, neither a spontaneous act, nor a calm possession. The "yes" of consent is patience, because it is always re-conquered starting from a "no", starting from an intimate factual consent of what "should be" from an own imaginary measure. Active patience and ontological tenderness towards oneself, the deepness of self-esteem, are not initial data with which we receive ourselves as an endowment, but a critical recovery facing a necessity already implanted in my existence. It comes to me, to make it mine in an inimitable way. The passiveness of consent may perhaps be the supreme basic activity by which an existing entity answers the alternative key of existing. As regards my existence, I have the possibility of receiving and adopting the gift I am from the transcendence of the other, to myself and to the world. But it is as well to surprise oneself,

acting one's own singularity, what makes the road to consent an irreplaceable work, nobody can do it for me, but inasmuch as I-am-given, and, in that sense, called upon. "La patience supporte activement ce qu'elle subit; elle agit intérieurement selon la nécessité qu'elle souffre. (. . .) Consentir c'est moins constater la nécessité que l'adopter; c'est dire oui à ce qui est déjà déterminé".⁸ This patience that consents without anticipating anything, without projecting future, is, notwithstanding, the possibility condition of an authentic projection. It arranges the previously given resources of singularity, because without them there is no creativity, it is not possible to want what is new and effectively appreciate it in its difference, without finding myself involved in what is old and previous.

Knowledge has its connections in the global dialectics of human existence facing Being. Ricoeur's first metaphysical reflections, that accompany and support his phenomenology of the disproportion of the wish-to-be, first shaped between the voluntary and the involuntary and then in the dialectics between finitude and infinitude, inherent to all intentional experiences of the capable-self and to its affective apperception, recover the anthropological issue in the framework of a general ontology of being, as actuality and potentiality, in two decisive articles: *Vraie et fausse angloise* (1953) and *Négativité et affirmation originaires* (1956).⁹ There he tackles the dramatic [aspect] of the narrowness of our finitude, inasmuch as the trigger for truth and happiness throws itself, in wishing, from [our finitude itself], powerful as well as immeasurable. The structural human disproportion thus implies a legitimate sadness and a positive anxiety that express the grandeur of the self, its non-conformity with something less than everything: its impossible ontical self-satisfaction, the folly of a self-synthesizing interpretation of the disproportion, which is, because of its own nature, without synthesis projectable and producible. Consent has to be aware of this, so as not to distort itself either as a naturalistic and historicist observance of necessity or become shocked at the anarchical power of negativity, of non-conformity.

To deepen into the rationality of consent is to unravel the precedence of positivity that underlies, and causes, the most violent negation which emerges from the inadequacy between transcendent demands of the self and historical fulfillments. It is not a mere gnoseological inadequacy in which the beginning of freedom puts itself at stake in the knowledge of necessity. At stake is [also] the self-Being original relationship, self-to-Infinite, as source of freedom, experimented in the rational-affective character or the original relation. It is contemplation with no distance, in friendliness, or rather, an active adoption of necessity, recognizing it as a gift, and thus, as dawning expression of freedom: "C'est par là que le consentement est toujours plus qu'une connaissance de la nécessité: je ne dis pas, comme du dehors: 'Il faut' - mais, repassant en quelque sorte sur la nécessité, je dis: oui, qu'elle soit. 'Fiat'. Je veux ainsi!"¹⁰

The embracing dialectics of activeness and passiveness in which consent operates, possesses an interesting and decisive critical implication of an ethical-ontological type. On the one hand, this dialectics in its turn upholds "une éthique (. . .) marquée par la dialectique de la maîtrise et du consentement"; so, ethics, rather the moralism of behaviour norms, implies something much more important: human stance

in front of the real, in front of the stars, in front of the other, and in front of itself. On the other hand, this embracing dialectics of activeness-passiveness dismisses every anthropological monism or dualism inasmuch as it shows the opening of an alterative gap in the dramatically maintained unity of human disproportion. “Les implications ontologiques de cette dialectique de l’agir et du p  tir ne me sont apparues qu’   la relecture de ma th  se (VI)    l’occasion d’une conf  rence    la Soci  t   fran  aise de philosophie: ‘L’unit   du volontaire et de l’involontaire comme id  e-limite’ (1951). La ph  nom  nologie du volontaire et de l’involontaire me paraissant ainsi offrir une m  diation originale entre les positions bien connues du dualisme et du monisme. (. . .) Un peu plus tard,   crivans *L’homme faillible*, je devais me risquer    parler, dans un langage emprunt      Pascal, d’une ontologie de la disproportion. L’expression ne figure pas dans *Le volontaire et l’involontaire*, bien qu’elle exprime correctement la tonalit   majeure de la sorte d’antropologie philosophique dont relevait l’arbitrage propos   entre monisme et dualisme”.¹¹ I transcribe this decisive autobiographical confession, because it offers the necessary categorial context to understand how every thing is bound together and what Ricoeur accurately aims at, when he upholds, against every anthropological monism or dualism, that the effectiveness of the voluntary or the involuntary is disproportion and that the unity of the voluntary or the involuntary is a boundary idea.¹²

What does boundary-idea here mean? Every limit is like skin –R. Guardini says–because in principle and vitally it communicates a nourishing *otherness*. Boundary-idea, because it is the demanding and undetermined presence in ourselves of something really other, the opportunity of occurrence and the physiognomy of which, is a-priori unknown to us. But we do know and sense, that, should it exist and come out, it must be somehow real and totally correspondent, in an unimaginable way, with our disproportionate existential demand of truth and happiness. Boundary-idea refers to a *tertium quid* inherent to the bipolar inadequacy of praxis that questions every form of comprehension and of practical relation with the human that could flatten and smother the disproportion. Dualism and monism express the historically recurrent attempt to accomplish that fading away. Be it by breaking the bipolarity of disproportion to direct it by means of a double register of perfection (dualism), or by turning the disproportion unilateral by means of a materialistic or spiritualistic planning of perfection (monism). The naivety of will to power rests upon the pretence of producing the proportion and offers an answer to man without man, measuring the immeasurable: it is magic as imaginative infinitization of the finite. The shrewdness of the will to power rests upon making the infiniteness of disproportion empirical, sharing freedom in the continuous accumulative circulation of the finite: it is the mirage of the accessible finitization of the infinite, keeping its novelty by means of the eternal returning of different phases of the same. In both cases, it is about the obviation of self-acceptance as disproportion, [about] the hushing of the human question or the deviation of its direction, to make it manageable and bearable, or to excite it by exacerbating the wish-without-being, in a theoretical and practical programmed indecision, regarding every possible event corresponding to the original relation, right up to the weariness of itself as true question and wish-to-be. Is it a true answer the one that trivializes, destroys and exceeds the question, or is

it already a dead and deadly answer? Is the proposal corresponding to the structural dual (not monist or dualist) disproportion, to cure ourselves of the disproportion or to praise it without measure, praising the original metaphysical relation in the presence of an existing entity that would be sign and figure of the disproportion itself? Is it not the very ideal of self-sufficiency, and of making oneself the enemy of every real disproportion, of critical consent?

There is a decisive aspect –I would call it blondelian– in Ricoeur’s work, extolled by critical sense of consent in reference to truth. Consenting does not refer to anything abstract or anonymous, to a mental by-product of man himself.¹³ This getting into necessity of reason and freedom makes explode a healthy crisis in the immaturity of the thinking self, raising a fundamental change of attitude. The self is summoned to a conversion: “le moi, plus radicalement, doit renoncer à une prétension secrètement cachée en toute conscience, abandonner son voeu d’auto-position, pour accueillir une spontanéité nourricière et comme une inspiration qui rompt le cercle stérile que le soi forme avec lui-même”.¹⁴ To consent is to adhere through reason, freedom and affectivity to something objective I give myself, but which intimately affects me, and the positivity of which I sense and potentiate through a renewed relation operated by consent. “Or le lien qui joint véritablement le vouloir à son corps requiert une autre sorte d’attention que l’attention intellectuelle à des structures. Elle exige que je participe activement à *mon incarnation comme mystère*. Je dois passer de l’objectivité à l’existence”.¹⁵ This ontological feeling of participation in being through flesh, prevents objective analyses from degrading into a naturalism with no deepness, just as the notional clarification of existence prevents rational-affective access to the ontological from disappearing into sentimental confusion. In philosophy, knowledge is inseparable from commitment to existence. The deeply felt epochal need of a new thematically widened Enlightenment of reason, open to the specificity of its fields of objectivation and with a multidimensionality in methods of knowledge, means that philosophy is not there to close itself up in a mythology of knowledge for the sake of knowledge, typical of a soul exiled from its incarnation.

From his first works, Ricoeur questions every pretence of giving an answer to existence –which is total demand of significance, exhaustive and inexhaustible– through the network of a discourse or an ultimate argument. To the life and existence of the self in action corresponds only effectively a living, intelligent and persuasive answer, to which it be possible to consent freely and affectively. The calibre of the “mystery of my incarnation” tunes in with the contemporaneity of a living presence that recognizes and embraces me in consent to my humanity. With the disproportional “questioning flesh” that I am, and not with the conclusive system of an apothetical discourse, does the event of an encounter take place, the correspondence of which becomes verifiable in act. Critical reason resumes its task as critical conscience of an experience in act. Philosophy re-discovers itself as “science of conscience of the total sense of experience”, correlative to the self as “self-conscience of the kosmos”. Reason is prepared by consent for this enthralling task. Ricoeur questions a certain tempting rationalism in reason, which gobbles down, expresses and substitutes the occurrence of being in a “science of experience of conscience”,

in what has already been experienced. The hegemony or the already decanted¹⁶ concept, of reasoning and analysis, above the recurrent and renewed observation of the original occurrence of the real in that field of encounter that experience is, – therefore reduced neither to a mere volatile sensation, nor to the prejudice held up on the already known and delimited– becomes living experience, when those second attributes of reason let themselves be measured by the received alterity. The subject of knowledge grows up as subject, when he judges incorporating what he experiences. The primacy of the experiential encounter, is decisive for experiencing the real intensively, involving reason down to its very bottom. Another misleading possibility is growing spiritually older in a perhaps splendid mental-aprioristic substitution of the experience of the real.

TOPICS OF CONSENT

The present paragraph intends to grasp the nucleus in which the interpellation of necessity condenses and to show that consent is the answer of freedom to what is factually inevitable and unmovable in existence itself, but yet is never fixed in its experienced sense. For the better or for the worse, it is in consent or in rejection where this sense is at stake. Ricoeur calls these topics of consent the *absolute involuntary* –character, unconscious, life– not because they invalidate the permanent dialectics of activity as initiative and of passiveness as reception, but because here reception must be total, for initiative to be real, incident. What absolutely affects us in our own flesh, and thus raises the questioning of the self, with a logic structure that aims at a total response, shows that metaphysical issues are not raised and decided from the clouds upwards, but in everyday flat ground: “le caractère, cette figure stable et absolument non choisie de l’existant, la vie, ce cadeau non concerté de la naissance, l’incoscient, cette zone interdite, a jamais inconvertible en conscience actuelle”,¹⁷ they defy freedom and reason in an immediate and permanent way, because they are there, in the nearest, but radically approaching them.

This total pressure of the involuntary, however, does not present itself equivocally, menacingly, without any antecedents, because the involuntary is accompanied and analogically nourishes the two precedent moments, where the creativity of will manifests itself more agility, having, in spite of it, not overcome the road to arbitrariness. The regulated sovereignty of freedom already manifests itself in *decision*: it implies the initiative of a project that intends to carry something out, but the project would never emerge, were it not nourished by the involuntary, providing motives arising from necessities experienced because of our bodily and historical-cultural incarnation in being. Motives that turn into values as soon as they are estimated as leading to the project –estimated in its turn, when it is perceived as significative of our will-to-be, of our destination to happiness– and arise knocking at the door of moral conscience, frequently in a conflictive manner. Decision crowns that reason for acting, which, finally, after deliberative scrutiny, shows itself more valuable, conducive, persuasive and concurrent with the projected will-to-be and with goodness. The same regulated sovereignty of freedom pre-shapes itself in the second sphere of the exercising of freedom, through the living presence of the motivating involuntary.

Inasmuch as decision does not come into the world if it does not become *action*, acting requires that I set my body in motion and make a voluntary effort. But if such movement and effort pretended to be a pure and non ruled creativity, all decisions would remain in the air, without acting, without interfering in the course of the world. To take the step from decision to action, it is necessary to have available a great amount of know-hows, pre-shaped in spontaneity, as well as exercising bodily and psychical capacities, which we must already count on, and which are involuntarily more or less available to be voluntarily involved in action. The alternate rhythm between the living impulse or the paralyzing shock of the different forms of emotions facing the new acting that is coming into the world and the calm and secure, or diverted and nonchalant position of accumulated habit, makes evident the decisive incidence of the involuntary in acting.

This presupposes not only the presence of an incarnated self, which transcends through sensitive-reason that which conditions it, but supposes as well the freedom in relation to which there may only be conscience and experience of necessity suffered-experienced in the flesh. In this way, consent is also a work of freedom, challenged to involve itself, in the interstices of its corporeity, in the consistence of being that presents and signifies itself in different ways, also in practical terms. So, what freedom is it about? A freedom that is not (by principle, though it might be by pretension) pure act, olympic movement, arbitrary or suicidal flight, because it is originally warned and sheltered by the suggestive and strict indications of being, which warns the wake conscience about the consistence of existence, through the involuntary. A freedom that is, in each of its moments, activity and passiveness, initiative and receptivity, which is exercised by taking what it is given, what it finds, and what does not do itself: motives and values, energies and powers. And finally, that imposing strength and that necessitating vulnerability of total nature, that reaches me through my body, without me, for me to be myself: the absolute involuntary. So: "L'acte du Cogito n'est pas un acte pur d'auto-position; il vit d'accueil et du dialogue avec ses propres conditions d'enracinement. L'acte du moi est en même temps participation".¹⁸ Participation to what?: "au mystère central de l'existence incarnée; pour être compris et retrouvé cet mystère que je suis exige que je coïncide avec lui, que j'y participe plus que je ne le regarde devant moi à distance d'objet".¹⁹ That is why human freedom is *dependent-independence*: admirable and paradoxical disproportion of an existent that is "maître de soi et serviteur de cette nécessité figurée par le caractère, l'inconscient et la vie".²⁰

Character, first figure of the absolute involuntary, does not refer to any collective typology, but to the inimitable uniqueness of the incarnated self. This is the indicator of its singular existence, from it arises the feeling of impossibility of each of getting rid of oneself. In character, freedom and destiny are no longer considered as two juxtaposed kingdoms, one beginning here and the other there. Rather, thanks to character, all determinations manifest themselves as the inimitable way of being of freedom itself, as the irreducible perspective upon values which manifest themselves through motives, while motivation particularizes itself, because its conscience is unique, with a style that distinguishes it from all others. Through character richness of human plurality is accomplished, a great mystery, which precisely because of

that, is not in the hands of men's power. Ontological mystery is, always, the only real critique of power. In its turn, character is our effective way of being, of co-existing and of co-inciding on the world; it is also matter to be worked upon, so that its virtualities do not become misappropriated.

The unconscious is the second manifestation of the absolute involuntary, there where it borders and penetrates in the actual critical nucleus of the self and shows that its transcendence in self-reflection is accompanied by an undetermined other, by an undefined matter that questions our very questioning capability, inasmuch as it is exercised with the pretension of total transparency and of original innocence of conscience, which easily accuses the limits of the real. On the one hand, the unconscious is the already given and never ending background of conscience, abyssal rearguard of clear and distinct ideas. But it acts as boiling source of inspiration, nourishing the productive imagination that drives artistic creativity. Its confusing and irreducible alterity accompanies the clear conscience, like the dark bottom ground in which we find ourselves as already given existing entities, and, even as consciences, we already come from near here and somewhere else. The fact that that indefinable matter is mainly affective, referred to the origin and persistently rebellious to discovery, suggests that the immemorial memory of our roots in being is an *original*, generative bond, linked through a predecessor alterative series that intrigues us, that inspires our eager search towards the other through others, always bumping into the elastic barrier of the immemorial. This impassable but backwards flexible barrier, which neither lets itself be placed at a distance, nor evaluate as if it were a motive, nor move as if it were a power docile to our projects, but shows indirectly through signs and symptoms, issues a highly instructive methodological criterion regarding the healthy general and philosophical use of reason. When the cognitive subject throws himself, loyal and coherent towards the foundation of what he finds in experience, to get to know and support its significance, the latter never appears as a directly available object. It manifests itself in experience through discontinuous strokes, discreet and even incongruent to a diverted and superficial look. Just as in the case of the unconscious, to pick up its traces, become aware of its correlations, and follow the conclusive indications regarding its significance, a method of signs is required, the seriousness of a hermeneutical-critical method that could support what it is, and could confirm the breach of escape towards the unknown within the already known, towards the invisible within the visible.

On the other hand, the unconscious protects the conscience against self-creating illusion, against the confusion between the capacity of self-determination and the *aseité* (*ens a se*), to change the sense of autonomy regulated by conscience under the pretext of an ontological self-sufficiency, which is a mould for traumas and every possible arbitrariness. Therefore the unconscious is also the sign of an *original* link with a type of equivocal and sinister alterity, in respect of which all psychical conflicts tie themselves together, increase and repeat themselves. As a last resort, the unconscious is the lodging-place of self-rejection. En efecto: "Je peux donc rester seul à dire non quand toute la nature à sa façon dit oui, et m'exiler à l'infini dans le refus. Mais ma lucidité doit être sans borne. Qui refuse ses limites refuse son fondement; qui refuse son fondement refuse l'involontaire absolu qui double comme un

ombre l'involontaire relatif des motifs et des pouvoirs. Qui refuse ses motifs et ses pouvoirs s'annule soi-même comme acte. Le non comme le oui ne peut être que total".²¹ The third figure of this total challenge of the absolute involuntary is life. Life is the basic necessity and most fundamental condition of will. But, is it directly visible at all?

LIFE AS *LÓGOS* AND PARADIGM OF CREATIVITY

We start from the devaluation that creativity claimed to exercise on the signification of consent as expression of freedom. Answering to the shallowness of this questioning, we become aware of the critical consistency of consent, for freedom to appropriate itself of the absolute involuntary. Now, in the same hard core of the absolute involuntary, we discover the paradigm and source of creativity: life as the sense of being. Thus, consent presents itself as critical activation of creativity: of life as *lógos*.

LIFE IS THE GRACIOUS *LÓGOS*
OF AN ORIGINAL GENEROSITY

It is possible to sense the difference and novelty of life when placing it in a correlation with two other figures of the absolute involuntary, and thus, to grasp as well its incidence in this whole: "Si le caractère est la nécessité la plus proche de ma volonté, on peut bien dire que la vie est *La* nécessité de base. Elle alimente les virtualités de l'inconscient et leurs conflits, elle donne au caractère ses directions privilégiées; c'est en elle que tout se résoud en dernière instance. (...) En moi et pour moi, l'union de l'âme et du corps est l'union de la liberté et de la vie. Je suis 'en vie': comme le suggère le langage, il suffit que je sois 'en vie' pour que je vienne 'au monde', -pour que 'j'existe'".²² Life is a plan of existence that wraps up conscience and that comes *from outside myself*, to permeate *everything in me*. It is the reconciling and totalizing topic of necessity and freedom: its occurrence is enough, for everything to be virtually there, for each way of being and each figure of the involuntary to grow according to their own perfection. The sense of *being* as act of existence and of making exist discerns itself in life, as totalizing basic necessity. Life in itself is not vitalist, it is logical, but not tautological. It is so rationalistically demanding, that man is capable of giving his life to uphold that value which gives sense to it and supports it. Suicide itself gives testimony that a life without *lógos* is unbearable; *lógos* is the forceful and evasive answer to the misunderstanding, that, in general, men already produce between life and the adequate reason for living. This non-vitalist demand of life has its pre-figurations in vegetal life, like the grain that dies for the sprouts to be born, and in animal life, in the total exposition of the mother to defend her brood. In the meantime, life goes on being, on the one hand, the basic endowment which allows values to be such for me, and on the other, the fluent organicity of a gracious and silent wisdom that sets essential tasks before the intervention of any human reflection, making possible every knowledge, power and

effort.²³ Following Husserl's steps, Ricoeur becomes suspicious of an vitalist and historicist idea of a philosophy of life. The theme bursts in bound to demands of reason: the essential primacy of "birth" pertaining its concealment of the romantic fascination exercised by death and the ethical primacy of the wish to live [according to] goodness, for moral normativity to have sense.²⁴

LIFE IS CREATIVE REASON IN ACTION

Its mode of construing being is not accessible to humans: "Dès que l'on compare en effet l'invention et la finalité en biologie à l'invention et la finalité humaine, elle apparaît nécessairement étonnante; comparé au cheminement difficile de la construction humaine, l'édification organique nous stupéfie: alors que l'homme fabrique des outils du dehors par addition des parties, la vie édifie ses organes du dedans par croissance orientée. Tout se passe comme si une intelligence que s'ignore, mais une intelligence infiniment plus clairvoyante et infiniment plus puissante ordonnait la matière".²⁵ This exceptional and inexhaustible intelligence inherent to life manifests itself even more in the bodily defections of human finitude: "elle se donne comme une puissance de réparation, de compensation, de guérition; le spectacle merveilleux de la cicatrisation, du sommeil et de la convalescence confondent ma volonté, ses faibles moyens et sa maigre patience".²⁶

In front of this spectacle it is necessary to exercise an effort upon reason, very violent, were it not for what the dominant mentality already facilitates, to cut the dynamics of the sign interposing a prejudice, which could prevent the sensitive and sensible intelligence from surprising itself by what occurs before its eyes. This thought arises spontaneously: "si la vie faisait ce qu'elle fait volontairement, elle serait une volonté sans commune mesure avec la nôtre, et par tout dire: démiurgique. (...) La vie édifie la vie; la volonté ne construit que des choses. Le spectacle de la vie humilie toujours la volonté".²⁷ Life is the expression of a rationality the final plan of which we do not completely grasp, but, at least, as an enormous good for ourselves. In the construction of organisms, life shows a geniality that goes over smallest details, where each organ performs perfectly determined functions and complementary of others in keeping with the living whole. This symphony has its rhythm and works with time, which makes the complete truth of the living entity explicit: it proceeds with method, and keeps growing through time in successive stages, in which the irreplaceable result that each one has been assigned in accordance with the living whole, is carried out. This beauty of life is not separated from the radical contingency of nature: life and nature are marvellous because they're signs, only signs of a presence, which, through them, suggests itself as infinite *lógos*.

THE LÓGOS OF LIFE IS SINGULARIZING SELF-AFFECTION AND INDIVISIBLE UNITY

Conscience is not designed to be exiled from life, to oppose it and contradict it, but to become absorbed in it in each concrete whole in which it develops, and thus

to understand it, because life is not merely our infrastructure, but mainly the positive figure of our fate: “elle est une certe nécessité d’exister que je ne peux plus m’opposer pour la juger et la maîtriser. Je ne peux pas aller jusq’au bout de cet acte d’exil qu’est la conscience (. . .) La vie n’est pas seulement la partie basse de moi-même sur laquelle je règne; je suis vivant tout entier, vivant dans ma liberté même. Je dois être ‘en’ vie por être responsable ‘de’ ma vie. Cela que je commande me fait exister”.²⁸ This same enveloping power of life that reaches us is what makes of it an affection: it reveals itself to me as felt rather than as known, wit no intentionality towards something, with no room for perspectives, not observable in itself. And it is, notwithstanding the first form of conscience-of-self, the elemental form of apperception of the self, which originally accompanies every conscience of something, every relation with something else: It is the inevitable conscience of the consistency of my particularity as an unredeemable whole. That is why life is apprehended with no perspective, not through aspects or sides, it offers no foreshortenings. Self-affection is the non-perceptive conscience of my body, it is my body sensed as a concrete and unique whole, i.e., conscience of life is not conscience of something, but self-conscience as individual living totality, which does not make itself, which receives itself.

In affective conscience life reveals itself as indivisible: “I exist as one”.²⁹ I am the unit that circulates among the diverse functions of my organism. I have limbs, feelings, ideas, but not lives. Life is not plural. I find myself already existing: conscience has no right to any previous decision upon existence. Because when the latter wakes up, the former is already given, it is being endowed, and conscience cannot anticipate itself to life, to give it to it.

LOGOS OF LIFE IS ENDOWED CONTINGENCY DIRECTLY RE-BOUND

Life is the cipher of a unique and brimming creative action, which comes from *somewhere else* and sets up as basis of acceptance of every aspect of the existing. “Le ‘je’ est sur fond de vie, (. . .) l’indéfini d’une vie donné gracieusement. Cette impuissance de la conscience à se donner l’être et à y persévérer est tantôt souferte comme une blesure originelle ou éprouvée comme une joyeuse complicité avec un élan venu d’ailleurs. (. . .) ce sentiment d’être débordé par ma vie est augmenté par cette assurance que la vie est une dans le monde, que elle vient de plus loin que moi et me traverse seulement en me donnant d’exister”.³⁰ As organism, life is the unfolding in myself of an intelligence absolutely wiser than myself, that supports me without resting, just as “growing” is de manifestation of that endowment towards its expressive completeness, just as “birth” is the occurrence of a mysterious election witch singularizes my total contingency. Life as donation to a free conscience, to a self that is the subject of this living body, implies to reference to nothingness.

On one side, it is positively “made of nothing”, from the total gratuitousness that only requires from me the recognition and performance of that contingency, as a

strive with reality in the conscience of dependency of the mystery that makes me singular. The only negation birth speaks of is the ex-nihilo of existence, of this unique and not another being that I am, having one day come to this world of life: "Je ne me pose pas dans l'existence; je n'ai pas de quoi produire ma présence au monde, mon être là; la conscience n'est pas créatrice: vouloir n'est pas créer".³¹ On the other side, negatively, life as punctual donation to a free conscience implies "nothingness" as possibility of negating my life as an endowment, of considering it as a brute an anonymous fact, which therefore neither tells me anything nor refers me to anything, and which I must therefore defeat according to my own measures and calculations. Now, this alternative and binding decision are already traumatically and continuously at stake, from the beginning of the self, with its reason and freedom, in history.

What does this imply for each of the moments of the effective experience of life, characterized by that structural disproportion between its being within limits and its wish-of-being, its wanting-everything? In general it implies that life as an endowment ontologically loses its potential because of un-binding a decision that breaks the bond between donation and donator. Thus the organism tends to disorganize itself and becoming vulnerable, illness attacks it, and it responds up to where it can, and we experiment all that in physical and psychical pain. At a certain point, growth combines with the decline of vital energies, and is substituted by ageing; "birth", which is the celebration of my positive contingency or of the occurrence of my singularity, with the limits that qualify it, begins being interfered by something strange to life, that distorts it, turning it into the *anxiety of contingency*.

Which fortuitous factor towards life is this? The historical resistance of reason against the freedom to embrace the mysterious singularizing dependency inherent to the gift of existing as an incarnated self distorts the happy contingency turning it into a distressing one, which will become resentment towards contingency. For the latter begins to be linked above all, with the radical foreign strangeness of death. There is neither original experience nor apperception of death, neither has the latter any symmetry with birth. There is no "natural death". There is the need for an accident by which one is thrown out of the scenery of life: "La mort reste un accident par rapport au dessin de la vie; la mort n'est pas tout à fait naturelle; il faut toujours un petit choc pour nous pousser dehors. . .".³² Then, suddenly, death becomes "le révélateur privilégié de cette angoisse de la contingence; c'est pourquoi l'idée de la mort est devenue en quelque sorte l'équivalent objectif, l'amorce et l'excitant de cette angoisse éminemment subjective de *ma* contingence".³³

*LÓGOS OF LIFE GIVES LESS RELEVANCE
TO THE SIGNIFICANCE AND THE REACH
OF DEATH*

Conscience of the unavoidable fact of death darkens the original experience of contingency as glorious occurrence of the unrepeatability of the singularity of the incarnated self. Contingency is intentionally misappropriated towards resentment against

finitude and is affectively emptied of the joy of human disproportion that is a sign of its binding. This radical confusion and this profound affective trauma arise from the impact produced by perception of death as what it is: a tragic incongruence with the superior dynamism of life, a scandalous disintegration of a singularized existing entity, meant to last as such. In the apperception of the self and self-affection, there is no trace of death. It is knowledge that has been learned: “L’idée de la mort reste une idée, toute entière apprise du dehors et sans équivalent subjectif inscrit dans le Cogito”.³⁴ Death is so anti-natural, that not only at the beginning does the child have an idea of it, but also, paradoxically, in spite of all our adult knowledge and suffering near it, and of verifying its unavoidable character that has hurt us so many times, we overlook it, we live as if that certainty were not essentially serious. Ricoeur insists: “cette certitude est un ‘savoir’ et non pas un’expérience, le plus certain de tous mes savoirs concernant mon avenir, mais seulement un savoir”.³⁵

There is no personal experience of death, but there is a live and suffering knowledge of it, through the death or our loved ones. It hurts us, because it is an exceptional negation that takes place necessary and separates us, interrupts our relations, our limits and our powers. But its necessity has a curious internal lessening which Ricoeur adequately points out: “se donne avec une nécessité irrécusable: ‘Tu dois mourir’. Et pourtant cette nécessité ne peut être déduite d’aucun caractère de notre existence; la contingence me dit seulement que je ne suis pas un être nécessaire dont le contraire impliquerait contradiction; elle me permet au plus de conclure que je peut ne plus être un jour, que je ‘peux’ mourir: car qui a ‘du’ commencer ‘peut’ finir, -mais non pas que je ‘dois’ mourir”.³⁶ This could-not-have-been of death – on which somehow we always count, when we in everyday life put in first place, in spite of certainty and crying, our devotion for going on working and asserting life – is the diminishing of relevance dictated by our ontological memory of something more original: the occurrence of our contingency.

Death produces in us a deep repulsion and fear because of its offending anti-natural character. But we should be aware that before and behind death, in the historical beginning and in each day in history, there is another big rejection in that entails us all. The rejection of the relation to being as act of existing and making exist, experienced as conscience of consistency of the instant. This is implied in the original self-conscience of our contingency, as joyful belonging to Being, and as dependency nourished from source of existence. It could be said that death, with its humiliating historical weight –that which we are not made for– is the last educational resource for a final alert so as not to lose something much bigger and more decisive for which we are made, given the introductory character of this very life, which, in the wish-to-be, expects life. Death, then has the mission of an alert, which, with its forcefulness, gives us the opportunity to tear ourselves from the illusion of self-sufficiency –that historical illusion, humiliating as well, for which we are not made– and which, under its multiple distortions, is the support of all violence of history.

FROM REVERSED TO CREATIVE CONSENT
*THE GREAT REJECTION AS REVERSED
 CONSENT*

To Ricoeur, as different from Heidegger, there is no original being-for-death: death does not constitute me, like *Sorge* or *Mit-sein*; neither does it interfere with me in the way other injuries of life do: suffering, ageing and distress of contingency. Death is always an intruder, as foreign to life as impossible to do away with it. Thus, death takes over the most total and menacing image of the necessity and limit that destroys freedom and life. It is there, where resentment against every other form of limitation begins, in short, against the human and creatural condition itself. Behind the great rejection of the absolute involuntary, hides the confusion between finitude and guiltiness. On the other hand, life contains the trigger for perfection and happiness: from the body it sends its message of its primitive passion to coincide with freedom, and the latter the passion to exist and express itself in a body that totally obeys it. There is human disproportion because life is desire to be and possess the infinite. When this desire loses its intentional direction, it turns against the dimension of finitude of the same subject that carries the disproportion. It does it in an indirect way: by despising the limits (which are like skin: they communicate totality and alterity). To reject the limit is to reject reference to the fundamental alterity. Then, the transcendence of the self, its sovereignty in the world through its connection with the Infinite, exchanges this constituent ideal for the utopia of projecting the vane and empty self-sufficiency. To evade the challenge of sense of the disproportion and the tension between the voluntary and the involuntary, the *Cogito* settles down in the abstract, denying that which, in it, does not obey the project of self-sufficiency. “Le trait plus remarquable de ce refus à triple tête (del límite de un carácter, de las tinieblas del inconsciente y de la contingencia de la vida), c’est qu’il ne se donne pas d’abord comme refus, mais se cache dans une affirmation de souveraineté”.³⁷

But it is only a speculative sovereignty, postulated to defend itself from finitude, because it has previously hidden what makes it human; the structural disproportion implied by the presence of an Other, on the way of the self to oneself. Then, faced with the narrowness of character of the speculative self, it builds up the promethean purpose of being the concentrated totality of possible humans, in the fashion of a powerful collective subject that represents real humanity. In front of the unfathomable unconscious, it raises the pretence of total transparency of an I-Think in general, which has already absorbed the sea of being and signification in the mirror of conscience. In front of the contingency of life and its condition of non-necessary individual existent, it considers itself as total and exhaustive condition of possibility for something to exist and have sense, becoming the operating subject of the “ideal genesis” of everything else, thanks to the alleged action creator of conscience.

The ontological significance of the fundamental senses and feelings, that show the resistance and transcendence of the body, of the other, of life, of duration of all “constitution” enterprise, is epistemologically discredited as pre-critical instance of reason, which has not yet reached the recognition of its absolute transcendentalism. Which is the task of so many fixations on the purity of method to build the

speculative tower? The crouching down of the virus of nothingness, of the hidden fear of death, calls for some mental form of conjuration: “c’est par un geste de puissance que la conscience réfute sa propre angoisse de ne pas être”.³⁸ That is why, “une philosophie de la conscience triomphante tient en germe une philosophie du désespoir. Il suffit que le refus dissimulé dans le vœu d’auto-position se connaisse come refus pour que la vanité et l’échec de ce vœu transforment soudain en désespoir la prétention de cette liberté titanesque. . .”.³⁹ Nihilism occurs as deceived idealism due to its lack of reality, but it stops its criticism half-way up. It unmasks the inverted significance of the great idealist theses, but remaining in their game. Where realism risked itself for the idea, nihilism states that it is only a strategy of will for power; where it speculated on the freedom of the spirit, it judges that it is an aesthetic game, to set arbitrary values as conditions of conservation and increase of that odd will of will. Men have arrived at the mature time, in which they only energize themselves for nothing, everything is interpretation to support a fleeting role on the great tragicomedy of the world, to which, in their massive loneliness, they lend themselves.

The self-contradictory parable of the great rejection as reversed feeling, does not need refutation, but returning the human to its place: “Le refus marque la plus extrême tension entre le volontaire et l’involontaire, entre la liberté et la nécessité; c’est sur lui que le consentement se reconquiert: il ne le refusera pas; il le transcendera”.⁴⁰ What does this imply? (a) To always redo the road to reason through a fundamental ontology of human reality, that is, “une méditation directe et concrète sur la condition véritable de l’homme. . .” (VI 438), having learned from our modernity, by contrast, that “toute genèse *idéale* de la conscience est un refus de la condition *concrète* de la conscience”.⁴¹ (b) To rehabilitate metaphysics as ecumenical critical-poetical dialogue, down to the clarifying threshold of the issue of Being, as task of philosophical reason linked to the experience of the self as freedom incarnated in history. The poetical root of consent is neither a capitulation in front of necessity nor an arrogant rejection of its character of sign directed to reason and freedom. It is gratitude before total gratuity of the enormous ontological weight of the gift of existence, which, because of the same, is a total proposal that challenges a just as total response. Because: “¿Comment justifier le oui du consentement sans porter un jugement de valeur sur l’ensemble de l’univers, c’est à dire, sans en apprécier l’ultime convenance à la liberté? Consentir n’est pas capituler si malgré les apparences le monde est le théâtre possible de la liberté. (. . .) Ainsi le consentement aura sa racine ‘poétique’ dans l’espérance, comme la décision dans l’amour et l’effort dans le don de la force”.⁴²

FROM IMPERFECT TO HYPERBOLIC CONSENT

The actuality of human disproportion and the project of cancelling the given by rejecting it, make it evident that the question about sense, reach and articulation between the absolute involuntary that constitutes life and the demands of freedom cannot be omitted. This emerging breach not only problematizes the self-experience of the unity of the bodilyself, but also affects the whole of relations with reality and defines the ultimate position of the self before Being. Ricoeur points out that

“Réfuser la nécessité d’en bas, c’est défier la Transcendance. Il faut que je découvre le Tout-Autre qui d’abord me repousse. C’est ici l’option la plus fondamentale de la philosophie: ou Dieu ou moi. Ou bien la philosophie commence par le contraste fondamental du *Cogito* et de l’Être en soi, ou bien elle débute par l’auto-position de la conscience, qui ha pour corollaire le mépris de l’être empirique”.⁴³ It is remarkable, that the contempt for the “empirical being” is to be verified as well in other attitudes that no longer invert but fracture the sense of consent, which always puts the relation between the individual existence and the totality of being at stake, as is the case of these two figures of consent, recurrent in history: stoicism as imperfect consent and orphism as hyperbolic consent. “Le stoïcisme représentera le pôle du détachement et du mépris (negation of the consistence of the empirical being, indifference towards the individual and concentration of the spirit upon itself before the Oneness); l’orphisme la perte de soi dans la nécessité (de-individuation and assimilation of the vital impetus of the great Wholeness) Mais l’un et l’autre néanmoins indiquent à leur façon le nexus du consentement et d’une philosophie de la Transcendance (the existential form of the constituent ontological relation from the self to Being defines itself in the modality of consent)”.⁴⁴ The effective truth of the inevitable link to Being (and with Transcendance) shows itself in the form in which the self tends to be related everyday with its concrete reality.

In a way stoicism is as well a philosophy of autonomy, but not faced up to rebellion in front of necessity, but from the indifference of the soul regarding the dissolutions introduced by the desire affected by the plurality of the desired things. As huge effort of self-control, it directs itself to reduce the life impulse, which acts through the body, which is therefore left aside as a thing among things. The soul must train itself to a high degree to operate a systematic homologation of all the individuality that affects it, to reduce it to indifference. “L’idée de l’insignifiance des choses que passent est à elle seule purificatrice; jointe à celle de l’ordre total, elle dévient pacifiante”.⁴⁵ For stoicism there are no passions of the soul but only of the body, while the soul is pure impenetrable act. The soul steadfastly construes its specific spherical shape, placing itself in the reverent and dispassionate admiration of divinized nature. The bonds that move the soul and affect it must be reflectively reduced to mere relative opinion, arising from a circumstantial state of mind. The reality it affects is reduced to doxical sentiment; affection is suppressed by suppressing opinion.

Consent is “un art de détachement et du mépris, par lequel l’âme se retire dans sa propre sphéricité, sans cesse compensé par une admiration révérencieuse pour la totalité qui englobe les choses nécessaires et la divinité qui habite cette totalité”.⁴⁶ Because of its reference to cosmic divinity, the soul is not the centre of being. Because of its indifference regarding the affections arising from its bodilyreceptivity, it is not mere part of the whole. But the soul is in the whole, and cannot therefore judge it. Its ultimate attitude is to remain contemplatively detained before the necessity of the whole. “La nécessité prise dans sa totalité est aimable; elle est raison, elle est dieu. La force du stoïcisme est de transférer au tout le prestige arraché à la partie. Le changement qui rend chaque chose et mon corps insignifiants est surmonté et conservé dans la substance du tout”.⁴⁷ The imperfect character of consent, as conceived by stoicism, consists in that the admiration of the cosmic

whole absorbs the corps-body while the subject-soul keeps itself in its spherical contemplative shape. This dualism breaks up the rational and affective demand of the unity of life. If the figure of consent needs to deny or reduce fundamental human factors to produce a partial technical-spiritual reconciliation, ethical responsibility is systematically justified. The admiration of the divine cosmic whole coincides with the disdain for the concrete-particular that constitutes the net of the relations in the everyday world. A true significance of existence to which we could consent is that which lights everything up without denying anything, carrying admiration down to the interstices of everyday life. "On ne peut pratiquer à la fois le mépris des petites choses et l'admiration du tout. La limite finale de l'estoïcisme c'est de rester aux lisières de la poésie de l'admiration"⁴⁸ In orphism, consent is, on the contrary, the loss of subjectivity in the frenzy of necessity. The vital course of the world is a solved problem, and man himself is already determined inside it. In this generic optimism of transforming evolvment, which absorbs life and death undramatically, and where the individual is a disdainful quantity, there are no ontological distinctions or gradations. "L'univers est en travail sur la dure loi du 'meurs et déviens'; cet oeuvre majestueuse, où la ruine, la perte, la mort sont toujours surpassés en quelqu'autre être, est offerte à ma contemplation dans les formes minérales, organiques, qu'ignorent le consentement. (. . .) Non seulement la vie en moi, mais le tout est un problème résolu".⁴⁹ Certain nietzschean atmospheric turbulences of "loyalty to earth" and "innocence of the becoming", in which the subject submerges to be vindicated by the anonymous stream of necessity, emanate a romantic effusion that does not match a discernment based above all in a discreet conscience of the self: "cet monde unique, unique pour moi, ce monde incomparable, est bon de une bonté elle-même sans degré, d'une bonté qu'est le 'Oui' de l'être. (. . .) Il est parce qu'il dévient; il dévient parce que toute ruine est surmontée. La bonté du monde c'est 'meurs et déviens', c'est la métamorphose".⁵⁰

But the enthusiastic "yes" of admiration does not make us free from the responsibility of consent in consent, inasmuch as this is the "yes" as act of freedom of a rational individual. This means that consenting is not gaily admitting the disappearing of ourselves as individuals to become amazed in the great cosmic-naturalistic metamorphosis. True admiration does not play with the abolition of the admirer. When nature in its beauty and the kosmos in its wonderful immensity are no longer signs of something else, but the very foundation and the unique entity where things and individuals emerge and sink like waves with no substance in the sea of being, it is reasonable to ask oneself how is so much background obviousness possible, in which a universal solution, thought-out by the self, that leaves out and suppresses the self is established. This self is solved inasmuch as it is dissolved in a total problem; solved for me, without me. "L'orphisme est le consentement hyperbolique qui me perds dans la nécessité, comme le stoïcisme était le consentement imparfait qui m'exilait du tout, que pourtant il m'efforçait d'admirer".⁵¹ On the contrary, in the realistic, rational and affective act of consent, the horizon of totality is not re-mystified and closed, but opened in the recognition of the signs and ciphers of a *Lógos* as evident in the text of universe, as exceeding all possible clarification or translation without very large margins. These constellations of signs that show themselves with reserve, because they require that freedom searches for them

attentively, are completely correspondent with the reason and freedom of man. They indicate sense, but do not oblige to recognize it: they also require to be wanted and expected. That is, they propose but so not impose themselves, because they refer to a self that can only recognize truth if it loves it, and if, therefore, it is itself entire like an incarnated self that exercises its sentient reason and its affective freedom. For if “l’admiration ou contemplation me descende et me remplace par les chiffres, le consentement me rend à moi-même et me rappelle que nul peut me délivrer de l’acte du oui. C’est pourquoi l’admiration et le consentement font cercle”.⁵² They reasonably draw circles in the self, if reality as sign, in and out of myself, refers to a present “you”, although directly in-cognoscible, that is interests itself in me attracting me by means of reason, through the necessity and for the freedom by which I live.

C R E A T I V E C O N S E N T

Just as we are realizing it, consent puts different alternatives and metaphysical decisions at stake, which in the essential are few and precise, in respect of which, the evaluating criterion lies in their capacity to give reason of facts. The facts are: the immeasurable and finite, intelligent and mysterious material reality of the kosmos, the exultant and dramatic reality of man, as reason incarnated in finitude, open to the infinite and pursued by the challenge to freedom as search for its destiny, under the sign of happiness. Here we barely indicate the fourth figure of consent, as critical approval inasmuch as it is gift of creation and demand of freedom. Regarding the three moments of the absolute involuntary this means: “Oui a mon caractère, dont je puis changer l’étroitesse en profondeur, acceptant de compenser par l’amitié son invincible partialité. Oui a mon inconscient que demeure la possibilité indéfinie de motiver ma liberté. Oui a ma vie, que je n’ai point choisie, mais que c’est la condition de toute chose possible”.⁵³ As regards the suffering, evil and death that interfere as intruding bodies in these aspects of positive donation, the judgment of reason always imposes discernment and liberating appeal. For we cannot simply change into joy the sadness of the finite in a character that not only distinguishes me, but also separates me from the others, from an unconscious that is not a creative background, but also a traumatic weight, from contingency, that is not only the experience of a joyful communal dependency, but also the factual pain of having to disappear of every kind and pleasant company.

Thus, the implication of freedom and Transcendence in consent adopts a completely new figure. If admiration is possible, it is because the world is an analogy of the Transcendence that creates it. And it is such, above all, because there is freedom, and therefore, the desire and the demand for total Goodness. With it, as well, the effective possibility that this finite and oscillating freedom let itself be dragged by evil and barbarism. So, the road to consent refers neither to the mythic admiration of nature summarized in the absolute involuntary, nor to the detachment or reduction of freedom that is infinite desire, nor to the use of this same desire, to deny, through rebellion the collection of factors in which it is given. Inasmuch as it is the desire of a concrete and carnal existent. It is evident that character, unconscious and life, as determined expression of the bodily self we are, is given to us. But the greatest

lies in that, the gift consists in the fact that we are a full freedom to accept and work on that gift or reject it and misappropriate it. Behind us there is Somebody, who has totally risked himself with us. Totally risking is creating. It is clear that in the logic of nature corporeity is transmitted, but freedom is not generated. Neither does the free Transcendence that nature creates and makes the singular self occur automatically generate the assent of the adherence of the self to its creative donation. If the rebellious, the stoic and the orphic fail, where is the way out? First of all, in drawing away from the technical image of oneself in self-position, by which one becomes boss and fabricator of oneself, without realizing everything that is contained and given in one-self. If not, the gift of being runs the risk of being objectivised and thought of as a kind of violation of subjectivity, like a compulsion exercised upon an thing.

The *invincible involuntary* makes us live, because it is what opens up from the immense context in which the face of the other appears, that occurs in the sign because it retires in discretion. This allows us to point out two aspects that pertain the critical status on consent, as gesture of reason *with* freedom. On the one hand, the given being that precedes, inevitable and irremovable, every constitution on the part of reason and every initiative of freedom, has the healthy role of educating subjectivity in the objectivity of the real, in the peculiar weight of the significance of things, in the learning of the transcendental and existential method of signs. On the other hand, that resistance of the real through the necessary in myself (character, unconscious, being-in life) is also a principle of individuation that I do not set. That which makes us unique and irreplaceable in the world, is also something that does not depend on us. It is given to us, however, receiving all its positive innovative effectiveness depends on ourselves. The independence of our singularity on our circumstantial arbitrariness (luckily), the fact that every intention to arbitrate it in opposition to an active fidelity towards the already-given does nothing but degrade it, means that the critical study of consent cannot be ontologically and conceptually dissociated from the reference to experience of the original creation, which sets, favours and arouses the presence of reason and freedom, in the world, in the universe. And that presence is every carnal self-of-woman-born. But neither can consent be ontologically and conceptually dissociated from the problem of evil and death. The imposing solitude of man to answer to that distressing request for liberation brings itself round to the paradox of freedom; the timid foreboding of which of the presence of Goodness in history – as wishing of the *gift of Being* that could heal the mortal injuries of freedom – tends to be content with little. To constitute itself in an unsustainable self-liberating epic or to succumb sober or inebriated in mortality. But freedom itself is intelligible in the world without creative Transcendence. Could it be intelligible as claim of liberation without liberating Transcendence? Philosophical poetics is the hermeneutic encounter between a dramatic wisdom of the occurrence of freedom and of the facts that testify it to the present, and a fundamental ontology of human reality and of the historic human condition. Poetics presents an occurrence in being and not an ultimate reasoning in the mind, thus indicating that metaphysical problems have neither metaphysic nor discursive solution, but require at the same time a historical and transcendent answer. That is why,

as Ricoeur wonderfully states: “L’admiration est possible parce que le monde est une analogie (sign) de la Transcendance (mystery); l’espérance est nécessaire parce que le monde est le tout’autre que la Transcendance. L’admiration, chant du jour, va à la merveille visible (creation), l’espérance transcende dans la nuit (liberation). L’admiration dit: le monde est bon, il est la patrie *possible* de la liberté; je peux consentir (sign). L’espérance dit: le monde n’est pas la patrie *definitive* de la liberté; je consens le plus possible, mais j’espère être délivré du terrible (mysterium iniquitatis) et, à la fin des temps, jouir d’un nouveau corps (truth is the immemorial nostalgia of the wish-to-be as life in the flesh) et d’une nouvelle nature accordés à la liberté (liberation as, with eminency, re-invented creation)”.⁵⁴

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NOTES

¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Réflexion faite. Autobiographie intellectuelle*, Éditions Esprit, Paris, 1995, expressions shown in quotation marks, can be found on p. 26.

² P. Ricoeur, “Auto-compréhension et histoire”, in: *Paul Ricoeur: Los Caminos de la Interpretación*, Tomás Calvo Martínez y Remedios Ávila Crespo (Editores), Anthropos, Barcelona, 1991, p. 21. (In this lecture, Ricoeur synthetically shows the diverse folds which the central issue of creativity acquires throughout his work.

³ P. Ricoeur, *Réflexion faite. Autobiographie intellectuelle*, Éditions Esprit, Paris, 1995, p. 23.

⁴ Cfr. P. Ricoeur, *Histoire et Vérité*, Seuil, Paris 1964: “Négativité et affirmation originaire”, p. 360.

⁵ Cfr. P. Ricoeur, *Du texte à l’action. Essais d’herméneutique, II* – Esprit-Seuil, Paris 1986: “La fonction herméneutique de la distanciation”, pp. 101–118 and “Herméneutique et critique des idéologies”, pp. 333–378.

⁶ P. Ricoeur, *Philosophie de la volonté I. Le volontaire et l’involontaire*, Aubier, Paris, 1950, p. 321. (Onwords in the text, VI).

⁷ VI 325.

⁸ VI 324.

⁹ Cfr. P. Ricoeur, *Histoire et Vérité*, o.c., pp. 317–360.

¹⁰ VI 322.

¹¹ P. Ricoeur, *Réflexion faite*, o.c., p. 24.

¹² Cfr. Ricoeur, P., “L’unité du volontaire et de l’involontaire comme idée-limite”, *Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie*, N° 45 (1951), pp. 1–29.

¹³ My first Reading of Ricoeur, in the 60s, was *Histoire et Vérité*, after my discovery of Maurice Blondel’s *L’Action* of 1893. The renewed impact that, of both readings, persists in me, is the growing discovery that the road to truth is, on one side, the result of the deepening in self-experience and, on the other, the result of the occurrence of an encounter with a presence that is word alive, opening a new horizon upon the experience of self. Ricoeur’s irradiating article contained there, “Vérité et mensonge”, o.c., pp. 165–197, shows how truth is the occasion of an especial experiential signification, the real contradictor of which is not error –that, once detected as such guides back to truth–, but (in St. Augustine’s sense) lie. Recognizing truth supposes a *fundamental ethical-metaphysical option of recognition and consent to the self-presentation of being, as existential sense of a living-life in the interstices of experience*, as presence of the whole in the fragment experienced. Critical reason is what makes conceptualizing reason always resume the road of experience and occurrence. Irrationalization of reason consists in narrowing the pretence of truth down to its discursive validity, losing the sensibility to truth as testimony and verifiable judgement in effective reality. The collusion between discourse and violence crouches, according to Ricoeur, in the rationalist-speculative synthesis which dries truth down to the already known and to the sole coherence of concept; in the ideological-political synthesis that systematized prejudice puts across

as mediatization of every relation with the other and with the real, preventing its possibility of public revelation; in the clerical-doctrinal synthesis, as substitution of the experience of faith, hope and charity through theology as the independent variable. This does not omit the importance of doctrine as critical conscience of the experience in act, of reflective speculation or of the ideological-political proposal. It emphatically states that truth is a living presence which does not let itself be crystallized in [precisely] that, the function of which is to depend upon it, and not to substitute it itself and its accessibility.

¹⁴ VI 17.

¹⁵ VI 17–18.

¹⁶ For this debate of Ricoeur's, in the field of history as well as in that of theological faith, between the great speculative temptation of the primacy of concept and analysis, still under the figure of the dialectical synthesis, or, on the contrary, the critical primacy of experience in itself, shielded under the fragile synthesis or open mediation –that Ricoeur proposes– to the actual presentation of alterity in the occurrence, in reference to the most genial and disguised modern rationalist formulation, the hegelian, cf. P. Ricoeur, “Renoncer à Hegel”, in *Temps et récit III. Le temps raconté*, Seuil, Paris, 1985, pp. 280–299 and “Le statut de la *Vorstellung* dans la philosophie hégélienne de la religion” (1985), in *Lectures 3. Aux frontières de la philosophie*, Seuil, Paris, 1994, pp. 41–62.

¹⁷ P. Ricoeur, *Réflexion faite*, o.c., p. 23.

¹⁸ VI 21.

¹⁹ VI 22.

²⁰ P. Ricoeur, *Réflexion faite*, o.c., p. 24.

²¹ VI 541.

²² VI 384–385.

²³ cf. VI 320.

²⁴ Cf. Ricoeur, P., *La critica e la convinzione*, Jaka Book, 1997, pp. 138–139.

²⁵ VI 392.

²⁶ VI, 393.

²⁷ VI 392–393.

²⁸ VI 385.

²⁹ VI 387.

³⁰ VI 388.

³¹ VI 427–428.

³² VI 429–430.

³³ VI 435.

³⁴ VI 429.

³⁵ VI 430.

³⁶ VI 430.

³⁷ VI 436.

³⁸ VI 437.

³⁹ VI, 438.

⁴⁰ VI 438.

⁴¹ VI 437.

⁴² VI 439.

⁴³ VI 449.

⁴⁴ VI 441.

⁴⁵ VI 442.

⁴⁶ VI 442.

⁴⁷ VI 442.

⁴⁸ VI 445.

⁴⁹ VI 445.

⁵⁰ VI 447.

⁵¹ VI 448.

⁵² VI 448.

⁵³ VI 450.

⁵⁴ VI 451.

THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE
AND RELEVANCE OF THE REMINDERS
ASSEMBLED AS “LANGUAGE-GAMES”

*If you do not expect the unexpected, you will not find it; for it is hard to be sought out and difficult.*¹

*Psychological – trivial – discussions of expectation, association, etc. always leave out what is really remarkable, and you notice that they talk around, without touching on the vital point.*²

*Only surrounded by certain manifestations of life, is there such a thing as an expression of pain. Only surrounded by an even more far-reaching particular manifestation of life, such a thing as the expression of sorrow or affection and so on.*³

–Wittgenstein

A B S T R A C T

The phenomenological significance of Wittgenstein’s reminders assembled as “language-games” are presented here with those aspects relevant to interpreting the ancient idea of *Logos* by understanding how concepts with rules operate and picture the logic of thinking, meaning, naming, intending, showing *anything* significantly. That “thing” may be something like a means of representation as the Use of a naming sign, as well as the Use of something named as “object” which both signify their identity and difference as a “name” or an “object named” with the signifying Use of other signs in the manifest stream of phenomena, from which reminders assembled as “language-games” present cross-strips. What is elucidated as such is also the trans-historical significance of these reminders as they elucidate the ultimate internal connections of the use of pictures of historical-language-games with the manifest signifying stream of phenomena as the ultimate *limits* of saying, showing, meaning, representing anything in language.

Let us follow Wittgenstein on the way of sharing the insight that trans-historically illuminates how the conventional uses of signs as pictures of language used as means and ends of representation operate as internally connected with the manifest signifying phenomena of life.

Although it is commonplace to speak of the astonishment or wonder that started philosophy, it is ironical to see the form of expressions of thinking, reasoning, arguing habits, so structured historically by the rules of historical language-games as not to be able to express a sense in response to the call of its originating movement. That movement tried to articulate a language of awareness as to the manifest of a single substance, as *physis* or nature as *Natura Naturans*, the aspects of which are reminded and assembled as “language-games” by Wittgenstein as the signifying manifest background of every picture representing the identity and difference of an object or event, pointed, shown, named by the use of an ostensive definition which

may be the use of a pointing finger or a naming sign used as such. Understanding the Logos of *Physis*, or manifest nature is intimately connected with such a sense of life of nature in manifest which is not subject to be represented by pictures, names and descriptions of language. It manifests as the possibility of speaking by means of using and operating with representations of language. Hence the manifest nature as *Natura Naturans*, *Physis* in manifest is intimately connected with understanding the “logos” of words, understanding how words mean, name, describe, operate with meaning, with the rule, the “logos” of which is kept and shared for the meaningful application of the word to its object.

According to Platonism narrated by the history of western philosophical tradition, the logos of the sign and the signified is maintained in so far as by soul’s reminiscence of the original Idea associated by sensations of the signified which manifests as a copy or imitation of its original Form. By the narrative of Logos of Platonism the word is separated from the signifying Use of the word in internal connection with the signifying manifest of phenomena, to a transcendental realm of Ideas and Soul life which paves the way to narratives of soul substance and subjectivity capable of thinking and applying a priori concepts or rules of thinking to empirical experience conceived in the manner of Kant’s *synthetic a priori* or Bertrand Russell’s atomic proposition the subject and predicate signs of which are supposed to name a particular and universal obtained to be perceived by the analysis of sense data which is subject to the perception and analysis of the thinking soul substance. The essentialism about the logos and the essentialist presuppositions in the construction of such narratives disguised in the manner of scientific analyses and theories are intimately connected, as they are being narratives, pictures of language as such, constructed by means of following and applying rules of language without however understanding the rules of the game in accordance with which pictures picture in language, i.e., how signs operate to name and represent, mean, show, define, give an ostensive definition of anything in language. Such failure of understanding the *Logos* of words opens a way to a series of confusions the hidden unquestioned presuppositions of which are disguised by the appearance of being a logical theory as epistemology and ontology, the logic of which is conditioned by the hardened operational rules and conventions of the language-game, in which one’s thinking habits are operationally structured to react with pictures of language in analysing and projecting pictures – whereas the problem in question actually requires an awareness about the phenomena that manifest the forms of expressions and significations operational with learning the rules of projecting, acting and operating with pictures of language, both as *means* as well as *ends* of language.

What is required is then the sense of awareness of manifest phenomena to save “Phenomena” by elucidating it from the prejudices of language; hence elucidating to shine the manifestation of life as the possibility of operating with the signs of language; namely as the possibility of naming, showing, pointing, speaking, writing, representing (picturing) by means of the use of the signs of language. What is brought to awareness as such is the reactive conditioned forms of expressions of our imagined self-consciousness. They are the form of expressions habit structures operationally structured in reaction to pictures which are expressed by gestures of

pointing things or events as if they are meant or differentiated, perceived as such prior to the learning and operating with pictures of language.

This indicates that “intentionality” needs to be elucidated as a phenomena expressive of itself in connection with significations that express and connect it with the rules and conventional uses of signs which are used in both ways: as means and ends of representing; the use of pictures as means as well as of pictures held fast as reality as the standard rule of comparing and measuring the truth of representational forms of expressions. In other words, elucidation of intentionality in internal connection with the use of signs and representational language recovers and illuminates manifest phenomena, as Nature in the aspect of *Natura Naturans* of Spinoza, as “that which is conceived through and in itself”.⁴

Therefore the form of expressions clarified as internally connected with manifest signifying phenomena allows us to untie the knots of intentionality the modalities of which are conditioned and structured by objectified representations of language and that such an intentionality in its conditioned state cannot make the required articulations of thinking to untie the knots of its own conditioning by elucidating the phenomena in manifest but perpetuate to react with operational habits of thinking structured by language phenomena.

What is in question is the presupposed background in which “dark” and “light”, “language” and “world” and all opposites obtained by naming, affirming and denying are internally connected with significations; that is the *interface*, the chasm between conceptual identities and differences particularized by naming and picturing.

Here we need to dig deeper into the reality of the forms of our expressions to open an interface between our sense of reality structured by conceptual representations, i.e., between concepts representing the reality of our wake life and the reality of our dream life, the reality of the latter of which is subordinated and judged by the rules of the language-game of our wake life. Missing the awareness of manifest background phenomena in the signifying web of which our forms of expressions signify to be shared as the rules of operating with signs, we seem to be acting and reacting as if consciously intending and willing subjects of our operations with signs, as if subjects naming and describing objects and events of a surrounding world horizon, in deep oblivion of the fact that such a horizon is a shared representational horizon historically structured. That is a horizon which appears on the other hand as the objective reality itself, as if representing its own nature or essence; the reality of which as if it’s subject to be pointed at, shown, touched, seen as this and that, in the clear light of common sense. That is the light of common sense determined by the rules and habits of language, rather than the light of awareness free of such a determination.

Hence what seems to be our wake life as opposed to dream life, may not be so awake unless we dig deeper into the forms of expressions the signifying shared consequences of which express and sustain the differences and similarities of our wake and dream life by the rules of the game in internal connection with manifest form of expressive phenomena manifested by significations.

A recognition of what is essential and inessential in our language if it is to represent (picture), a recognition of which parts of our language are wheels turning idly, amounts to the construction of a phenomenological language. (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks*, Blackwell, 1975, I, p. 51.)

Our operations with the use of signs manifest in internal connection with the manifest signifying stream of life, phenomena as such (manifest “suchness” as expressed by the Zen Doctrine of no mind, awareness of life with a freedom of distance to the operationally conditioned intentional consciousness and imagination in reaction to the pictures of language.). Hence clarifying essential aspects of manifest phenomena from what is inessential, allows us to take notice of the forms of expressions of intentionality, the operational habits of operating with representations of language as tools or means of representation. Lack of that awareness of the language phenomena – in the manifest of which “language” and “world”, or “subject” and “object” and everything represented by conceptual identities and differences operate in language – results in a language of conditioned intentionality the forms of expressions of which express confusions of misunderstanding how pictures of language and intentionality operate and intertwined historically as they continue to condition each other building up a strengthening circle in which intentional habit reactions and constructing pictures operationally feed on each other. I.e. the words “name” and “object” only seemingly identify and represent the naming sign and the signified as “object” without actually recognizing the signifying phenomena in which these words and other signs operate in internal connection with the signifying use of other words as signs in the stream of manifest phenomena. Therefore, all the suppositions and analyses introduced by descriptions of “subjectivity” and “objectivity”, or as to the subject predicate analyses of a proposition to explain the representational connection of a proposition with the actual world are in fact expressions of a confusion resulting from using pictures of language in describing the phenomena essential for representation, in describing the facts of picturing, which are not on the same level with the pictured facts already re-presented as “ready to hand”, and which are in the space of expectations and associations of imagination and memory habits operationally structured with the use of pictures of language. The manifest phenomena on the other hand is not in the space of expectation and associations of imagination, is not anywhere of logical and temporal space and horizon of imagination and memory habits. It is a manifestation in the signifying web of which our memory and imagination habits in reaction with the signifying consequences of signs are operationally structured with the operational rules and techniques of operating, acting with the use of signs. In other words, the awareness of manifest phenomena in question changes our intentional modality conditioned as empirical subjectivity in reaction to pictures of language particularized as objects and events in physical and temporal space.

Therefore, the elucidation of the manifest phenomena in which intentionality with pictures of language are operationally structured is of primary importance. On the other hand the human intentionality (the forms of expressions of consciousness, consciousness expressed as phenomena manifested by significations in internal connections rather than consciousness and phenomena pictured by using pictures as means of picturing, i.e., in the manner of subject object epistemologies) structured

as such with representations of language seems not to be able to think except by operating and projecting pictures of language in interpreting its own pictures, hence building modules by projecting pictures that paves and structures a way of treading by its own projections. The problem seems as if we are condemned to be determined to move by language habits, by the rules and techniques of operating and thinking with signs of language, rather than with a freedom of awareness as long as we fail to be struck by the manifest signifying phenomena.

It is indeed here, the philosophical insight or intuitive awareness comes in as the key to the elucidation problem concerning manifest signifying phenomena where forms of expressions manifest in internal connections with significations simultaneous and spontaneous as life without a subject and object, or manifest significations in internal connections as the limit of saying, showing, giving an ostensive definition, doing anything in language with signs, hence operating with signs, or pictures of language. That is an awareness which enables us not to react as conditioned by any cultural historical system of beliefs based on the rules and pictures of any historical language-game, but as one which enables us to understand the human form of life by tracing the modifications of intentionality shaped in any historical context of language-game by the rules and techniques of the pictures used as means of representation to represent reality – to picture reality as one’s surrounding world horizon whether scientifically or culturally.

However, that aspect of language phenomena in manifest, remain covered and left in deep oblivion owing to the intentional structure of our operating with signs, in speaking, showing, naming, describing things and events in physical and temporal space. It is due to that oblivion or effacing of manifest phenomena, life as “suchness” from one’s awareness that our world horizon seem to us as if subject to our intentional operations and perceptions as if they are “there”, as “ready to hand”, so to speak with the terms of Heidegger, objectified as objects with their conceptual identities and differences in space, and likewise events as temporal occurrences as temporal space. Therefore, the reminders assembled as “language-games” of Wittgenstein; or “*Lifeworld*” of Husserl; or *Vivencia* of Ortega y Gasset; or *Dasein* of Heidegger; or *Virtuality of the Durée* of Bergson, (in which memory reactions are structured and temporalized and spatialized as cause and effect, before and after); or the “*chiasm*” of Merleau-Ponty whose “Visible and Invisible” is an attempt to open an interface between the boundary drawn by concepts representing the visible and invisible, which is an interface opened to elucidate the interplay of significations that internally connect what is visible and invisible the significations of which imply and presuppose each other, hence providing a distance of freedom of intelligence to the interference of the prejudices or imaginings of the subjectivity whose intentionality structured by operational habits of reacting to the pictures of concepts; or likewise the interplay of “*Cairos*” and “*Chronos*” of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka are all philosophical elaborations focused to elucidate and express the same sense of life in manifest, as the presupposed *trans-historical* background of historical time-structure of intentionality, the temporalized behaviour of historical consciousness and imagination as such.

Therefore, the phenomenological terms “*lebenswelt*”, “*vivencia*”, “*umwelt*” etc. always need to be used in the light of phenomenological elucidation. They are such critical terms which need to be saved always from the associations of operational language and the intentionality conditioned along with the historical backload of such historical languages. Heidegger’s introduction of *Dasein* is such a term developed to elucidate the phenomena in manifest in the web of which intentional operational thinking habits are webbed and get structured as one’s shared historical consciousness. Here the awareness that calls to be heard by means of a movement of thinking that elucidates phenomena in which the logical syntax of language of intentional consciousness is structured is not on the same level of awareness with the intentionality, whose operational thinking habits are determined historically, by the historical dynamics of the language and culture in which one is trained and educated as an actor of the language-game. We need not to name and categorize this higher awareness as transcendental, or as absolute – this would be a wrong gesture that triggers imagination reactions. What we always need is to keep the way open for ourselves and others by elucidating the ways for that awareness to awaken and move to articulate the forms of expressions to express and manifest itself as it is; hence moving out of the determined historical modalities of intentionality to the unconditioned free mode of awareness, as the possibility of which pointed out by Spinoza.

Here philosophy and poetic language are in need of each other as philosophical elucidations need to guide the way out from the misguided memory habits and reactions of imagination by the associations of pictures of historical language-games. Poetry by itself may not be enough to bring out the ultimate light of awareness, whereas the harmony and the stillness that shines in poetry shines in the light of awareness that traces its articulating movements all at once with the manifest form of significations.⁵

Without that awareness, our thinking with tools of language has to remain imprisoned so to speak by representational language, it has to move within the circle of constructing and projecting pictures of language with the operational habits of applying methods and techniques of language, with the intentionality the thinking and imagining habits of which are already determined by the rules and techniques of the historical language-games.

The difference between thinking (philosophizing) for the elucidation of manifest phenomena and thinking phenomena always by means of constructing and projecting pictures and models with the methods and techniques of comparing pictures with pictures is noted by Wittgenstein in his Foreword below. Elucidating the aspects of manifest phenomena as what is essential for representation, for acting and operating with pictures of language, clarifies not only the *a posteriori* basis of rules and techniques of applying logic and logical thinking in historical language-games, but more significantly the phenomenon expressive of the intentionality, the form of expressions of consciousness in reaction to the images and associations of the representations of language which is a reaction that closes and imprisons one’s thinking to a modality of thinking conditioned by pictures of language.

That is a modality of subject object thinking the wheel of which is turned by our operational habits of intentionality structured to operate with pictures of language. Therefore it is crucial and significant to understand how we think/operate with pictures of language rather than picturing facts of picturing by means of constructing and projecting pictures in the name of analysis and synthesis, with the methods and tools of analytical thinking habits that produce science and technological culture with the representational historical world horizon peculiar to the modes of thinking that constructs it by reactions and consequences that project and picture it.

That requires clarifying essential aspects of manifest phenomena from what inessential, i.e., from the imagination pictures expressed by the form of expressions of gestures of meaning, pointing, showing, giving an ostensive definition of anything as if it's the basis of naming and representing something in language, as was the implicit presupposition of Russell's idea of naming in his theory of atomic proposition.

Wittgenstein delineates with a clear awareness his authentic difference that characterizes the sense of motivation behind the movement of his thinking always directed to elucidate phenomena as it is manifested, to save the phenomena as manifest from the prejudices of the intentionality the thinking habits of which are determined by operational habits of applying a logic that works with operating with pictures.

This book is written for such men as are in sympathy with its spirit. This spirit is different from the one which informs the vast stream of European and American civilization in which all of us stand. That spirit expresses itself in an onwards movement, in building ever larger and more complicated structures; the other in striving after clarity and perspicuity in no matter what structure. The first tries to grasp the world by way of its periphery – in its variety; the second at its centre – in its essence. And so the first adds one construction to another, moving on and up, as it were, from one stage to the next, while the other remains where it is and what it tries to grasp is always the same.⁶

Elucidation of manifest phenomena of life, with significations internally connected simultaneous and spontaneous is what is saved and grasped as always the same, namely the same manifest surroundings with its essential aspects of significations internally connected for learning and operating with conventional rules and pictures as means and ends of constructing and describing pictures are always reminded as a cross-strip and saved as the *sub specie aeternitatis* presupposed background of showing, pointing, naming, giving an ostensive definition of anything – hence speaking, meaning, saying something in physical and temporal space. In other words, the reminders assembled as language-games, are such cross-strips saved as aspects of manifest of phenomena of life, the simultaneity and spontaneity of which are always presupposed as what sustain our thinking and operating with pictures, the logical space of which both physically and temporally are segmented with the habit structures of intentionality by operating and learning to operate with signs as they signify internally connected with the spontaneous and simultaneous virtual manifest of significations. Therefore, the awareness that elucidates the internal connections of manifest signifying surroundings for the use of any sign to be used as a picture, either as means or ends of picturing reminds and

assembles those aspects as what is essential for a picture to operate as such. Hence the reminders assembled as language-games present cross-strips and strike us, if they *ever strike us*⁷ at all as *sub specie aeternitatis*, to touch us with the momentum of touching our whole stance of existential modality to bring the standstill of its habitual operational movement, in such ways as expressed by the form of expressions of the Zen masters: “Moving as unmoved”, intending, willing, meaning and so on. That is to say, without the backload of the historical habits of imagining subject the whole intentional psychological modality of which as being determined in reaction to pictures and associations of pictures of historical language-games.

They are forms of expressions that unite poetic expression and philosophical insight and wisdom – as the articulations of which serve to open the *interface* between representations, between the particularizations of memory and imagination habits of pointing, showing, demonstrating, giving an ostensive definition of a thing or an event already conceptualized. The interface opens up for us a different horizon of signs in manifest,⁸ signifying simultaneously, as uncaused in the sense of spontaneity from which no conceptual difference is yet pictured, or marked off in space and time. This is the horizon the sense of which is flashed out by Heraclitus’ remark: “One cannot step into the same river twice.” That is a remark which is poetic as a metaphor and philosophical as it expresses an insight of awareness as to the manifest sense of phenomena of life, in the unfolding significations of which our reactions with their signifying consequences become operational with our use of signs as tools (means) of representation as well as what is represented. As we operate with signs to show, name or describe the conceptual differences signified by the use of signs which are particularized or qualified as objects in physical and temporal space, our operating with signs are likewise segmented and ordered causally and temporally by our operating with signs. Hence the form of reality is first projected by the consequences of our entering to the life of language acting and reacting with significations in the heart of simultaneous and spontaneous shining of virtual manifest of life, without being neither a subject nor an object.

When Wittgenstein reminds us how a child learns the use of words by acting and operating with their signifying consequences, what is expected from us is to take notice of signifying phenomena of life in manifest, which requires a different awareness of phenomena from the intentionality of an adult, whose intellectual habits of thinking with pictures of language are already determined by the techniques and rules of the language and culture in which one is trained and educated as an actor. Hence actors’ intentionality, consciousness, thinking habits are a hindrance to take notice of the phenomena in manifest which needs to be elucidated as internally connected with the expressive phenomena of one’s consciousness, intentions, desires, feelings and so on, the significations and consequences of which are expressed and become operational with particular objects, desired, felt, used, operated with consequences and technologies and methodologies interlacing in the life of language-game as culture and history of culture. In other words, an adult who may be intellectually a master of such technological and intellectual knowledge as an actor of the language-game and historical culture, who may precisely for this reason be hampered from sensing and noticing the manifest of life as it is, in its

simultaneity and spontaneity without a subject and object as such, from the manifest single substance of which such modalities of object/event consciousness, historical intentionality as such is manifested so to speak in Spinoza's terms.

Lack of awareness of how language, intentional consciousness and pictures of language operate as internally connected and condition each other reciprocally contains so many misunderstandings and confusions resulting from the missing of such an awareness of manifest phenomena in the signifying web of which our memory and imagination reactions become operational with signs structuring an intentional consciousness with the use of signs and their signifying consequences which interlace and criss-cross with other significations. Hence language, without the awareness as to the operational structuring of intentionality with the use of signs and representations of language becomes a labyrinth of *doxas* created by language habits, by habits of thinking and operating with the techniques and rules of applying the tools of language which serve as both means and ends of picturing anything as "real" as opposed to "unreal" and so on. Therefore, elucidating the internal connection between manifest signifying phenomena and the intentionality of thinking and operating with signs is crucial to understanding everything in the light of phenomenological elucidation of phenomena, which amounts to responding appropriately to the insight which the word Logos expresses. "Understanding the internal connection" means elucidating the internal connections between operating with the intentionality of memory habits connected with external connections of signs with internal connections of signified phenomena always presupposed as the possibility of saying and showing something by means of an external connection defined and maintained, reminded by Berkeley as God's continuing to perceive as what sustains the mutual agreement in the signifying consequences shared and sustained as the rules of the game, as the possibility of saying and showing anything in the language-game.

The subject of the awareness or intelligence is nowhere of space, as it elucidates how we come to speak in terms of space through operating with signs, but also it is everywhere of the space of memory, as it is an awareness in contrast to thinking and imagining habits conditioned and confined to the place/space of memory of one's operational habits, hence to move only operationally with the rules and techniques of pictures of the historical space of language-game in which one is trained and educated. This is not a denial of historical culture nor historical consciousness but the possibility of the freeing of intelligence by its own movement of awareness that is otherwise confined to move only through the habit structures of thinking conditioned and structured operationally by being trained and educated with the historical rules of the language-game. Here lies the only possibility of understanding history and historical condition of man, with a certain distance of freedom from the reactive imagination and consciousness, the intentional habit structures of which are conditioned by being trained and educated operationally with rules and techniques of pictures of historical language-games which weave and condition human thinking with all the backlog of historical imagination and thinking habits. What I am trying to elucidate is thus meant to contribute to sharing and expressing the insight that started philosophy which seems to have fallen away

from its originating awareness with the intellectual technological development of constructing pictures and techniques in the form of theories and hypothesis which served as a model for constructing epistemological and ontological pictures while the real question required a clarity of understanding as to how pictures of language pictured concepts with their represented identities and differences. The same confusion and failure of awareness of the manifest of life of phenomena still infects philosophy and understanding science in the form of philosophizing in accordance with methods of science, in pursuit of scientific pictures of cognition, popularized as cognitive sciences and so on, while the real question requires clarity of understanding how pictures of language picture/represent concepts with their identities and differences, which is the clarity as a key to tracing not only science with its internal connections with language and culture, but tracing the reactive behavior of intentional consciousness under the impact of the pictures of language cultural as well as scientific.

The elucidation of interface elucidates what is meant by the concept of “Lifeworld” (Lebenswelt) which phenomenology arrived to face as the manifest signifying background in which intentionality is structured to be expressed with the form of expressions of consciousness of objects. In other words consciousness of space and time unfolds and is sustained by manifest signifying phenomena as intentionality is structured by the forms of expressions the signifying consequences of which are shared to make up the rules of acting with signs as both means of representations as well as what is represented (pictured) as the reality of the surroundings, as our world picture with its horizons. Such that pictures of language are used to picture all our surroundings with a space of acting and operating with them exhausting all the space of thinking and acting with its own rules and techniques of operating with them, leaving no space for thinking and questioning as to its structuring. This shows that our thinking and imagining habits are so much structured and determined by the language of representations which does not allow for our intelligence any space or interval to take notice of the manifest signifying phenomena expressing the behavior of our operational habits of thinking and imagining with its own forms of expressions peculiar to it. The intentionality expressed by habits of thinking and imagining that are structured with the rules and techniques of pictures of language does not allow for our intelligence any space of movement except by operating with the techniques and rules of pictures, which then results by forming and constructing general pictures, in the form of theories, hypotheses and so on. And which then is closed by its own movement operationally determined by thinking habits with rules and picture constructions, to move so to speak in a spiralling way by describing pictures by means of pictures, by projecting picture constructions where the question requires understanding how pictures operate internally connected with the manifest of phenomena of life.

That closed horizon, is the horizon of “physical space” once read and held to be three dimensional due to the missing awareness of the internal connections between our operations with pictures and the world horizon the appearances of which are read and spaced by these operational activities. That is also the physical space once supposed and re-presented as filled by “matter” defined by its primary qualities as

opposed to secondary qualities. The analytical habits of thinking went to analyze objects in terms of essential and accidental properties, or in terms of primary and secondary qualities, imagining a “perceiver” “analyzer” “subject” or “consciousness” in reaction to the particularized identities and differences which operate as pictures of language; hence going away from the sense of manifest of phenomena of life, expressed by the poetic metaphorical language of Heraclitus and Parmenides.

Where does our body end and the physical space of matter start? Or the border of body end and the awareness of self subjectivity start? How do we come to speak with these conceptual descriptions that picture our bodies, or our supposed subjective or objective perceptions? Do they exist independently of our coming to learn to speak with these concepts and descriptions? Or do we also come to experience our life horizon precisely due to our coming to learn to operate with such words and concepts?

Hence, the importance and significance of phenomenology as it represents a movement of thinking that is concerned with elucidating structure of intentionality, the behavior of imagination intertwining operationally with the signifying consequences of signs with regard to phenomena in manifest – that is a movement of thinking contrariwise to the subject object ontological and epistemological suppositions centered around a supposed subjectivity, intentionality as such, with a priori or a posteriori rules conceived either in Cartesian terms or in Kantian synthesis. *The phenomenological elucidation of manifest phenomena requires therefore always opening up the interface between concepts*, which allows us the awareness of the continuity of signifying stream of phenomena between the discontinuities and fragmentations of intentional consciousness due to reactions and their operational consequences in the form of habit and belief structures to pictures of language. Which are the beliefs one entertains as a subject who speaks and reports one’s dreams, as opposed to one’s wake life, having learnt to speak and report with concepts that are used to describe and report them. As our concepts, such as “dream” and “wake life”, or “language” and “world”, or “subject” and “object”; “mind” and “matter”; “*res cogitans*” and “*res extensa*”, etc. operate as pictures the rules of which are based on our reactions and consequences in the language-game in which we are trained. As long as we fail to be struck by the awareness of the signifying stream of phenomena, our life experience are determined by the consequences of our reactions which become operational with rules and pictures of historical conventional language-games. The narratives and beliefs systems associated then dominate and shape human sensibility as an intentionality empirically and historically shared, as discontinuous and fragmented life experiences experienced, *seen as* in the manner of perceiving, meaning, showing, pointing reality. Such truth beliefs, as Wittgenstein does, are provoked to be expressed as expressed by gestures and gesticulations of meaning, showing, pointing at the reality of anything which may be something like a sensation, or something like Moore’s hand, while on the other hand they are carried out to their logical conclusion by reminders assembled as language-games, by clarifying that they remain like an idle wheel, turning nothing with itself, signifying nothing, in oblivion and in isolation of the signifying internal connections that one learns to operate with the manifest signifying Use of other

signs. That Use internally connected with the manifest signifying surroundings is presupposed as the ungrounded grounds of learning the conventional rules and pictures of all historical-cultural-conventional language-games. Intentionality remains fragmented and conditioned in oblivion of the manifest of signifying surroundings. That conditioned modality of thinking and imagining in reaction to the identities and differences represented by pictures of language doesn't in turn allow for one the freedom of space (of awareness) to trace back and forth the signifying process that structures intentional operational habits in internal connection with pictures of language reciprocally. Hence while pictures of language are projected by means of reactions and their signifying consequences which arrive to constitute one's world horizon, they operate on the other hand by filtering signifying manifest phenomena of life from the horizon of the intentionality structured to operate in reaction and with the use of the pictures of the language-game.

Such analyses in oblivion of the internal connections of signifying surroundings which operate as the possibility of *meaning*, showing, pointing, intending, willing *anything* with the use of signs, follow from intentional operational memory habits structured in reaction to pictures of language, more correctly to the particular images isolated from its signifying manifest surroundings, as they are associated and identified albeit mistakenly with the particularized images of a picture; which is, as a concept, represented by its signifying Use with the signifying Use of other signs in manifest. Such analyses and suppositions result from the deep forgetfulness of the analytical habit reactions that operates by describing and constructing external connections between pictures without the awareness of the Use of the picture as a sign in signifying internal connections with the Use of other signs. The analytical habit reaction manifests itself by gestures and gesticulations of pointing and meaning to the associated images of pictures imagined as objective, supposed to be public as opposed to the image imagined as private. In both cases, imagination reaction manifests itself as a reactive imagination of solipsism which results from analytical thinking habits forgetful of the signifying internal connections presupposed as the possibility of pointing, meaning, showing, picturing anything with its identity and difference in language, whether the images of pictures are supposed to be "private" or "public", as the latter and former are polar concepts presupposing and polarizing each other in the logical space of memory reactions that operates in reaction to the particular images and associations of images that resemble pictures, while missing the Use of the picture that is internally connected with the signifying use of other signs in manifest of life. Therefore, Wittgenstein always elucidates the Use of the picture with its internal connections with the use of other signs, by colliding his reminders with analytical habit reactions that tends to identify the picture as if the picture is representing its own identity; hence in oblivion and isolation of its Use which actually represents its identity and difference in internal connection with the signifying Use of other signs in manifest. Hence, he always reminds the Use of the picture as against and in contrast to habit reactions of imagining what the image of the picture resembles which trigger only the associated images of a picture in isolation from its manifest signifying surroundings.

When G.E. Moore demonstrated his hand by his gesture of showing his hand as part of the external world in order to point out that doubting is excluded as nonsensical in such cases, Wittgenstein proceeds to clarify that such a gesture of demonstration remains as a wrong gesture due to his failure of recognizing signifying phenomena in the weave of which we come to speak of our surroundings in terms of our hands and limbs and what they touch and use as “objects or experience” as “sensations of touching, seeing, or feeling” and so on. Here clarity about the grounds presupposed by our operating with signs in speaking and expressing our propositions is connected with clarity about our forms of expressions expressing certainty and uncertainty with its operational consequences needless of ascertaining by any logical demonstration or verification. On the contrary, the possibility of logical demonstration or verification presupposes the certainty expressed and shared operationally by learning to operate with rules of the language-game, as doubting makes sense only where certainty is operational.

Connected with such elucidation of signifying expressive phenomena of operating with signs and rules, such concepts as “private” and “public” are clarified from the backload of confusion that results from the analytical habit reaction expressed by the form of expressions in the form of a gesture of giving an ostensive definition directed to the images that are associated by their resemblances to the pictures of language in isolation from the use of the picture that is operational with the use of other signs internally connected with signifying phenomena in manifest. Such form of expressions express pictures of imagination which share the same confusion due to the missing awareness of how the use of pictures of language with their conceptual differences are expressed and learnt operationally with their differing consequences with the signifying use of other signs internally connected with the manifest signifying phenomena of the language-game. That arrives to clarifying that nothing is hidden absolutely, nor given as “private”, or “subjective awareness”, nor as “objective” – except by the operationally shared consequences and rules which unfold and get structured historically, in the context of a language-game, which is a context elucidated as a cross-section, as internally connected with manifest signifying phenomena, life in manifest as such.

Missing of that awareness about the picture is manifested by the form of expressions of imagination the reactions and habits of which are prompted by the varying pictures of historical language-games, which vary by the varying form of expressions of narratives which changes from mythological to scientific theories, depending on the changes of historical culture of the language-game. Thus, one is misled and separated apart by one’s own operational language and thinking habits in reaction to and with pictures of language away from the manifest sense of life, Existence as such. And hence, away from the sense of “*ontopoiesis*”, from the sense of the “unity-of-everything-there-is-alive. . .” as expressed by the form of expressions of Anna-Teresa Tymienicka.

This separation is deepened and hardened by the development of instrumental, operational pictures of language to the point of excluding the reality of manifest dream experience from wakeful experience of reality which appears to be subject to our willing and controlling with our operational habits with the use of pictures

of language. The Other, which is not experienced as subject to habitual control and operational use, belongs to the manifest of life, and remains the Other of our life experience, as our life experience seems to be experienced as subject to empirical operational habits, the sense of the Other seems to be threatening, intriguing, unwelcome, irksome, mysterious. It is therefore covered, repressed and transformed by the pictures of narratives that order and explain them in accordance with the pictures that describe and order our operational activities of wakeful life experience.

It is only by considering the form of expressions shared we compare the concept of a “dream experience” with a concept of “real experience”, as the form of expressions shared expresses our sense of experiencing reality, in comparison to a form of expression that differs from it. That means to say, our sense of experience of the reality of life is learned to be experienced and expressed as a shared intentionality so to speak in phenomenological terms. The terms “subjectivity” and “inter-subjectivity” are in need of phenomenological elucidation here, considering that there is no subjectivity prior to expressive signifying phenomena, as the terms “subjective” and “objective” are concepts, the different and opposed senses of which are internally connected with manifest signifying phenomena.

Husserl’s Phenomenology started by taking consciousness always as a consciousness of something, as an intentional structure, and went to dig up the historical layers of it to come across the signifying *phenomena* with signifying relations, intersecting with other significations in virtuality. The term “Lebenswelt” (Lifeworld) refers to this virtuality rather than the world represented, objectified as a pole of a historically structured intentionality, as a pole of empirical subjectivity. Heidegger’s phenomenological hermeneutics thematize this signifying field as *Dasein* and tries to elucidate it as the possibility of tracing of all the historical changes of intentionality layered by the changing forms of expressions of it, i.e., in the form of interpretations of the surrounding world-pictures objectified. Heidegger therefore needed to clarify the modes in which things exist or do not exist for us as ready to hand, or present at hand, or not present at hand in terms of the different consequences following from their being present or being absent, as i.e., the pencil’s existence is presented by its being ready to my using it when the need arises for it, or conversely its absence is presented by the consequence manifested as a hindrance to my need for writing with it. He thus pointed out the manner in which the existents exist and appear with different identities and differences as part of the different operational consequences of surrounding horizons in connection with body’s actions and reactions in internal connection with the signifying surrounding phenomena, which the latter assumes the appearance of a world horizon objectified as a result of an intentionality structured operationally with the representations that picture conceptual identities and differences of language and culture. Hence, Heidegger thematizes the signifying manifest field of Lifeworld (Lebenswelt) in which the intentional consciousness is characterized by phenomena expressed in signifying internal connections in manifest which unfolds and structured operationally with operating with signs. Merleau-ponty contributed to the elucidation of signifying field of virtual phenomena by tracing back the sensation into the signifying phenomena internally connected as expressive phenomena with other significations

in manifest, from the internal connections of which nothing is thinkable in isolation; that is to say, no-body, no-behavior, nor the intentionality as subjectivity of bodily behavior, nor any thing can be shown, or supposed to be perceived as subject to an ostensive definition. That seemed to be possible to the analytical habits of taking objects and events in the manner in which it seemed to a naive realist, or to a logical positivist, or to a logical empiricist as expressed and betrayed by the forms of expressions expressed by gestures and gesticulations of meaning and analysing a sense data, which is then exposed by Wittgenstein's reminders that they are not essential for representation in language, like a wheel, turning nothing with itself, signifying nothing, except the fact of one's confusions, which result from a failure of understanding about how signs operate, mean, name, picture (represent) identities and differences in the actual stream of using and operating with signs of any language-game.

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka expresses the same insight when she points out that:

To grasp life's patterning *all should be presented at once in one cross section of an image.*⁹

That requires starting always from the many aspects in simultaneous with their manifest spontaneity in bringing out the sense of onto-poiesis that expresses its internal logos as opposed to interpreting logos as external to the manifest of life. Her words: "*Unity-of-everything-there-is-alive...*" also expresses its original sense in connection with the same awareness of the virtual phenomena of life in manifest, in the signifying web of which intentionality of particularizations are expressed and structured in the form of operational habits of using signs as pictures, as means and ends of saying, showing, pointing, *meaning anything*.

Phenomenological movement of thinking seems therefore promising as long as it keeps up the good work of elucidating the intentional structure and behavior of historical consciousness with its internal connections with the eternal manifest moments of life. It is promising in bridging the gap with the original awareness that started philosophizing, with the original and different sense from the sense which assumed historically: which took on the particular shape of the intentionality of the thinking and philosophizing habits by constructing general pictures in the form of theories and arguments – the form of expressions of which are operationally structured to fluctuate in reaction to pictures and their associated images, always modifying and generalizing pictures, in the weave of which intentionality is layered and conditioned as historical consciousness and imagination, as historical modifications of intentionality, without however freedom of movement of thinking in distance to the historically modified intentional consciousness.

Such is the Anglo-American analytical way in which the language of philosophical analyses and forms of arguments shaped the way for philosophizing with its norms and journals and peer reviews, so far away from the original roots that started a movement of thinking peculiar to the insight which inspires to articulate a language to share its logos which is internal to it. Philosophy in its original sense of astonishment, which is prompted by the flash of an insight about manifest of life or nature, without the mediation of representational language, having found itself speechless given the established rules and representational tools of language and

thinking, had to articulate a language to express its own sense of life in manifest. Such sense of life is expressed by the language of *apeiron* of Anaximander, by the *Flux* of Heraclitus and the unmoved full plenitude (that leaves no space for a movement) of Parmenides. That movement gave way on the other hand to another cultural development that created a language of picture constructions by analyses and syntheses; hence picturing Nature in accordance with the rules of constructing and comparing pictures of language; which ended up by misrepresenting and misunderstanding the identities and differences pictured. The misunderstandings and deep confusions of which still infects philosophy education and its industry, leaves us now with facing the problem of unifying the so deep fragmentation of human consciousness and world horizon, which has always been the deep concern of authentic philosophical insight. The inherent crisis of that fragmentation manifests with its own consequences in human life and culture, with its own fate (“karma”) so to speak, as was once noted by Heraclitus: “*One’s character is one’s fate*”. *Logos* in Heraclitus sense is a “call” of awareness that is addressed to awaken our deepest intelligence, and not to thinking habits structured to operate with rules and pictures of conventional, cultural, historical language-games.

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NOTES

- ¹ Heraclitus of Ephesos, John Burnet *Early Greek Philosophy* (Adam & C. Black, 1963) p. 133.
- ² Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks* (Blackwell, 1975), p. 69.
- ³ Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, 541.
- ⁴ “When I say that I mean by substance that which is conceived through and in itself; and that I mean by modification or accident that which is something else, and is conceived through that wherein it is, evidently it follows that substance is by nature prior to its accidents. For without the former the latter can neither be nor be conceived. Secondly it follows that besides substances and accidents nothing exists really or externally to the intellect.” Spinoza, *Correspondences*, IV.
- ⁵ Professor Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s philosophy of *ontopoiesis* seems to me to be such an effort to explore these significations with an eye touching and tracing their internal connections with the manifest of life of phenomena. That is an interpretative activity motivated and resonated by the same live movement in manifest.
- ⁶ *Philosophical Remarks*, Foreword; Ed. By Rush Rhees and translated into English by Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White (Blackwell, 1975).
- ⁷ “We fail to be struck by what, once seen, is most striking and powerful.” Wittgenstein, *Phil. Inv.*, 129.
- ⁸ The concept of “Lifeworld” (“Lebenswelt”, “vivencia”: Ortega y Gasset) of Phenomenology is elucidated by Wittgenstein’s reminders assembled as “language-games” which present “cross strips” cut out so to speak from the signifying manifest stream of phenomena as the background internally connected with our showing, pointing, naming, giving an ostensive definition of any thing or event in physical and temporal space of acting and operating with our memory habits shared and kept by our learning and acting with the rules of the game. The internal connections of manifest signifying phenomena are elucidated as the possibility of defining and describing external connections between signs as “word” and “object” the actual identities and differences of which are represented by their differing uses and significations objectified as objects or events ordered in physical and temporal space. The missing awareness

of the whole manifest life experience manifests by being conditioned to operate with memory habits in reaction to pictures of language, hence confusing pictures used as means of representation with pictures represented as reality, due to the missing awareness how language phenomena, forms of our expressions manifest as internally connected with the signifying phenomena in manifest.

⁹ A.-T. Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life* (Kluwer, Book 4) p. 5.



“SOPHIA” AS “TELOS” IN THE “ONTOPOIETIC
PERSPECTIVE”

A B S T R A C T

Centered upon the “logos of life” and the “creative human condition”, and being developed in terms of an integrator Apollonian vision about the universal harmony within the “Great Plan of Life”, the original phenomenological work of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka reveals itself as a cogent urge to retrieving the signification of a major value: *sophia* – in the terminology established by the ancient Greeks. Taking it in a broader semantic openness, as wisdom in general – not merely a theoretical, but also a practical one, including moderation, too – this concept appears us even like *telos* – in the Stoics’ distinction from *skopos* – for human being in its self-individualization and self-accomplishment-in-existence. To approach *sophia*, that engages inquiry, insight, knowledge, reflection, comprehension, a complex practice of man-in-quest-of-wisdom, an elevated attitude toward the entire experience of life; seeing that *sophia* covers a telic oriented creative tension, an aspiration toward the attainment of an ideal situation. It represents a challenge for human becoming inscribed in a worthy movement as self-fulfillment in an aretaic horizon, which is one of sense-bestowing for the human being’s participation to the logoc flux and order in the “ontopoiesis of life”.

Given the situation of our time with the turmoil of science-technological advances, but no less with a general climate of disarray in which humanity “is apparently plunging into further chaos as disorientation about everything”,¹ phenomenology of life with the pursuit of the *logos* – the “sense of sense” that “penetrates All” – comes to heralding a “New cultural Enlightenment”.

Searching after reason, putting in act a “new critique of reason”, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka develops a philosophical/proto-phenomenological vision claimed by that she considers to be a “brewing flux of renewal, growth, and the perfecting of humanity”,² asserting the need of turning to the wisdom. “The state of our culture prompts us to search after reason”; “it calls for philosophy to free us from our impasse and to lead on”, by regaining the potential of wisdom, finally, in “our maneuvering upon the chaotic flux of life”.³

Throughout an original work unfolded in four tomes of her fleuve-treatise *Logos and Life*,⁴ continued in the recent Book 1 of *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*,⁵ we face an impressive demonstration of *philosophizing upon life and human condition*, that encourages us to reconsider even the mission of this act in its roots of the Hellenic tradition concerning the value of *sophia* (σοφία)/wisdom.

Actually, we face a celebration of philosophizing practice in its principle vocation conducted by the human “quest for wisdom” – that seems to be the Tymienieckan reflective way at anchor in the creative human experience as part of the “Ontopoiesis of Life”. This is the central nerve of an integrator and dynamic vision from the vital to the sacral levels of life, following a constructive design under a *telos* oriented schema focused on the “self-individualization of life” process. As the author states: *onto-* refers “to the ‘firstness’ of this process with respect to the scale of the existential formation”, meaning also “the indispensable and universal character of whatever there could be in the ‘objective’ form proper to human reality”; and *poiesis* refers to the continuous transformation, “advance” and “qualification”, respectively the mark of creativity as the intrinsic factor of “becoming”.⁶

In its entirety, phenomenology of life emphasizes an Apollonian fundamental choice for philosophizing, on the orbit of trustfulness given by light, construction, order, harmony. It displays an affirmative attitude and a balanced healthy comprehension upon the whole existence, concomitantly in each dimension of “the inorganic, the organic, bios or zoe, gregarious life, social and cultural life”, and in “the unity-of-All-is-alive”.⁷ We find an offer to re-discovering *sophia* with the opportunity to be guided in the effort of overcoming “our present decadence”, in surpassing the lack of orientation of “an Alexandrian Age” – with the picture of “futility and absurd as normal”, of “spiritual paralysis” and “moral confusion”, of the lamentable rise of the “demotic” (a “tyranny of the common man”).⁸

Acknowledged by mythology as attribute of goddess Athena – the personification of wisdom and the patroness of creative humans – *sophia* is one of the values that stand the test of time and that in nowadays – maybe, more than ever – deserves to be retrieved in its plenitude.

Sophia almost became an imperative to be incorporated in our life, to be explored in its function of orienting our discernment as regards the right things and actions, for the benefit of ourselves and others, for the common good of the societal, cultural and natural environment. *Sophia* must be cultivated like an important faculty of personality, organizing a reasonable human life on the ground of the best use of available knowledge; shaping and adjusting our behavior in accordance with what is really true, significant, lasting; helping us to choose well, to decide and to act by a responsible commitment for a positive long-term future of a meaningful life in its totality.

We approach *sophia* as *telos* within the context of phenomenology of life, being rather interested by the implied process, as active component in philo-sophizing. So, it is more fitting to the “ontopoietic” vision that is crystallizing not on beingness as a state, a finished, established one, but on beingness in progress, as a process, as beingness-in-becoming.

The term of *telos* with which we are dealing here is that used in Stoicism, tacking into account its overall meaning: the ultimate object of desire, both as an incorporeal and a corporeal, predicate and thing, stressing the first situation by priority. Without entering the complex discussion on verbal meaning about things and predicates, we just remind that Zeno, Cleanthes, Chrysippus have distinguished between the *telos* (τέλος), an operational finality toward which man is striving for, and the *skopos* (σκοπος), a target or aim in actual fact.

In correspondence with the Stoic theory of the *telos*: *to eudaimonein/to be happy* – including: the happiness, the happy life, and being happy,⁹ we try a phenomenological dis-closure of *sophia* as creative wisdom, combining actual and possible human experience unfolded on an ascending trajectory to an end. We take the concept in the sense of the wisdom exercise, as a horizon into which man directs his conduct, with the movement between transient and eternal.

Sophia as *telos* rather supposes a tension to pursuing an ideal: to be able to achieving wisdom, to be devoted to philo-sophizing, to become wisely. There is an interplay of instrumental, motivational, teleological dimensions of *sophia* to be putted in act for a full understanding of the dynamic web of life in its “ontopoietical course”, articulating the unity of “the rationalities of the cosmos, life, nature, and those of human creative genius” in “an all-embracing vision . . . of the entire spread of the Logos in its manifestation”.¹⁰

A creative wisdom, a creative way towards wisdom is at stake, in the tonality of the matrix of phenomenology of life with the question of *creativity* as the “Archimedean point” for the whole life’s unfolding progress.

Sophia as *telos* manifests itself like a fundamental process of spiritual awareness supporting the creative act of human being – that in which “man is the doer and is dealing with the inner workings of nature within himself and as they relate him, to all other human beings, and all living beings”, what Tymieniecka calls “the unity-of-everything-that-is-alive”. It is a peculiar lore, a sage learning that defines a creative manner of philosophizing, one that goes “to the roots of human thinking and acting” in respect with man’s descending “to this deepest plane on which everything is being played”.¹¹

Returning to a capital problem of the antique philosophy, we get *sophia* in a large sense, covering the *integrator wisdom* as a priority we should strive for in the present situation of an “anatomy of bewilderment – of the disarray humanity now finds itself in”.¹²

Although Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka doesn’t explicitly resort to the notion of *sophia*, the contemplative and practical potential of it emerges throughout her phenomenological discourse, sustaining a clear-sightedness and a thorough understanding for the scrutiny of the “logos of life” – “the motor and carrier of the entire ontopoietic enterprise”, considered to be “not only force and shaping but also the ordering principle of life”.¹³

By relating the assertion about the “quest of wisdom” with the pivotal thesis that: “to be human means to be creative”, we can follow a veritable pathway of philosophizing upon the meaning of life. It re-sets and renews philosophy itself “in a major key in an age of minor variations” under the auspices of acknowledging “a deep-seated need in human nature to respond to, and preserve the mystery of life”.¹⁴

A praise of wisdom is revealing from the phenomenology of life. Thus we turn back to *sophia* – the so highly esteemed concept by Greeks. Its exercise can be distinguished in the framework of philosophizing as that used to be shared during the early times in European culture. So, to tackle the issue of *sophia* entitles us to turn back even to the Delphic precepts, “because this was the manner of *philo-sophia* among the ancients, a kind of laconic brevity”, as Socrates says in a Platonic

dialogue, speaking about the “Seven Sages of Greece” (“Seven Wise Men”) and their wisdom.¹⁵

Precisely, we refer to the in so far famous formulas: “Γνωθι σεαυτον”/“*Gnothi seauton*”/“Know thyself” and “Μηδεν αγαν”/“*Meden agan*”/“Nothing too much” (“Nothing in excess”).

The meaning of both these sentences is activated in the territory of phenomenology of life.

Self-knowledge enters by necessity in the process of “self-individualization in life” – a nodal concept of Tymieniecka’s effort to clarify the workings of “the logos in life” and “the life of the logos” in the “ontopoietic design of life”. The “self-individualization of life” is thought like the center from whence the beingness rays; it is that “holds the vital strings of beingness”; it represents the “vehicle” of the *logos* in its constructive advance in life under the convergent action of the principles: “*impetus and equipoise*”.¹⁶

Self-knowledge carries the development of self-consciousness and orients the praxis of man by singling out the creative human condition within the web of life. It is to be supposed that such of self-knowledge operates on the unveiling of human individualization like a process that consists “in an *in itself* but not a *for itself*”; it is a process of serving the entire system of life, with the interplay of “the singular and the whole”, “within the mesh of interlocking existential ties and life-communion”.¹⁷ In completion with self-explication and self-understanding, it grounds the “self-interpretation” that – engaging the play of self and other/the self like the other in the unity sameness-distinctiveness deciphering – marks the human creativity in the functional polyvalent network of existence. According to Tymieniecka, *creativity* appears to be the “uniquely, specifically human self-explication in existence”; it means “interpretation par excellence”.¹⁸

Such determinations of the “creative self” interest us especially from the point of view of the moral experience, of the human fulfillment for which the *wisdom* is a virtue of prime order.

“The quest for wisdom” claimed by the phenomenologist of life is in resonance with the Greco-Roman philosophy about the precedence of *sophia/sapientia* among the other virtues, orchestrating a real art of living. “Wisdom is the chief and leader; next follow temperance, . . . courage and justice” – teaches us Plato, valuing the cardinal “virtues” in the “class of divine goods”.¹⁹ And Cicero, finding in *sapientia* an *ars vivendi*, he has seen wisdom as “the first of all virtues” (“*princeps omnium virtutum illa sapientia*”), explaining it like “the ability to perceive what in any given instance is true and real, what its relations are, its consequences, and its causes”.²⁰

In the same tonality of highlighting the creative moral experience of human being, we reconsider the second wording we have already mentioned as summary of the Ancients’ philosophizing: “Nothing too much”. The referential, here, is the *measure*.

The issue is re-assessed by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka as an ethical demand of our time. She unfolds an insight of the *golden measure*²¹ as key valuation stick for the “telic schema of life’s constructivism” in its “cycle: *generation, fruition, accomplishment*” with its “innermost *sense of continuation, renewal*”.²²

In retort to the present situation – seen as being “much more complex and far-reaching than any crisis” –, the phenomenologist of life offers a viable way by launching “the universal call for measure”; in the value and the principle of *measure* she finds a strong factor to be used “in striving for the common good of life”.²³

Actually, Tymieniecka’s conception circumscribes a rich and supple *science of right measure in all*; it enlightens upon the valences of the “art of measure”: *to metrion* (το μετρικον) coming from the Hellenic philosophy, expressing “that is fitting”, “that is timely”, “all is necessary”, “everything there is living in the middle of the distance between extremes”.²⁴

The question of measure prompts us to rethink about wisdom as *virtue*, applying the Aristotelian definition: the “laudable mean state between excess and deficiency”. We undertake the concept in its creative function of guiding and educating man towards his moral excellence, placing him on the royal area of the *metron ariston* (μετρον αριστον) of the Greeks’ teleology. It is *the virtue* conceived like measure between two vices: a “too much” and a “too little”, the “middle way” that “if regarded from the point of view of the highest good, or of excellence, it is a climax”.²⁵

Beyond the theory of Aristotle about virtue as being twofold: “partly intellectual and partly moral”,²⁶ we aim at *virtuelarete* in general, designated here as a renewed generic *sophia*. It demands teaching and habituating, experience, time, and ability; because our concern is upon its exercise. Thus, we are mostly focused on both the theoretical and practical dimensions of wisdom and also on the value of moderation, as potentiality to making “a good condition of man” and to enabling him “to perform his proper function well”;²⁷ respectively, to become wisely, and so to succeed in seeking and understanding “the ontopoietic intentionality – a sentient and intellectual one – of life”.²⁸

In our sphere of interest, to exercise *sophia* implies to exercise an intellectual and moral virtue that accounts at a superior degree for the ennobling human condition and life. In an *aretaic* approach, *sophia* functions like a commendable and useful quality of character, facilitating to man a specific freedom to surpass himself and to continuously work for his moral personality’s fulfillment.

Especially, facing the present “anatomy of moral disarray”, we need to prize and to restore such a cardinal virtue as the wisdom has been acknowledged in the Antiquity philosophy. According to Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “we are challenged to enter into our depths in order to achieve a new understanding of our place in the cosmos and the web of life, to find new wisdom for charting our paths together and fresh inspiration to animate our personal conduct.”²⁹

We think that, for our time, a more adequate appropriation and practise of wisdom entail a mixture of the ancient Greeks’ terms: *sophia* (σοφια), *phronesis* (φρονησις) and *sophrosyne* (σωφροσυνη), covering the entire action of *arete* (αρετη) as *mesotes* (μεσοτης); respectively, the virtue-“golden measure” that operates in the “ontopoietic, specifically human self-individualization”, and concomitantly “in the coordination and harmonization of the whole of life”.³⁰ Experimenting with and assuming contradictions, but aiming towards equilibrium

which sustains creation, development, and preservation, through an activated wisdom as *arete-mesotes*, man can coordinate the balance of his confrontation with the given world and his creative capacity to transform it. Regaining a peculiar *sapientiality/sageness*, following his own creative *telos*, finally man completes his status of *homo sapiens* with that responsible position of “custodian of everything-and all-alive-unity”, by using his inventive faculties to searching and disclosing the *logos*’ rhythm and harmony in maintaining and increasing the Good and the Beauty of existence.

It is the creative human mode of becoming to put in act the moral excellence in the endeavor to ennobling the entire life; that means a victory of the *aretaic* vision that engages good reason, sensitivity and motivation, creative imagination, promotion of values of order, measure, refinement, construction, harmony; all, in an Apollonian *poietical* perspective of “man, the creator” acting under “that principle existing in individuals that Homer had named *divine image and likeness*”.³¹

To become wisely, to treat *sophia* as *telos* – that appears like a significant part of to the utmost experiencing of a human moral life as a creative one. Considered as plenary functional virtue, wisdom makes sense the intertwining point of man’s autonomy and his natural and social relationships. In Tymieniecka language, it facilitates the grasping of the conjunction of human commitment to “self-individualizing” and to “sharing in life” in its totality, revealed in consonance with the overall flow of the “logos of life”. Establishing the centrality of the investigation of virtue, the phenomenologist of life features: “we situate the question of morality and virtue at the primogenital human plane where reason with its faculties, on the one hand, and the vital forces, on the other, emerge as partners in the creative orchestration of human functioning that forms [eventually] . . . the human expansion of the schema of Nature. In short, the question of virtue lies at the heart of the life strategies of the Logos”.³²

To Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s assertion that philosophy, respectively wisdom is “made possible owing to the creative virtualities of man”,³³ we add that, in its turn, wisdom represents a creative factor within the expanse of human life; it can be explored like a function of “man, the creator” in order to rise from the initial spontaneity, going to enact and to fulfill the inventive virtualities in a specifically human individualization, guided by a “creative telos”, considering the total human experience between the rootedness “in Elementary Nature” and the tendency “toward Transcendence”.³⁴

Phenomenology of life opens new opportunities to the *experience of wisdom*, that is bolstered by the reflective, “Apollonian intellect”, with the “creative imagination” and cultural memory. At the same time, such experience makes possible a balance between these, on the one hand, and, on the other, the sentient, emotive, communicative “Dionysian” and the inventive, freeing in spiritual transcendence, “Promethean” modes of rationality, in a divisive as well as a complementary harmony of life.

The exercise of wisdom is a condition required by a creative philosophizing upon the “great plan of life” making possible the unraveling and catching of the innermost

sense of life. An indispensable component of philosophizing – in the circularity: outcomes and means –, wisdom enables man to register his becoming on the route of progress, connected to the *logoic* – natural, creative and sacred – process of life.

Wisdom can fruit in the mobilization of all the human energies “for the discovery of means, ways, and materials, and for channeling them into a constructive apparatus capable of concretizing a new vision”.³⁵ It is an open-ended, integrating and dynamic vision with the dialectics of opposites in their distinctive identities, but also in their full unity. In Tymieniecka’s terms, it is a vision of comprehending life simultaneously as “timing and spacing”, “flux and stability”, in its “fleetingness and essence”, with disruptions and continuity, by “inward-outward directions”, on “hidden and obvious arteries”, unveiling – beyond any contradictions – the universal harmony of the All. Such a vision is completely in accordance with the incipient uses of philosophizing, on the Pythagorean channel about “philosopher”/“*sophos*”/“wise man”.³⁶

To practise wisdom, that fortifies man – the agent of the heroism of the life struggle – to endure the most difficult trials of his worldly existence, and to find and to increase the joy of living. According to Joseph Bochenski, we observe that, like Janus the dual headed god, “wisdom has two faces; it teaches us on the one hand that all is futile, and on the other that we must enjoy life”. The message to be learned is that, essentially, “there is no contradiction between the doctrine of futility and the precept of pleasure”.³⁷

By practising wisdom, we reach to comprehend the play of contradictions and equilibrium alike, in the individual, societal and natural life. Thus, we attain to revive the awareness of a basic truth from the Greek philosophy, that *sophia* is correlating to the principle of *harmonia* that brings order to chaos.³⁸

Intimated tied to an *aretic* culture, the experience of wisdom leads human being close by a supreme order, in a cosmic perspective, toward which man aspires from ever; metaphorically conceived from Pythagoras and Plato until Tymieniecka, it is the order of an ideal spectacle of the “music” and “dance spheres”.³⁹

In its intricate movement of deciphering the “logos of life” and the “creative human condition”, phenomenology of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka shows itself as a praise-demonstration of the exercise of *sophia-telos tou biou* (wisdom-purpose of life). Like process of a continuous spiritual freshness and ordering of human action, wisdom-at-work helps man to inscribe himself on an ascending route in the becoming flux of life; consequently, it helps man to understand life “in its surface phenomenal manifestation, in a formal, structural, constitutive fashion”, as well as “into the depths of the energies, forces, dynamisms that carry it relentlessly onward”,⁴⁰ no less, to understand his own vocation of philosophizing as style of a healthy and happy living.

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NOTES

- ¹ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I: *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, Springer, Dordrecht, 2009, p. xxiii.
- ² Ibidem.
- ³ Ibidem, p. xxv.
- ⁴ See Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 1: *Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 1988; Book 2: *The Three Movements of the Soul*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 1988; Book 3: *The Passions of the Soul and the Elements in the Ontopoiesis of Culture. The Life Significance of Literature*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 1990; Book 4: *Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, Kluwer, Dordrecht/Boston/London, 2000.
- ⁵ See Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I: *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, op. cit.
- ⁶ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, "Measure and the Ontopoietic Self-Individualization of Life", in *Phenomenological Inquiry*, Volume 19, Belmont, Massachusetts, The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning, 1995, p. 40.
- ⁷ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, in Ivanka Rainova, "Interview with Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka", Moscow, August 1993, <http://www.phenomenology.org/interview.html>.
- ⁸ Cf. Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence. 500 Years of Western Cultural Life, 1500 to the Present*, Harper Perennial, 2001.
- ⁹ Cf. Stobaeus, *Eclogae*, 2.57, in Arthur J. Pomeroy (ed.), *Arius Didymus. Epitome of Stoic Ethics. Texts and Translations*, Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, 1999.
- ¹⁰ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4: *Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, op. cit., pp. 189, 187.
- ¹¹ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, in Ivanka Rainova, op. cit.
- ¹¹ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, "Measure and the Ontopoietic Self-Individualization of Life", op. cit., pp. 26–27.
- ¹³ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I: *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, op. cit., pp. 29; 113.
- ¹⁴ Lawrence Kimmel, "Logos: Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's Celebration of Life in Search of Wisdom", in Gary Backhaus (ed.), *Thinking through Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's «Logos and Life»*, *Phenomenological Inquiry*, Volume 27, Hanover, New Hampshire, The World Institute for Advanced Phenomenological Research and Learning, 2003, pp. 20; 21.
- ¹⁵ Plato, *Protagoras*, 342e–343b.
- ¹⁶ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4: *Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, op. cit., pp. 5, 6.
- ¹⁷ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I: *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, op. cit., p. 89.
- ¹⁸ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, "The Creative Self and the Other in Man's Self-Interpretation", in Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (ed.), *Analecta Husserliana*, Volume VI, D. Reidel, Dordrecht, 1977, pp. 189; 168.
- ¹⁹ Plato, *The Laws*, I, 631.
- ²⁰ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*, I.42 ; *De Officiis*, I ; II.5.
- ²¹ See Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4: *Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, op. cit., pp. 613–639.
- ²² Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I: *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, op. cit., pp. 109, 110.
- ²³ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, "Measure and the Ontopoietic Self-Individualization of Life", op. cit., p. 28.
- ²⁴ Plato, *Political Man*, 286d, 284e.
- ²⁵ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1106b 20; 1107a 5.
- ²⁶ Ibidem, 1103a 5.
- ²⁷ Ibidem, 1106a 15–25.
- ²⁸ Cf. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I: *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, op. cit., pp. 140–141.

- ²⁹ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, “Measure and the Ontopoietic Self-Individualization of Life”, op. cit., p. 26.
- ³⁰ Ibidem, p. 36.
- ³¹ Plato, *The Republic*, 501b.
- ³² Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4: *Impetus and Equipoise in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, op. cit., p. 598.
- ³³ Ibidem, p. 313.
- ³⁴ Ibidem, p. 485.
- ³⁵ Ibidem, p. 469.
- ³⁶ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Doctrines of Eminent Philosophers*, I, 12.
- ³⁷ Cf. Joseph Bochenski, *Manuel de sagesse du monde ordinaire*, Editions de L’Aire, 2002.
- ³⁸ See Diogenes Laertius, op. cit., VIII, 33.
- ³⁹ See Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life*, Book 4: *Impetus and Equipoise in the Life-Strategies of Reason*, op. cit., pp. 651–657.
- ⁴⁰ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I: *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, op. cit., p. 35.

THE SELF AND THE WORLD: VEDANTA,
SUFISM, AND THE PRESOCRATICS IN
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL VIEW

ABSTRACT

This article examines two opposing perspectives in the formulation of phenomenological analysis which take as a starting point either the self, or the world. The phenomenologically grounded (based on direct intuition) focus on self-knowledge in ancient philosophy and esotericism emerges out of its apparent epistemological counter, the world. A similar dialectical synthesis can be traced in Tymieniecka's Philosophy of Life, with its emphasis on the primacy of the world in analysis. To that end, the article examines phenomenological reduction of the self in Western egology, a more holistic approach of the practical philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, the function of the Heart and the mutual mirroring of world and self in Sufism, and the shaping of the self by the world in Greek doxographical traditions. It suggests that the human condition has the possibility of an awareness which encompasses the world, as in the Sufi notion of the Heart, and that the positioning of the self in the entire context of life brings one closer to "things as they are" in Tymieniecka's philosophy of life.

At the 55th International Phenomenology Congress in Nijmegen, 2007, I witnessed a historical dispute between Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka and Angela Ales Bello, which summed up the two opposing perspectives in the formulation of phenomenology: Where does one begin the analysis—in the self, or in the world? In this paper, I will compare self-world relations in several systems of knowledge, such as Western phenomenology, Indian Vedānta, Sufism, doxographic Greek philosophical tradition, and, finally, in Tymieniecka's Phenomenology of Life. The knowledge in these philosophical or mystical philosophical systems is largely obtained through the direct intuition of the inner contents of consciousness, which is also characteristic of phenomenology. In Vedanta, presocratic Greek philosophy, and Sufism, all of which begin with distinction between the self and the world in the natural attitude, the experiential dichotomy between the self and the world resolves into the recognition of their foundational ontological unity. However, the paths uncovering this principal unity are compassed in a very different manner, and it is this difference that I will examine.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL EGEOLOGY

In egological investigations, the self and the world often appear as two dialectically connected opposites. When the systematic egological investigations reach the bottom-line within human subjectivity, the residue of pure awareness comes out of anonymity. In reflective analysis,¹ the pure subjectivity of awareness becomes fully differentiated from its objects (not so in the internal, experiential motion of reduction, but this consideration is usually dismissed). The discovery of a perceptual potentiality beyond space or time, and of an apparently limitless principle within human consciousness, is so overwhelmingly intense that the question of the existential status of pure subjectivity is pushed out of consideration. Whether this limitless and pure principle is an actually lived self-awareness, or is merely an abstraction—that is, a mental possibility conditioned on a volitional act of discrimination between a subject and an object—remains unexamined. The prototypically Cartesian subject-object differentiation is completed, and the residue of reduction of the self becomes a separately standing “thing” suitable for analysis.²

Pure subjectivity becomes a transcendental ego which is released into the world, either as an infinite ontological substratum of the latter (in Cartesianism), or as a constituting principle of intersubjectivity (as in Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology). The manifold world of names and forms “is” by the “*amness*” of this pure subject-awareness and, in turn, participates in the constitution of the self which is subjected to reduction. The dialectical cycle has been completed, but the synthesis has not become fertile: it has nowhere to go, and it never transcends itself into a new emergence.

As a mental mode, reduction is different from a natural flow of experience.³ Besides uncovering, or releasing, pure subjectivity, the operation of reduction also constitutes it.⁴ Although pure awareness is a condition that is at best extremely difficult to achieve pre-reflectively, it remains experientially easily available as an idea. It is unclear not only whether such a condition as pure subjectivity of awareness can be lived,⁵ but also whether without reflection which bridges the perceptual gap between the self and the world the dialectical synthesis outlined above would even be possible.

In practical philosophies which are concerned with human fulfillment,⁶ the question of where does self-knowledge begin, in the self or in the world, is even more tangible: as opposed to thinking what we are, we become what we think.

VEDĀNTA: SELF IS THE ONLY ONE REMAINING

In comparison with the pure philosophical agendas of western phenomenology, the goal of the Indian Advaita Vedānta is much more practical: it is liberation (Sanskrit *Moksa*) from limitations associated with the worldly existence of the body. In positive terms, it is an attainment of full, flawless happiness (Sanskrit *Ānanda*). As practical philosophy, Vedānta not only frees the self from the tenets of individuality, particularity and separateness, but goes even further to turn this condition

into a natural state. The method of Vedānta is self-inquiry with systematic reduction of self-experience, combined with metaphysical ruminations on the nature of self-awareness.

FIRST MOMENT OF VEDANTIC SELF-REALIZATION:
DISCOVERY OF THE SELF

As an example, the following verses (Lakṣmīdhara, trans. and commentaries Berliner 1990, verse 2) begin with a discovery and examination of the formless and limitless Self:

Always I am; always I shine;
Never am I an object of dislike to myself.
Therefore it is established
That I am Brahman,⁷
Who is of the Nature of Existence, Awareness and Fullness.

To find “Always I am; always I shine;/Never am I an object of dislike to myself” in one’s lived experience, one performs a systematic negation of all cognition and perception. Known in Vedānta as “differentiation between the seer and the seen” (Sanskrit *Dṛk dṛśya viveka*)⁸ or “not this, not that” (*neti, neti*), the process differentiates a subject who has the nature of awareness, signified as “I,” from objects of awareness that are labeled as “this” or “mine,” and do not have inherent awareness. This reduction happens not only within the sphere of pure ideas but involves the whole self-awareness, and the whole of bodily perception.

The cascade of reduction-based switches in self-identity culminates in the realization that who one is pure, limitless, self-subsistent, self-aware subjective awareness identical only to itself—the good old Transcendental Ego. Detached from changing objects, one’s identity has to be firmly associated with this formless awareness. This central step, disidentification with names and forms, and identification with the limitless principle of awareness, means that one is not a separate person and an individual, but is instead an all-encompassing, one-in-existence entity (Sanskrit *Brahman*) with no boundaries.

Psychologically, reduction alone is an insufficient means to construct such a universal self-identity, to cancel the existential reality of being a separate individual, and to attain the Vedantic goal of liberation from suffering. After the dialectical loop by which the principle of individual awareness is realized as universal (“Therefore it is established/That I am Brahman”), next must come the mental changes responsible for the cessation of suffering. Unless this is accomplished, liberation/happiness remains a purely theoretical, and not an existentially realized value.⁹ Both the stability of the universal self-identity and the cessation of suffering are conditioned on the radical reconstitution of the self-world relations.

In order to get rid of the persistent impression of re-emerging individuality, the teaching methodology focuses on the recognition of the ontological primacy of pure awareness:

In me, in the space of awareness,
Rises this celestial city called the world.
Therefore how am I not Brahman,
Who is all-knower and the cause of all?¹⁰

The verse emphasizes that awareness only appears finite due to the illusion of the senses. In reality, awareness is beingness, which is clearly indivisible and present in every element of the world. Experientially, one cannot distinguish between the beingness of the subject and of the object. Thus, pure awareness/transcendental ego acquires the quality of a universal substance which is indivisible because of its transcendent nature.

As a man regards the food he has eaten as one with himself, the Adept Yogin sees the Universe as one with his Self. . .¹¹

Identification with this awareness-substance is believed to change the mental processes: having discarded all identifications with the phenomenal field the seeker ceases to experience suffering. However, the pressure of intentionality continues even though awareness is experientially differentiated from its objects: bodily participation in the world continues, and the influences which constitute individuality cannot be canceled. One quickly discovers that Self-Realization does not hold by itself and that the world keeps imposing itself on the seeker, reconstituting the individuality undermined by Vedāntic self-exploration.

As expected according to Western phenomenological philosophy, this world-attachment of the self is precisely what reduction is expected to reveal.¹² However, Vedānta intends not only to examine, but to modify Husserlian intentionality. Besides deconstructing the reality of the world in its theory of Māyā-vāda, Vedānta introduces the complementary methodological counterpart to the analysis of the self, the analysis of the Self-of-the world, or *Īśwara*. The transcendental ego is extracted from a less-than-real individual psyche and is bestowed onto the less-than-real world. As a result, the world acquires a sentient Self. Paradoxical self-world relations are contained within the notion of different levels of reality, as in the commonly cited in Vedānta circles famous verses from Shankara's work *Maniṣāpañcakam*:

On the level of the body I am your servant.
On the level of the soul I am your lover.
On the level of the Self I am you.¹³

The method of reduction persists on many levels as the means of establishing self-world unity. The self is reduced to pure awareness, i.e. Self; the world is reduced to the Self, and even when analysis begins with the world, the world has to be interpreted as a self in order to give space to the same reduction. So Self remains as a reigning entity, never questioned in its causal positioning. "It is the ego as transcendental, i.e. as having abstained from granting the validity of the world's existence, including that part of the world that comprises its own psychophysical being, that bears the responsibility for the entire sense and the existential status of the objective world".¹⁴ Is this true, that only

reduction can rescue consciousness from the perceptual illusion of isolation and establish an otherwise unreachable self-world unity? To answer this question, I will turn to the systems of knowledge that, instead of imposing reduction on lived self-experience, follow the natural dynamics of the phenomenal fields of the self and of the world. If we are, indeed, always “confronted with the process of lived self-acquaintance whose distinctive feature is its non-reflective character, and which must be understood as an immediate expression of life itself”,¹⁵ then there may be something in our experience that lies deeper than the analytically recognized self-world unity creates a ground for a gestalt of unity as different from the understanding rooted in reduction and logic.

Such direct intuitive epistemologies of Islamic or Buddhist mysticism are not egalitarian in a sense of being available to every kind of mind. On the contrary, they correspond with the developmental maturity of the mind’s capacity to know.¹⁶ These capacities can increase spontaneously¹⁷ or can be trained.¹⁸ These developmentally available faculties form epistemologies rooted in the direct, unmediated awareness of “things themselves,” as in Islamic mystical philosophy, with its epistemology of knowledge by presence.¹⁹

SUFISM: THE SELF IS THE LIGHT IN THE MIRROR
OF THE WORLD

The Sufi approach to knowledge fully incorporated Plato’s “repeated insistence that what to a superficial person is just ‘myth’ may have all decisive attributes of a logos for someone whose perception runs deeper”.²⁰ Islamic philosophy establishes the limits of reason, and shifts the emphasis of knowledge-giving practices to heart-intellect with its direct intuition of the contents of consciousness. The central figure of Islamic philosophy, Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazālī, in his autobiography *al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl*,²¹ describes his search for true knowledge as a progression from a radical doubt in the truth of sense perception, to a deep study of contemporary scientific-philosophical systems, and finally to the mystic discipline of experiential cognition.

In contrast to systematic reduction in Cartesianism, early Husserl’s phenomenology, or Vedānta, Islamic mystical philosophy relies on individual revelatory perception where knowledge by presence²² plays a major role. Human life is viewed in Sufism as a journey of knowledge leading Sufi Gnostics,^{23,24} to the escape from existential alienation through the recovery of a primordial state of mystical Union:

Hear the reed as it makes its lament
telling a tale of how it was rent
from its root. . . (Mesnevi, line 1)
All who have wandered far from their source
make their beginning the end of their course (Mesnevi, line 4).²⁵

The journey is created by the dynamics of the three participating principles: the self of the gnostic, the world, and God. Thus, Sufism investigates a different kind

of self: the self which is always relational, possessing of all its potentialities, and inclusive of the full spectrum of perceptual possibilities available in the human condition. These possibilities are dependent on the psychological maturity and spiritual development of the practitioner.²⁶ The majority of Sufi authorities do not use systematic reduction of experience in order for the knowledge (Arabic *ma'rifa*) to emerge because (a) the Real (Arabic *al-Haqq*, “the Truth”) is revealed in the advanced states of perception, and (b) the relationship between the human being, God and the world are mutually pervasive and paradoxical:

He who affirms the duality (of God and the world) falls in the error of associating something with God; and he who affirms the singularity of God commits the fault of confining Him to a (rational) unity. . . though wilt see Him in the essence of things, sovereign and conditioned at the same time.²⁷

Systematic reduction, therefore, would distort the picture.

At the beginning of the journey, knowledge is incomplete. Both the self and the world are present in the beginner’s perception, but God is hidden. Progress from the state of veiling to the states of direct perception of God corresponds to the increase of self-knowledge. “Who knoweth himself knoweth his Lord” is a recurring theme in the collection of Hadīth Qudsi.²⁸ The whole process is orchestrated by God who is the teleological force behind self-knowledge.

God (Arabic *al-Haqq*, ‘Reality’) wanted to see the essences of his most perfect Names whose number is infinite – and if you like you can equally well say: God wanted to see His own Essence in *the global object* [the world, italics mine] which having been blessed with existence summarized the Divine Order so that He could manifest His mystery to Himself. . . . As the vision that a being has of himself is not the same as that which another reality procures for him, and which he uses for himself as a mirror. . .²⁹

In this schema of things, the existence of the world is conditioned on the existence of God (who is the ultimate subject/carrier of consciousness), and the world is also necessary for God’s self-knowledge. This creates a very definite role for the human being (Adam) as a vehicle of divine self-knowledge:

God first created the entire world as something amorphous and without grace, comparable to a mirror not yet polished. . . For the entire reality from its beginning to its end comes from God alone, and it is to Him that it returns. So then, Divine Order requires the clarification of the mirror of the world; and Adam became the light itself of this mirror and the spirit of this form.³⁰

Hence, philosophizing in Islam begins with the posited unity of God, world and self, but the starting platform of uncovering the experiential correlates of this unity is the self. The latter is, of course, similar to the natural state in phenomenology,³¹ except that the self is not isolated as the only relevant subject of analysis. On the contrary, the self in Sufism is viewed in the context of indivisible unity with the world, and via a shared medium of an all-encompassing, transcendent and self-subsistent God.

Because the world is the place of Divine self-disclosure, and because human awareness is the vehicle of Divine self-knowledge, Islamic mysticism pays very close attention to the actual givenness of experience. The latter, according to Sufis, naturally fluctuates between the two poles of self-transcendence, the inner pole, which is the pure subject, and the outer pole, which is the world. Eventually, gnostic

experiences a variety of states, all of which carry existential value. Fluctuations in spontaneously expanded perceptual states occur on the axis of meaning God—the self—the world, with a shifting focus of identification (Sam Goldberger, personal communication, 1997). The fluctuations are reflected in Sufi concepts of *fanā'* and *baqā'*³² and in the maps of the states of knowledge.³³

If the fluctuations of the states of internal spiritual union resolve in an experience of oblivion, the Sufi tradition suggests a return to the awareness of external existences. Return to the world leads gnostic to a greater knowledge than that the knowledge in the state of ecstatic extinction in God, because God, knowledge of whom the gnostic is seeking, is “sovereign and conditioned”³⁴ at the same time. Eventually, the introspective self-transcendent and external self-transcendent modes of awareness are indistinguishable.³⁵

In this ebb and flow of revelatory experience, various forms of reduction may emerge naturally; however, there is no need to take a path of systematic reduction to arrive at self-world unity. The certainty of knowledge of unity of the self and the world is discovered perceptually, within the medium of the *embodied* lived experience, as opposed to an abstracted mental effort in phenomenology of pure ideas. The cosmological insights of Sufi Gnostic are connected with the embodied structure of self-awareness known as the Spiritual Heart.

THE HEART

The attitude towards the world in esoteric Islam varies from a straightforward rejection of it as a place of pollution of the soul in Tirmīdhi,³⁶ to much more nuanced perspectives on the self-world relationship in Niffari³⁷ or Ibn ‘Arabi.³⁸ The attitude towards the world influences the understanding of what is true knowledge. The shift in the kind of knowledge is “from discursive to spiritual; [the shift] in the *subject* of knowledge [is] from the mind to the heart; and. . . [the shift] in the *object* of knowledge, [is] from discrete, formal data, to the essential principles of Reality as such”.³⁹

Discrimination between mental knowledge and the knowledge of the Heart is widespread in folk-theories of cognition. The post-Husserlian studies of constitution of the self, such as Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception,⁴⁰ Rosen’s formulation of topographic phenomenology,⁴¹ and Gendlin’s work on the embodiment of meaning,⁴² create a phenomenological framework for this common sense distinction. The primary constitution of knowledge always engages both the meaning and the body; consequently, the distinction between the discursive mind and the heart-intellect will be related to the constitutional horizon within which the knowledge is viewed. In the constitution of knowledge, the absence (discursive mind) or presence (heart-intellect) of a consciously highlighted somatic self-awareness creates a major difference. Paradoxically, it is not the domain of pure ideas, but the somatic self-awareness, i.e. the Sufi “heart”, that is associated with the function of imagination and carries potential for all the possibilities of consciousness available in human condition. The “heart” is both outwardly, and inwardly aware, as in Brentano’s notion of inner consciousness, except for that this

consciousness in Sufism is necessarily egological. Sufism uses the practices of *Dhikr* (Arabic “Rememberance”)⁴³ to activate the direct awareness of embodied imagination. A process of conscious self-reconstitution, rooted in the awareness if this inward embodied realms of imagination, consists of the sequence of the states of *Jam‘* (Arabic “Gathering”).⁴⁴ *Jam* integrates into a conscious psychic unity all the elements of consciousness which had been previously anonymous or “veiled”, and later rendered transparent by *Dhikr*. This form of awareness leads to the gestalt of unity of the self and the world.

Within the phenomenological field of the Heart, Sufi maps of consciousness identify several domains (Arabic *Laṭā‘if* “graces, subtleties”)⁴⁵ which correspond to various forms of identity, from the individual self, to the self “beyond” the ego boundaries. The “self-in-the-Heart” is always a self-in-relationship,⁴⁶ always in a self-transcendent mode. As was both in psychological research⁴⁷ and in Sufi gnostic explorations, the modes of knowledge of the world, and the capacity to penetrate the world’s internal organization, depend on the configuration of the self of the knower. Hence, the Heart presents an array of possibilities of knowledge in regard to the self-world tandem.

The internal contents of the heart-awareness is the infinite world of imagination,⁴⁸ with the logico, onto-poietic hierarchical ordering.⁴⁹ Even without a phenomenological analysis, one easily discovers correspondences between the constitution of the heart-self, the naïve perception of the world, and the mythological cosmologies of creation.

Direct intuitive apperception of the interiority of the Heart-self, i.e. the embodied core of self-consciousness, creates the conditions of awareness necessary for experiential realization of the unity of its individual and cosmic aspects. There follows the unification of paradoxical conditions, such as in the statement of Ibn ‘Arabi, partially quoted above: “You are Him, and you are not Him, you’ll find Him in the nature of things, sovereign and conditioned at the same time”.⁵⁰ Thus, the self-world dialectics embedded in Sufi gnosis is not a sequential flow of ideas resolving into a synthesis. This is the onto-poietic time,⁵¹ in which Heart-consciousness manifests its characteristic topological flip-flops (“You are Him, and you are not Him” at the same time),⁵² and creates gestalt of unity out of paradoxes of ordinary awareness. This awareness is not “altered”, but expanded and sober.⁵³ It simply highlights the moments in consciousness which were previously anonymous.

The ultimate condition of the gnosis is the condition of a Universal Man, when the “Real is identical with them, while they do not exist”.⁵⁴ The Real (Arabic *al-Ḥaqq*, “real, truth”), the perennial subject-awareness, generates the world as its global object, therefore, the perceptual condition of the Universal Man is open to complete awareness of everything there is within his own “inner consciousness”. Thus, in one’s perception the intersubjective is included in the intrasubjective:

Each individual of the human species contains the others entirely, without any lack, his [her] own limitation being but accidental. . . For as far as the accidental conditions do not intervene, individuals are, then, like opposing mirrors, in which one fully reflects the other. . .⁵⁵

If the inner consciousness transforms towards integration of the intra- and inter- subjective domains, the reflective self-awareness and the relationship with the world will also change. The self and the world in Sufic practice are connected by this perception, and not by the zigzags of Hegelian dialectics. In Sufic awareness, the transcendent function of consciousness is highlighted both inwardly and outwardly, unifying the self and the world through the experience of self-transcendence.

The inward-outward self-transcendence constitutes the two mirroring worlds: a world of imagination within the bodily egological heart-self, and a “real” world outside the body. In this system, the forms of awareness fluctuate, from egological awareness, to the awareness beyond the ego. There emerges one indivisible structure, a unity which encompasses both the intersubjective and intrasubjective domains located in the spectrum of perceptual possibilities between the polarities of awareness.

Where is the “beginning” of this knowledge? If it is in the self, then the degree of uncertainty of knowledge skyrockets, as the forms of subjective awareness are in constant flux. The angles of interpretation, created by the positioning of awareness, create a variety of phenomenological systems; from standpoint of Islamic metaphysics, the whole of cultural history is nothing but the dynamics of the modes of witnessing. The analysis in the present paper began with the self-based/reduction-based approach in egological phenomenology, proceeded to a more holistic view of the self in Vedanta, and demonstrated the self-world as a system in phenomenological epistemology of Sufism. I will now examine the possibilities which open when the world is taken as the beginning platform for the analysis. For that, I will turn to where things had begun, to the “Golden Age” of philosophy before the dawn of reduction, i.e. to the pre-Socratic Greek philosophy in the doxographic tradition.

ANCIENT GREEKS: THE WORLD'S SHAPING OF THE SELF

Kingsley's meticulous analysis of early Greek philosophy leaves no doubt that there is much more to the Greeks explorations of the world than a simple natural philosophy. It seems quite plausible that Empedocles and Parmenides practiced some kind of esoteric disciplines⁵⁶ which might have refined their intuition of internal consciousness. Even though the Greeks did not leave a record of formalized introspective contemplative practice which would lead to the self-knowledge by presence, one cannot exclude the possibility that the oral Greek tradition included such practices.⁵⁷ If this is so, Greek cosmology can be at least partially rooted in the phenomenological datum of inner self-consciousness. While such similarities can be (and generally are) ascribed to diffusion, the similarities between Greek and Sufi eschatology also support an assumption that in this case, the diffusion of ideas could've been accompanied by the transmission of introspective practices. The latter will lead to the similar constitution of the *pre-reflective* level of consciousness, reflexively presented in the similarities of mythological and philosophical ideas.

There are striking similarities between the central philosophical-mystical ideas in the doxographic tradition, attributed to the influence of South Italian landscapes,⁵⁸ and the essential topographic structures of the internal landscape of the self. The format of the article limits me to only a brief outline of the cycle of ideas “at the roots of classical Greek and Roman mythology. . . [which] appears in many forms, and . . . exist(s) within themes and motifs in oriental mythology, both Near Eastern and Indo-European”.⁵⁹ This cycle includes the idea of a fiery essence contained in the heart of the matter, the idea of the sun coming in and out of the underworld, the idea that one needs to visit hell before rising to heaven, the idea of an axis connecting heaven and earth, and the whole script of the post-mortem travels of the soul, with the spiritual “descent” rather than “ascent”. For a practitioner of egological esoteric introspective practice involving the spiritual heart, such as the practice of *Dhikr*, these ideas will be perceived as metaphorical descriptions of the internal impressions emerging in the process of the advanced practice. Tirmīdhi,⁶⁰ not only mentions the perception of light emerging from the darkness at the core of one’s being, and the sun-like luminosity rising inside one’s body, but believes these impressions to be the signs of spiritual advancement. Corbin, in his comparative analysis of Iranian mystical philosophical texts, provides the detailed descriptions of the types and occurrences of the internal lights.⁶¹ References to internal luminosity appear not only in the Sufism or pre-Islamic Iranian philosophy, but also in Hindu scriptures,⁶² in Buddhist cosmologies,⁶³ and in Christian descriptions of the effects of internal somatic attentional focus in prayer.⁶⁴ Perception of the internal movement up and down the central axis of the body connecting the internal imaginal worlds and the descent into the limitless spaces of spiritual darkness within the inner space of the chest appears in the practices of *Dhikr*, Prayer of the Heart, and Kundalini Yoga—as well as in the processes associated with the spontaneous spiritual transformation described in Tantra.⁶⁵ Descent into darkness, and the annihilation of the personal identity akin to death and the following opening of the spiritual ascent are also the typical elements of inner practice.⁶⁶

These stable impressions create a topography of the internal universe and serve as the landmarks by which the aspirant defines his or her progress.⁶⁷ Some systems, such as tantric Laya Yoga, Indian Sufism, or Taoist Alchemy, formalized the inner topographies as the system of chakras, Lata’if (subtle centers of the Heart-consciousness), channels, centers or meridians.⁶⁸ In tantric yoga, the detailing of the inner landscape reaches a high degree of elaboration reminiscent of the real topographic maps.⁶⁹ The temporal, spatial, meaningful and hyletic relations within these internal structures scaffold the flow of introspective self-experience. Whether these structures are “uncovered” in practice, or constituted, is not clear.⁷⁰ For example, Suhrawardī⁷¹ describes the dynamics of lights without any reference to a corresponding spiritual practice. These lights, internal movements, and the overall internal landscape belong to the spatial, perceptual/somatic, topological and hyletic structural elements of the inner organization of the self, as opposed to the meaning-related constitution described earlier by Merleau-Ponty or Gendlin. The ideas of the above mentioned cycle are likely to form as a reflection of both the external, and of this internal landscape.

The similarities between the inner-imaginal and the outer-real landscapes is more than coincidence. The stable correspondencies between the cycle of mythological ideas, and the shape of the internal landscape point out to the complicated constitutive process including observations and interaction with the world, coupled with mythical thinking, languaging and introspection.⁷² Neuroscientific studies of the correlates of consciousness showed that constitution includes various cognitive-perceptual processes, mirroring being one of them.⁷³ Mirroring theory suggests that the living, embodied self uses for its constitution the reflection of things external to the self. Indeed, “all things are required for fire and fire for all things as goods for gold and gold for goods”.⁷⁴ In this schema of things, the structures of consciousness appearing in the internal landscape of the meditating mystics, are the hyletic and spatial blueprint of the external world, in a manner on a negative, one sees the image consisting of the white light outlines, as compared to the fully fleshed figures seen on the positive.

Ancient Greeks write without using the personal pronouns. Unless it is simply a writing convention, their written language reflects the way of thinking. The whole human being, the body and the soul, is viewed not in isolation, but within a logocic, natural flow of things. Thus, both on the pre-reflective, and on the ciphering level, the knowledge of the world becomes a key to the knowledge of the self; the focus on the world incorporates the phenomenological urge to self-knowledge, in that it pushes philosophers such as Empedocles, Parmenides or Heraclitus to examine whether there is, in the nature of being, anything that endures the flux of things. From here, the two possibilities emerge. One is to isolate the self from the flow of things, and to examine it reflectively,—this is the path of reduction. The other path aspires to understand of consciousness, reflective as well as pre-reflective, in its reflexivity with the world within the phenomenological order of things. Which leads us, inadvertently, to Tymieniecka’s phenomenology of life.

TYMIENIECKA: SUBTERRANIAN CURRENTS OF LIFE

In the early stages of her philosophy, Tymieniecka follows the traditional phenomenological focus on the self. However, after the self-individualizing-in—existence of life, and the human condition are articulated, Tymieniecka develops the focus on the primacy of the world in the overall formulation of her philosophy. Self emerges out of this matrix gradually, as the evolution of the “. . .crucial specific existential/ontological device [the soul, i.e., the principle of consciousness or measuring observer] that differentiates all life from non-life, that is, through the inward/outward oriented central ‘agency’ of the individualized beingness, that life’s ontopoietic processes are carried out”.⁷⁵

Tymieniecka switches the angle of phenomenological awareness from the segmented horizons of knowledge, to the foundational nature of the phenomenon of life: life is a primary given, and it has to be phenomenologically studied before anything else in order to give the raise to the true understanding of things.⁷⁶ Since Tymieniecka’s whole categorization bears fidelity to life per se, the primacy of the

world is dictated by the logic of her interrogation. She breaks the millennia-long philosophical trance in which the self always “feels itself as a fulcrum, center of our experience’s furthers horizon”.⁷⁷ While “the persistent care of the self is built into the very life stream”,⁷⁸ Tymieniecka’s focus on the world as a beginning analytical platform is the direct outcome of her primary thematization of life as compared to the more traditional thematization of being and knowing, and of the radical spirit of her phenomenological approach. She describes the dynamics in the onto-poietic Logos of life, and fully follows the flow of this dynamics in her interrogation. In the same motion she breaks free from of the monumental pressure of the logoc flow by establishing herself and her philosophizing as the locus of logoc self-reflection. Tymieniecka’s turn to the world as a point of departure is both fulfilling the logoc individuation, and defeating the trance inherent in it.

The world is the *primum mobile* in Tymieniecka’s philosophy, creating a context for the rest of the analysis. In its principle methodological positioning in the whole discourse, the strategy of referencing the insights against the non-reducible presence of the world is analogous only to a pervasive motion of reduction in Husserl’s. The turn to the world does not put the self into the oblivion, on the contrary, it creates a condition of expanded and heightened awareness which propels one from simply living to living as a personal developmental practice. This is because of this move of expanded awareness, and the resulting aesthetic freedom coupled with a phenomenological descriptiveness of Tymieniecka’s method, the categorical apparatus of Tymieniecka’s philosophy such as life, sharing-in-life, unity-of-everything-there-is-alive etc. comes as close to things themselves as it is at all possible in relations between a signifier and the signified. Her analysis is never an inference, or an opinion, but it is always a penetrating vision and an essential description. Designs in the self-individuating givenness of life become visible without alienation or superimposed modifications of their operating dynamic principles. Tymieniecka effectively controls “the deconstructing [of life’s] constitutive efforts inherent to the logos of philosophical interrogations”,⁷⁹ as her phenomenological “gaze” is both the expression of self-reflexivity of life,⁸⁰ and of the “symbiotic empathy” embedded in the matrix of life.⁸¹ Thus, self and the world are both positioned within the overarching principle of life, interconnected, as it were, within a network of myriads phenomenologically present interactions and/or dynamic bonds.

In the phenomenology of life, the phenomenological explications of life happen within the phenomenological *modus vivendi*,⁸² i.e. the systematic outlook at life as a phenomenon given in the first person experience. Experiential states present themselves as self-luminous, i.e., self-generated and self-posted, i.e., both *creative*, and *creating* virtualities of life. The strength of Tymieniecka’s approach, as it seems to me, consists exactly in the extreme intimacy with and high appreciation of this direct givenness of the self-luminous life. The attraction to her philosophy is nearly sensate; she simultaneously eidetically expands, and meditatively grounds in the body the attention of the reader. In this manner, she remains true to the logos of her interrogation, overcoming the centuries of philosophical “dissociation” from life. She manages to stay with onto-poiesis as it happens, in the world and in its’ mirror, the self, in the moment-by-moment unfolding of “subterranean” currents of life. In

this specific positioning of awareness, I believe, lies the reason for the success of Tymieniecka's philosophy.

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NOTES

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⁸ *Drg-Drśya-Viveka*. op. cit., 1976.

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¹² Toadvine. op. cit., 2002, p. 81.

¹³ Modified from the translation by Śrī S. V. Ganesan “In the form of body I am your servant. // In the form of life, O three-eyed one, I am part of yourself. // In the form of soul, you are within me and in every other soul.”

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TRINITARIAN APPROPRIATIONS OF THE
 TRANSCENDENTALS: GIVENNESS AND
 INTENTIONALITY IN LEVINAS, MARION,
 AND TYMIENIECKA

ABSTRACT

Consciousness' contribution to the constitution of objects is a central concern for Husserlian phenomenology and its heirs. The philosophies of Levinas, Marion and Tymieniecka problematize this concern in the form of two commonly shared questions: "What is given in object-constituting consciousness?" and "How—if at all—is the given co-constituted by realities which transcend consciousness and are (in some sense) prior to it?" Though problematizing the issues similarly, the answers Levinas, Marion, and Tymieniecka give to these questions seem very different. For Levinas, the Other is given constitutively in all of its particularity in a relationless relation. Because it is outside of the totality of the Transcendental ego, it resists possession, is not an object of enjoyment but shows a freedom which is both a call to responsibility and to obligation. For Marion the phenomenology of givenness is tied to the kind of reduction accomplished: the reduction of the to-whom-given, the reduction of the to-which-given, the reduction of the how-given and the reduction of the how-far-given. For Marion it is the third kind of givenness—givenness as gift (Charity/Agapē) that delivers the Being of beings. For Tymieniecka, the New is poetically constituted in chaotic deconstruction and reconstruction of perceptual givens, after the incipient phase of awareness. In this paper, my intention is to argue that all three formulations of givenness, constitution and transcendence are complementary and tantamount to a rediscovery of three transcendental modes of being. For Levinas, it is the Other's ingression into constitution of consciousness that points to the givenness of the Ethical (or the Good), for Marion it is Love that delivers Truth, and for Tymieniecka it is the New's constitution out of given features of aisthēsis that points to the Beautiful. I will, further, suggest that each of these transcendentals may be understood theologically as Trinitarian appropriations belonging, respectively, to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Finally, I will also relate these different respective notions of givenness as descriptions of the Trinitarian personalization of revelation.

INTRODUCTION

The paper is an exercise in resourcement theology, an approach to generative and speculative theology in Roman Catholicism which some have cynically termed the "back to the future" approach to theological innovation, a view which might suggest

that it is associated with a conservatism in theological outlook relative to the RC tradition. However, a quick inquiry into the identities of its practitioners on both sides of the *Communio* and *Concilium* divide, dispels the charge of conservatism. One finds among its many practitioners many luminaries of 20th century theology—luminaries such as Henri de Lubac, Eric Przywara, Ives Congar, Bernard Lonergan, Karl Rahner, and Hans Urs von Balthasar, among others, luminaries whose theological writings made them suspect radicals relative to the conservatism of the Roman church, though that same church eventually caught up with and even sanctioned many of their ideas.

“Resourcement Theology” defies simplistic reduction because it is a “cluster concept” covering a variety of theological orientations and methods. Even so, across its many varieties there are some common features: First, in intention it parallels the Husserlian epigram “Back to the sources,” “sources” being understood by the resource theologians as a reactivation of ideas internal and external to the Tradition, ideas whose meaning had become ignored, neglected, or ossified. Second, methodologically, it attempts the recovery of this meaning using the most up-to-date historical approaches and assumptions, a use which—early-on—made it susceptible to its scholastic opponents’ unjust characterization as a form of modernism. Third, it attempts to reactivate these ideas in reference to the experiences/realities that ground them in order to ask the question whether those experiences are still living (or ought to be living) today.¹

This paper is an attempt, within the scope of resourcement theology, to make an argument for the recovery and updating of the notion of the transcendentals in such a way to expand contemporary Trinitology, especially with respect to the notion of Trinitarian appropriations.

Although there are many classic treatments of Trinitarian appropriations (and a variety of different schemas by which various Neoplatonic transcendentals are correlated with the Trinitarian persons), there is no one standard, universally accepted, set of appropriations. In the parlance of theologians, there is no formulation of these appropriations which has achieved *doctrinal* or *dogmatic* status. For this reason, theological speculation about Trinitarian appropriation of the transcendentals lies squarely in the realm of *theological opinion*, a status which has been stable for about fifteen centuries.² In this paper, it is my intention to revisit this speculative reflection in order to suggest a new formulation of Trinitarian appropriation based upon the thought of three contemporary philosophers: Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Luc Marion, and A.-T. Tymieniecka.

Because each of these thinkers formulates the relationship between transcendentals and givenness in such a way to make transcendental object and epistemological process inseparable, it is possible to claim that the accessibility of each transcendental is connected to and defined by a unique epistemological mediation. This possibility has important consequences for the Christian understanding of revelation inasmuch as it provides an important new theological inflection. When the idea of revelation has been broached in connection with speculation about Trinitarian appropriations, the tendency has been to ignore the phenomenological evidences in the Scriptures that suggest revelation is pluriform in favor of a view which makes

it homogenous. It is this tendency toward homogenization I would like to challenge in this essay, suggesting, instead, that if it is true that the Trinitarian appropriations are inseparable from accompanying modes of communication, then the respective revelations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are qualitatively different *qua* communications and, more specifically, that they are also different as communications *of* the respective appropriated transcendentals. This does not contradict the orthodox view that the historical (or economic) missions of the Trinitarian persons are distinctive (but cooperative), yet it goes beyond the standard formulation to suggest that correlative with these unique missions are distinctive personal communications, the *idiosyncratic, economic* revelations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.³

To argue for the meaning and significance of my claims, I would, first, like to walk you quickly through some theological preliminaries connected with the notion of Trinitarian appropriations. Second, I will move to a discussion of the relationship between the *noematic* and *noetic* components of givenness according to Levinas, Marion, and Tymieniecka. Third and finally, I will conclude with an explanation of how the adaptation of the ideas can positively re-shape Christian thinking about the Trinity and revelation.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TRANSCENDENTALS IN THE WESTERN INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

Theories of transcendentals have been proposed since the time of Plato in order to explain (1) the overarching perfections found across beings and (2) the analogicity of language in saying something meaningful about beings from diverse realms of things. It is a part of our common human experience to speak—often in rapid succession, without skipping a beat—of good, true, or beautiful: physical theories, mathematical formulas, poems, dogs, women and men, architectural designs, virtues, shotguns, and so on. Thomas Aquinas uses an intentionally startling comparison to illustrate the second reason for the transcendentals when he describes God and a horse's urine both as being good (*in some sense*).⁴ It is the recognition that there is some common term (or measure) to such analogies—that these analogies are somehow, in some way, saying the same thing—which lies at the heart of the classic notion of the transcendentals.

Plato, whose influence on later kataphatic and apophatic theological ontologies cannot be underestimated, described the One (*henas*) and the Good (*agathon*) as beyond being (*huperousia*)—or transcendental—and *relatively* beyond knowing.⁵ Plato and the later Neoplatonists suggest that the epistemic inaccessibility of the One and the Good is only *relative* because other avenues of knowing, apart from apodictic knowledge, are possible, such as: induction to the eminent source, analogy, negation, and mystical union.⁶ These methods of access are later more rigorously developed by Christian and Pagan thinkers of the 1st millennium and by the Christian theologians of the Middle Ages.

Aristotle described a similar set of properties as transcending the established categories of things by being universal to them all, thus defying classification according to exclusive schemas of genera or species and substance or accidents. Among these he included being, oneness, and goodness. To capture the illusive but universal distribution of these features across reality, Aristotle, however, never resorted to the Greek noun *hyperousia* nor verbs available to him and employed in other contexts, words such as *hyperbainein* (stretch beyond) or *hyperballein* (exceed).⁷ This omission indicated a view of metaphysics confident that being circumscribed reality. For Aristotle, these properties were neither Platonic forms, nor hyper-essential. Rather, these universal features were susceptible to description and comparison analogically, their meaning neither univocal nor equivocal across reality but sharing some common intelligible measure (*metron*) or rationale (*logos/ratio*) explicable within the natural horizon of things.

The preparatory period in the consideration of the transcendental was complete when, during the Patristic period, the list of the preeminent transcendentals reached traditional theological stabilization in the triad of Goodness, Wisdom (or Truth), and Beauty in the thought of Proclus.⁸ Accepting an emanational ontology, especially the Pagan Neoplatonists proposed that this triad also represented a prolation of being, the One pouring itself out in relative differentiation into the Good, the Good into the True, and the True into the Beautiful.

The medievals later propose alternative lists of transcendentals, recognizing the Neoplatonic formulations, while reintroducing Aristotelian recognitions. Thomas Aquinas draws on the prior rich development of the idea in order to make it bear theological value. In his thought, the transcendentals are correlated with the Trinitarian persons in a most original way.

For Thomas, a long list of transcendental reflects the traditional views of both the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies, and in the *Disputed Questions on Truth*, Thomas shows his reliance on both schools by making the observation that the transcendentals may be distributed conceptually over diverse genera of things or may be assigned special metaphysical properties (Ver. Q.1, A.10). Thomas' short list of transcendentals includes oneness (*unum*), being (*ens*), thing (*res*), otherness (*aliquid*), truth (*veritas*), and goodness (*bonum*) and beauty (*pulchrum*). When considered conceptually, the transcendental are analogously present in a multitude of beings; when considered metaphysically, the properties of individual created beings are graduated and depend (by eminence and cause) on the transcendental perfections of the Godhead.

THE MEANING OF THE TRINITARIAN APPROPRIATION OF TRANSCENDENTALS

In his theory of the Trinity, Thomas Aquinas follows the Patristic distinction between the *economic* and *immanent* features of the Trinity. Thomas, following Augustine, Hilary and Richard of St. Victor, is careful to maintain that the Trinity, as God, is conjointly involved in every act. In Augustine, the missions of the Trinitarian

persons are treated in some confusion with the transcendental appropriations—wisdom, for example—but it is clear that confusion is not Augustine’s intent, because he keeps clear the essential features of the godhead from the Trinity’s contingent actions in history. Thomas’ own formulation goes a long way to clarify Augustine’s treatment.

For Thomas, the *immanent* features include what has been called the “one, two, three, four, five schema.” Internally, constitutive of God are five notions, one act of being (or essence), two asymmetric relations (the relation of generation of the Son, and the relation of the generation of the Spirit), three persons (constituted by the relations), four processions, and five notions. The *economic* features include the salvific givenness of the Trinity in history. These modes of givenness have the peculiar character of being (1) freely chosen, (2) technically appropriate, expedient, and efficient, and (3) personally expressive. Two of these modes of givenness—that of the Son and Holy Spirit—are more appropriately designated *missions* because they are sent into history by the Father, while the Father is not sent but is the origin of his own giving (Ia, Q. 43, A.4, Res. 1–3).

The personal expressiveness of *givenness*, requires special explanation. Thomas, following Hilary, Augustine, and Richard of St. Victor, is careful to maintain that the Trinity, as God, is conjointly involved in every act. But different Trinitarian persons assume the foreground or background relative to the modes of givenness as is appropriate to them, so that it is possible to say that the giving of the Father in the Old Testament uniquely expresses his personality, the mission of the Son in the New Testament (up to his ascension) uniquely expresses his personality, and the mission of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament and from Pentecost to present, uniquely expresses his personality.⁹

Analogous to the Trinitarian missions is the idea that each Trinitarian person assumes or *appropriates* a transcendental which is most expressive of his personality. In using the appropriate verb [Lat.: *approprio*], Thomas indicates that each Trinitarian person takes to its own possession or self- ascription a term or quality expressing its idiomatic features with respect either to its shared Godhead or what it causes.¹⁰ As he puts it, “To appropriate means nothing else than *to contract* something common, making it something proper” (Ver. Q.7, A.3, Res.). Here, Thomas’ intentional conflation of legal and metaphysical senses of the verb *contractio* should not be underestimated. Just as, by contract, one of the parties might assume greater responsibility for the powers which all parties share, one of the Trinitarian persons can similarly take on a transcendental. But, perhaps, more telling is the metaphysical meaning of *contractio*, implying a “contraction, compression, delimitation, or focusing” of the transcendental through a *hupostasis* or person.¹¹

“Now what is common to the entire Trinity cannot be appropriate to a single Person on the grounds that this belongs more to this Person than it does another,” but it may be made on the grounds that “what is common has a greater resemblance to what is proper to one person than to what is proper to another” (Ver. Q.7, A.3, Res.). This being so, the appropriations are accidents, though following the language of Porphyry in the *Isagoge*, it may not be without justification to think of them as *necessary* accidents related to the economic functions of the Trinitarian persons.¹²

With the idea of transcendental appropriation comes a particular semantic procedure. "Appropriation means the making known of divine persons *by means of* essential attributes" according to the *via affirmativa* and the *via negativa*, that is through kataphatic or apophatic discourse (Ia, Q. 39, A. 7, Res). Here, the transcendentals are prior conceptually in the natural order of being, but knowing the Trinitarian person in supernatural revelation illuminates the transcendental in the order of experience so that one may also come to know the transcendental through the person (Ia, Q. 39, A. 7, Res. 3).¹³

Thomas says that because it is impossible to know the divine persons and the coordinate personal properties *via* natural reason, philosophers, prior to Christianity, at best could only know the essential attributes of God—such as power, wisdom, goodness, etc.—which are the appropriations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Ia, O. 32, Res. 1.). This distinction speaks to the classical division between natural and supernatural revelation indicating the complementarity of what may be known through reason and what may be known through revelation and how both kinds of knowledge reinforce one another. This distinction will have special relevance, as we shall soon see.

Thomas is aware that it is possible to assign transcendental appropriations to the Trinitarian persons in various ways. This follows from the fact that no single transcendental is a proper essential predicate of any person, but they all share them equally. In the *Summa*, so that he may bring some order to the diverse preceding views on the matter (including his own), he organizes the appropriations proposed by his predecessors according to whether they are conceptualized according to those questions which govern the investigation of all things: (1) What is it in itself? (2) How is it one? (3) How does it act and cause? And, (4) How does it stand in relation to its effects? (ST, 1a, 39, A. 8, Res.).

Corresponding to the first question, Hillary's formulation makes the assignment of transcendentals eternity-beauty-joy because eternity expresses underivability (just as the Father is the first), because beauty expresses integrity, harmony, and clarity (just as the Son is the very icon of the Father) and because joy expresses the love and enjoyment of the Father and Son for each other (just as the Holy Spirit is the procession of this love).

Corresponding to the second question, one of Augustine's formulations makes the assignment of the transcendentals unity-equality-connection because unity expresses the absolute independence of the Father as first principle, because equality expresses the oneness of the Son but in reference to the Father, and because connection expresses the unity of the relationship between Father and Son which is the Holy Spirit.

Corresponding to the third question, Hugh of St. Victor's formulation assigns power to the Father owing to the Father's primacy which *is not* flagging though he is supreme patriarch, assigns wisdom to the Son owing to the Son's being the Logos but which *is not* diminished by being an offspring of the Father, and goodness to the Holy Spirit because it is the motive and object of love, but which *is not* tainted by acquisitive violence.¹⁴

Corresponding to the fourth, and final, question, another formulation of Augustine assigns efficiency to the Father because it is he who is *like* the originating (kinetic) cause of all that is, assigns instrumentality to the Son because it is he who is like is the principle (organic cause) of a principle (the Father) through whom all things came into being, and assigns finality to the Holy Spirit because it is he who (like the telic cause) brings the Trinitarian processions to an “end” within the mutual loving enjoyment of the Father and the Son.

Recognizing, as he does, multiple ways of assigning appropriations, Thomas does not finally settle on any particular configuration. It is my purpose, in the conclusion of this paper, to suggest an assignment which will be generally satisfactory, especially when considered in relation to the Trinitarian missions.

Although they possess many of the same accidental and economic features, Thomas never draws his discussion of the Trinitarian missions into relation to his discussion of the appropriation of transcendentals. He is precluded by this, in fact, because he thinks the distinctive appropriations are merely *notional*, that is, they are merely human conceptual distinctions (Ver. Q.1, A.1, Res. Con. 5). However, if there are analogies between each that make one transcendental more appropriate as a descriptor for a mission, I would argue that the mission becomes a vehicle for it. In other words, the mission or mode of givenness of each Trinitarian person is related to the transcendental that is most prominent in the completion of the mission. This would make the appropriation of the transcendentals something more than notional because transcendentals would be emblematic *of* and given *through* the economic Trinitarian missions. By the accepted Rahnerian principle that the economic Trinity *is* the immanent Trinity—and by thematizing the word “is” here according to the Clintonian principle that its meaning “depends on what *is* is”—then the economic missions must tell us something about intra-Trinitarian structures. Note that this is not a denial that all Trinitarian persons are involved in every mission or that all Trinitarian persons properly—that is in essence—claim all transcendentals.¹⁵ Even so, my proposal draws the Trinitarian missions into closer relationship to the Trinitarian appropriations than Thomas seems willing to do.

But which appropriations of the transcendentals are to be thus related? Obviously, Thomas recognizes that many assignments of the transcendentals are possible, to the point of making them dependent upon the erotetic approach that one undertakes with respect to them, and that would seem to multiply them, indefinitely. In the *Disputed Questions on Truth*, he does seem to settle on a particular configuration for the purposes of discussion, but without ultimately valorizing it. That is the set of appropriations that associates the essence of the Trinity with Being, the Father with Oneness, the Son with Truth, and the Holy Spirit with Goodness.

My question is whether there isn't a supervening appropriation which both (a) corresponds to the economic mission of the person and (b) best represents its unique mode of givenness. I would argue that the supervening assignment of the Trinitarian appropriations is that of Goodness for the Father, Truth for the Son, and Beauty for the Holy Spirit and that it is this assignment that is borne out by the recent phenomenology of givenness in the thought of Levinas, Marion, and Tymieniecka.

Because of the limitations of time and preparation, I can only give a sketch of this demonstration. I hope that this sketch will be sufficiently detailed to be understood.

LEVINAS, MARION, AND TYMIENIECKA
ON TRANSCENDENTALS AND GIVENNESS

The phenomenologies of Levinas, Marion, and Tymieniecka share three important features that have particular significance for the remainder of this paper. First, all of them are critiques of the limitations of the Husserlian formulation of intentionality. Second, all of them result in the re-interpretation of the givenness of experience. Third, all result in theological repercussions, some recognized and some unrecognized by their authors.

Although Husserl's philosophy itself, may be viewed as a resistance to the absorption of the world into consciousness, Levinas, Marion and Tymieniecka dispute, in various ways, the effectiveness of this refusal in order to propose alternative, more radical refusals (Levinas 1998a, 86). In the case of Levinas, the result is the reductive thematization of a specific kind of givenness as the primordially and existentially constitutive of subjecthood. In the case of Marion, the result is an attempt to accomplish an eidetic reduction of the varieties of givenness in order to produce a general description of the phenomena. And finally, in the case of A.-T. Tymieniecka, the result is to establish an ontology of what is given in the synthetic apprehension of sense on the basis of a phenomenological reduction.

In a way, the three views of these philosophers are a practical object-lesson emblematic of the Marion's assertion of the implicit Husserlian principle of principles: "So much givenness, so many [phenomenological] reductions" (Marion, 2002, 14; 1998, 203). But simply because there is a plurality of phenomenological reductions does not mean that the notion of reduction itself is flawed. In fact, I would suggest that the investigations of all three phenomenologists are compatible, if some key assumptions are appropriately adjusted. But that is another story. My purpose, here, is to mine the discoveries of Levinas, Marion, and Tymieniecka in order to allow a new interpretation of Trinitarian appropriation.

GIVENNESS IN LEVINAS

"The liveliness of life is the incessant bursting of identification. As if, dazzling or burning, life were, beyond seeing, already the pain of the eye overwhelmed by light; beyond contact, already the igniting of the skin that touches—but does not touch—the ungraspable" (Levinas 1998a, 166). Life is not an ekstasis but an enthusiasm, the awakening of the Self-same to the Other (Ibid.). This process is a sobering up from the intoxication with being, an intoxication which imagines that the self is in Being and may absorb the other in the same homogeneity of Being (Ibid.).

In Levinas' this reveille, this sobering up, is tantamount to a "living reason" which is no longer judged in Husserlian terms as the lucidity of self-evidence (Ibid.). A "living reason" is not the kind of reason that seeks repose in the "the Same,"

in knowledge facetly understood in terms of being; it is not the kind of reason that seeks “repose, conciliation, appeasement” in the ultimacy of the Same (Ibid., 167). Nevertheless, Husserl opened the door, particularly in *Ideas* I, to a “transcendence in immanence,” a differentiation and rupture in the midst of presence to self in the recognition that the other constitutes a fissure in consciousness deeper than its unity (Ibid., 176). Unfortunately, Husserl promptly closed the very door he opened on this possibility, when, according to Levinas, he attempted to derive the consciousness of the other through an egological reduction. Levinas radicalizes the openness to the heterogeneity of the Other by suggesting that it lies at the basis of the constitution of the self.

The “Other wrenches me from my hypostasis, from the here,” where at the heart of my being and the center of my world, I posit myself (Ibid., 177). This wrenching out of self is the root of the philosophically deep awareness of my identity. This wrenching confers on me an awareness of the alterity of myself, the very alterity by which I wrench the other to a similar rupture in his solipsistic identity (Ibid., 177). As this happens, “the *here* and the *there*” are “inverted” and the I, once comfortably installed, moves into the background. Here, I see myself denuded before the other to whom I am obliged “to render account” (Ibid.). Facing the other is a sobering trauma which awakens the ego from its dogmatic slumbers; it awakens the ego to its freedom from itself but also to the realization that the Other cannot be assimilated to it (Ibid.).

The living reason described by Levinas is not the contemplative equanimity of the egological constitution and absorption of the other, nor is it the subsumption of both ego and other and their homogenization within the categories of being. Rather, living reason is the reckoning of living transcendence: This is the “[t]ranscendence in which, perhaps, the distinction between transcendence toward the other [hu]man and transcendence toward God should not be made too quickly” (Ibid., 178).

The transcendence which Levinas describes constitutes a salvation from the solitary self, a self which on one hand must face the horrific anonymity and homogeneity of the “there-is” (*il y a*), the self’s alienation, and the self’s false constructions of the being of the world around it (Purcell 2006, 98). It is the encounter with the other which brings with it immediate responsibility for that other, a responsibility which is also transformative for the self. In its “unanticipatable alterity,” in its incomprehensibility and inexhaustibility, I confront the other as unlimited in him/herself and as an opening to the infinite which stands behind it (Levinas 1969, 34). Here, what is established in Husserlian terms is an intentional relation in which the noematic content is totally at the disposal of the other and infinitely beyond my ability to accomplish a concept of it in the intentional act (noesis) (Levinas 1996, 54). I am in complete passivity to it. Though lost in forgetfulness, the encounter with the wholly other grounds human self-hood and responsibility. This means that the Infinite has primacy as the noematic principle which is constitutive of self-hood. All philosophies which deny the irreducible nature of this confrontation are self-deceptive.

According to Levinas, the unsettling confrontation with a person in his otherness, as it were, bears with it the question, “What has he to do with me?” It bears with it the irreducible and undelimitable datum of responsibility, infinite responsibility for the other. “My responsibility is an exceptional relationship in which the Same can be concerned by the Other without the Other being assimilated to the Same” (Levinas 1998b, 13). Opposite the face of the other, I find that there is no limit to what I must demand of myself (Ibid.) Opposite the face of the other, infinite responsibility is given to me. Levinas calls this relationship a relationship of Deaconship [!] of absolute service to the other, a service where I lose myself in responsibility to the other. (Levinas 2000, 161).

GOD IN LEVINAS

The reduction to being which is impossible for the other is intensified when God assumes the place of the other beyond otherness. To speak of God as the eminent—one of Levinas’ favorite epithets—is not adequate so long as that God is understood as an inhabitant of the house of being. For Levinas, God transcends being and every idea that would attempt to think him in terms of being.¹⁶ A more apt, though hyperbolic, expression is that God is the pre-eminent. The only adequate approach to God is one which recognizes that: “This idea of God surpasses every capacity, its ‘objective reality’ as a *cogitatum* causes the ‘formal reality’ of the *cogitatio* to break apart. This claim overturns—in advance—the universal validity and the original character of intentionality. . . . [T]he idea of God causes the breakup of the thinking that—as investment, synopsis, and synthesis—merely encloses in a presence, re-presents, brings back to presence, or lets be” (Levinas 1998b, 63). Nevertheless, the Infinite finds a paradoxical place within consciousness but one which transcends thought “which is structured as a comprehension of the *cogitatum* by the *cogitatio*.” The place of the Infinite within consciousness is the placing-in consciousness a passivity beyond all passivity which may be actively assumed by the subject, and in this it is rather like the notion of an obediential potency to be passive, a passivity impossible without the Infinite’s awakening one to that passivity (Ibid.). This non-intentional modality does not constitute an orientation in the subject directed to the fulfillment of evidences in the Husserlian sense. As Levinas puts it, this non-intentional modality is the disproportionate transcendence which makes the subject “hostage” to measureless responsibility for the human other but also to the Infinite other (Levinas 2000, 137–138). This relationship is tantamount to a saying whose interpellative force is not in *what is said* but in *the saying*. Its illocutionary force—the illocutionary force of the summons—is absolute and without a sedimentation of specifics (Levinas 2000, 161).

The relationship of radical responsibility for the other demands that Levinas characterize his movement beyond ontotheology as the development of a transcendental ethics. Simply put, ethics thus becomes for Levinas first philosophy and substitutes for that part of theology traditionally called “the doctrine of God.” This means that God is thought no longer primarily in terms of being but, rather, that pride of place (as far as first philosophy is concerned) goes to the transcendental, the Good. God is

not longer to be considered pre-eminently being but pre-eminently, *the Good*. Here, Levinas admits, he follows some hints in Plato but especially the themes of some of the Neoplatonists, and primarily Plotinus.

The indivisibility of the Good and its identity with the One, the way in which the Good brings the subject into responsible unity with the other, the way the Good elects me to responsibility in a way that is prevenient to a choice I might make in favor of irresponsibility, the way *the Good* is superior to any idolized descriptor of God as a lesser good or in terms of the characteristics of beings—all of these are the reasons that Levinas gives for preferring to consider God as the Good beyond ontotheology (Levinas 2000, 176–179). This is a God who is transcendent to the point of absence; this is a God whose saying can never be circumscribed in the ossification of what is said (Ibid., 204). This is a Good *who* is “otherwise than being.”

GIVENNESS IN MARION

Based on his formulation of the implicit Husserlian foundation principle (“So many reductions, so much givenness.”), Marion has approached the idea of givenness by following a path of phenomenological reductions designed to render the essences of the gift and the essence of its givenness. This investigation follows the analogy between the noematic and noetic correlates (in intentional relations) and the gift and the given.

Marion discovers three features of the gift. First, the giving of the gift is always accompanied by the withdrawal of the giver and the creation of a distance, a distance between the benefactor and the beneficiary and between the intention of the gift and its appropriation. No matter how gratuitous the gift may seem to be, once given, the temptation of the beneficiary is an appropriation of it. This appropriation is an appropriation of control and one of the forms of that control may be the interpretation of the meaning of the gift itself. The danger of the appropriation is that it occludes the communication of significance which is contained in the giving of the gift.

Second, even though the distance of withdrawal makes the appropriation of the gift a live possibility, it is also what preserves the giver as its origin, and because the givenness of the gift cannot be occluded—though its significance, might—the subject from whom or the direction from which it issued cannot entirely be effaced.

Third, in its purity, the giving of a gift is not fundamentally the giving of a thing. The thing given is an excuse for the gesture—or, better, is the instrument for the gesture, and it is the gesture which is what is supremely important in the purity of the giving. In its purity as an act of giving—in its sheer gratuity—the gift of *the giving* is the gift of *giving*. In other words, pure giving is perichoretic. It produces a spontaneous reciprocity by in which the giving fans out to others and, if possible, returns to the primary giver. In a community of generosity, generosity is returned.

When he take up the essential (intrinsic or noetic) aspects of the giving, Marion finds that there are three requirements and five conditions or determinations for the giving of a gift. The requirements speak to the empirical reality of the giving. That it be recognized as empirical, the giving, first, must be thematized simply in its

givenness and not as the preapprehension of its relation to its giver; it must show its givenness in the immanence of consciousness. Second, it must be thematized as irrevocably given. Third, it must have its whole significance as givenness (Marion 2002, 119–120). These requirements characterize the purity of the phenomenon.

But the pure phenomenon also possesses modalities or determinations which are unique, once its empirical nature is established. (1) A gift is given anamorphically, because its significance is revealed only when a particular perspective is achieved; (2) it is given contingently and unexpectedly; (3) it is given as an indisputable fact whose efficacy cannot be disputed; (4) it affects me with a suddenness and excessive profundity which is irreducible to its form; and (5) the giving of the gift is the giving whose definitive character is that of an event which precedes its cause and, in fact, cannot have an adequate cause (Marion 2002, 123–170). Emancipated from classic notions of causality, three *notae*—or distinguishing marks—may be abstracted from the five determinations: the phenomenon of any particular givenness is unique and unrepeatable; the phenomenon of givenness is excessive because it defies all expectations; and the phenomenon of givenness is supercharged with possibility because it exceeds the limitations essence imposes on potentiality (170–173).

G O D I N M A R I O N

For Marion, the thinking of the being of God is, as in the thought of Levinas, the audacious attempt to limit God to an enclosed horizon of being which is preapprehended and capable of being thought. But God may not be thus limited. Like Levinas, Marion opts for a rejection of ontotheology with the hope of transcending totality.

What this means is that the only way God can be thought is not in subordination to humanly established categories of being, but only on God's terms. God himself dictates the conditions for the possibility of his own conceptualization. These conditions are freely achieved in the way God gives himself as love, that is as pre-eminently a gift that dictates the terms of its reception (Marion 1995, 49). There is a remote similarity between Levinas' attempt to think the goodness of God—which is a matter of the relationship between the summoned and the Summoner—and Marion's understanding how the gift of love establishes the ground rules for thinking a God without being—which is a matter of the relationship between the beneficiary and the Benefactor. Both seem to opt for an *analogia relationis* over an *analogia entis*.

Marion deviates from the radicality of Levinas' call to an anti-idolatry of thinking the Good, especially where Levinas treads very close to the acceptance of the relationship between the death of God and the death of metaphysics. For Marion, the death of metaphysics is not equivalent to the death of God. To make it such is to succumb to idolatry. To understand this claim, one must understand that Marion views idolatrous conceptions of God as those which in their ability to dazzle us are reflective of the crass values we hold in common with the carvers of the idols. The idol is an idol because it is reflective of the idolater's self-idolatry. The attempt philosophically to take on these false idols and to best them by installing some other ultimate

in their place is to make more idols. Moreover, even those who take the critical leg of this dialectic of the idea as having finality without accepting the newly installed idol, succumb to idolatry, indirectly. Thus, even Levinas strays very close to idolatry by not being sufficiently critical of the critics of the idea of God. For Marion, the death of metaphysics does not mean the death of God; it is merely a call to a new way of thinking God.

The iconic provides a preferable way of describing how the Infinite might be expressed through the finite. Unlike the idol, the icon is not reflective of the worshippers own gaze. Instead, the icon becomes translucent to the divine and draws the Infinite through the finite to the worshipper. The worshipper's gaze does not stop at the finitude of the transmitting image but transects the finite surface to intend the Infinite that it presents. In the process, the gaze of the worshipper crosses the gaze of the Worshipped. In the relation of the worshipper loving the Worshipped "the weight of the other's unsubstitutable gaze as it crosses . . . [the] intentional aim [of the worshipper]" (Horner 2005, 70). As Robyn Horner has observed, this is a quasi-Levanasian intentionality of love, in which the weight of Worshipped's "gaze is experienced as an always-prior injunction that exposes and obliges me" (Ibid.) Unlike the idol the eikon is not *auto-representational*; it is *hetero-presentational*. The notion of the iconic can be broadened beyond religious artifacts and include the possibility that religious experiences and even religious ideas might function iconically. In considering the relevance of the iconic to religious experience, Marion sometimes ties together the themes of his phenomenology of givenness and his analysis of the eikon by suggesting that the experience of love can be bound up inseparably with both.

Though Marion's Christology is surprisingly underdeveloped, it is clear that Jesus Christ is the example of love, gift, and eikon par excellence. As eikon, Jesus is the very expression of the Father's infinitude in the form of finitude. In his coming into the world, Jesus' incarnation has all of the idiomatic features of the gift enumerated above. As the gift of the love of the Father, and as a lover himself, he stands as another subject, the knowledge of whom I have access to only on the condition that I accept his acceptance of me and that I return the gift of charity to him, that is, on the condition that I accept him in his otherness as he already accepts me in mine, so that he does not become a constitutable object (Horner 2005, 71; Marion 2002, 160–167).

Connected with the braid of themes—gift, eikon, love—is one of the most controversial claims of Marion is that supernatural revelation is an example of (what he calls) the "saturated phenomenon." A saturated phenomenon is a phenomenon which is not destructive of intentionality, inasmuch as a relationship between intention and fulfillment is preserved, but it is a phenomenon which gives itself in its fulfillment so excessively that the corresponding intention is overwhelmed (Marion 2004, 112). The icon is an example of such a phenomenon; so is divine revelation, and so, one would assume, is mystical experience. In maintaining that revelation is so terrifically under-determined—Marion calls it the saturation of a saturation because it possesses so many modalities as not to be unitary—he installs an incredible difficulty in its interpretation, at least as a present experience and not

as a sedimented literature.¹⁷ This is compounded also by his various statements to the effect that the saturated phenomenon does away with its noetic and noematic horizons (Marion 2002, 200–211; Horner 2005, 113–114).¹⁸

GIVENNESS IN TYMIENIECKA

Of the three thinkers considered, here, Tymieniecka represents the philosopher whose thought remains closest to the ambit of the Husserlian philosophy in how it approaches the problem of givenness and what is given. The direction of Tymieniecka's thought is in a direction different from Levinas and Marion. Her concern is not the with the apophatic transcendence of the hyperessential; her philosophical project is directed to the transcendence of being *within* the horizon of what she calls "beingness," a beingness that is rooted in an unconditional ground, "the God of all creation, Who announces himself as . . . 'I am Who Am' " (Tymieniecka 2009, xxix). If the thought of Levinas and Marion is directed to the hyper-transcendence of a summons or a gift that come from beyond being, her thought is directed to the transcendence that is possible within the horizon of beings that share *esse commune*. Nevertheless, she recognizes that any such science of being must be rooted in a God who is Beingness, itself. This constitutes a return to metaphysics that more nearly approaches kataphatic philosophies of being. (I will say more about this later.)

Like the thought of Levinas and Marion, Tymieniecka begins with a critique of Husserlian philosophy. Like Levinas and Marion, Tymieniecka does not believe that Husserl's reductions reach the bed-rock of reality, a foundation which is equivalent to the processes of the emergence and individuation of beings (Ibid., xxviii). What is required according to Tymieniecka is "a new critique of reason" which seeks a break from its narrow traditional framework to deal with the dynamic "currents of existence" and generates additional criteria of "validity, predictability, prospects, and measure" (Ibid., xxiv).

The phenomenological approach that Tymieniecka has in mind involves "the dissolution of traditional forms of seeing reality" with the purpose of reaching "life's generative routes, the paths of the logos carrying the individualization of beingness" (xxvii). "It is the logos of life in its . . . laying down of its course that gives us the access to the very becoming of beingness" (Ibid. xxvii). This—in contrast to Levinas—is what protophenomenology is about, this is the true first-philosophy. Relative to Levinas, Tymieniecka's is a drawing away from existential phenomenology back to phenomenology as a science of being.

According to Tymieniecka, humans recognize themselves as subjects "not by a cognitive act but by 'being alive'—by experiencing . . . [themselves] within . . . [their] milieu of beingness, directing . . . [their] instincts and appetites, recognizing the elements of the circumambient world in their vital relatedness to . . . [themselves], but . . . [above all] by recognizing that [each is an] . . . acting center of the universe . . . , a self-sustaining agent who directs . . . his own course and who . . . endows that course with moral and aesthetic values . . . and . . . seeks to understand" the reasons for all that is (xxxix-xxxii). Tymieniecka's phenomenology is directed to

the beingness of life, a beingness characterized by “constructivism, energy, metamorphic versatility,” and the force which prompts growth and dissolution “in the regenerative fonts of the Unconditioned” (Tymieniecka 2009, xxvi). “Life is the conveyor of beingness. It partakes of its fullness” (Ibid., 3). What is sought to make sense of beingness is the “sense of sense,” the Logos. The Logos must be discluded, however. It must be rediscovered from the maze of data. It must be shown that it is that within which all reality is and is made possible (Ibid.).

Tymieniecka is in agreement with the Husserlian search for an approach which would establish phenomenology as first science, but also with his intention to explore the “logos of interrogation” which in the Cartesian Meditations should function as a “Phenomenology of phenomenological reduction” (12). We have seen that both Levinas and Marion tried their hand at the latter. Tymieniecka also has some distinctive ideas about how this is to be accomplished.

Tymieniecka’s complaint about the deficiencies of Husserlian phenomenology go to the heart of the idea of intentionality. She disputes that intentionality ought to be presupposed as the “exclusive and dominating function in the human constitution of reality” (18). Undoubtedly, intentionality is “the key” to the functioning of consciousness, but it is not the complete process. Tymieniecka gives uncharacteristically succinct expression to the Husserlian omission that makes an opening to a phenomenology of life in the following passage:

The intentionality of consciousness is, indeed, the key to its functioning. As we all know . . . it orients the act of consciousness in a triangular setup (the ego pole, the acts streaming from the flux, the being directed toward an objective aim); it organizes the cognitive context as the constitutive context of the objects, a context that establishes our reality. Husserl famously distinguished noetic and noematic sides of this . . . act of aiming at an objective grasp. That means that the logos whose objective intention carries the act splits into subjective and objective sides, one representing the side of active performance and [19] the other that of objective shaping. Yet it is the “same” logos as it proceeds in its intimately correlated twofold way to bring forth the *presencing* of phenomena. IS IT NOT EXTRAORDINARY HOW THE LOGOS ACCOMMODATES THE ‘EXTERIOR’ TO CONSCIOUS ACTS THAT BY ‘INTERIOR’ ACTIVITY PRESENCE THEMSELVES TO THE LIVING SUBJECT THROUGH ITS OWN PERSONAL MECHANISM? [My emphasis.] The intentionality of consciousness acquires in the Husserlian schema this unique role of operating simultaneously a distinction, an operative split, such that the logos carries out its work of constituting human reality within and without, first by promoting the flux of acts, and second by endowing them with three-directional orientation to be acts of and “for” the self . . . and shaping a presentational content. In this conception of presencing reality through consciousness, Husserl introduces a distinction between conscious but empirical acts, which presence reality in its changeable, fleeting appearances, and intrinsic “pure” intentional acts . . . , in which the noetic-noematically revealed phenomena emerge. . . . Consciousness’ noetic-noematic structurations assume the character of necessity . . . [and] the eidetic findings are now seen to be in relation to their formation within consciousness. (19).

But, according to Tymieniecka, this account of “the intentional shaping of reality . . . does not suffice to account for it” (Ibid.) It does not address the logos in its “incipient phase” and it has been relatively unsuccessful in achieving a reduction of the empirical and the hyletic (20). Moreover, the account of the constitution of reality is incomplete and hangs “in thin air” (21). It is Tymieniecka’s purpose to supply the last and grounding reduction, the one that will provide an explication of the logos which undergirds the coordination of the interior and exterior of the constituting acts. This is equivalent to a reorientation of phenomenology away

from an obsession with intentionality to a consideration of the role creativity plays in the constitution of givenness. This straightaway blurs the line between a phenomenology which would remain description aloof from the creativity of life and a phenomenology that recognizes that this creativity lies at the heart of even phenomenological procedure (26). The Logos thus reveals itself as a shaping force, but it is also sentience.

The assertion that the Logos of Life is sentient means that it is not a disorganized aleatory force; it is a shaping force (30). At all levels of life's diversity, sentience is the characteristic of its organization, "an essential element in *all life*" (30). In this way, Tymieniecka grounds the Husserlian description of the constitution of experience. She maintains that the coordinating logos between what is external to consciousness and what is internal to consciousness is a constructive sentience already at work at all levels of human experience. This means that with respect to all creativity and all individuation there is no outside to the Logos of Life. It is at play in everything that is. "It is not only that in its innumerable guises sentience pervades all elements, factors, and levels of life's diversification, from the amoeba to the angels, it is also that sentience enters into life's animus, bursting forth as its essential factor" (30). Logico sentience is the "quintessential core of life" (Ibid., xxix). Sentience runs its dianoic thread through all of life.

The mode of givenness in the Tymienieckian idea of the Logos of Life is twofold: It is the givenness of what is necessary to make sense of the Husserlian formulation of the constitution of experience, including the grounding of intentionality, itself, and it is the givenness of what is overlooked in the classic Husserlian approach because it is difficult or impossible to thematize as an accessible object.

GOD IN TYMIENIECKA

As is with Levinas, though less so with Marion whose philosophy is pitched—despite its denials—to the solution of some theological problems—Tymieniecka's philosophy does not bear its theological affinities in plain view. Even so, it is possible to mine, with some great effort, the theological gold that is buried, there. Like Levinas' account of the divine, Tymieniecka's account is more closely connected with what has been called natural theology; its extension to the realm of Trinitarian thought must, therefore, be by way of correlation.

The context for the development of Tymieniecka's philosophy is her personal concern with artistic creation and the way creativity is operative at every level within the house of being. Although her philosophy, as much as that of Levinas, claims to be a universal philosophy, it is clear that just as much as Levinas is intent upon thinking a postmodern philosophy under the themes of the Good and the Ethical, Tymieniecka is intent upon thinking a postmodern philosophy in terms of onto-poiesis and—I would argue, though I would be hard-put to find her say it in her own words—the Beautiful. Apart from her constant evocation of creativity, which occurs on virtually every page of her corpus, there are two especially important discussions in which this thematization occurs. One is the discussion of the notion of *animus*, the other is how she characterizes the virtuous development of the individual.

Tymieniecka associates the decisive factor by which the Logos of Life manifests itself and spreads itself in vast circuits as “*animus*.” It is the full glory of the Logos of Life the emergence to which the apparatus of individualization is directed. Unthinkable in itself, and eluding objectification, the animus is “in-grown” into all beings which have purpose and direction. It is not epiphenomenal but the heart of the individual’s beingness (Tymieniecka 2009, 5–9).

Animus has five characteristic features. Animus is especially manifest in the unity of a living being’s teleological orientation, particularly in the way it harmonizes all of its operations, all of its tensile forces, to achieve its end (7). Second, it harmonizes these various constitutive “streamlets of life” in a unique configuration with proportions and correspondences unique to the individuated being. Third, it is operative in all features of the being’s nucleus so that even in interaction with other beings it is engaged in the construction of its resident being’s unique identity. Fourth, its reach is through all of the capacities connected to the survival and striving of the individual. Fifth, it has as many modalities as there are living beings, “from the vegetal . . . to the most complex” and “stands for the reacting, sensitive, sentient, emotive factors of life’s becoming” (8). In her description of animus, Tymieniecka comes close to the classical descriptions of what created beauty is, only she has provided a description of its operative agency in the world and has named it soul or spirit.

Secondly, the progress of the soul in its sacral development shows its development in relation to the Divine. At its first stage, persons are constituted in their nascent humanity “in a vital network” shared with all living beings, that is at “all [common] levels of self individuation” (221). Individuation is pitched—at this early stage—toward the soul’s interiorization of “vital-cosmic” interconnections with the “unknown, mysterious, incomprehensible, marvelous” (221). Here a distinction is postulated between the profane and the sacred. Transcendence is interpreted in terms of the experience of the uncanny other forces. At the second stage, the constitution of persons is in connection with the sociocultural world and intersubjectivity of others. This is Husserl’s “community of human consciousness” which transcends the basic vitality, singularity and quotidian existence of individuals toward the development of a common spirituality, in a specific sense (222). Here, the enrichment of the human soul is a result the sacred shared with others and transcendence is a transcendence of the individual toward the group’s spirit. Neither vital-cosmic transcendence nor communitarian transcendence is an “authentically religious experience of the Divine,” however (222). Both are turned outward in their transcendence while the third, authentic, experience of the sacred is turned inward to the human creative act and its “transcendental-intentional” clarification (Ibid.).

According to Tymieniecka, it is the inward sacred which is the “deep work” of the soul. That deep work does not issue from the outside but from the inside of human experience. She puts her thesis in the interrogative mode: “How [is it that] revelation of the divine could be acknowledged as such and accepted” if God radically transcends the lifeworld, the human, and everything which radically encloses humankind in its “finite intentional circle”? How is it that humans can “‘listen’ and get in touch with Him”? (223).

Of course, each question is answered in a different way by Levinas and Marion. Tymieniecka's answer is in a Witness whose presence is radically other "because he cannot identify himself with any living being, with anything known and with [239] nothing that could be known, because he . . . [is] radically other than . . . to all that is present, but also to all that which is possible" (239). At this point, Tymieniecka makes the meontic turn (in her own way) by defining the Witness as beyond possibility, possibility as defined in terms of the horizon of beingness. He is a Witness "that completely penetrates us, that participates in all our movements, that inspires all our being though his own presence"; he is who Augustine identifies "God within us and us outside of ourselves" (239).

Authentic sacrality requires that exceptional conditions be fulfilled for any message to be received by the soul since the Witness is not a part of the onto-poietic process. It requires a confiding of transformation to the Witness, and it results in a path of moral and spiritual development not determined by the Logos of Life (242). It cannot be accomplished from the side of human intentionality. An inner transformation is required by which self-detachment, self-sacrifice, and an inner communion with all beings opens "the horizon of hope for the blessedness of peace in communion with the Witness" (241). As its growth in identification with the Witness occurs, the soul comes progressively closer to a fulfillment in which is the repairing of our inadequacies and harmony with all creation and in which the divine instantiates us according to a unique measure, in the horizon of the Logos of Life (253).

REVELATION AND THE GIVENNESS OF THE GOOD,
THE TRUE, AND THE BEAUTIFUL

Levinas and Marion agree that the problem with ontotheology is that it does not take the transcendence of God seriously, that is, its epigones imagine that Being is rationally de-limitable, that it could be reduced to rational descriptions and evidences. But we should be careful not to imagine that all theology is simplistic in this assumption. This is not what the idea of the analogicity of Being entails—at least not in Thomas' understanding. Thomas puts the font of Being—God—not on a continuous scale with his creation, but following Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, he puts one end of the scale in created finitude and the other at infinity, but with a lacuna between the remotest end of the scale of created being and its infinite endpoint. In the theology of Thomas, all that is claimed for understanding is its adequacy to the purpose for which humans were created, not the rational circumscription of the infinite. How far we are to expand this adequacy of the knower to the known—whether we are to associate it with the Marxist dictum in the *Theses on Feuerbach*: "That humankind cannot raise any question to which it cannot find an answer", or whether it means something much more modest—is not entirely clear. Thomas' mode of operations, however, gives us some clue. His view is synoptic and one which pushes for reasonable description, whenever it is possible to give it.

Hans Urs von Balthasar has well made the point that though the *analogia entis* was made present in Christ this *does not* license the theologian to imagine that the

intra-worldly scale of being (and the transcendentals which accompany it) and the extra-worldly hyperessential being of God and his accompanying freedom of revelation (with its perfusion of transcendentals) are a continuous scale. The preservation of the *analogia entis* entails recognition of its limitations, that it must not entail a projection of the features of a finite being onto the infinite, a projection of the distinction between essence and existence into God. To do otherwise is to succumb to Heidegger's condemnation of ontotheology (Urs von Balthasar 1991, 91–92). The “solution” proposed by Von Balthasar is one that takes up some of the Levinasian themes, though in a less radical form:

The real “identity” of God that unfolds the vitality of the transcendentals in its . . . inconceivable way in God's threefold personality lies—to speak with Plato and then later with Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius the Areopagite—*epekeina tou ontos* (the far side of being [or otherwise than being]), above and beyond what we can still make out as “the ‘to be’ of beings” [*Seiendsein*]. Only from this “above and beyond” that points beyond all [worldly] order and law-likeness . . . to God's . . . sovereign freedom [by which he can] make use of the most comprehensive reality of all that we know. Being, not so as to define himself ([as] “I am who am”), but in order to characterize his inconceivable free turning to us ([as] “I will always be who I will always be”), in contrast to the idols that are always “identities woven whole cloth out of human thinking”. This transcendence over what we think of as identical . . . is revealed in Jesus Christ. Only in this way is God's perfect freedom unveiled as an inner vitality in which the transcendentals are identified with his identity. There is no possibility of separating the life of the three Persons from God's essence. The essence is no fourth element, something common to the three persons. Rather, it is in their eternal life itself in their processions. This is why God's “Being” (thought of as a substance) does not manifest itself in the true-good-beautiful. On the contrary, the manifestation of the inner divine life (the processions) is as such identical with the transcendentals, which are identical to each other (Ibid., 92–93).

In the above passage, Von Balthasar establishes several points which will figure into my conclusion. First, the thinking of God's being is not proportioned to human understanding; the adequacy of intellection does not extend to it. Thus, in a real sense the Trinity is a God beyond being, if being is understood as *esse commune*. Second, the manifestation of the inner divine life of the persons is identical with the transcendentals. Third, there is a sense in which something which approximates the Barthian *analogia relationis* provides a more direct avenue of approach to the revelation of God than the *analogia entis*. This last point is established, in the above passage, by Von Balthasar's allusion to the covenant as the revelation of God's *relation* to humans. Similarly, relation (not being) is primordial in God's revelation according to Levinas, it is equivalent to the summons. It is possible to translate this privileging of relation over being into Husserlian terms by saying that revelation is a noesis without a clear and distinct noema. However, even if relation is seen to be the modality under which God manifests himself to humankind, it is not inconceivable that relationality could provide a mediating category by which God's being could be intuited. Here, the right question is whether God in his relations with humans reveals truthfully what he is in himself. The mediation of what God is by relation should not be understood as a path around the impasse of the impossibility of the finite fully comprehending the infinite, however.

The previous respective formulations of givenness in relation to the transcendentals has relevance to the intratrinitarian life.

The personal differentiations which are defined by the Father's generation of the Son and the spiration of the Holy Spirit by Father and Son are examples of the emergence of the hypostases and the relations of opposition which exist in God. For the Christian, the otherness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the Trinity is the metaphysical symmetric ground of all personal otherness in creation. The actualized infinite responsibility of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father and the Father and the Son for the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit for the Father and the Son is realized in the perichoresis which enacts the mutual kenosis of one person for the other. Here, the infinite mutual responsibility of one for the other is actually achieved—each fully gives himself to the other—in a way that cannot be achieved in the responsible actions of humans. More importantly, each philosopher's conception of givenness has repercussions for the reformulation of the Trinitarian appropriations and missions in the economic Trinity.

*THE FATHER AND THE APPROPRIATION OF THE
GOOD ACCORDING TO LEVINAS*

When Levinas describes the summons of the individual to infinite responsibility for the other, he apparently thinks that this summons points to the Infinite but only through the other human. This is the equivalent of the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself. Levinas seems to think that the summons of the Infinite can be derived from this responsibility, alone. But this ignores both the summons God makes directly to the individual and the call to infinite responsibility for the supreme other that this other kind of summons entails. Even though Levinas would prefer to arrive at the idea of the Infinite through a kind of methodological atheism which brackets revelatory phenomena other than what is awakened by the faces of other humans—this being a more persuasive demonstration of its truth—Levinas would be hard put to reduce all of the revelatory modes of the Hebrew scriptures to the encounter with other humans. There are scriptural passages where what faces the individual, if not the face of God, is at least God's manifestation. Thus, apparently left out of the summons of the Infinite is the commandment to love God above all things. A Trinitarian theology sensitive to the communication of God in the Old Testament must uphold the re-inauguration of the second aspect of this infinite summons; it ignores this re-inauguration to its own peril.

Levinas' analysis of infinite responsibility is a description of God's call through the natural order, but he would have to admit an additional qualification to square with the data of the Hebrew scriptures. Required is the qualification that Levinas must make a place for the way for God to address his people which is characteristic of the supernatural or paranormal order. Required is that we think supernatural revelation within the philosophy of Levinas.

What one then discovers is that in the form of supernatural revelation, the content of God's summons is nonetheless likewise attenuated because of its noematic excess. This means that those to whom it is revealed often succumb or are constantly tempted to succumb to a premature limitation of its meaning. The infinite summons is constantly submitted to the distorting finitude of the individual. Just as

the idolatry of being is an attempt to equate God with the finitude of being, so too the idolization of the summons is the attempt to equate the summons of God with a finite meaning which carries something less than infinite responsibility. Judaic and Christian histories are narratives replete with the idolatrous finitization of the infinite summons. This is shown in the development of religious law in the Judeo-Christian tradition where the expansion of the humanistic interpretations of the law saves it from its potential ossification. How it is saved in this process is by a kind of triangulation, the faces of humans provide the corrective to the idolatrous ossification of the law. In its infinite call to responsibility, it is made clear that the Law was made for humankind not humankind for the Law. A Trinitarian theology sensitive to the communication of God in the Old and New Testaments will recognize the incommensurability between the summons and what concretely one is summoned to, or in the words of Levinas, between the “the saying” and “the said.”

Having made these stipulations, I would argue that corresponding to the mode of the Father’s givenness, Levinas’ characterization of it as an ethical summons means that in this revelatory givenness the transcendental of the Good is economically conveyed. Thus, the Father is first encountered in his summons to the Good. And, as Levinas has put it, the Good and the One are an inseparable unity in that revelation. The givenness of the Father is the Good.

THE SON AND THE APPROPRIATION OF THE TRUTH ACCORDING TO MARION

In light of the notions of givenness in Levinas and Marion, the economic mission of the Son and his appropriation of the Truth may now be addressed. Jesus Christ is the incarnation of God, the eikon or very image of God, the fullness of the infinite summons in the finite. This means that Jesus is perfect finite enactment of the summons but that he may also, it the first person, claim to be the very expression of the Father to whom is handed all the Father’s power, so that his power to address the summons to others and to interpret the summons without its idolization falls to him. Jesus is the living law. The sinlessness which the Gospels claim for Jesus means that in all of his actions he never deviated once from the perfect enactment of the summons, he never fell short of what he was called to. His redemptive death was the actualization of infinite responsibility for everything in a finite death. His sharing of the hyperessential unity of the Father makes him unique as the only-begotten Son, but he is unique in his awareness of his unity with the Father, unique in his ability as subject to assert that unity, not as an identity with the person of the Father, but as having hyperessential unity with the Father, and being the perfect presentation of the Father, in Trinitarian immanence, and the adequate presentation of the Father incarnationally, in his earthly mission.

Jesus, in his economic mission, appropriates Truth as his transcendental because, in the classical sense, Truth is the adequation of being and concept; it is the confidence that the concept is adequate to convey the reality. Jesus, as the Son and eikon of the Father, is the Truth because he is the perfect fleshly—the perfect human adequation—of both the summons and the Summoner. And he is the Levinasian

other, both as human and divine, both as other and otherwise than the other. He is the Truth because he establishes a commensurability between the infinite and the finite where the Infinite stands to reality as the human nature stands to concept. Hence the claim of the *Gospel of John* that he is the Logos. In the first person, he thus elicits infinite solicitude and responsibility to both great commandments. And yet, his incarnation of the Infinite and the summons is not a circumscription. Like Marion's eikon, he is merely the most *adequate* expression of the Infinite proportioned to our finite receptivity. Here, truth as adequation is reintroduced, but the very notion of adequation suggests two consequences (a) adequacy is always adequacy to some purpose and (b) the very conception of Truth as adequacy points beyond itself to deeper reality which stands behind it. Even as the incarnation of the Infinite, Jesus did not do all that he might have said, or say all that he might have done, but what he did say and did do was sufficient to establish that he was the model of perfect obedience to the summons. His actions and teachings, like the summons of the Father, is open to infinite expansion, but—also like the summons—they are in peril of idolatrous reduction to something less than the fullness of what they convey.

The givenness of the Son as the adequation of the Infinite takes the transcendental Truth as its economic appropriation.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE APPROPRIATION OF BEAUTY ACCORDING TO TYMIENIECKA

In light of the notion of givenness and especially what is given according to the thought of A.-T. Tymieniecka, the appropriation of the Holy Spirit may now be adequately described as that of Beauty. In order to understand how this association may be made we must have recourse to Thomas Aquinas' classic description of beauty. In the *Summa Theologiae* (ST 1a, Q. 39, Art. 8) he provides his most expansive description of the essence of the beautiful as consisting of integrity (*integritas*), or completeness or perfection (*perfectio*), due proportion (*debita proportio*) or harmony (*harmonia*) and clarity or splendor (*claritas*). Tymieniecka's account of the onto-poietic fashioning of the individual is supercharged with these predicates, each of which is repeated numerous times but expanded according to a modern appreciation of the dynamism of life. A single passage will suffice, here, to remind us how beauty enters into her every discussion, even her discussion of other transcendentals. "No wonder that truth, in the experience of its crucial significance as the vortex of all measures, proportions, calculations, harmonies, and disjunctions in all the onto-poietic horizons from the vita to the sacral, possesses the deepest fascination and pervades all we undertake, aim at, thirst for, and enjoy as human beings, one equal only to that of the all-encompassing ecstasies of the Glory of the Fullness" (Tymieniecka 2009, xxxii). This passage is notable because it is reflective also of the title of her late friend—John Paul the 2nd's great encyclical, where—making use of Von Balthasar's own ruminations on the transcendentals—he calls the ethical presence of Christians in the world, the Splendor of Truth or, better, the Beauty of Truth.

Even though it is ostensibly a statement about Truth, in this passage, Tymieniecka associates aesthetic language with Truth as ordering being, an ordering which is experienced as a fascination felt in the dynamic measuredness of creation but also in relation to the glory of the infinite plentitude. By its description, this passage indicates the aesthetic component to the contemplation of being's order; it is also a worthy description of what Beauty is as a transcendental. This tendency to consider all features of being through the lens of beauty allows me to argue that Tymieniecka's phenomenology and her understanding of givenness are inseparable connected with the thematization of being as beautiful.

Because the Holy Spirit has been theologically associated naturally with the creative informing of reality, Tymieniecka's discussion of the Logos of Life bears affinities with it from the philosophical side. But when she described the way in which the Witness is constitutive of the human trans-natural destiny, she also speaks of a greater possible harmonization of the divine and the natural whose purpose is perfection and whose individual unit is the human soul. This is a perfection that has repercussions for sacred life in community and bears resemblance to the supernatural individuation of the members of the Church, who in the development of their unique spiritual gifts, are well-ordered constituents of the body of Christ, a body that Christ directs through his harmonizing Spirit. In her depiction of the integrity, harmony, and clarity of the operations of the Logos of Life and the complementary guidance of the Witness, Tymieniecka has identified two sides of the same coin. These are the two aspects of the mission of the Holy Spirit as well as his identifying transcendental—beauty.

Let me conclude this "little sketch" with a very brief recollection: In this paper, I have attempted to provide an insight into how the notion of the Trinitarian appropriations might be helped and updated through a reflection on contemporary phenomenological analyses of givenness and intentionality. In other words, I have *appropriated* the philosophy of Levinas, Marion, and Tymieniecka to make the notion of Trinitarian appropriations stronger and to suggest that they be more directly linked to the missions of the Trinitarian persons in the world.

As to whether all of the presuppositions of the respective philosophies considered, here, are themselves compatible, I have not ventured an answer.

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NOTES

¹ Jürgen Mettepenningen. *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II*. London: T. & T. Clark, 2010, pp. 141–145.

² This distinction has only been viable in the Roman Catholic tradition since the 16th century. According to *Ad Tuendam Fidem*, dogma is distinguished from doctrine.

³ This is not to preclude their cooperation in this revelation but merely to suggest that each person has a distinctive mode of revelation or givenness, both naturally and supernaturally.

⁴ ST 1a, Q. 13 Art. 5.

⁵ The relevant passages are in the Parmenides (141d–142a), the Republic (509b), the Timaeus (28c), and Epistle (7, 341b–d).

⁶ These are all taken up later, by Christians, as approaches to God.

⁷ Despite the claim sometimes made—always without references—Aristotle never uses the word “*huperbainein*” in connection with the transcendentals. He never names the transcendentals using technical terms, either nouns or verbs.

⁸ R.T. Wallis. *Neoplatonism*. London: Duckworth, 1972, p. 154. Wallis says that the origin of this short-list and their elevation to the status of supreme principles is based upon their treatment in the *Chaldean Oracles*. It becomes popular in Christian philosophy and theology, later.

⁹ Thomas also considers (what he calls) the invisible missions of the persons.

¹⁰ See “*approprio, appropriate, and appropriation*” in Roy J. Deferrari, *Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 77b–78a.

¹¹ Roy J. Deferrari. *Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas*. 233b.

¹² Here, the necessity of the appropriation would not be causative from the side of creation – that is conditioned by it – but rather would be the result of a Trinitarian person invariably choosing that transcendental for its self expression because of its expedience in doing so. This follows from the principle that God does not violate the nature of the created being but only enlarges it according to its potentiality.

¹³ Thomas is so terse in his explanation that this is the best rendering I am able to give.

¹⁴ In this example, the kataphatic and apophatic approaches to the description of the appropriations are both in effect.

¹⁵ Thomas denial that the Trinitarian persons possess the transcendentals as proper (*proprius*) or distinctively characteristic qualities is a denial that they are not common essential possessions of the other Trinitarian persons (ST 1a, Q. 39, A. 8, Res. 1–2). But simply because they cannot be considered to qualify the persons uniquely does not mean that they cannot be assumed as unique and distinctive features of the Trinitarian missions, both ontologically by way of some similitude to the immanent missions of the persons and economically because of they are modes of the missions of the persons in creation. See also; Roy J. Deferrari, *Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 906b–907a.

¹⁶ Levinas’ rejection of being-talk is not, however, absolute. He recognizes the necessity of it with respect to sciences of immanence, sciences which have achieved amazing technical results.

¹⁷ Authority (or the authority of a tradition) guided by the Holy Spirit understood as the context of revelation helps dissolve its equivocity as a saturated phenomenon, but that, then, raises the problematic as to how authority is given. If authority is itself a matter of revelation, then one has a circle of dependent saturated phenomena.

¹⁸ To my mind, Marion treats the importance of the horizon(s) of the phenomenon with insufficient appreciation of its/their necessity. By my understanding, Husserl had a topological analogy in mind, an analogy whose features are the geometry of a sphere, an individual’s position on it, and the global nature of being as bringing surprises but none which would absolute deviate from one’s expectation of what is beyond the horizon. Marion’s claim about the supersaturation of the horizon might be more clearly explicated by a shift in the kind of horizontality in the analogy, a shift from a spherical horizon to a hyperbolic horizon, for example. The horizons of the noematic and noetic correlates are topologically distorted. They no longer bear the contours of a totality but open hyperbolically into infinity.

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SECTION VIII
CREATIVITY AND THE ONTOPOIETIC LOGOS

BLANCHOT'S INAUGURAL POETICS:
VISIBILITY AND THE INFINITE
CONVERSATION

ABSTRACT

This chapter argues that Maurice Blanchot made a distinctive contribution to philosophical thought that is irreducible to the question of influence but cannot be fully understood apart from his relationship to the phenomenological tradition. The chapter compares Blanchot's conception of reversal to what can be found in Heidegger, but also emphasizes the role that classical myth and modern literature perform in his phenomenological approach to texts. Blanchot's poetics is discussed in terms of Merleau-Ponty's notion of visibility and then contrasted to the classicism that underlies Gadamer's hermeneutics. The conclusion argues that Blanchot's poetics contains a view of beginnings that clarifies the value of phenomenology as a method of inquiry.

Maurice Blanchot's reputation as a literary essayist, who worked in the Continental tradition in criticism, has largely overshadowed his contribution to philosophy in contrast to his unique encounter with literature itself. In this chapter, we shall argue that Blanchot renews some of the basic insights of phenomenology in both engaging and surpassing early hermeneutics, while opening up a new conception of the literary work of art through the myth of Orpheus. Our discussion will proceed in four stages: first, we shall explore how Blanchot offers an account of the work of art that suggests but departs from Martin Heidegger's notion of a phenomenological reversal, just as it clarifies a new poetics of literature; second, we need to examine Blanchot's use of myth and literature as a means for clarifying the role of visibility in the process of reversal, as phenomenologically informed; third, Blanchot's approach to this reversal will be contrasted to Hans-Georg Gadamer's appropriation of classicism as a cultural and philosophical option; and, in our final remarks, we shall discuss how Blanchot invites us to envision his inaugural poetics in a manner that is both indebted to phenomenology and casts light on phenomenology as a reflective procedure.

I

The possibility of approaching literature through philosophical resources performs an implicit, if not entirely explicit, role in Blanchot's early masterwork, *L'Espace littéraire*, originally published in 1955. While clearly concerned with the concept of the work of art that often emerges in early hermeneutics, Blanchot profoundly

modifies the role of this concept in describing the experience of literature in terms of a radical reversal. Such a reversal is conceived as a divestment of the self, rather than as a triumph of the subject, just as it opens up an infinite space that cannot be represented. It might be argued that this singular reversal is already anticipated by Heidegger, whose attempt to limit the power of subjectivity constitutes a radical critique of Cartesian priorities through an unprecedented renewal of ontology. We know that, in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger thematically opposes his own project to the Cartesian and more strongly Kantian turn toward the human subject as the primary locus of epistemological concern. The disclosure of categorical intuition is often assigned a special role in enabling Heidegger to employ the tools of Husserlian phenomenology in overcoming the subjectivism inherent in modern thought.¹ Insofar as Blanchot's reversal occurs exclusively in the privileged domain of literature, the philosophical significance of his critical reflections would be difficult to extend beyond a narrow field of cultural reflection. Hence, if connected to discrete realms of inquiry, Blanchot and Heidegger would be unlike in a way that derives from the simple difference between literature and philosophy.

This suspicion is reinforced when we consider Heidegger's work as an ontological quest that originally does not appear to privilege literature as a special source of insight. *Sein und Zeit* already suggests that the question of Being is not merely a late concern but integral to an on-going problematic that begins as soon as the situation of *Dasein* acquires a hermeneutical meaning.² The exact moment when Heidegger shifted from a worldly, *Dasein*-based problematic to a more ontologically diffuse undertaking may never be determined. Partly for this reason, we might consider the possibility that Heidegger's articulation of an essential reversal is already crucial to the argument of *Zein und Seit*, where the challenge to traditional metaphysics is worked out in detail on the basis of an ontological inquiry. The idea that a fundamental reversal occurs later is not always borne out by what is explored in the earlier context, which sustains a more thematic relationship to phenomenology. What this also means is that a more forward-looking reading of Heidegger points toward interpretive options that may not have been fully explored in response to his early masterwork but acquire significance in retrospect. At the same time, this does not mean that literature as such had to perform an essential role in reversal as Heidegger conceived of it.

Moreover, the role of *language* in Heidegger's basic conception of truth could easily uphold, instead of qualifying, the more strictly philosophical nature of his enterprise. The notion that Heidegger's reversal can be found early in his work is certainly compatible with the idea that the movement away from subjectivity occurs at the precise juncture that language acquires a special significance in a hermeneutical project. From this standpoint, Heidegger's middle and late apotheosis of poetic dwelling develops the linguistic clue that was already crucial to the argument of *Sein und Zeit*, where the role of language in the expression of truth performed a unique and widely acknowledged role.³ The early philosophical works that culminate in this crucial argument do not privilege literature in the narrow sense nor do they offer us a precise way of discussing the possibility that *writing* contains a key to what would later emerge thematically as an alternative to ontological oblivion. We

might even argue that the studies of individual poets and the complex discourse on poetic thinking that unfold in Heidegger's so-called middle and late periods are indebted to a philosophy of language that barely articulates the emergence of writing *as* writing.

It is only by *reading* Heidegger as a philosopher whose *use* of writing is ultimately inseparable from the nature of his philosophical activity that we can begin to question the way that his work is generally separated from literature as a crucial resource. In this sense, Heidegger's remarkable essay, "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes" (originally composed during the 1935–36 period), clearly demonstrates how the space of writing as a site for ontological disclosure is opened up when an experience of "world" is introduced through a specifically *poetic* discourse. From the perspective of a thematic of writing that is suggested but never developed, this thoughtfully constructed discussion of art, language and truth acquires an inaugural status in demonstrating how a poetic *text* can perform a crucial role in carrying us beyond a basically physical relationship to an external environment. *Sein und Zeit* already provides the explicit statement of how the phenomenological conception of world differs from that of Descartes, particularly when it provides a positive version of "world" on the basis of spatiality as a non-subjective mode of being.⁴ However, Heidegger's crucial essay on art engages the reader in an ontological quest that can be inferred on the basis of a written description of a work of art, rather than through the example of a work that simply refers to an external situation on a mimetic basis.

Thus, in an attempt to retrieve the work of art as a thing that bears the world within it, Heidegger employs one of Van Gogh's paintings of peasant shoes to evoke the wearer, an ordinary peasant woman who belongs to a distinctive place but also alters the rural landscape of which she is a part. On one level, we might read Heidegger in this context as merely continuing the project of *Zein und Seit*, which already explained how the world comes into focus at the critical moment when an instrumental complex breaks down and forces us to reexamine our immediate environment as somehow integrated, if not entirely familiar to us. And yet, "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes" provides us with a way of understanding Heidegger's world-concept that is different from what the more systematic treatise provides in demonstrating the imaginary aspect of the world that it evokes. Van Gogh's painting does not provide any precise information concerning the wearer of the shoes that are depicted. Heidegger, in contrast, takes us from the things depicted to the life-world of an imaginary woman who might have occupied the empty shoes themselves:

Under the shoes slides the loneliness of the field-path as evening falls. In the shoes vibrates the silent call of the earth, its quiet gift of the ripening grain and its unexplained self-refusal in the fallow desolation of the wintry field. The equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining anxiety as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, and trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surviving menace of death.⁵

On one level, this simple description evokes a silent landscape that somehow "speaks" to us through the agency of poetic reflection. What is perhaps more plausible is that the woman has entered into the texture of the wintry landscape, just as the landscape – which otherwise would lack the features that have been worked over it – has been transformed through the persistent activity of a human host into

a site of both need and withdrawal. In interpreting this passage, we would be doing the philosopher a disservice to simply remark on the practical recourse to prose poetry. The “world” of the peasant woman is evoked through a visual image that involves a *written* response to what would have remained inexpressible in a purely philosophical discourse.

The ironic aspect of Heidegger’s description becomes evident when we juxtapose poetic language and visual image in the narrative of a “world” that contains visible and invisible at once. The verbal elaboration of “world” requires two media, namely, painting and poetry, in order to unify a reality that may be sundered. Nonetheless, this entire account is also a description of a certain Van Gogh painting that Heidegger has already mentioned to underscore the relative stability of the work of art as an anti-subjective thesis. While Heidegger’s reversal can be traced back to *Sein und Zeit*, we might also interpret this thesis quite differently as announcing “the possibility of impossibility” (Lévinas) that emerges in the forlorn mood that the work expresses.⁶ Such a possibility would not only draw upon Heidegger’s earlier analyses of *Dasein* because it now involves a written account of a world that provides no heroic options to a peasant laborer who has survived many hardships. The work of art now brings to light something that cannot be seen and deepens the meaning of reversal to involve the possible collapse of human subjectivity and measurable time.

From this broader perspective, Heidegger’s discourse on finitude can be interpreted as an instance of severe ontological limitation, which prevents the truth of being from coinciding with timeless presence. Moreover, this very discourse can even be related to a critique of the natural attitude that was always central to Husserlian phenomenology, especially to the degree that it requires the secondary elaboration in which a certain *resistance* to the natural world makes itself felt in poetic terms. The orientation toward “being” (rather than subjectivity) that underlies this discourse is at least suggested in Husserl’s assertion that human accomplishments can be anonymous.⁷ This special assertion, nonetheless, indicates why all cultural objects contain within themselves the potential for variations in meaning that qualify the objective significance of the creative work itself.⁸

It is at this point that Blanchot’s conception of reversal offers a mode of access to the work of art in a way that is neither ontological nor strongly personalist in its deeper implications. Heidegger already argued that openness to the work can function as an alternative to modern subjectivism. However, when anonymous existence is philosophically demoted, we are at a disadvantage to distinguish fundamental ontology from normative concerns. While it would be problematic to read early Heidegger in overtly ethical terms, we would be hard-pressed to deny that his analysis of “everydayness” is anything other than value-laden in its tenor and implications. Perhaps more consistently, Blanchot newly appropriates phenomenological anonymity as a neutral term that describes in a formal idiom the impersonal aspect of intentional life. Hence, Blanchot’s view of *the writer* specifies linguistic displacements that challenge traditional subject-based criticism: “The writer belongs to a language that no one speaks, which is addressed to no one, which has no center, and which reveals nothing.”⁹ Moreover, in a manner that looks forward to the early

criticism of Roland Barthes, Blanchot discusses how the anonymous site of creativity often coincides with the construction of third person narratives from which the author is entirely absent.¹⁰

Blanchot's understanding of reversal is phenomenological in negotiating a new sense of aesthetic appearance that is irreducible to the Heideggerian problematic. The figure of Orpheus performs a crucial role in enabling Blanchot to specify how the reversal carries us from a centered notion of the human subject to a process-oriented *event* of aesthetic ambiguity. To the degree that Orpheus gazes directly on Eurydice, he ruins the work and loses what he seeks to master. However, in simply refusing to observe his approaching lover, Orpheus would demonstrate infidelity to the profound impulse to possess her as an ineluctable other. Heidegger wrote "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes" in the attempt to move beyond the constraints of philosophical aesthetics, which adopts the subject as its starting-point and prevents art from making serious contributions to our access to truth. Is there a sense in which Blanchot would revive aesthetics in a new guise without returning to an older conception of the subject that would ground experience in an a priori conception of its own activity? In order to answer this question, we need to examine how myth and allusion can be employed in suggesting a realm of appearance that provides insight into aspects of the human condition that are irreducible to either direct perception or conceptual understanding.

II

Blanchot's interpretation of the Orpheus myth provides a key to the meaning of *visibility* as a quasi-aesthetic category that clarifies the way in which literary texts can be read as testimonies to a unique order of experience. In discussing Heidegger's approach to the work of art, we encountered a discussion of "world" that was built out of a mysterious conjunction between person and place, but the nature of this conjunction remained unclear, perhaps because the whole notion of being-in-the-world occluded the movement *between* two zones of contact. Maurice Merleau-Ponty provides an eloquent critique of Bergson in which he explains that my encounter with the visible world pervades the structure of experience itself: "There is an experience of the visible thing as pre-existing my vision, but this experience is not a fusion, a coincidence," so that I am already within the world with which I make contact. Moreover, the visibility that is woven into my experience of things allows me to discover "a Being of which my vision is a part, a visibility older than my perceptions or my acts."¹¹ Hence, instead of arguing that subject and object achieve a sort of higher synthesis that invalidates self-reflectivity, Merleau-Ponty identifies the space in which I move and experience the world as one that allows me to enter into the domain of the things themselves, just as it allows the things to enter into my state of consciousness as other to myself. This dual movement is called "double reference" because of the way that it preserves the condition of being lived through and also sustains the sense of distance that prevents co-mingling from becoming a simple act of coinciding.¹²

To return to the myth of Orpheus, we might relate this analysis to Blanchot's appropriation of a classical narrative that seems to partake more strongly of the imaginary but also indicates how "double reference" pervades an aesthetic framework that suggests how the artist's gaze both responds to an appearance as an appearance and also accepts the fading of an apparition into a distance that cannot be mastered. Orpheus cannot remain indifferent to an appearance that haunts him just as he is deflected away from the special task of guiding Eurydice without observing her. And yet, the visibility that is momentarily achieved through his gaze is suddenly lost in the abyss of night. Blanchot reveals the paradoxical nature of this unveiling when he recounts the significance of the classical narrative in terms of the work of art. The Greek myth clearly demonstrates that the work cannot be pursued directly: Orpheus turns back, ruins the work, and Eurydice returns to Hades. And yet, this fateful movement becomes unavoidable as soon as Orpheus begins to understand that "not to turn toward Eurydice would be no less untrue."¹³ Fidelity to what is immeasurable and to the force of circumstances require that a risk be taken, but the truth of the matter is that "only in song does Orpheus have power over Eurydice."¹⁴ But this power is strictly limited. Eurydice has ceased to be present in the voice of the poet, while her mode of appearance cannot be separated from an encounter that *once took place* and continues to inform the memory of what now appears only as pure song.

Blanchot's interpretation of the Orpheus myth can be related to the dual nature of aesthetic appearance and also invites us to question what sort of work actually emerges through the vehicle of the artistic gaze. The gaze of Orpheus is said to be an "ultimate gift to the work," no less than it is the moment when the work is lost.¹⁵ Heidegger places the origin of the work of art in art, rather than in the artist, and provides an alternative to aesthetic experience in reminding us that nothing can be accomplished in a creative vacuum. Blanchot, in contrast, identifies ontological instability with the transformation of the work of art into a "text" that lacks continuous presence and bears a kinship to evanescent appearances.¹⁶ Moreover, while Heidegger provides examples of how the work of art projects a "world" that discloses truth, Blanchot anticipates Jean-Luc Nancy in discussing how the world of sense dissolves when the artist undergoes temporal displacement in an experience of solitude.¹⁷ At the same time, Blanchot's recourse to a certain mode of appearance when describing the impossibility of the work exposes him to the criticisms that Heidegger's approach was designed to counteract. How does the opening of the work as "text" provide a sort of ground that provides a degree of stability that the dissolution of the world cannot revoke?

The dissolution of the world does not undermine the possibility of creativity itself to the precise degree that the artist is always already related to an alterity that prevents him from being assimilated to everyday self-sameness. Blanchot specifically refers to a "radical reversal" in which the artist perceives a certain object as "the point through which the work's requirements pass," thereby effacing all notions of value and utility in world loss.¹⁸ This procedure includes two aspects that prevent the loss of world from resulting in subjective chaos. First, the artist in producing the work of art remains in contact with a quasi-subject that *stands out* and allows him to

view the ordinary world in a new way. For this reason, the artist never simply rises from the ordinary world to the sphere of art but invariably enters into a negative relationship to everyday life before providing a different perspective on his goals and values. At the same time, Blanchot does not merely describe how this process occurs but offers a kind of explanation for the artist's capacity to move beyond the given world and alter our understanding of the familiar. Hence, the second aspect of this process combines with the first in bringing about a compelling transition into another realm: "It is because he already belongs to another time, to time's other, and because he has abandoned time's labor to expose himself to the trial of the essential solitude where fascination reigns" that the artist can emerge relatively unscathed from the experience of world loss and can include what is unlike in his account of existence.¹⁹

The movement away from the familiar world is therefore anything but a Romantic escape into subjective inwardness. Blanchot employs the literature of Franz Kafka to cast light on the artist's exile but also to demonstrate the artist's ability to pass beyond the limits of his own consciousness. Kafka is the writer who feels banished from any homeland and ultimately discovers that literature alone can offer him something that cannot even be identified with the notion of a stable world. Art is a sign of an "unhappy consciousness" and an antidote to the illusory satisfactions that are the refuge of weak souls. Blanchot identifies Kafka with one of the basic traits of art itself, which is the capacity to link us "to what is 'outside' the world, and it expresses the profundity of this outside bereft of intimacy and of repose," so that the life of the artist can seem like a perpetual misfortune.²⁰ The experience of being cast out can be related to a singular discovery. The choice between the homeland before us and the desert beyond does not permit a third option. Kafka understood that his own options remain limited to this stark choice, but he also knew that the artist he wished to be could not even provide him with one world that might shelter him from the condition of banishment. The artist is the "poet" for whom this one world has ceased to exist: "For there exists for him only the outside, the glistening flow of the eternal outside."²¹

While insisting that art provides access to an outside that is irreducible to inner experience, Blanchot also emphasizes how the artist promotes an encounter with death that assumes many forms in a general economy of creative expression. The example of Stephen Mallarmé serves the purpose of highlighting the role of death as well as absence and negativity in artistic production. The poet who remarked on the power of words to make physical things absent was also the author of *Igitur*, a verse drama in which the protagonist confronts the Midnight of freely chosen death. Blanchot notes that the final version of Mallarmé's verse drama assumes the form of a soliloquy in which the protagonist, like another Hamlet, becomes a speaking presence who directs us to the ordeals of consciousness.²² The opposition between pure consciousness and a Midnight that threatens to obliterate all thought does not admit of a possible resolution. The problem is that *Igitur* has never known chance. The dice are only cast at Midnight, which is also the hour that does not arrive. Blanchot keenly observes that the successor poem of *Igitur* is necessarily *Un Coup de dés*, a literary work that gives chance its due. The first poem passes beyond the nothingness of

pure consciousness to become a game of chance that compares to an inconclusive narrative, whereas the work that remains evokes the element of uncertainty and risk that inheres in all uses of language. The play between the visible and the invisible only achieves stillness when the poem itself emerges as a literary object that shines forth in the portals of being.

Blanchot's approach to Rainer Maria Rilke is consistent with a concern for the relationship between death and writing that pervades his reading of Kafka and Mallarmé, but it also provides a coda to the way that the visible passes into the invisible without ceasing to inform our sense of the poem. Mallarmé's poetry brought us to the brink of death in the consciousness of *Igitur* and in the transformation of the work into a site of dispersal and a mark of limits. Rilke's early attitude towards death is perhaps similar to what can be found in Nietzsche when read as a precursor to existentialism. A well-stated abhorrence for the modern depersonalization of death is a constant theme in the poet's only novel, *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*. And yet, Rilke's late poetry commemorates "the fruition of the visible in the invisible for which we are responsible," just as it epitomizes "the very task of dying."²³ This task is analogous to the translation of external things into verbal realities that takes place in the silent world of poetry. Blanchot contrasts the role of change in life and its more profound role in art as memorialized in Rilke's *Duineser Elegien*, the testament of the poet's final years:

In the world things are *transformed* into objects in order to be grasped, utilized, made more certain in the distinct rigor of their limits and the affirmation of a homogenous and divisible space. But in imaginary space things are *transformed* into that which cannot be grasped. Out of use, beyond wear, they are not in our possession but are the movement of dispossession which releases us both from them and from ourselves. They are not certain but are joined in the intimacy of the risk where we are, rather, introduced, utterly without reserve, into a place where nothing retains us at all.²⁴

The space that provides the basis for this change both exceeds and occasions the things that change. Death provides one way of understanding the appearance of the visible in the invisible. The poem's space occupies the site of this change within the sphere of literature, which reconciles the world of things and the language of non-being.

Blanchot's meditation on literature therefore assigns the poem the task of constituting a unique space that allows the passage between the realm of the visible and the invisible. The possibility of this passage occurs in the space of the Open, which should not be confused with a personal site that the poet may occupy in composing the poem: "This is the Orphic space to which the poet doubtless has no access, where he can penetrate only to disappear," so that any intimacy that he brings to this opening is only achieved at the cost of silence.²⁵ The disruption of the world that occurs in the creation of the work of art opens a "space" in which things can newly appear, because "absence is also the presence of things" in their being.²⁶ And yet, the work of art radiates a "being" that is not the being of things but contains inside and outside at once, just as it refers to a space that is "prior" to everyday life experience. Blanchot is less interested in placing the work before us as the setting for truth than in foregrounding the Open as the productive space in which the work of art quietly unfolds: "The Open is the work, but the work is origin."²⁷

III

Blanchot's account of art and literature allows us to assess the broader implications of a hermeneutical theory that challenges received notions of modern culture. The current exposition remains phenomenological in the precise sense of requiring a reflective component in order to clarify Blanchot's unique task, but this component is not primarily traceable to the older notion of categorial intuition or even to reflection on the question of being as first broached in Plato and Aristotle. The situation of sustaining a literary dialogue with phenomenology has a somewhat different meaning when related to the status of the reader in Blanchot's theory and criticism than it would if it were only related to the interpretation of texts. Hence, in the present discussion, we hope to enlarge upon phenomenology to include various hermeneutical motifs that foreground the interactive nature of text, reader and community in terms of the opening of the work as a gateway to time and alterity. In this part of our discussion, we will be concerned with how Blanchot anticipates but also surpasses the position of Hans-Georg Gadamer, whose major work, *Wahrheit und Methode*, develops modern hermeneutics in a systematic form largely as a response to Heidegger's ontological intervention.

First, Blanchot's emphasis on the reader in "constituting" the work of art might be placed alongside Gadamer's concept of how a "fusion of horizons" mediates between the perspectives of reader and author in literary reception.²⁸ Without denying that a text possesses hermeneutical value that cannot be revealed through a strictly historical analysis, Gadamer argues that interpretation can occur somewhere *between* the intentions of an author and the motivations of a reader who approaches the text in a contemporary setting. Subsequent to Gadamer's elaboration of this important concept, Hans Robert Jauss develops a more historically oriented approach to literary reception that allows us to study a given text in terms of the history of readings that transform its meaning in time. Roman Ingarden had previously demonstrated in detailed analyses that literary reception is temporally layered but allows us to correlate the reader's motivations with the production of the literary work of art as harmonious structure, which requires aesthetic criteria in order to be fully appreciated. Blanchot's contribution to the problem of reception is even more strongly anti-historicist and anticipates the thought of Barthes, Foucault and Derrida, whose poststructuralist thematic derives from Saussurean linguistics. For Blanchot, the act of reading does not primarily establish contact with sedimented meanings but liberates us from original intentions: "The reader does not add himself to the book, but tends primarily to relieve it of an author."²⁹ Hence, rather than conceive of reading according to a model of co-constitution that would conceive of literary meaning as negotiated in a middle zone that mediates original intentions with contemporary directives, Blanchot conceives of the literary text as an impersonal manifestation in which writing appears *as* writing.

The author therefore "dies" in a precise sense when the reader constitutes a work that no longer coincides with the intentions of the author who produced it. On this basis, Blanchot "affirms the new lightness of the book" and displaces the role of the author in the reception of meaning. But does this imply that the reader can

construe *any* meaning in disregarding the real or apparent intentions of an imputed author? Blanchot implicitly answers this question when he compares the role of the reader to the process of shaping a sculptural work: "Reading gives to the book the abrupt existence which the sculpture 'seems' to get from the chisel alone."³⁰ This does not mean that the book would cease to exist if it went unread, but that, like the sculpture shaped from stone, the book acquires standing existence when reading isolates it from the flow of meanings that might allow us to situate the work in the past and thus to finalize interpretation contextually. And yet, Blanchot does not conceive of the literary work as an ideal object that can be grasped as either a timeless mental entity or as the concretization of universal schemata. Blanchot posits the radical difference between a work that is always partially concealed but contains limited meanings and a *work to come* where "everything which does have meaning returns as towards its origin."³¹ For Blanchot, literary reception is less of a "fusion of horizons" than a twisting free from sedimented meanings that are no longer part of an on-going interpretation.

By detaching the literary work from the intentions of the author, the reader can join the origin of the work with the movement into the future that carries us beyond the meanings that are initially evident. Because this act of detachment is possible, Blanchot can re-envision the literary work as capable of resituating us in a life-world that is not cut off from productive achievements having the power to alter everyday life in innumerable ways:

The book, the written thing, enters the world and carries out its work of transformation and negation. It, too, is the future of many other things, and not only books: by the projects which it can give rise to, by the undertaking it encourages, by the totality of the world on which it is a modified reflection, it is an infinite source of new realities, and because of these new realities existence will be something it was not before.³²

The reception of the literary work is therefore inseparable from an effort to vary the given environment precisely because the work derives from a world that is undergoing change on a continual basis. At the same time, we should not attempt to naturalize this process of change for the simple reason that Blanchot presupposes what we might call a phenomenological outlook with regard to both the poet and the poetics of origin. With reference to Mallarmé, Blanchot emphasizes how the poet undergoes a reduction in presence that corresponds to a decisive displacement: "The poet disappears beneath the pressure of the work, by the same impulse that causes natural beauty to disappear."³³ Both the poet and the natural world are transposed into a movement that occurs in language and nowhere else, since language is "the only initiator and principle: the source."³⁴

By implicating the literary work in the process of change, Blanchot also helps us understand how the reader responds to art's vocation in historical terms. History provides us with the second point of possible convergence with modern hermeneutics, but once again Blanchot departs from what might have been a common meeting ground. Gadamer's stated preference for mediatory over historicist approaches to art suggests an opposition to antiquarianism that might seem to echo Blanchot's notion of the work to come. However, while Gadamer's notion of "the classical" was not intended to conflate normative and Greco-Roman conceptions of art, this

same notion enshrines the past in the mode of continual presence, particularly when it argues that the canonical work can speak in a contemporary context.³⁵ Blanchot, in contrast, emphasizes that the fragmentary experience of history is essential to what remains true of traditional conceptions of art. He denies that the work of art is timeless in the sense of remaining the same throughout the ages. The reader, truly conceived, experiences the work's distance, but this is what allows him to perceive the work's genesis as origin. In Blanchot's account of literature, history possesses a divisive meaning as opposed to the distinct possibility of mediation.

Blanchot willingly acknowledges that art can become an enduring reality when it is interpreted according to a plurality of cultural values and across varied circumstances. The historical aspect of reception is what guarantees the integrity of an "endless conversation" that draws upon many perspectives and ceaselessly initiates a dialogue with the past. Gadamer refers to how the work is encountered in a "history of effects" that sometimes has the cumulative significance of implying a hermeneutical totality. Blanchot argues somewhat differently that the continual search for new interpretations is what gives the work its historical future. Art has a public significance, which is not predicated on the continuous presence of a past achievement that has been reaffirmed as a canonical value. The work of art in its historical manifestations is both a presence and a disappearance, which means that reception is sometime difficult to correlate to genuine appropriation. Blanchot acknowledges that the Greek dramas contain meanings that have become opaque in time, signifying a reality that is no longer accessible. The Eumenides will never speak again, but from another standpoint, "each time they speak it is the unique birth of their language that they announce."³⁶ Their first utterances occurred in the primeval night of myth, whereas they later became synonymous with the ascendancy of law and order. When they speak tomorrow, their words may be part of a literary work in which the language of origin has acquired a more intimate meaning.

Finally, Blanchot shows us that the work of art is an *event* in the radical sense of providing a basis for new beginnings. The notion of the work as an event constitutes the third possible area of convergence between Blanchot and modern hermeneutics as conceived in the wake of Gadamer's critique of Romantic historicism. A purely traditionalist approach to art detaches us from the process character of what comes to us from the past and reaches us in the here and now. Gadamer's critique of the Romantic approach to history as remote and inaccessible is consistent with Blanchot's suspicion of academic historicism, but, more importantly, the hermeneutical rehabilitation of art as a possible source of knowledge draws upon the notion that "the language of art is an encounter with an unfinished event and is itself part of this event."³⁷ Gadamer cautiously affirms Hegelian models of historical research, which privilege the present over the past, over Romantic ones that value the past only for its own sake. Blanchot also acknowledges the power of Hegel's arguments, just as he emphasizes the limited nature of Romantic conceptions of art and artist. And yet, in a somewhat different spirit, Blanchot returns to the work of art as historical in a way that is irreducible to any progressive survey that would minimize the importance of the work's origin. The trained historian may be too methodologically encumbered to grasp the event-like quality of art works, but the work itself does not

lack historical resonance, since “it is an event, *the* event of history itself, and this is because its most steadfast claim is to give to the word *beginning* all of its force.”³⁸ How can we assess the phenomenological significance of Blanchot’s assessment of the work of art as an event, especially when the work of art is a *literary* event that awakens a more reflective sense of our beginnings?

I V

The role of phenomenology in Blanchot’s inaugural poetics has been implicit, if not explicit, in our study of his use of myth, his approach to modern literature and in the hermeneutical implications of his view of literary reception. In the early part of our discussion, we compared Blanchot’s approach to the literary work to Heidegger’s understanding of the work of art, and also broached the possibility that Merleau-Ponty’s notion of visibility might clarify the mode in which the space of literature opens up our sense of particular works. What we need to do now is examine the phenomenological aspects of this space, particularly in view of the problem of interpreting Blanchot as in some respects Heideggerian but also as engaged in a philosophically distinctive task that cannot be subsumed under established headings. In order to achieve these things, we first need to identify Blanchot’s poetics within a general framework that is compatible with a phenomenological approach to literature. We then need to return to the question of Heidegger’s own indebtedness to phenomenology, since Blanchot’s version of inaugural poetics would be enriched if this indebtedness could be more clearly specified. In the final part of this discussion, we will want to examine the possibility that Blanchot’s poetics of origin makes a unique contribution to the phenomenological tradition when it explores the question of beginnings in a new way.

While Blanchot’s criticism cannot be understood apart from his persistent interest in modern literature, we should not assume for this reason that his inaugural poetics lacks philosophical import. We might take his frequent references to Mallarmé as an indication of his literary stance, which involves a clear rejection of representational conceptions of art and literature. Blanchot’s approach to the literary text opens up the significance of writing, as opposed to a purely verbal understanding of what constitutes the literary. Timothy Clark has discussed how this approach required the development of modern poetry in order to become theoretically compelling: “The space of text, with Mallarmé, becomes no longer one of voice, but of writing, whose force is always to break away from narrowly representational constraints.”³⁹ This notion of literary or textual space does not map onto external reality anymore than it participates in the regime of everyday speech. Blanchot refers to an “essential language” that appears when the poet occupies a space that opposes our mimetic expectations:

Sounds, rhythm, number, all that does not count in current speech, now become most important. That is because words need to be visible; they need their own reality that can intervene between what is and what they express. Their duty is to draw the gaze to themselves and turn it away from the thing of which they speak. Yet their presence is our gauge for the absence of all the rest.⁴⁰

And yet, without depriving poetry of its visible dimension, Blanchot also emphasizes how writing itself is the crucial term that expresses “a rupture with language understood as that which *represents*,” just as it breaks with the manifestations of sensible appearance.⁴¹ Writing must be conceived in a concrete way as a kind of “other” that provides the space within which thinking can occur: “Uncontained by any system or any conceptual or empirical limit, it is a species of infinity, or, better, of infinitizing.”⁴² The word of the poet is thus an appearance of what no longer appears, evoking “the imaginary, the incessant, the interminable.”⁴³

The infinite aspect of this space requires that we reconsider the role of reflection in phenomenology as a *modern* discipline that presupposes a thematic understanding of conscious acts. Early in our discussion, Blanchot's use of the Orpheus myth as a paradigm for considering the poetic imaginary was compared to Heidegger's use of the work of art in “*Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*,” which provides a model for assessing the concept of “world” in phenomenological terms. What is easy to overlook in both cases is the modern contribution to our understanding of the matter at hand. In Blanchot's case, the myth of Orpheus is elaborated in terms of Rilke's poetry rather than simply as a classical myth that had its home in ancient Greek tradition. For Heidegger, in a similar way, the “world” of the peasant women derives from reflections on Van Gogh's painting of peasant shoes, a specifically modern work of art that opens up certain hermeneutical possibilities that are expressed in language. In *Der Grundprobleme der Phenomenologie*, Heidegger directly maintains that classical ontology is inadequate because it holds to “a common conception of *Dasein*,” rather than because it is unreflective. Classical ontology returns to the compartments of *Dasein* when it demonstrates an awareness of “*Dasein*'s everyday and natural self-understanding.”⁴⁴ But this does not mean that Greek philosophy offers clarity with regard to the ontological problematic, or that the Greek concept of the world can be identified with a phenomenological use of the world-concept. What we need to do, therefore, is to examine the contribution that phenomenology is capable of making to our understanding of how ontological inquiry can occur.

By returning to the work of Heidegger's so-called phenomenological decade, which falls roughly between the *Habilitation* in 1916 and the publication of *Sein und Zeit* in 1927, we can begin to grasp the importance of Husserl's work to all that follows. In the Marburg University lectures on historical ontology that were given in the winter sessions of 1923–24, Heidegger discusses the kinship between Descartes and Husserl but, more importantly, offers a separate discussion to clarify their “fundamental differences” (“*fundamentale Unterschiede*”) through which the phenomenological notions of evidence, reduction and pure consciousness acquire original meanings. Central to phenomenology is Husserl's effort to mark out a “wholly new domain” that clarifies the ways of “self-relating-towards” (*Sichbeziehens-auf*) and the intentional manner in which self-relating becomes present.⁴⁵ Heidegger argues on this basis that it is an error to reduce the meaning of Husserl's achievement to a phenomenology of the act or to a transcendental psychology, since phenomenological reflection is not reflection in the limited sense but what allows ontological research to proceed in a scientific manner.⁴⁶ Apart from the

grounding effort that enables us to see any entity in terms of its being, we are not able to pursue ontology as a philosophical discipline.⁴⁷

We might apply these principles to Blanchot's approach to the imaginary as the "space of meaning" that both requires meaning and goes beyond it in order to function as the frame within which literature is apprehended. On the one hand, Blanchot's recourse to the myth of Orpheus is a paradigm for interpreting the reversal that occurs when appearance passes into disappearance but also produces a work that is other than anything else in the world. This work possesses being and therefore can be reflected upon in the manner that Heidegger illuminates in his assessment of Husserl's departure from Cartesian rationalism. At the same time, the literary work of art is not grounded in the manner of a mere object but marks the entry of history into the substance of poetic achievement. Blanchot underscores the role of beginnings in history without depriving inaugural poetics of its phenomenological meaning as a space in which the past is reflectively seized upon in new ways, thus allowing the self to cross a certain threshold that cannot be anticipated on the basis of present knowledge alone.

Hannah Arendt has more clearly discussed how the possibility of beginning anew exceeds the limits of established knowledge and cannot be understood apart from the question of self-identity. This possibility is as old as the Augustinian belief in the possibility of claiming a new origin in the mode of a recurrent recollection, but what Arendt emphasizes in this case is not so much the role of memory in enlivening the past as the ontological conditions that allow the beginning to be made: "This beginning is not the same as the beginning of the world; it is not the beginning of something but of somebody, who is a beginner himself."⁴⁸ Blanchot is closer to this viewpoint than he is to the Gadamerian notion of affirming the truth-value of art as an alternative to the post-Kantian tendency to relegate the aesthetic dimension to the fringes of knowledge. Blanchot understands how a poetics of beginnings requires a movement beyond knowledge in the cognitive sense as well as an openness to time that cannot be guaranteed within the framework of pure knowledge. Moreover, the possibility of achieving this new beginning is never far from "the impossibility of possibility" that reminds us of our finitude but also opens a sense of responsibility to ourselves and others. The work of art provides us with a reminder of a death all of us share, but it also unfolds in the fragile space of an infinite conversation and likewise suggests that no community is more difficult to preserve than the community to come.

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NOTES

¹ The role that Husserl's conception of categorical intuition performs in Heidegger's ontology is examined in Jiro Watanabe, "Categorical Intuition and the Understanding of Being in Husserl and Heidegger," *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 109–117. The influence of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, particularly the Sixth Investigation,

on Heidegger's attempt to disclose the limitations of the propositional theory of truth is crucial to the hermeneutical approach to being which grounds our understanding of beings as such.

² Reiner Schürmann argues that the first eight sections of *Sein und Zeit* constitute a sort of prolegomena that draws upon Plato and Aristotle, rather than modern philosophy, in the effort to retrieve the question of being. In Schürmann's reading of Heidegger, intuition itself is under critique to the degree that it is concerned primarily with the cognitive status of objects as opposed to the understanding of *Dasein*. We might argue somewhat differently, however, that *Sein und Zeit* remains indebted to the Husserlian breakthrough insofar as it grasps phenomenology as a series of questions about the truth of being as a whole. For details, see Reiner Schürmann, "Heidegger's *Being and Time*" in *On Heidegger's "Being and Time"* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 56–131.

³ The status of language as everyday discourse as well as the role of language in the expressive disclosure of truth are both discussed in Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996) I.5A, section 34, pp. 150–56; I.6 section 44, pp. 196–212.

⁴ After developing a comprehensive criticism of Descartes's concept of world, Heidegger works out a phenomenological understanding of world on the basis a new approach to spatiality as presented in *Being and Time* I.3, sections 22–24, pp. 194–205.

⁵ Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), p. 33.

⁶ Under the heading of the radical reversal, Blanchot refers to Levinas after discussing Heidegger's "possibility of impossibility," thus inviting us to consider finitude in a new way. See Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 140. A discussion of the full implications of this shift can be found in Lars Iyer, *Blanchot's Vigilance: Literature, Phenomenology and the Ethical* (New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 16–20.

⁷ The formation of the life-world by "anonymous" subjective phenomena is discussed in Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999), IIIA, section 29, pp. 111–114. From this standpoint, the task of philosophy is to investigate "anonymous" subjectivity as existing prior to what we accomplish in more limited spheres: "Before all accomplishments there has always already been a universal accomplishment, presupposed by all human *praxis* and all prescientific life." *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁸ Husserl explains that the analysis of intentionality would remain "anonymous" if it remained at the level of "a naïve devotion to the intentional object," but also that "the noetic multiplicities of consciousness and their synthetic unity" could not reveal "one intentional object" unless the phenomenologist adopted a reflective attitude toward mental acts. For details, see Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999), pp. 47–49. Blanchot's view of anonymous subjectivity invites us to intervene reflectively at the precise moment when the work of art calls on us to reverse an unreflective absorption in both self and world.

⁹ Maurice Blanchot, *The Space of Literature* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), p. 16.

¹⁰ For a critical discussion of the use of third person narrative in modern novels, see Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1968), pp. 29–40.

¹¹ Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 123.

¹² *Ibid.*, 124.

¹³ Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 172.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹⁶ See Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," *Image Music Text* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1988), pp. 155–164.

¹⁷ Jean-Luc Nancy argues that, under conditions of late modernity, the world no longer has a sense because it lacks an essential relation to either another world or a divine creator. The end of the world, however, does not mean the end of sense but that the world's sense has become immanent. See Jean-Luc Nancy, "The End of the World," *The Sense of the World* (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 4–9.

¹⁸ Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 47.

- ¹⁹ Ibid., p. 47.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 75.
- ²¹ Ibid., p. 83.
- ²² Ibid., pp. 115–116.
- ²³ Ibid., p. 141.
- ²⁴ Ibid., p. 141.
- ²⁵ Ibid., p. 142.
- ²⁶ Ibid., pp. 158–159.
- ²⁷ Ibid., p. 142.
- ²⁸ See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), pp. 300–307. We should note here that the concept of a “fusion of horizons” presupposes two separate horizons, rather than a process whereby the past and present are completely unified.
- ²⁹ Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 193.
- ³⁰ Ibid., p. 193.
- ³¹ Ibid., p. 196.
- ³² Maurice Blanchot, *The Work of Fire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 314.
- ³³ Maurice Blanchot, *The Book to Come* (Stanford: Stanford University, 2003), p. 228.
- ³⁴ Ibid., p. 229.
- ³⁵ Gadamer carefully distinguishes this conception of the classic from Greco-Roman models of normativity but also attempts to ground this notion in an experience of timelessness according to which the past is experienced in the mode of the present. See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, pp. 285–290.
- ³⁶ Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 206.
- ³⁷ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 99.
- ³⁸ Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 228.
- ³⁹ Timothy Clark, *Derrida, Heidegger, Blanchot: Sources of Derrida’s Notion and Practice of Literature* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 68.
- ⁴⁰ Blanchot, *The Work of Fire*, pp. 31–32.
- ⁴¹ Maurice Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation* (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 261.
- ⁴² Clark, *Derrida, Heidegger, Blanchot*, p. 80.
- ⁴³ Blanchot, *The Space of Literature*, p. 40.
- ⁴⁴ Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (Bloomington, IN and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 110.
- ⁴⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Einführung in die Phänomenologische Forschung*, III.2, *Gesamtausgabe* 17 (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1994), p. 262.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., 262.
- ⁴⁷ While offering sympathetic criticisms of Kisiel’s account of this early period, Crowell develops some of these compelling suggestions on Heidegger’s interface with Husserl and phenomenology that preceded the publication of *Sein und Zeit*. For details, see Steven Galt Crowell, “Heidegger’s Phenomenological Decade,” *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning: Paths Toward Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001), pp. 115–128.
- ⁴⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University and Chicago Press, 1989), p. 177.

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LOVE OF LIFE, TRAGEDY AND SOME
CHARACTERS IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY

A B S T R A C T

There are certain personages whom almost everyone recognizes as concrete characters, and takes as universal descriptions of types of human beings. The coherence of the traits of such figures makes them real persons with virtues or vices, with certain perspectives and inclinations for various pleasures. These creations of the poets are simple and pure in the sense that they appear to incarnate unique values and a will to determine or influence the course of events. Unlike the tragic heroes, we do not consider ordinary men and women worth aesthetical or moral attention.

I

The poetic account of the war in Troy and that of the heroes' lives gives us substantial clues for reconstructing the past of humanity. The kings, the princes, the aristocrats and those who happen to come across them in their lives as their servants, as prophets and beggars represent universal characters conceived and described by the ablest writers of all ages. No doubt, the ancient poets focused their view to the aristocrats, or on the lives of those men and women who were kings, queens, princes, and to the gods, but this choice neither blurs our sight of humanity nor represents it in a biased manner. That Homer and other great poets bring before our eyes a lively picture of the ancient men and women is clear once we consider that the descriptions of the lives and aspirations of those heroes are universal in their basic features. Although Odysseus and Hamlet owe their lives in our imagination to those who speak about them, they exist as universal human types, as real individuals, even more real than the actual ones.

The objects of the longings and the dreads of human beings do not seem to be infinitely many in kind. A given community has characteristic practices, particular laws that regulate life, an ethos, but the restraints or the encouragements concerning the common and private life appear to aim to shape the same human nature, namely the same inclinations for pleasure, health, security, comfort, wealth and honor, and the same aversion for pain, misery, insecurity and shame. Death, loss of the beloved, freedom or property; illness, disgrace are objects of aversion for all human beings regardless of culture or age; similarly a peaceful, healthy and prosperous life with those whom one loves, recognition and honor are universal objects of desire. Since the first recorded descriptions of common life, these objects of aversion and desire seem to have constituted the substance of the discourse on values: losses and gains

that come from the society, or from the powers one thinks one can communicate, please, appease and convince, from the other men, women or gods is the major theme in all discourse about value in terms of motives or fears. A particular mode of action is said to lead to gain and hence to happiness, and its opposite or lack to the loss of valuable things of life.

The theme of loss and gain appear in almost all artistic, moral and juridical discourse. We may even assert that communication rests on these conceptions. Losses are either punishments or they are seen to be so. Gods, for example, are thought to have the power to punish those who do not abide by the universal laws. Again, the society is thought to be naturally holding the right to punish by depriving the individual of his or her rights of property, freedom, honor and even of life. Both restrictions and deprivations are losses. In a similar vein, gods, men and women are believed to have the power to allow the individual to enjoy the liberty to attain whatever he or she lawfully demands or by rewarding him or her by rights or objects that give pleasure and happiness.

This general nature of society seems to bring different ages and cultures together in the meaning, aim and possibilities of human happiness or misery. Without this common understanding of good and evil, of pleasure and pain, or of gain and loss, neither different generations nor different cultures could understand the tragedy and happiness of the other. Of course this does not mean that a chasm never exists; in fact, education, opportunities, and political order affect this communication in the highest degree. However, we are concerned not with the actuality, but with the possibility of universal meaning and communication.

Ancient Greek imagination still preoccupies the minds of many, and it is generally held that the modern artistic conception rests on that solid base. The ancients have laid down the foundations of knowledge in almost every science and art. Although most of the elementary knowledge in physical sciences now seems to be refuted by the paradigm change that took place in the modern period, the philosophical and artistic achievements of the Greeks preserve their value, and prove to be on a par with the other peaks of human history. Philosophy is a Greek word, and thought on existence and value is still called by this name. The mythical or fictional personages of the Greek poetry and drama still exemplify actual human characters; otherwise they would not remain concrete individuals in the contemporary, or in the universal imagination. They live as conceptions of certain types, and in the dramatic contrast or harmony with the others, serve as poetic tools to describe "facts" to which we attribute "value."

I intend to concentrate on several such universal characters. I will focus on Odysseus, his life, character, expectations and his story of victory and survival. I believe that Odysseus constitutes a universal exemplar of the individual who aims tranquility in the peaceful life of a farmer, and who, facing unfavorable circumstances employs all possible means to attain this end. Odysseus is not a man after the uncertainties of an adventurous life. Rather, he is depicted by Homer and Sophocles as one who leads an adventurous life against his will. Odysseus seeks happiness in his beloved country, in his family, in farming, in feasting and in leading people to happiness of the same sort. No doubt, Odysseus is a king, not an ordinary man, but

his kingdom resembles rather a household. Desire of peace, prosperity, friendship and order in any society, be it a small or a large one, seems to be universal to humanity. A philosopher who renounces life, or a hero who looks for death for a cause are only exceptions.

The story of the Trojan War and the characters conceived by the poets give us sufficient clues to reconstruct the characters of the ancient men and women who know the value of a tranquil, prosperous and honorable life, but who experience tragic losses and see drastic changes in their stations. Indeed the concept and the form of tragedy rest on such losses, and the poets delineate the pain of loss in the personages and situations they elaborate.

The encounter of king Odysseus and his ally and later rival Ajax referring to Sophocles' famous tragedy is illustrative. Sophocles brings the two figures together to describe the universal human experience of competition and jealousy. Odysseus, who has proved himself to be one of the keenest warriors in the Achaean army, and who has therefore deserved the honor of his allies, is challenged by a less praiseworthy man, Ajax, who deems himself abler than the classical hero. Ajax's frenzy, which we learn to be a punishment by the goddess Athena, brings him a disgrace which he cannot bear. This loss and his suicide that follows his consciousness of the dishonor that his hallucination would bring are exemplars of tragic loss. Odysseus, on the other hand, appears as a man of sense resisting his commanders and insisting that Ajax should be buried in accordance with universal laws as befits an honorable warrior. Here Odysseus is depicted as a just man who consistently argues against further disgrace of his rival by the mortals. This piety or justice of the hero is coherent with Homer's interpretation: Odysseus is a reliable warrior and ally, a keen strategist, and seems to have rightfully deserved the arms of Achilles. Odysseus is never depicted by the ancient poets as demanding recognition for his virtues or as disregarding justice for illicit gain. Sophocles' portrayal of Odysseus is in line with Homer's: in *Philoctetes*, Philoctetes accuses Odysseus for being unwilling to sail with Agamemnon and Menelaus for the war. Odysseus loves peace, but he is an excellent warrior. Although he values and seeks peace and tranquility, he came to be the paragon of the adventurous. And, he is rewarded with the highest honors and stations in the army for his courage and cunning although he is against war. As we read in the *Odyssey*, he resists the temptations of a life of pleasure, even an immortal life, having nothing but the memories of his land and family in his mind.

I will now concentrate on two characters which can be contrasted with Odysseus, a character which has proved to be universal, although he is not universally seen as representing virtue. The main themes of contrast will be related to the classical virtues, namely courage, prudence, moderation and justice. I will refer to the ancient poets' descriptions of the situations and the discourses of their personages to substantiate my claim that the desire for tranquility and the desire for honor are the two dynamic powers that lead human beings to action, and are, therefore, the causes of their passions. Ancient Greek literature gives us almost a complete picture of human existence as driven by these two forces. The scenes described by the authors represent our destiny and render our desires and aversions, thoughts and acts visible

in the losses or gains in life. The tragic characters that represent these accidental or willed passions, virtues and vices, power and weakness are models through which we can conceive universal values and the universally valuable.

I I

Odysseus' story seems to teach us that a life of adventure is possible, enduring, and even enjoyable through one's natural inclination to tranquility. The memories of a land, a home, family, friends, objects and activities for living must be dear to one who is uncertain of his or her future. It seems that one envisages the dangers of a voyage or of a flight because of this calling of memories. An escapade, even an imaginary one as in hearing or inventing a story must become conceivable only if one has an aim or a destination. Outlaws or fugitives must be looking for their home in the memories of a yet innocent life, or must be dreaming of one in which their crimes are forgotten as in dreams. All travelers, regardless whether they are tourists or emigrants must be keeping the memories of happiness in a past and expecting their recovery. It seems that a departure's charm is either in the thought of returning home, or that of rebuilding it on a secure land.

Sophocles represents Odysseus as unwilling to participate in the Trojan expedition. Philoctetes is the Achaean warrior left on the deserted island of Lemnos. After the prophecy of Priam's son Helenus which says that Troy can only be taken by his help or with Heracles' weapons the army decides to call Philoctetes who has Heracles' bow and arrows, but Philoctetes refuses to come with Odysseus.

Sophocles makes Philoctetes say that unlike Odysseus, he was willing to come to Troy: "you sailed with them after being kidnapped and compelled, and I, the unfortunate one, had sailed of my own free will with seven ships before they, as you say, but as they say you, threw me out dishonoured."¹

Philoctetes was left alone on Lemnos because of his stinking leg which seems to be taken as an ill omen. Apparently he was willing to join the war, which he clearly wanted for fame, but, according to one legend, was bitten by the snake at the altar of Chryse, which suggests he was overhasty and imprudent in trying to reach the honor he was looking for. Odysseus is there with the mission to bring Philoctetes and his weapons back, and was also among those who left him alone on the deserted island. Odysseus answers the bitter words of Philoctetes who blames him and the other Argives:

Where there is need of men like this, I am such a man; but where there is test for just and noble men, you will find no one more scrupulous² than I. But it is my nature always to desire victory.³

Sophocles makes Odysseus speak for himself that he is desirous of victory. The story related to the hero, namely that of Homer, however, makes Odysseus appear obedient to the words of the gods, to the unwritten laws of nature, and to the established order in the army. This seems to be reminded to those who are familiar to the legend by Sophocles as he makes Odysseus say "where there is test for just and noble men, you will find no one more scrupulous than I."

Odysseus is one of the two or three men whose analyses and strategies are esteemed at the headquarters, he is an indispensable ambassador in every important negotiation, an able warrior and scout in dangerous missions. He is depicted by Homer and Sophocles to follow the dictates of universal reason in conflicts, and to be at variance with his comrades only when he can justify himself by reference to the universal laws. He is in Lemnos on a mission to bring Philoctetes and his bow back to Troy, a mission to be accomplished at any cost, and by any means. Odysseus may appear unjust to many among the modern readers, as too cunning or even stealthy in making Achilles' inexperienced son Neoptolemus a part of his scheme, and in forcing the resistant Philoctetes by threatening him with taking his bow and leaving him on the island as a prey to animals. But Neoptolemus gives him the bow back and Odysseus puts an end to his mission which now appears to be accomplishable only by unjust means. Besides, the prophecy that had led the army to decide to call Philoctetes back also tells that Philoctetes would be cured by the ablest physicians of the time, which must be invaluable for Philoctetes who suffers from a painful chronic disease.

It is not Odysseus, but Philoctetes who appears unreasonable and unjust in the play, for gods make him accept the offer. Philoctetes was willing to participate in war, and he wanted it for honor. Hence, he appears in utter contrast with Odysseus who proved to be an excellent warrior: although he never wanted war and the honor it might bring, Odysseus has deserved the highest of honors, Achilles' arms. We also find Odysseus as responsible for the crucial mission of following the prophecy of Helenus, which all Argives believed and decided to be the only means to win the war.

Reluctance for war implies love of a tranquil life. War has a great symbolic power: it can be taken as representing competition or strife in the most general sense. Strife is not observed in work: the herdsman, the farmer, the artist do not "make war" with natural powers, they only obey them to attain their ends. Odysseus was fond of his life in his small and relatively unimportant island Ithaca, and is always represented by Homer as dreaming of an ordinary family life throughout his odyssey. He is never at home, never looks for a new home, but his own home from where he is torn apart for an unreasonable cause, namely for the war for Helen, a war which appears to have attracted many kings and princes for honor. Philoctetes was one of those who came for fame, and certainly, Ajax another.

Odysseus loves tranquility in ordinary life where one is at work, and work in its primordial form must not be strife, but a systematic activity in collaboration with the unchanging or uncontrollable forces of nature and gods. Humans worship nature, they try to predict its behavior, it is impossible to fight with it, and one can only expect to appease it, to persuade the power which makes life possible and enjoyable.

After years of absence, Odysseus, left on his island Ithaca by the Phaeacians, goes to his farmstead, where he meets his old swineherd who managed to increase production by good techniques and hard work. This farm, which does not seem to be a place fit for the first meal of a king who has been absent for many years, but the poet seems to suggest that the well governed farm and the honest swineherd Eumaeus,

the good farmer is the most reliable person of the land, that production is the most vital function of a country, that work for living is essential for the feeling of security and hence for happiness in an ordinary life.

Odysseus, the unwarlike, has to slay the suitors for a happy life with his wife and son. It seems that the sharp contrast between the hero's love of tranquility and his eagerness for victory for a well reasoned cause, which often appears as only a means for his ultimate aim, namely his home, makes him ever more interesting as a figure throughout the ages and the greatest hero of antiquity.

Odysseus is both a farmer and a warrior. He is a follower of reason common to all possible activities of men, in this sense in his struggle with those who deny him the liberty of tranquility he resembles an artist who plays with nature for the happiness of play and living. But this struggle is not war at any cost: it is through obedience to laws, or to those powers one can and must conceive as universal that Odysseus tries to attain his end. *Logos*, or the common reason is the most perfect tool in the hands of the person who can comprehend and use it. *Logos* must be the essence of any conceivable human product, including especially those of politics and art, activities whose objects are not as concrete as the others. Odysseus represents the human being who strives to change the course of events by employing this common and powerful tool. Neither production nor management could be possible without understanding and obeying the laws one cannot change: one can neither find food, nor create objects or bring forth examples rare and unique without a sufficient understanding of the laws that govern nature and men. It seems that common sense constitutes the principal criterion by means of which we discern the quality of human products, and that those who create or use them in a distinguished manner must have an accurate understanding of the laws discovered by common reason which make these products conceivable and essential as they are.

Mastery in understanding the common laws, especially those related to politics was Odysseus' merit, and this makes him a universal hero. Polytheistic religious practices too seem to be politics in the most general sense, for they concern the relations between gods and men.⁴ Odysseus is a negotiator, an ambassador, a statesman. He was a member of the commission sent to Priam, and his merits are admitted by the person who must have the final word, the king himself:

The basic conflict of the Trojan War was that between Agamemnon and Achilles, which Epictetus used as an example to teach that passion for a woman (Briseis) must not be a reason of conflict between those who went to Troy for war. He has a similar argument for the passion of Menelaus for Helen. The stoic ideal of morality blames Menelaus' sensitivity for honor and love. Epictetus repeatedly stresses that Helen, being a disloyal wife, is not a good cause for war. In both conflicts that arose because of passions related to sexual love and honor, we find Odysseus as a mediator. He tries to win Achilles back to war, and manages at last to bring Briseis back to Achilles.

Again, Homer shows him as an ambassador trying to take Helen back from Paris to avoid the painful war. Given his dislike for war, Odysseus appears before our eyes as a pacifist, but also as a warrior to end the war with victory. He kills or wounds because this appears to him unavoidable for survival; and this is not without a good

cause: he longs for his country, his wife, his son and everything related to his modest life as a king. What should a war for Helen, for spoil, for honor in the far away land Anatolia bring to the Ithacan? He has enough for happiness on his island.

Homer shows Odysseus as excelling all Argives in reasoning and speech; but never shows him after honor, or after recognition of his merits, but only after avoiding war. Odysseus who joined the fleet with a modest naval force, is the greatest hero of antiquity. The ancients must have seen the cardinal virtues, namely justice, moderation, prudence and courage as incarnated in the personage of this invincible mortal. Moderation and prudence, as proper to the ideal farmer of Hesiod, are virtues of one who seeks peace and a tranquil life. Justice and courage, though they are inseparable from moderation and prudence, and have little value if they are found in a person who lacks the former, become visible more in one's relations with the others.

III

Sophocles depicts Odysseus in *Ajax* as the model of justice putting him on a par with Antigone, his heroine of justice and piety. Odysseus is the advocate of the hero, his rival in the contest for the arms of Achilles, which resulted in his victory. In Sophocles' interpretation, Ajax, thinking that not Odysseus, but he deserved the arms, plans to kill Agamemnon, Menelaus, Odysseus and others, but being deceived by the goddess Athena, slaughters the cattle kept for the army taking them for his enemies. Ajax, perceiving that he has been deceived, or that he has lost his mind, commits suicide. We find Odysseus arguing for the necessity of a burial ceremony for the hero, defying his seniors Agamemnon and Menelaus. Although he knows that he was one of those whom Ajax wanted to kill, he does not approve of further punishment, nor does he think that leaving his body to the wild animals would be a good example to the army, for this, even if it is ordered by rulers, would be a transgression of the eternal laws. In Sophocles' play, Odysseus says the following to the furious Agamemnon:

I beg you not to venture to cast this man [Ajax] ruthlessly, unburied. Violence must not so prevail on you that you trample justice under your foot! For me too he was once my chief enemy, ever since I became the owner of the arms of Achilles; but though he was such in regard to me, I would not so far fail to do him honour as to deny that he was the most valiant man among the Argives, of all that came to Troy, except Achilles. And so you cannot dishonour him without injustice; for you would be destroying not him, but the laws of the gods. It is unjust to injure a noble man, if he is dead, even if it happens that you hate him.⁵

Justice is generally conceived as the virtue which makes order and peace possible, and treatment after death seems to be one of the things humans have always been sensitive. Both Odysseus and Antigone appear as the guardians of the eternal laws exemplified in the religious practice of burial, they remind that this must be a right of those who once performed their duties even if they ultimately fail tragically like Ajax. Sophocles makes justice appear in full splendor in Odysseus' words in favor of Ajax, but the hero's courage, prudence and moderation are no less apparent. For,

without the courage to resist his commanders, his consideration for the events that would follow if Ajax's body is left as prey to wild beasts, and without the strength of will that makes him forget his enmity, his justice would not appear as striking as it does in his resistance to the rulers of the army.

Ajax, as we read in Homer, was a distinguished warrior of the Achaean army. But, like Philoctetes, he seems to have joined the league for honor, for booty and fame. Ajax is depicted by Homer and Sophocles as too eager for dangerous missions. They both show him as one of the most valiant warriors of the army. And, unlike Philoctetes, we must consider Ajax as careful, as Sophocles makes the goddess Athena say the following words to Odysseus:

Do you see, Odysseus, how great is the power of the gods? What man was found to be more farsighted than this one, or better at doing what the occasion required?

But Ajax's farsightedness, (his quality of being *pronous* or *promēthēs*) is not prudence, *phronēsis* in the proper sense. For *phronesis* as one of the cardinal virtues, requires the presence of the other virtues in combination. And, Ajax's love of honor or self-conceit makes him deficient in moderation and prudence. He is represented by Sophocles as insolent to gods, hence as a sinner, and his valor loses its significance in the eyes of gods and men. Virtues do not have values by themselves; they are valuable if they are united in the character of the person with the other virtues. Hence, Ajax, who is depicted by Sophocles as lacking in respect for the gods, can hardly be called virtuous. As we read in the play, the messenger reports the prophecy of Calchas as follows:

When men grow to a size too great to do good, the prophet said, they are brought down by cruel misfortunes sent by the gods, yes, each who has human nature but refuses to think only human thoughts. But he [Ajax] from the moment of his leaving home was found to be foolish when his father said to him, "wish for triumph in battle, but wish to triumph always with a god's aid!" And he replied boastfully and stupidly. "Father, together with the gods even one who amounts to nothing may win victory; but I am confident that I can grasp this glory without them." Such a boast as that he uttered; and a second time, when divine Athena urged him on and told him to direct his bloody hand against the enemy, he made answer with these dreadful and unspeakable words, "Queen, stand by the other Argives; where I am the enemy shall never break through." By such words as these he brought on himself the unappeasable anger of the goddess, through his more than mortal pride.

Odysseus pays due respect to gods, and their words. He takes prophecies seriously, as he is represented in *Philoctetes*. He is favored by Athena, the goddess of reason, but he deserves her favor as a free agent. In the ancients' imagination gods were interested in men and women, they favored or even respected certain human beings. They did fall in love with them. But respect and love are different. Odysseus appears more to be respected than loved by the goddess Athena. It may be a plausible conjecture that the ancient poets, and especially Homer, regarded the relation between the goddess and Odysseus as representing the ultimate tie between gods and humans. I do not say that they intended this as an embellishment for their stories of human tragedy, but only that they conceived this divine relationship as the highest piety. I must note that I am speaking of a dynasty of gods and a human race where there are countless conflicts and intrigues, both among gods and men. Odysseus is "pious"⁶ in this sense, he fears gods, except involuntarily never acts or

speaks insolently as we read Ajax to have done; he pays due attention to rituals and takes prophecies seriously.

It seems that the Greek poets saw piety as careful reasoning and moderation in thought. Hence, what makes Odysseus interesting to us is his moderation, his sound reasoning in finding expedients. There are restrictions to one's will and actions among gods and men, and Odysseus takes this as his first truth, desires only a human life, and thinks only "human thoughts." He unceasingly tries to make his way in the turmoil, thinks as a human must think, and never takes himself as something more than a mortal.

I have tried to understand the significance of character Odysseus in terms of reason and virtue. Many ancient and modern writers of ethics use these terms interchangeably. Without reason, one can hardly be virtuous, and without virtue one can hardly be seen as making use of reason properly. The anonymous tradition, and the poets and philosophers of antiquity seem to have conceived that one who is most skilled in proper reasoning is also the most courageous, moderate, prudent and just. For, without a due to consideration of the given and the means to an end, one does not deserve to be called virtuous, but is rather pitied as weak, or blamed as evil. It is true that Odysseus is not universally deemed to be virtuous, but we were speaking of the world of ancient Greeks and their conception of virtue where piety meant something different than what it means for monotheism.

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NOTES

- ¹ Sophocles, *Philoctetes*, 1025–28; Hugh Lloyd-Jones translation (Loeb ed.), p. 359.
- ² The Greek adjective is *eusebēs*, which could also be translated as religious or pious.
- ³ *Ibid.* 1049–51; Hugh Lloyd-Jones, p. 361.
- ⁴ In this sense Odysseus' reverence for Athena and her providence to him are of great significance. The ancient texts show Odysseus as favored by the goddess who is recognized as equaling Zeus in the power of thought. But Odysseus is keen to observe religious practices for almost all gods, and to abide by the words of prophets who convey gods' decrees.
- ⁵ Sophocles, *Ajax*, 1332–45; Hugh Lloyd-Jones translation (Loeb ed.), pp. 153–155.
- ⁶ See note 2 above.

HUMOR IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF LOGOS:
THE INSPIRATIONS OF ANCIENT GREEK
PHILOSOPHY

ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the ancient Greek concepts of humor interpreted in the perspective of logos, as well as the inspirations of these philosophical ideas of antiquity for contemporary humor studies. Generally speaking, humor can be considered as a charming, yet paradoxical counterpart of logos, supplementing the one-sidedness of strictly discursive cognitive approach and allowing for the perception of phenomena in multifarious and contradictory planes of reference. Such seem to be the intimations of leading Greek philosophers. Thus, the philosophical humor may be presented as having its roots in the universal logos and alluding to it in an *à rebours* manner. The concepts of humor and laughter formulated by Democritus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Diogenes have been reviewed using contemporary interpretation measures. In this respect, among others, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's concept of ontopoiesis of life with its logos-source and the resulting innumerable perspectives turns to be a useful tool of analyzing the abundance and individuation character inherent in humor, as revealed already in classical systems and reflections. Her notion of the ontopoiesis of life allows for intimating the phenomenon in terms of creativity and insight.

Strikingly opposite to logos as it may seem, humor can also be viewed as its counterpart or even paradoxical outcome. So understood, humor – and laughter that tends to accompany it – symbolically participates in the logos universality, indirectly and perversely pointing to the existential or even metaphysical essentials. It was the Greeks who first suggested this line of humor discourse.

We should remember that the notions of humor, laughter, comedy, wit, or irony have often been mixed up and confused in 2500-year-old discussions on the topic that can be traced in the philosophical literature. In the present paper we shall understand humor – referring to the distinction made by John Morreal – as arising from a pleasant cognitive shift, whereas laughter is assumed to be related to a pleasant psychological shift.¹ Thus the transformations occurring within the process of cognition and resulting in a feeling of surprise that pleases the human yearnings for novelty and weirdness – may be considered as characteristic of humoristic approach. And though the ancient philosophers often used the term “laughter” while talking about the humorous perception of experienced (comical) situations, they pointed to the very essence of the phenomenon that is, in our opinion, embedded in the fundamental cognitive paradoxes. That is why humor in its substance can be

associated with – seemingly distorted – aspects of the cognizing reason itself. What is more, the philosophical humor – searching for the essences, alongside the whole business of philosophy – possesses a veiled metaphysical inclination, discovering a dialectical potential in innumerable (and as such also contradictory) emanations of the logos itself.

Philosophy has traditionally been rooted – at least until the postmodern times – in the logos. It was the ancient Greeks who built the foundations of Western thought upon the universal rational principles, and made the questions concerning the most vital and ultimate matters the core of the discipline. The gravity of such inquiries might seem profoundly inconsistent with the light spirit, absurdness and triviality that are commonly recognized as inherent to humor. Yet, in the writings of the greatest philosophers of the time we can find at least the outlines of certain theories of humor either corresponding to – even if apparently competing with – the primary task of philosophy proper.

Undoubtedly, the category of logos was the one dominating the classical thought, designating and embracing in itself the harmony of being as such as well as the rules of human cognition and conduct. It was Heraclitus who recognized logos as a factor common to all things, in particular to human beings; as the basic rational principle governing all phenomena and making for the unity of things. However, as he believed, this fact could be pronounced only by people following and accepting the necessary and omni-present nature of the logos: “Therefore it is necessary to follow the common; but although the logos is common the many live as though they had a private understanding”.² In this context, the chaotic abundance, multifariousness, whimsical randomness and freedom, irregularity, exaggeration and ephemeral trait embedded in humor might – at first sight – be perceived as drastically different from the harmonious clearness, as well as the necessary and eternal nature of the logos.

Analyzing the fundamental and source-like character of the logos from the contemporary phenomenological perspective, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka writes: “The classical ways proposed by philosophy – ontology, epistemology, metaphysics, aesthetics, anthropology, etc. – all have their source in this logos and yet escape from it into the labyrinths of their singular intellectual approaches, getting more and more remote from the source and from each other, getting lost in endless intellectual speculation”.³ Following this idea of the author of phenomenology of life, we aim at showing how, also in the case of humor, one can speak in terms of its primordial logos roots and associations, which seem to be negated in the labyrinths of seemingly illogical and highly individual endeavors. The interpretation based on Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s concept would help us understand the phenomenon of the universal humor – the humor that philosophy is interested in – as having its source in the universal logos, similarly to the whole “enterprise of philosophy”. Referring to the quoted author’s postulates, we feel the necessity of reviving this ancient and powerful idea that makes for the unity of being and experience, believing that it can be paradoxically envisaged also in the philosophically understood humor.⁴

The profound humorist standpoint is not that distant from the approach of philosophy as it may be superficially judged. In fact, it was philosophy that first posed the questions: “What is humor?”/“What is laughter?”, and it seems that this discipline

has the greatest chances of grasping the mechanism of humor and arriving at its deep structure-meaning.

Humor shares with philosophy the act of withdrawal from practical aspects of life and a standard commonsensical approach. They both incessantly search for ever fresh and thus astonishing solutions, employing the power of abundant imagination, and also fantasy. They both open new perspectives, enabling experience and cognition detach from prevalent stereotypes. In this context, it is worthwhile to quote William James's interpretation of the akin characters of humor and philosophy: "Philosophy, beginning in wonder, as Plato and Aristotle said, is able to fancy everything different from what is. It sees the familiar as if it were strange, and the strange as if it were familiar".⁵ John Morreal summarizes the analogy between philosophy and humor as follows: "To have cultivated a philosophical spirit or a rich sense of humor is to have a distanced, and, at least potentially, a more objective view of the world".⁶

However, this dependence between philosophy and humor is of a pretty complex character, showing in most cases its *à rebours* nature – especially while getting *more and more remote from the original source*. Thus, further in the text we would like to detect the logos-related elements in Greek philosophical concepts of humor and its accompanying laughter, and to prove – following Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's idea – that the motto "Logos, the sense of sense, penetrates All. (...) IN LOGOS OMNIA"⁷ pertinently refers also to the foundations of humor.

The question arises, how to describe this mechanism of humor, that can be related to the logos-like inventiveness and versatility? The contemporary critic, Arthur Koestler in his bisociation theory states that the bases of all original thought and discoveries, also in the sphere of humor, lie in the simultaneous perception of given phenomena jointly in traditionally separate and incompatible systems of reference, governed by conflicting rules.⁸ Thinking in the categories of one system only does not allow for any original and truly creative achievements. The escape from routine is signaled in the insight which presents a familiar situation in new light and triggers a fresh response to it. The act of bisociation joins the separate matrices of experience, expanding the horizons of complex though surprisingly rich vision. It implies "living on various planes", multidimensionally. The violent collision of two matrices of perception or reasoning, a sudden bisociation of a phenomenon in two traditionally incompatible systems, evokes a particular emotional tension which finds its outlet in laughter. This very act of associating matters that commonly are considered disjunctive, results, in our opinion, from the logos source of everythingness, as it ingeniously points at the basic and sensible unity of all things, in spite of their superficial labyrinth-like or even whimsical differentiations.

It was Socrates, the model sage of antiquity, who – in his search for truth – proved to be aware of the significance of humorous elements in the solemn discourse, introducing wit and irony into the realm of philosophy. Generally speaking, the essence of irony, understood both as rhetorical device and Socratic method, lies in incongruity between the literal and deep meanings of the utterance, between its apparent foolishness and the hidden substantiality and wisdom. It can be used as a tool for the whole variety of purposes, including the cognitive-dialogical ones, as was the case

with Socratic method. Irony creates a certain (often humorous) illusion, building up the opposition: serious – non-serious, god-like – clown-like.⁹ The motif of game is therefore, not alien to this method. For Socrates, irony is mostly verbal, and the intended audience is expected to grasp eventually that the speaker is highlighting the literal falsity of the utterance, and not *eironeia*, which aims at deception and is predominantly malevolent.¹⁰ Irony is thus employed to serve the enlightened and logos-based objectives of the sage's teaching, who intends his disputants to arrive at the truth, using this indirect method.

“Philosophy is when we laugh. And we laugh at stupidity”¹¹ – this remark by Hans Blumenberg may be pertinently referred to the concept of the classical philosopher who truly appreciated the significance of laughter and humor in the plane of the logos: Democritus, often presented in the iconography as “the laughing philosopher”. Similarly to former Greek thinkers, also the author of atomic theory viewed the logos as the factor determining the proper measure and moderation, which, in turn, ensure the state of peace, balance and good mood. Joy in life is considered as highly rational standpoint, and it is only the stupid people who are unable to find any satisfaction in living.

As a philosopher, Democritus shows a detached attitude towards the follies of the world. In vivid opposition to the crying Heraclitus, he assumes the laughing mood in the face of circumstances that cannot be controlled by reason. Seneca comments upon these two opposite philosophical attitudes to the universal lack of sensibility as follows: “Whenever Heraclitus went forth from his house and saw all around him so many men who were living a wretched life – no, rather, were dying a wretched death – he would weep, and all the joyous and happy people he met stirred his pity; he was gentle-hearted, but too weak, and was himself one of those who had need of pity. Democritus, on the other hand, it is said, never appeared in public without laughing; so little did the serious pursuits of men seem serious to him”.¹²

Both the Heraclitean and Democritean positions can be described, after Helmut Plessner, as two radically different reactions to the situations of crisis of expression (and such must be for a sage the absurd situation of human folly): weeping or laughing.¹³ The atomist philosopher, instead of despairing of human unwisdom, was inclined to perceive human weakness and vice not as tragedy, but rather as comedy, and to manifest a mild and sympathetic approach to that which seemingly deserves contempt. To quote Seneca's evaluating indications: “We must, therefore, give our minds such a bent that all the vices of the populace may not appear hateful to us, but ridiculous, and we should imitate Democritus rather than Heraclitus. For the latter used to weep whenever he appeared in public, but the former laughed: to one everything which we do seemed to be foolishness, to the other, misery. Therefore all things must be made light of and borne with a calm mind: it is more manlike to scoff at life than to bewail it. Furthermore, he who laughs at the human race also deserves better of it than he who mourns for it. The former leaves something still to be hoped for; the latter stupidly weeps over what he despairs of being able to correct: and he shows a greater mind who, after he has contemplated all things, cannot restrain his laughter than he who cannot restrain his tears, inasmuch as he does not allow his mind to be affected in the least, and does not consider anything great, severe,

or even serious”.¹⁴ Democritus’s position seems to take into account more aspects, and be more promising than that of Heraclitus. His laughter is not just a simple fountain of light-hearted jesting, but rather emerges out of bitter wisdom, and manifests a benevolent acceptance of the inferiority of certain aspects of existence. For him, in the philosophically considered plane, it was the logos itself that imposes the requirement of reconciliation with the weird fortune and triviality of human endeavors. In paradoxical and absurd situations in which all ways of expression fail, humor and laugh seem to constitute the only sensible reply. The abundant and apparently irrational laughter of Democritus in the fictitious *Letters of Hippocrates* is evaluated as a proper way of reacting to life’s follies. At first, though, the ceaselessly laughing Democritus is considered maniacally mad. Eventually, Hippocrates pronounces the diagnosis that the philosopher shows profound wisdom and is but “too sensible”. In the face of human littleness, vice and inability to think logically, Democritus’s laugh becomes a remedy preventing him from giving up in despair, and simultaneously signaling to his contemporaries their funny irrationality. He criticized their thoughtlessness, as they seemed to have “neither eyes nor ears”. The logos itself points at the adequate behavior in situations in which reason is lacking – trivializing the unwise phenomena, and indicating their insignificant and absurd character.

Even though Democritus does not believe in the possibility of improving the citizens of his native Abdera, the laughter devoid of bitterness or malice enables him to preserve balance and maintain the inner independence from the crazy human world. Such is the natural consequence of his metaphysical theory according to which the world – including man and society – is nothing more than a never-ending game of atoms ceaselessly moving in the void.

According to Michel de Montaigne, Democritus’s assessment of the human condition as futile and comic is more appropriate than Heraclitus’s, as it takes into consideration the truly humane values. It presents people as trivial rather than evil, and, accordingly, deserving laughter, not hatred. Likewise, the human condition should not yield to despair, but rather to an all-comprehending smile. The inhabitants of Abdera – the objects of Democritus’ laugh – are treated with benevolence, as the creatures unable to see through their restricted horizon. The philosopher detects humane value in laughing at all people including himself – the value of which one-sidedly serious and highly critical approach is usually devoid.

Here we encounter a very important aspect of humor: the multi-sidedness of its approaches to given phenomena, or, to be more precise, their complex and ambivalent perception, which allows for more comprehensive outlook on things.

The main opponent of Democritus, Plato, outlined a radically different vision and assessment of the nature of humor and laughter. Contrary to Democritus, and following his master Socrates, he tends to juxtapose humor and the logos.

In this context, we should start with recalling the famous scene from Plato’s *Theaetetus*, in which the Thrace servant laughs at Thales when the philosopher falls into a well while looking up the starry sky. On a different and competitive plane of reference/association, Thales’s wisdom is perceived by the unwise and primitive woman as foolery, as alien to the dictate of the “sense” of common people, and

consequently finds its outlet in laugh. The philosopher Thales becomes an object of the servant's amusement, who is convinced of her own commonsensical superiority. For the idealist philosopher, such amusement is contrary to reason. In the *Republic*, we become further convinced that someone who has seen the Idea of the Good, thus reaching the highest level of cognition, must appear funny both to himself and to others, as he represents the triumph over the stereotypes to which humans are so much used. The desire for laugh is presented as detrimental,¹⁵ for the ideal sage should not give his reason up totally to emotions. In Plato's ideal state, there is practically no place for humor, as in like manner there is no place for poetry. It is only the solemn observation of the rules of logos that befits the philosopher. Its opposite – a joyful fantasy with its fictitious implications – constitutes but an obstacle on the path of pursuing the ultimate truth of eternal being. The method implied by reason and solemn love/charity turns to be more useful for such a noble purpose. Moreover, the search for amusement is not worthy of the philosopher whose legitimate task lies in seeking for the best, not the most joyful.

But even the exalted Plato felt bound to agree that humor possesses certain value in the dialectical process of cognizing the essentials. In the *Laws* he stated: "For it is impossible to learn the serious without the comic, or any one of a pair of contraries without the other, if one is to be a wise man (...)." ¹⁶ Humor helps us understand that which is actually valuable and which constitute the opposite of the comical: the solemn. Imitation of the ridiculous in comedy may be accepted only on condition that it represents a despicable contrast to the good. Thus the knowledge of the nature of the comic should serve mainly a negative and cautionary purposes: those who learn the ridicule from the position of distanced audience can avoid it in their own endeavors. All in all, the logos, alongside the virtue inseparable from it, requires that the humoristic should be given up in the face of the ultimate Good. Further in *Laws*, we read that: "(...) to put both [the serious and the comic] into practice is equally impossible, if one is to share in even a small measure of virtue; in fact, it is precisely for this reason that one should learn them, – in order to avoid ever doing or saying anything ludicrous, through ignorance, when one ought not".¹⁷ Consequently, a comic performance is not appropriate for the liberated, i.e. the rational person. It can only suit the slave whose activities, interpreted in terms of the mimesis theory, may possess certain value as an artistic imitation of situations and features considered inferior and despicable: "(...) we will impose such mimicry on slaves and foreign hirelings, and no serious attention shall ever be paid to it, nor shall any free man or free woman be seen learning it, and there must always be some novel feature in their mimic shows".¹⁸ The reason and laws based on it should therefore impose restrictions on amusing entertainment so that they do not turn detrimental to the logos-imbedded task of humans: "Let such, then, be the regulations for all those laughable amusements which we all call comedy, as laid down both by law and by argument".¹⁹

Also in the *Republic*, when setting up rules for the education of the Guardians of the ideal state, Plato presents laughter as the reaction to be avoided, because it may lead to violent (i.e. unreasonable) behavior: "Again, they must not be prone to laughter. For ordinarily when one abandons himself to violent laughter his condition

provokes a violent reaction”.²⁰ Accordingly, literature should be censored so that it does not provide bad examples of gods and heroes as overcome with laughter.

But although he despised laughter and comedy, as they were presented in sheer contrast to the main objectives of his idealist theory, Plato was the first philosopher in the ancient world to undertake an attempt at clarifying the very notion of comicality. In the *Philebus*, he finds the cause of funniness in complex processes occurring within the human soul, wherein the ambivalent emotions blend up. In his interpretation, the nature of comicality or “the malice of amusement” consists in the mixture of pleasure and pain. Again, philosophically, a pleasure that results from the good is considered here, whereas a pain constitutes a feeling accompanying evil. In the case of the comical we encounter a paradoxical combination of both, in contrast to knowledge, in which pleasures are unmixed with pain.²¹

For Socrates pronouncing Plato’s opinion, it is “the evil” or “the vice” that initiates the whole analysis of the comical. All vice has its source in unwillingness (or inability) to answer the Delphic inscription “Know Thyself”. Consequently, a man does not actually know himself, and takes himself for somebody whom he is not. As James Wood pertinently remarks, “Comedy in the *Philebus* is condemned not because it is mimetic (as in the *Republic*), but because it is malicious, as malice in turn is condemned for its unjust co-mingling of pleasure and pain. Malicious laughter occurs in conjunction with the spectacle of the ridiculous, which is defined in opposition to the Delphic command ‘Know Thyself’. Hence, malicious comedy is grounded in self-ignorance and foolishness, both that of the ridiculed and, as it turns out, of the ridiculer”.²²

In the *Philebus*, Socrates mentions three errors that can appear on the path of gaining self-knowledge: errors related to wealth (when people consider themselves richer than they are in reality), errors connected with their alleged beauty and power, and – the most widely spread one – errors consisting in considering oneself more virtuous than one really is. All these faults prevent one from truly knowing himself, and as such constitute vice. Consequently, in accordance with the theory presented in the *Philebus*, they lead to pain. In order to show the blended pleasant and painful nature of comedy, Plato offers another subdivision: though all ignorant and false opinions of oneself are disastrous, there is a qualitative difference between the vice of strong and of weak men: “Let this, then, be the principle of division; those of them who are weak and unable to revenge themselves, when they are laughed at, may be truly called ridiculous, but those who can defend themselves may be more truly described as strong and formidable; for ignorance in the powerful is hateful and horrible, because hurtful to others both in reality and in fiction, but powerless ignorance may be reckoned, and in truth is, ridiculous”.²³ Plato’s arguments become more clear in the light of the infamous revenge taken on his master Socrates by men in power, who were obviously mistaken in their self-estimation. On the other hand, the relevant ignorance of powerless people is not that frightening, but merely ridiculous.

Evil presented in comedy instead of evoking pain, induces laugh. Here, Plato outlines the first version of the so-called *superiority theory* in relation to laughter and humor: pleasure inherent in laugh (and humor) results from the feeling of

superiority in relation to the weak, defective and inferior. However, this type of pleasure seems in most times alien to a logos-controlled philosopher that finds pleasure only in the solemn knowledge of the ultimate forms, with its highest goal: the Idea of the Good. Nevertheless, as James Wood pertinently states, “. . .laughter is called for precisely at the moments of greatest philosophical solemnity in order to remind oneself and others of human limitation and the need for humility in the quest for cosmic enlightenment”.²⁴ Accordingly, it may be noticed that it is the logos itself that imposes the need for humility in the face of the primordial and the highest. Considering the earthly restrictions (the chains in the ingenuous allegory of the cave presented in the *Republic*), the highest cannot be fully comprehended, at least here, on the earth. Therefore, the critical aspect of laughter and humor may also be cognitively valuable. The most difficult to achieve and requiring maturity is the ability to ridicule oneself. In the *Philebus* we read that the philosopher laughs both at himself and others, playfully recognizing the limits of any philosophical seriousness. This is what James Wood recognizes as the philosophical *redemption of laughter*.²⁵

Diogenes reversed the dialectical situation of amusing inferiority and amused superiority, mocking at all types of persons who considered themselves superior, and moving the boundaries of philosophical humor up to the absurd. In a provocative manner, he ridiculed both the common sense and laws of average people, and Plato's spiritual aloofness, for the sake of what he perceived as the primary life values. For that reason he was criticized by the rational philosopher who considered him primitive or even barbarian. He did not hide his scornful intentions, and manifested sarcasm towards the spiritual discourse. As Diogenes Laertius reports, “When Plato was discoursing about his ‘ideas’, and using the nouns ‘tableness’ and ‘cupness’; ‘I, O Plato!’ interrupted Diogenes, ‘see a table and a cup, but I see no tableness or cupness’. Plato made answer, ‘That is natural enough, for you have eyes, by which a cup and a table are contemplated; but you have not intellect, by which tableness and cupness are seen’.”²⁶ However, as we can further read in the *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, in his malicious satire he himself was showing a proud sense of superiority: “Thus I trample on the pride of Plato”; and that Plato rejoined, “With quite as much pride yourself, O Diogenes”.”²⁷ Paradoxically, Diogenes's own mockery seems to be incapable of discovering his own ridiculous sense of superiority, devoid of self-criticism and even . . . the sense of humor.

According to Christoph Martin Wieland, the author of an apologetic book devoted to Diogenes, the controversial philosopher behaved so weirdly not because he was mocking at all people on principle, but because he looked through the absurd character of their everyday habits in which he did not want to participate.²⁸ Such was his way of manifesting independence from all the stereotypes imposed by society. The philosopher of Sinope in an excessive mocking manner was revealing the follies of his social milieu, thus – following the prophecy of Delphic oracle and considering it his vocation – reversing, long time before Nietzsche, the commonly accepted values. His aggressive mockery was directed against the legally regulated social order that imposes illusory and false purposes.

To those who in the name of majority ridiculed him, Diogenes had a ready answer: “When a man said to him once, ‘Most people laugh at you’; ‘And very likely’, he

replied, ‘the asses laugh at them; but they do not regard the asses, neither do I regard them’ ”.²⁹ Diogenes’s extravagance found its zealous defender in the person of Wieland who presented Diogenes’s sarcasm – the sarcasm of the “mad Socrates” – as the humor of enlightened humanist, who applied bitter satire and mockery in order to reveal the existential and moral essences.

The theory of humor and laughter was further developed by Aristotle. It was him who reserved the very ability of laughing to human beings.³⁰ If we combine that characteristic of man with Aristotelian *differentia specifica* of his equally famous definition included in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, it may turn out that rationality and capability of laughing are not, after all, so alien to each other. Anyhow, considered as one of human distinctive features, ability of getting amused deserves a philosophical analysis in the eyes of the rationalist thinker.

In accordance with his sensibly moderate philosophy, Aristotle was far from abandoning the whole enterprise of amusement and comicality whatsoever. Neither was he convinced about the trivial nature of humor as Plato used to be. In his opinion, we should not totally suppress laughter that arouses from comicality, because jesting makes for the pleasant side of active life. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the capability of laughing is included among the social virtues, and people devoid of the sense of humor are reckoned as lacking good manners. However, as usual, it is reason that imposes restrictions on our readiness to overdo jesting and laughing, so that they remain tactful and polished. Accordingly, the Stagiryte distinguishes the tasteful and moderate type of humor from the excessive one, which cannot be accepted as a social virtue.

In the *Poetics*, looking for the essence of humor and comicality and referring to Plato’s superiority theory, Aristotle states that in being amused by someone we are finding that person inferior in some way. However, “to find someone’s shortcomings funny, we must find them as relatively minor”,³¹ not harmful or disturbing. In like manner, the Stagiryte defined the essence of comedy: “Comedy, as we have said, is a representation of inferior people, not indeed in the full sense of the word bad, but the laughable is a species of the base or ugly. It consists in some blunder or ugliness that does not cause pain or disaster, an obvious example being the comic mask which is ugly and distorted but not painful”.³² In his opinion, contrary to tragedy whose characters are average or better than average, comedy presents subjects of lesser virtue than the audience. Here we despise the characters, since they are shown as in some way inferior to us. The “ludicrous”, according to Aristotle, is “that is a failing or a piece of ugliness which causes no pain of destruction”.³³ The distanced and minimized evil shown in comedy is unable of making any harm, and thus can be understood as fulfilling didactic purposes. It namely contains criticism of human weaknesses presented in an amusing way, and by means of entertainment teaches to avoid them. So Aristotle, like Plato, brings ethical considerations of comicality to our attention again.

However, the aspect of Aristotelian humor theory which is closest to finding the logos-source of the phenomenon, is his concept of incongruity. According to John Morreall, Aristotle is the first to suggest the incongruity theory of humor,³⁴ later developed by numerous thinkers, including Cicero, Descartes, Hutcheson, Kant,

Schopenhauer or Bergson, and several contemporary humor researchers who provide modified versions based on the classical idea. Incongruity theories seem to be intellectually most promising, as they focus on the formal object of amusement, attempting to outline the distinguishing features of humor. These theories expose its paradoxical and quasi-cognitive character, the aspect that – at least partially – can satisfy the philosopher. In the view of theories belonging to this group, “what amuses us is some object of perception or thought that clashes with what we would have expected in particular set of circumstances”.³⁵ Generally speaking, incongruity theories are founded upon contrast and dialectically opposite sets of references.

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle states that the humorous effect is achieved by setting up a certain expectation in the audience and then surprising them with something they did not expect, delivering something “that gives a twist”. “The effect is produced even by jokes depending upon changes of the letters of a word; this too is a surprise. You find this in verse as well as in prose. The word which comes is not what the hearer imagined”.³⁶ Surprise evoked by contrast between the original line of reasoning on the side of listeners/readers with reference to the speech/text and its actual utterance induces special intellectual amusement. More universal implications of the described theory can be found in contrast between stereotypes resulting from culture, education and individual experience, and their non-conformity to the actual perceptions. By the feeling of amusement, this process leads to temporary suspension of one-track commonsensical approach to phenomena, offering an insight through the prism of dialectical relation between antithetical elements. Aristotle further explains that the surprise must somehow “fit the facts”,³⁷ or – to use the terms of the contemporary version of the theory – the incongruity must be capable of resolution. “The more briefly and antithetically such sayings can be expressed, the more taking they are, for antithesis impresses the new idea more firmly and brevity more quickly”.³⁸ We can compare the moment of surprise imposed by the wit to the freshness and suddenness of new discoveries in the field of any type of creativity. That is how the logos poetically operates, using brilliant antitheses and quick associations of opposed elements to evoke new perspectives of interpreting the unknown aspects of the familiar, to experience the flux between contradictory planes, to approach the dialectical fullness of being.

Let us quote Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s words again in this context: “The world horizons that our experiences open before us appear and vanish as our focus shifts. Yet the initial spontaneity of that consciousness’ emergence is not self-explanatory. It is not its own cause, neither does it carry its own ‘reason’”.³⁹ In the view of the theories of humor based on the notion of incongruity and contrast initiated by Aristotle, also the power of humor which opens new perspectives of vision and insight may be considered as emerging from the main stream of life energy which itself arises out of the primeval rational principle that surpasses the individual. Again, applying Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka’s theory, we can detect the universal metaphysical foundations of this specific absurd-like character of the individualization of *primordial positioning of life* within the logos itself. In Book I of *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life* we read: “Transcendental consciousness does, indeed, posit and objective world around us but one with established or now

being established forms, ways of proceeding. However, these recognized modalities and their very coming about are being existentially conditioned and have their roots not in themselves but within *the primordial positioning of life* and its individualization – positioning within an immense network of logicoic forces, schemata, and routes, of which human consciousness is but a constructive knot on a larger scale”.⁴⁰ Accordingly, discussing the essence of humor in the horizon of logos, we can conclude that the situations/the whole world projected or constituted by “the humorous consciousness” have their source in the powerful life differentiation of the logos itself, and symbolically point (indirectly and perversely) to its richness/fullness that seeks to find its outlet also in individuated creative paradoxes inherent in humor.

In the ancient Greek thought we find several insights that can be employed to the interpretation of humor origins in terms of logos. Though never developed into a comprehensive theory at the times, they have inspired further reflections over the universal logicoic foundations of the philosophically understood humor, with its playful form, cognitive shift and quite serious implications.

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NOTES

¹ Cf. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/humor/>.

² Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians*, trans. Richard Bett (Cambridge: CUP, 2005) http://assets.cambridge.org/052182/4974/frontmatter/0521824974_frontmatter.htm, VII, 133.

³ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I, *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009), p. xxxii.

⁴ Cf. *ibidem*, p. xxv: “The human quest for wisdom, for making sense of the things we believe on faith, is being pulled apart by the intellectual program of ‘deconstruction’, on the one hand, and by a revived religious distrust of reason, on the other”.

⁵ William James, *Problems of Philosophy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 11.

⁶ John Morreal, “Introduction”, in *The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor*, ed. John Morreal (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 2.

⁷ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, op. cit., p. xxvi.

⁸ Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), pp. 27–87.

⁹ Cf. Włodzimierz Sztorc, *Ironia romantyczna* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1992), p. 6.

¹⁰ Cf. David Wolfsdorf, “The Irony of Socrates”, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 65:2 (Spring 2007), p. 176.

¹¹ Hans Blumenberg, *Das Lachen der Thrakerin* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1987), p. 149.

¹² Seneca, *On Anger*, trans. John W. Basore, 2.10.5 (<http://www.morris.umn.edu/academic/philosophy/Collier/Intro%20to%20Philosophy/Seneca.pdf>).

¹³ Helmut Plessner, *Laughing and Crying: A Study of the Limits of Human Behaviour*, trans. J. S. Churchill & Marjorie Grene (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970).

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- 17 Ibidem, 816e.
- 18 Ibidem, 816e–817a.
- 19 Ibidem.
- 20 Plato, *Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey (Princeton, NJ: Hamilton & Cairns, 1961), 388e. pp. 633–634.
- 21 Plato, *Philebus*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, 48c, <http://www.greektxts.com/library/Plato/philebus/eng/786.html>.
- 22 James Wood, *Comedy, Laughter, and Malice in Plato's Philebus*, <http://apaclassics.org/images/uploads/documents/abstracts/Wood.pdf>.
- 23 Plato, *Philebus*, op. cit., 49c.
- 24 James Wood, op.cit.
- 25 Cf. ibidem.
- 26 Diogenes Laertius, *The Lives And Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. C.D. Yonge, Ch. VI. <http://fxylib.znufe.edu.cn/wgfjld/pw/diogenes/dldiogenes.htm>.
- 27 Ibidem.
- 28 Christoph Martin Wieland, *Nachlass des Diogenes von Sinope*, [in:] *Sämtliche Werke IV* (Hamburg: Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur, 1984), Vol. 13.
- 29 Diogenes Laertius, op.cit.
- 30 “. . . no animal but man ever laughs”, Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals*, trans. William Ogle, p. 77. <http://books.google.pl/books?id>.
- 31 John Morreall, *The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor*, op. cit., p. 14.
- 32 Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher, ch. 5, 1449a. <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.html>.
- 33 Ibidem, sections 3 and 7.
- 34 John Morreall, *Taking Laughter Seriously* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1983), p. 16.
- 35 John Morreall, *The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor*, op. cit., p. 6.
- 36 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, based on trans. by W. Rhys Roberts, <http://www2.iastate.edu/~honeyl/Rhetoric/rhet3-11.html#1412a>.
- 37 Ibidem. Cf. also <http://www.iep.utm.edu/humor/>.
- 38 Ibidem.
- 39 Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, op. cit., p. xxix.
- 40 Ibidem.

THE IDEAL AND THE REAL: BRIDGING
THE GAP

The inner life most gladly, most cheerfully, most devotedly wants to be the living bridge between our present life and the ideal life, the life that we want to have.

–Sri Chinmoy Kumar Ghose¹

A B S T R A C T

The ideal and the real represent a projection of human consciousness that appears to be in a state of internal conflict. In fact, human consciousness itself might be said to inhabit a perennial interplay of the two. Whereas the result of this interplay can be by turns pleasure or sorrow, the two never appear to be completely reconciled. By tracing the identification of the real and the ideal – in the sense that they appear to the rational mind – in the art and philosophy of antiquity, this chapter attempts to clarify their meaning and proposes that they converge in art. Here art acts as a vehicle of another, transcendent and unified consciousness that is sometimes termed as ‘spiritual’.

The quote above deserves careful consideration, not least as regards the phrase “the inner life”, and its connotation of spirituality. If seen in a particular way, I would say that art is essentially a ‘spiritual’ pursuit. If we can for the moment suspend our preconceptions of these words, and allow art to fold into the same undefined area that is implied above by the “inner life”, in what way and in what sense, then, does or can art bridge the gap between the ideal and the real?

First of all, we have to know what we mean by the real, and what we mean by the ideal. In human life, it seems the ideal is a vision of what reality should be – according to our deepest desires and aspirations. The real is what *actually is*. The ideal appears to be projected either in the future, as yet un-manifest, or in the remote past and therefore not immediately available to us. The real exists either in the actual present, or in the known experience of the past. The ideal is always to come, or perhaps to come again; the real is imminently now, irretrievably past, or a probability of the future.

But, in point of fact what we term the ‘real’ is actually also a projection – just as much as is the ideal: if we stop to consider for a moment what we mean by ‘real’ or ‘actual’ we find that it is not so easy to grasp, or even to define. Of course, we *think* we know what we mean, but that *thinking* – on closer examination – can be misleading, to say the least. This point of doubt about our relation to the ‘real’ world – and the consequential search for truth – is what forms the basis of rationalism, from Plato to Descartes, to Husserl – and is arguably the basis of philosophy as a whole.

But if the real is subject to doubt, then what of the ideal? Surely it must be more so, since it is already in retreat from pragmatic realism; and just as the real may prove difficult to define, then by the same token the ideal in comparison is so simple it cannot hope to represent any truth for the rational mind? Well, not quite so: if we care to look at the ancient origins of our rational philosophy, the ideal is there – standing side by side with reasoned dialectic. And it is an extremely difficult notion to shake off, or to ignore, even for the most rational of minds. For far from being diametrically opposed to rational thought, what we call the ideal is actually fundamental and integral to the way that thought constructs itself. This is something that has been explored by writers such as Derrida and Levinas,² and it reveals a deeper significance to the idea of the ideal, and its relationship to the real, than might be assumed superficially, or in the first instance.

My purpose here is not to delve into the psychology of the ideal – much as that would be a fascinating project in itself – for I am not well versed in psychology. Rather, I would like to approach the psychological and philosophical tension between these two – the ideal and the real – through an examination of how they interact through the medium of art, thereby not only (and not merely) grounding the dialectic in a ‘case’ such as art, but *a fortiori* attempting to show at the same time why art is a singularly unique and invaluable instrument of human progress and fulfilment.

A B A D H I S T O R Y

Many people would argue that there is no need for the ideal: indeed, we would be much better off without it. For there can be no doubt that it has been the cause of much trouble. One only has to consider some of the political, social, and religious ideals of the last few centuries and their catastrophic impact upon the real world to be tempted to renounce idealism altogether. But like it or not, the ideal continues to play a large part in human life. It is in fact integral to everything we do. We pursue the ideal every day in so many ways that we are hardly aware of. We cannot help projecting our wishes and desires into our actions, from the simplest to the grandest project. For example: ideally, I will give a very interesting presentation, everything will go smoothly, there will be no technical problems, and the audience will be quietly enthralled. This is an ideal. And that pattern is repeated in many of our projected actions and situations. Then of course, we know from experience that reality has a habit of not performing in an ideal way, and so we come up with contingency plans – just in case. But there can be no escaping the fact that what we are pursuing is a form of the ideal. It is an *idea of perfection*, of things as we would like or wish them to be, and as we think they could or should be – if only reality would co-operate.

So we can see that the ideal is linked to *perfection*. In this sense, idealism actually is amoral – a criminal, for example, might see his ideal as the perfect crime. Nevertheless down through the ages, idealism and perfection have been linked, and perfection inextricably bound up with the idea of ‘the good’: unfortunately, what

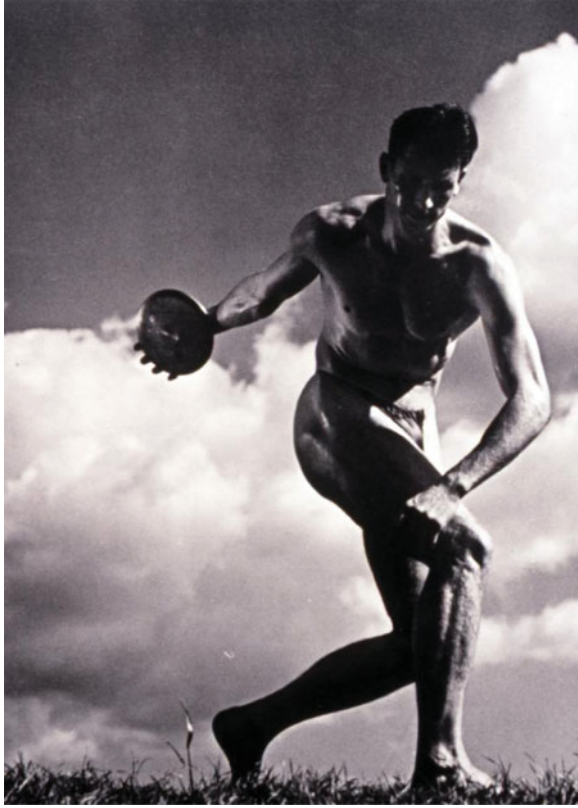


Chen Yan Ning. 1972. *Chairman Mao Visits Guangdong Countryside*

we have found is that what appears to be good for some turns out to be very bad for others.

Communism and Fascism, for example, were constructed around ideals. Both considered their respective idealism to be innately ‘good’, although they declared themselves poles apart, and both proved disastrous for the majority of people affected by them. This can often be the result of trying to put the ideal into practice, of trying to impose it upon the real. Reality, on the other hand, might sometimes appear good, and sometimes bad. But it never appears to be perfect – at least not for very long – and so we are invariably, and ultimately, dissatisfied with it.

In speaking of the ideal and the real, we are willingly or unwillingly drawn back to Plato. In the *Republic* he set out his thoughts on the ideal society. And the spirit of this great work of philosophy has throughout history inspired many to attempt the implementation of ideals in the political and social circumstances of their time, with varying degrees of success and failure. Plato, however, was not a politician, but a writer and philosopher. Key to his notion of the ideal republic is the idea of the “philosopher-king”. This idea pre-supposes wisdom and goodness in those ultimately responsible for the welfare of the republic. The reason for this is that without wisdom and goodness the republic, as envisaged by Plato, would begin to fall apart. They are the glue that keeps it together. The “King” represents the rule of law, of virtue, and the “Philosopher” wisdom and goodness. For Plato the virtues of wisdom and goodness are non-negotiable, even – it might be argued – undemocratic: nor are they, however, a ‘divine right’. They are, like reason itself, ‘absolutes’ outside of space and time and therefore beyond human fallibility, but not beyond human understanding. Now, this very absolutism if misconstrued or misappropriated, can become the cause of unimaginable mischief – as we well know. It is important, therefore, that wisdom and goodness remain true ‘ideals’ in the Platonic sense: i.e. they are beyond material form. If that is the case they cannot be appropriated under



The illustration shown here is from the Leni Riefenstahl film *Olympia* (1938). Paradoxically, and unlike *Triumph of the Will*, this film is *not* notable for Nazi ideals. It is idealistic in its treatment of the modern Olympics as an event of international friendship and human achievement. Its stunning photography focuses on all the athletes, including beautiful sequences of the black American Jesse Owens

any circumstances in the material world: they are only visible through their ‘real’ and material effects. What is essential – and this is where materiality comes in – is to carefully and thoughtfully create the conditions under which they can ameliorate reality.

This is an idea that in its purest form also occurs in the history of India, and is represented in the national flag of that country: The great king Asoka was instrumental in combining temporal law with spiritual tenets, and his ‘wheel’ symbolises this convergence in the centre of the flag. It was evident in the rule of Charlemagne, and the English King Alfred. Similarly, it inspired Dante to dream of a blend of earthly government and divine wisdom in the Europe of his day. And it surfaced yet again in the founding principles of the republic of the United States of America, embodying a secular wisdom founded in humanism.

Now these examples might appear in themselves to be yet more manifestations of a present idealism, which is at best naively unrealistic and at worst decidedly

foolhardy or even dangerous: one simply has to dig deeper into the records to find that ‘reality’ does not match up to our cherished historical retrospective. But to my mind, in each case they are not so much ideal historical narratives as figural prototypes of an attempted *balance* of the phenomena of the ideal and the real, which is where their true value is to be found.

A QUESTION OF BALANCE

The problem with the ideal arises when we try to appropriate it, try to bring it into being. There are two reasons why this might fail.

First of all let us consider the ideal as Plato envisaged it. According to Plato what we take for the ‘real’ form is not truly real. True reality is Ideal Form. Taking his “couch”, (or “bed” as it is more popularly known) as an example, we can look at it from several different angles and find it is different each time. Whichever view we choose we find it cannot be the definitive form of the bed, as there are many other viewpoints showing different aspects.

Does a couch differ from itself according as you view it from the side or the front, or in any other way? Or does it differ not at all, in fact, though it appears different, and so of other things?³

It follows that the ideal form of the bed – the “one in nature” is not apparent. Therefore it would appear that the ideal form cannot actually be envisaged, or that it cannot be envisaged as form. He uses this analogy to illustrate the difference between ideal form and material form, and between art and truth.⁴ But the point is that in his view the ideal form cannot be made manifest, for as soon as it was it would no longer be ideal, and another ideal form would of necessity arise to take its place.

Of course, we can do away altogether with the notion of an ideal form of the bed: but this would mean that it cannot be ‘a’ bed since there is no definitive bed to base it upon, nor can it be the definitive ‘the’ bed since we know there is more than one form of bed in the world. It can of course be ‘this’ particular bed, perhaps the one and only ‘bed’ known to us at the time – but, again, we have seen that *in reality* it has no definitive viewpoint and its true form escapes us. Furthermore we are throughout relying upon the general concept of ‘bed’. Without the concept ‘bed’ the bed cannot be identified. This generality – ‘bed-ness’ or ‘of being a bed’ – is a notional and abstract one, but it is indispensable to our way of thinking. And it is fundamental to language. Even if we speak metaphorically – e.g. “she made a bed of the cold ground” – we have to admit of the concept ‘bed’. And this concept is difficult – if not impossible – to define.

This raises “the question of being” as Heidegger would have it.⁵ After Plato the question was not raised, but on the contrary – according to Heidegger – “forgotten”. ‘Being’ was *assumed* to be. From Aristotle onwards the simple nominal category ‘bed’ replaced the intuitive notion of ideal form that had underpinned Plato’s rational enquiry, and Plato’s ideal form was subsumed within Aristotle’s “form and substance”, which duality eventually led to numerous representations such as

material/immaterial, mind/body, subject/object, etc. It was following Heidegger's example that Derrida critiqued Plato, as the lynchpin of a way of thinking that has profoundly influenced and directed Western civilisation. In his essay *Khôra*⁶ Derrida seizes upon a doubt in Plato's mind. This doubt is to whether or not everything can be divided between the "sensible" and the "intelligible", as Plato's mode of enquiry had otherwise almost invariably led him to believe. In the middle of the *Timaeus*, dividing in two a discourse itself composed of *logos* and *mythos*,⁷ Plato muses on a possibility beyond both ideal and physical form that is inexplicable and irreducible in terms of pure dialectic. It is the "khôra", a place – according to Derrida – that is not a place, "an apparently empty space – even though it is no doubt not *emptiness*"⁸ – which nevertheless at once both encompasses and is independent from everything else. It has to be so in order – logically – for the contingencies of rational thought to exist at all. Plato likens it to a "mother" or "receptacle", using language that is unique to this particular dialogue of the *Timaeus*. So here, at last, there is a link between two opposites such as the 'sensible' and the 'intelligible', 'truth' and 'opinion' – something that binds them into the same system, and as Derrida frequently points out, puts into question their constant prioritising. One can read this – and I think that Derrida intends it to be read so – to mean that there is another way, within and beyond the bi-polarities of thought, in which truth is revealed.

Now, this 'other' way might immediately be mistaken for a new ideal, or at the very least a different 'take' on life. There is always that danger. But the danger of misappropriation is quickly obviated if we remember that this 'other', this different 'take', occupies an "empty" space where thought has lost its autonomy in its very source, and we are empowered to renounce all bi-polarities in favour of what might be called *oneness*. It must include everything. If this indefinable space – which Plato called "khôra" – is in fact the source of everything, how can it possibly reject anything?

The second – and connected – reason why an ideal does not work in reality is that if we are looking for a peg to fit into a square hole, it has to be a square peg. Similarly, if we are looking for an ideal to apply to reality, to nature, there is only one that will do. It must conform to nature. It cannot be one of countless creations of the mind, aloof and ultimately divisive. It must come from beyond the mind, having oneness as its core. As we shall see, this oneness begins by accepting reality as it is, and ends by transforming it into infinite possibilities. In this way reality – and nature – can recognize and welcome the ideal as their true complement, present yet absent from time immemorial. Our view of reality and nature is transformed and transcended.

ART AND THE IDEAL

Now – in my opinion – the same principle holds true in and through art. We have seen many instances of the ideal in art. The ancient Greeks are usually associated with bringing the ideal into Western art. In fact, our modern concept of the

ideal may well begin with Greece. For when we look at classical Greek art, we are encountering an attempt to bring rationality and the ideal into sculpture and architecture. The Greeks saw mathematics as part of the *logos* that underpinned the entire universe, the inner world as well as the outer. They used mathematics to arrive at ideal proportions in architecture, and then transcended the maths in order to enhance their designs with a beauty beyond calculation. They sought to bring proportional perfection into being, and their sculpture of the human form also reflected this. They appeared to see in the human form its divine possibilities, in terms of beauty and proportion, and this they attempted to visualise through art – as if art were a bridge between the human and the divine, between the real and the ideal. (It must be remembered that they also sought to achieve this harmony, beauty, and proportion through physical exercise, careful grooming, and graceful attire and we can only assume that they – like us – came in all shapes and sizes and degrees of beauty [or not] in the real world).



Athens, Greece. 447–431 BC. *Parthenon*. Myron. c 450 BC. *Diskobolos* (Roman Copy). Museo delle Terme, Rome

So we can see this kind of Greek art in two ways. On the one hand, it aspires to an arguably impossible ideal: but on the other it has undoubtedly glimpsed within the real the possibility of innate beauty, like the shadow or echo of something more perfect. It is as if each thing in its naturalness were endowed with a beauty and perfection that is part and parcel of its reality, if only we could see it. The universe is composed of balance and proportion. So the real in a way inspires the ideal, which in turn inspires the real. Here, beauty comes initially from truth, and then aspires to perfection – to the ideal. So that, perhaps,

Beauty is not truth, but Truth is beauty.⁹

Thus the Greeks strove for an ideal of perfection in their artistic rendition of the human form. But – if we discount for the moment possible communication with the gods – where else could they have glimpsed that perfection except in the imperfect *human* form they saw around them? Like Plato, they seemed aware of a higher

perfection, of which the quotidian is a distant, dim, but nonetheless true reflection. This glimpse of perfection and the urge to realise it and embrace it may be the phenomenon we call ideal beauty. It is Pygmalion's dream, though alas we have no Aphrodite to fulfil our desire. But the fact remains that the ideal exists in the human imagination, inspired in part through contact with the real world.

From Greek art of the Classical period, then, we get the feeling that the ideal is something real; that it is possessed of a real existence – though perhaps hidden – within nature. It is in this period also that we find the stirring of *pathos*, where human feeling is realized and expressed in a subtle and refined way, as if that feeling has become important in its subjectivity, thus elevating its subject – mankind – in a spirit of self-reflective empathy and sympathy.¹⁰



Greek. West Pediment, Temple of Zeus at Olympia. c 460 BC. *Hippodamia Attacked by a Centaur*. Archeological Museum, Olympia

Feeling, and our compassion for it, tells us that we are capable of higher thoughts, higher emotions, and Greek sculpture tells us that the human form is somehow an expression of this latent, and inner, refinement. This greatest gift of nature enables man to achieve the highest and noblest ideal: that is, he can recognize the other's feelings, and even place them before his own. He can become selfless. This strain of self-reflection, acute observation, empathy with and sympathy for the world around us is integral to the development of art.

A similar feeling occurs when we experience landscape. From where does the pastoral image – so revered in ancient times – derive its delight? Why do we love to hear birds singing, to see the sun shining on fields and rustic lanes?



John Constable. 1821. *The Hay Wain*. National Gallery, London (Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

What distant country does it remind us of? Whence springs the ideal notion of Arcadia, even in the person untutored in the classics or ignorant of the history of painting? Is it racial memory; conditioned consciousness; cultural heritage; genetic programming; or does it remind us of something within ourselves – perhaps even an *inner* country – that we have only partially glimpsed from time to time in the outer world? If this is the case, why is it there, waiting to be discovered within?

When we look at traditional Oriental art, on the other hand, we see another side of the same coin. Here nature seems to already contain the beauty and perfection that the artist wants to communicate. The ideal, in the sense of perfection, is actually already there within the real trees and mountains. We know that nature is transient. But in Oriental art nature – or reality – is perfect not despite the fact of its apparent spontaneity and transience, but – on the contrary – *because of it*. Perfection is integral, and exists within the passing moment.

This is also true of the artistic gesture – the brushstroke, the textured line, the flow of colour – elements of oriental art that can also be traced in that of the West. They are the imprint of an otherwise un-manifest beauty: perfection in imperfection, the intelligible in the sensible, the meaningful in the meaningless, form in substance, the ideal in the real, the infinite in the finite.



Lu Yan Shao. 1980. *Mountain and Clouds*



Clyfford Still. 1948. *1948 C*. Hirshorn Museum

W A Y T O G O

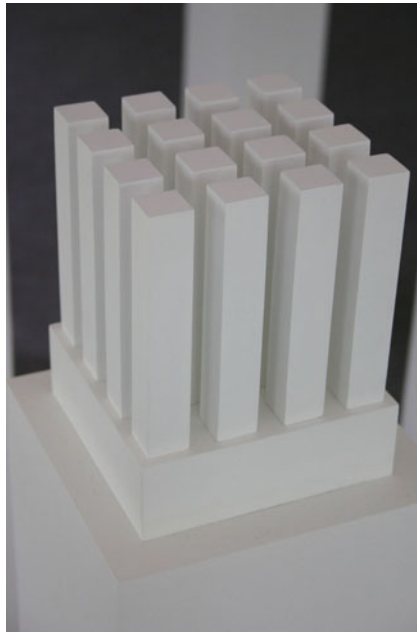
So art can, like “spirituality”, be a bridge between the real and the ideal. Indeed, art is essentially ‘spiritual’ in that sense. (Let us be careful here not to ascribe to ‘spirituality’ the attributes of yet another misleading ideal out of touch with the real. True spirituality is anything but this, and we must use the word carefully and wisely). Art, like spirituality, cannot – or should not – be appropriated. In fact it must be marked by its absence of appropriation. Art is ultimately indeterminate in terms of its practical meaning, whilst rich in meaning of a deeper kind. This very indeterminateness contains a “more” than what is presented materially or empirically in the artwork, or its narrative. Art is not rational in the sense that it can be expressed in terms of the opposites we have already discussed – truth/opinion, sensible/intelligible etc. The ideal that art superimposes upon the real is indefinable. Unlike a static transcendent such as a fixed notion of beauty imposed from without, art’s ‘ideal’ is somehow already integrated within its real form.

... the more is not simply the nexus of the elements, but an other, mediated through this nexus and yet divided from it. The artistic elements suggest through this nexus what escapes it (...) It is not through a higher perfection that artworks separate from the fallibly existent but rather by becoming actual (...) they are not the other of the empirical world: everything in them becomes other.¹¹

When quoting Adorno it helps to remember that Marx saw the ideal arising from the material, and not the other way round as in Hegel. Adorno developed this theme to a very fine degree, where it is no longer identifiable even as “spirit”, becoming something beyond description, even beyond language, but somehow tangible

through materiality in its subtler forms of literature, music and art. But in order to be what it is, and to escape the appropriation of quotidian thought, art makes use of paradox, irony, and ambiguity, to double back upon itself as its own ineffable “other”, in a conscious gesture of self-erasure.

Where does this leave us regarding the ideal and art? Derrida often speaks about a “democracy to come”¹² in his examination of the political. This essentially means that democracy as a system has – in reality – yet to dawn anywhere on earth. Government of the people, for the people, and by the people seems a mathematical impossibility. It is also, as Derrida rightly observes, the only system that opens itself to critique as part of its nature. It is this essential fragility that gives it strength – a seeming impossibility. But in fact the impossibility of true democracy means that it is “forever on the move”, and the *promise* of its coming, either today or tomorrow, is actually its life and its essence. But it will never fully arrive (or will it?).



Brian Grassom. 2006. *City of Dreams*

It is the same with art. Art is forever on the move, and the artist knows this instinctively. It’s ‘on the move-ness’ is integral to art, even when the work is static, a finished article. Art never grasps the ideal: that is always just out of reach, like Pygmalion’s wish. But it awakens in us the ability to realise in its imperfection, in its movement and in its transience, the infinity, eternity and immortality that we are consciously or unconsciously seeking, and find that their creative reality lives within

us – spontaneously – from moment to moment. In this sense it is a “bridge between the ideal and the real”.

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NOTES

¹ Sri Chinmoy Kumar Ghose, from “True Spirituality and the Inner Life”, a talk given at North Dakota University, October 25th 1974.

² Derrida’s notion of *différance* is a way of thinking the replacement – without presence – of the ideal of “presence” within text. Levinas similarly critiqued the “ideal of reason” as a self-perpetuating device of reason itself. See, for example, Derrida, J., *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. A. Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 25–26; and Levinas, E., *Totality and Infinity*, trans. A. Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969), p. 33. Levinas speaks in this instance of the “desire for the invisible” or the “absolutely other”.

³ Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey, 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann LTD., 1935), Vol. II, Book X, p. 431. I have used this particular translation here, which differs from the better known one by Benjamin Jowett (see Note 7 below), as a point of interest. Jowett uses “reality” for “fact”, and “bed” for “couch”, but the meaning is the same.

⁴ However, Plato does not tell us what he means by “in fact”: this seemingly unassuming phrase is glossed over, not defined, an *a priori* assumption, and this is important because “fact” or “reality” thus behaves in the text in the same way as ideal form, which he insists cannot be made visible. So, the “fact” of the bed – its reality according to reason – although intuitively perceived, is, like ideal form, not available to the material senses. It is, in modern parlance, an ‘abstraction’ and therefore essentially an ideal form as opposed to a reality. Of course, Plato was convinced of the primacy of mathematics, and if this were a mathematical problem the “fact” of the bed might be much like the solution to an abstract equation. Indeed, a geneticist might argue that Plato was taking the first tentative steps towards a purely scientific view of life. But pure mathematics, although derived from nature, is in itself abstraction and does not answer the fundamental problem of the bed’s “apparent” reality as experienced in nature by human consciousness. Neither would mathematics use such language as the “unique” bed “that God produces” (*ibid.* pp. 429, 427). This dichotomy in Plato’s work, between the rational and the intuitive, between *logos* and *mythos* is frequently and lovingly exploited by Derrida.

⁵ Heidegger, M., *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie/E. Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), p. 2.

⁶ Derrida, J., “Khora”, in: *On the Name*, trans. D. Wood/J. P. Leavey/I. McLeod (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 89–127.

⁷ Plato, “Timaeus”, in: *Dialogues*, trans. B. Jowett (Chicago: William Benton, 1952), [52], p. 457. Socrates asks Timaeus to give his account of the nature of the universe and it’s creation. About halfway through this curious mix of reason and myth, “khora” is introduced.

⁸ Derrida, J., *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁹ Sri Chinmoy Kumar Ghose, *Meditations: Food for the Soul* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 53.

¹⁰ See Janson, H. W., *History of Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), p. 131.

¹¹ Adorno, T. W., *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. R. Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 1997), pp. 79, 81.

¹² Derrida, J., *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans P. Brault/M. Nass (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 78–92.

HISTORICITY, NARRATIVE
AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MONSTROSITY
IN JOHN GARDNER'S *GRENDEL*

A B S T R A C T

The relationship between history and narrative has always been a subject of controversy among philosophers, historians and literary theorists. Is narrative the indispensable component of history? What is the function of narrative in history? How does history represent human experience with the narrative function? Is historical narrative imitation or reproduction of the past? What is the role of the historian and his constructive imagination in history writing? This article discusses these questions in the context of a literary text, Gardner's *Grendel*, which is a re-writing of the Old English epic *Beowulf*, and with reference to phenomenological and Kantian ideas of history, narrative, the self, and imagination. Relying mainly on Hayden White, Louis Mink, and Paul Ricoeur's ideas of history and narrative, the present article concludes that history is a reproduction of past actuality instead of an imitation of it. Thus, in the article the term history-making is preferred instead of history writing and history-making is regarded as bearing close resemblance to story-making. The chapter studies *Grendel* against this philosophical background in terms of how narrative plays a symbolizing, form-giving tool for consciousness in historicizing human experience and how heroism and monstrosity are historical, ideational constructs on which human experience is founded.

Historicity and its positioning of the individual subject and the society into spatio-temporal context through narrative are much debated issues in phenomenological research. The symbolic/pattern-making function of the human mind, its structuring fragments of experience into meaningful wholes and thus locating the self within history and time by "telling" it have been some of the major concerns of phenomenology. From Husserl to Heidegger and Ingarden, to Paul Ricoeur, Hayden White, Louis Mink, and David Herman, philosophers of history, theorists of narrative, and phenomenologists have discussed the indispensable relationship between narrative and history and their construction of the self as both itself and not itself. They have elaborated on the made-up and ideational world of history brought about by the narrative function and on the way the self is defamiliarized in narrative and history. Husserl thought that "the ego constitutes itself for itself, so to speak, in the unity of *Geschichte*,"¹ and saw historicity as the result of the intentional act of consciousness and its effort of creating a historical self by locating phenomenal experience into time. This idea of Husserl is a good point of departure for the argumentation of this chapter and requires further elaboration, which the present chapter

aims to do. It also poses questions about the relationship between historicity and consciousness and how narrative functions as a cognitive tool for historicizing human experience. This chapter aims to study the relationship between narrative and history, and the pattern-making, metaphorizing and defamiliarizing function of narrative in history. With the supposition that authors of literature have always benefited from or been influenced by philosophy when writing their works and that literature has always played an important ground for philosophical investigations, this chapter discusses the above-mentioned philosophical issues in the context of a literary work, John Gardner's *Grendel*. The chapter studies *Grendel* in terms of how narrative plays a symbolizing, form-giving tool for consciousness in historicizing human experience and how heroism and monstrosity are historical, ideational constructs on which human experience is founded. Gardner's novel is studied not only for exemplifying the tenets of the philosophy of phenomenology concerning history-making, narrative, and the self but also to extend the discussion of these issues to the study of historical narrative construction in literature.

In the first volume of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* the German neo-Kantian philosopher Ernst Cassirer argues that "[c]onsciousness is a symbolizing, 'form-giving activity'"² which "does not merely copy but rather embodies an original formative power. It does not express passively the mere fact that something is present but contains an independent energy of the human spirit through which the simple presence of the phenomenon assumes a definite 'meaning', a particular ideational content."³ Thus, the existence of social phenomena depends, as Kant argues, on the purpose of the human mind conceiving it, that is, on the determining will of the subject; social phenomena is "the correlate of the 'I think' or of the unity of consciousness; it is the expression of the *cogito*."⁴ The father of phenomenology, Husserl, also saw consciousness as central in the perception of phenomena, though, differently from Kant's categorizing and all-pervading mind, he studies the conscious processes of phenomenal experience and thus bridges between subject and object. In *Ideas: A General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1913) Husserl studies the structures of experience as they are represented in consciousness and explores in depth how the conscious world of the perceiver acts in the physical world of objects. With his idea of "intentionality," a crucial term in his philosophy and meaning the directedness of consciousness towards its object in experience, Husserl explicates the way consciousness works in the process of the structuration of experience.

Narrative is a cognitive tool through which consciousness *symbolizes* or *structures* the human experience of time. It is "a pattern-forming cognitive system" that functions "to connect and integrate certain components of conscious content over time into a coherent ideational structure."⁵ It is "a system for structuring any time-based pattern into a resource for consciousness, making it possible for cultural as well as natural objects and phenomena to assume the role of cognitive artifacts to begin with."⁶ Stories tell about the actions of intelligent agents that are situated within a world together with the objects they act upon. In this respect, telling a story necessitates, in the words of David Herman, "modeling, and enabling others to model, an emergent constellation of spatially related entities."⁷ Narrative thus operates as an

instrument of mind in the construction of reality, and entails a cognitive process of assigning referents a spatio-temporal position in the storyworld. It provides "crucial representational tools facilitating humans' efforts to organize multiple knowledge domains, each with its attendant sets of beliefs and procedures."⁸

Taken on this ground, studying narrativity is to investigate social phenomena as a "world-spanning" network of relations taking place in the mind of the teller. The teller creates this network of relations by the cognitive activity of emplotment, which for the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, is the essence of narrative. To delve further into this idea, we should linger more on Ricoeur because his idea of *mimesis* and metaphor carries us to the vantage point of this chapter. Ricoeur brings a new dimension to the role played by the subject in the construction of human experience relying on Aristotle's idea of *mimesis* and Kant's idea of "schematizing a synthetic operation." Ricoeur's idea is important in that it points to the subjective, cognitive and metaphorical base of not only Aristotle's idea of *mimesis* but also all literary and linguistic creations. In *The Rule of Metaphor*⁹ Ricoeur states that Aristotle defines tragedy as "the imitation of human action." However, it is an imitation that elevates, magnifies and ennobles this action. In this regard, Ricoeur argues that for Aristotle *mimesis* is *poiesis*, that is, construction or creation. With *mythos* (plot) it becomes a rearrangement of human action into a more coherent form and with *lexis* (poetic language) a structuring that elevates this action. Thus, *mimesis* is something that composes and constructs the very thing it imitates. In this regard, *mimesis* is an imitation that has a double reference: a reference to reality and a self-reference, a representation of human action and a construction of that action. So, the reference of tragedy to reality is not a direct one but a "suspended" one.

Relying on Aristotle's *mimesis* and Kant's "schematizing a synthetic operation," and studying Augustine's *Confessions* and Heidegger's "within-timeness," Ricoeur concludes that human experience is characterized by discordance. The constructive imagination brings concord to this "aporia" by way of what he calls "predicative assimilation", that is, by seeing the similar in the dissimilar.

Literature, in narrative form, brings concord to this "aporia" by means of the invention of the plot. Narrative, to which Ricoeur devotes a great deal of his work, is a synthesis of heterogenous elements, a gathering-up of events and incidents "as widely divergent as circumstances encountered while unsought," a concord created out of the discord of experience, out of the divergent bits and pieces of experience. Like metaphor, narrative is a "semantic innovation" in which something new is brought into the world by means of language. Instead of describing the world, it redescribes it. Just as metaphor is the capacity of "seeing as," narrative opens us to the realm of the "as if." It attaches to the events of the world a form they do not otherwise have. Emplotment, the core feature of narrative, is thus a "grasping together," a patterning of experience, and it is one of the main functions of the imagination. It is a cognitive tool of making sense of experience and of making life plausible. In this regard, the way fragments of experience are organized in the process of emplotment depends on the plotting imagination, that is, on the story-maker.

The narrative kernel and thus the truth-claim and fictionality of history are much discussed issues by philosophers of history. There is a general agreement among

philosophers of history that narrative is the core component of history. However, since narrative presents, as discussed above, a distorted picture of the events it relates, the truth-claim of history and the levels of fictionality and distortion in it are frequent objects of discussion. So, philosophers usually discuss historical narrative with an effort of distinguishing it from fictional narrative. Louis Mink, for instance, argues that historiography can be differentiated from fiction with its truth-claim and point of common sense; “historiography consists of narratives which claim to be true, while fiction consists of imaginative narratives for which belief and therefore truth-claims are suspended.”¹⁰ Differently from fictional narratives, in historical narrative the historian “does not invent but discover, or attempts to discover;” “the story of the past needs only to be communicated, not constructed.”¹¹ However, Mink stresses that historical narrative is “a matter of fallible inference and interpretation”¹² because “narrative form in history, as in fiction, is an artifice.”¹³ As historical, he argues, historical narrative “claims to represent, through its form, part of the real complexity of the past, but as narrative it is a product of imaginative construction, which cannot defend its claim to truth by any accepted procedure of argument or authentication.”¹⁴

In his analysis of historical narrative Ricoeur also begins his discussion by underlining the truth-claim factor of historical narratives. However, seeing emplotment as the characterizing feature of also historical narrative and attaching the synthesizing imagination of the historian a crucial role in history-making, he sees the story of the past in historical narrative not just as something communicated, but, to a large extent, as something constructed. Drawing on Aristotle’s *mimesis*, Heidegger’s and Augustine’s concepts of time, and Kant’s idea of synthesizing imagination, he arrives at the conclusion that history is a kind of narration in which the past, the present and the future are synthesized and our temporal experience shaped. In “The Narrative Function” he states, “to be historical, I shall say, an event must be more than a singular occurrence: it must be defined in terms of its contribution to the development of a plot.”¹⁵

He defines history as a narration that describes a sequence of actions and experiences in two dimensions: chronological and configurational. For Ricoeur, the first may be called “the episodic” or sequential dimension. This dimension characterizes the story as made out of events. The second dimension is “the configurational one, according to which the plot construes significant wholes out of scattered events;”¹⁶ it is to “grasp together successive events. . .to extract a configuration from a succession.”¹⁷ To explain the configurational dimension, Ricoeur employs Kant’s idea of “reflective judgment” and states that the narrative operation in historicizing human action has the character of a judgment because to locate an event in historical time is not only to follow episodes but also “to reflect upon events with the aim of encompassing them in successive totalities.”¹⁸

As in all other symbolic forms, in history, too, the “telling” subject and its imagination play a crucial role in history-making. Ricoeur concludes that “the historicity of human experience can be brought to language only as narrativity. . .For historicity comes to language only so far as we tell stories or tell history.”¹⁹ This process is not

a naïve one; as Richard Kearney puts it, it “involves ‘the representative function of the imagination.’”²⁰ In history events are manipulated and given some form by the historian’s productive imagination. Ricoeur states, “by telling stories and writing history we provide ‘shape’ to what remains chaotic, obscure, and mute. . . historical narrative and fictional narrative *jointly* provide not only ‘models of’ but ‘models for’ articulating in a symbolic way our ordinary experience of time.”²¹ The historian does this by selecting only those events that, in his estimation, should not be forgotten and structures them in narrative order. Moreover, he highlights the events that he thinks memorable and overshadows those that should be forgotten. In this regard, the act of narrating history is a “schematizing” and “synthetic” operation in which “dissimilar” events are “configured.”

A philosopher of history who most openly stresses the “constructed” and fictional character of historical narratives is Hayden White. In “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact” White criticizes Northrop Frye’s idea that the historical is the opposite of the mythical and argues that mythos is not the opposite of historical narrative but inherent to it. He states, “histories gain part of their explanatory effect by their success in making stories out of mere chronicles.”²² Similar to Ricoeur, he uses the term “emplotment” to explicate the way historians make stories of a past event. White defines emplotment as “the codification of the facts contained in the chronicle as components of specific *kinds* of plot structures.”²³ He discusses that in their efforts to make sense of historical record, which is fragmentary and always incomplete, historians have to make use of what R. G. Collingwood calls “the constructive imagination,” which is much like Kant’s *priori* imagination and Ricoeur’s predicative imagination. The constructive imagination makes events into a story “by the suppression or subordination of certain of them and the highlighting of others, by characterization, motific repetition, variation of tone and point of view, alternative descriptive strategies, and the like—in short, all of the techniques that we would normally expect to find in the emplotment of a novel or a play.”²⁴ He presents that no historical event is intrinsically tragic or inherently comic or ironic. The mode of emplotment—that is, whether it is comic, tragic, romantic, ironical, and so on—depends upon “the historian’s decision to configure them according to the imperatives of one plot structure or mythos rather than another.”²⁵ The cultural heritage of the “audience” of the historian plays a crucial role in the way the historian emplots past events. White stresses that “the encodation of events in terms of various plot structures is one of the ways that a culture has of making sense of both personal and public pasts.”²⁶ Events which appear strange, enigmatic, incomplete, and implausible are encoded in culturally provided categories by the historians. In short, the unfamiliar events take a familiar kind of configuration and events are “rendered comprehensible by being subsumed under the categories of the plot structure in which they are encoded as a story of a particular kind.”²⁷

Coming closer to Ricoeur’s idea of imagination and metaphor, White asserts that historical narratives are metaphorical statements which suggest “a relation of similitude between such events and processes and the story-types that we conventionally use to endow the events of our lives with culturally sanctioned meanings.”²⁸

Dwelling further on this idea in “Historical Emplotment and the Problem of Truth,” he states,

Any figurative expression adds to the representation of the object to which it refers. Figuration produces stylization, which directs attention to the author and his or her creative talent. Next, figuration produces a “perspective” on the referent of the utterance, but in featuring one particular perspective, it necessarily closes off others.²⁹

All historical narratives, as such, “presuppose figurative characterizations of the events they purport to represent and explain.”³⁰ For this reason, histories are not only about events but also about the possible sets of relationships that those events can be demonstrated to figure. These sets of events are not immanent in the events themselves; “they exist only in the mind of the historian reflecting on them;” they are present as “the modes of relationships conceptualized in the myth, fable, and folklore, scientific knowledge, religion, and literary art, of the historian’s own culture.”³¹ This means that historical narratives can be characterized by the mode of figurative discourse in which they encode their objects of representation.

The idea of history as a narrative construct has been an object of criticism by some philosophers of history. For instance, David Carr criticizes Ricoeur, White, and Mink’s idea that historical narrative “is not imitative but creative of reality”³² and that narrative structure is an artificial, imposed form of ordering ascribed to our actual experience. Carr argues that narrative activity is a constitutive part of action and the events of life constitute “a complex structure of temporal configurations that interlock and receive their definition and their meaning from within action itself.”³³ Relying partly on Husserl’s idea of protension and retention, he says we grasp a configuration extending from the past to the present even in the relatively passive experience of hearing a melody.

In spite of the criticism to their almost total disregard of the truth-claim of history and to their view of history as more fictional than factual form, this study has elaborated more on Ricoeur, Mink, and White’s arguments because they present us with a theoretical framework to study historicity, narrativity, and the construction of the self in John Gardner’s *Grendel*. With their ideas of emplotment, imagination, metaphorization, and the “mythic” core of narrative, Ricoeur and White’s ideas are of particular importance for the purpose of this study.

John Gardner’s *Grendel*³⁴ represents how historicity and narrativity function to configure human experience and how this configuration serves for the foundation of a civilization. *Grendel* is a re-writing of the Old English epic *Beowulf* from the perspective of Grendel—the first known monster of English literature. As already known, the old English epic *Beowulf* begins during the climax of Grendel’s attacks on King Hrothgar’s meadhall. It is said that before these attacks King Hrothgar enjoyed a prosperous and successful reign. He built a great mead-hall, called Heorot, where his warriors can gather to drink, receive gifts from their lord, and listen to stories sung by the scop, or bards. The kingdom enjoyed peace and prosperity until Grendel began his attacks. However, the focal point of the epic is not Grendel’s attacks or the reasons behind these attacks. Attention is centered on Beowulf’s heroic

deeds, his rescue of Hrothgar by killing Grendel and his mother, and towards the end his slaying a dragon to save the Geats from its threats.

Relying on White and Ricoeur's ideas, we handle here the epic form as a historical narrative in which the mythic or epic side overshadows what Mink calls "past actuality." As said before, Ricoeur regarded *mimesis*, and thus literary and historical narratives, as having double-reference: self-reference and reference to external reality. This proposition is true for historical narratives with a strong claim for truth. However, in such narratives as the epic or myth, the self-reference is much more dominant than the other one. Signs of "past actuality" are almost lost in the "projected past" of such narratives. In the epic and myth the narrative world is defamiliarized and distanced from ordinary human experience by the plotting imagination to the extent that the ties connecting the two become almost totally invisible. While historical writings with a claim for truth focus on the conflicts between enemies and allies in the historical evolution of a civilization or a nation, in epical or legendary historical narratives the conflict is usually between heroes and monsters, between Apollo and Python, Perseus and the Gorgons, Siegfried and the dragon, and Beowulf and Grendel. The construction of the subject also changes from one historical narrative to the other. While the former constructs the nation and its allies by also constructing an enemy identifiable with temporal experience, the latter constructs a supernatural hero by also creating a monstrous counterpart.

In *Beowulf*, in the bard's historical narrative (because the first history-makers were usually harpers or bards) historical data are embroidered with mythic and supernatural elements; for instance, the foundation of Hrothgar's kingdom by his ancestors, the prosperity of the kingdom during Hrothgar's reign, and Beowulf's reign in the Geatland after the death of Hygelac—the ex-king of the land—are given side by side with such mythic and supernatural elements as Beowulf's heroic deeds, supernatural monsters and dragons. The historical data are even almost lost in the self-referential narrative concerning Beowulf's heroic deeds and fight with the monsters. Besides, though Beowulf is a late-comer in the history of Hrothgar's kingdom and of the war with Grendel, he is made by the harper's plotting imagination the central figure, the pros and cons of the history before him being almost totally overshadowed. Grendel, together with the dragon, is silenced throughout the narrative, and the reasons behind his fight with Hrothgar are not told. Thus, Grendel can be said to be the first outcast of English Literature as well as of the first known historical narrative of Britain.

Gardner's *Grendel* is a counter-narrative to *Beowulf*, and it retells the *Beowulf* story from Grendel's point of view, making Beowulf not appear until the end of the novel, which is the actual place he deserved in the history of Hrothgar's civilization and in the war between Hrothgar and Grendel. In *Grendel*, it is told that Grendel, a large bearlike monster and the narrator of the novel, has spent the last twelve years locked in a war against a band of humans. The main action of the novel, like the Old English epic *Beowulf*, takes place in the last year of that war, but the novel skips back in time in order to illuminate the origins of the conflict as well as Grendel's personal history. The strategy of skipping back in time gives us, as readers, the opportunity to see the reasons of his war with men against the background of his personal history,

as opposed to the lacking and one-sided historical account presented in *Beowulf*. As Joseph Milosh says, unlike Grendel in *Beowulf*, Gardner's Grendel "is anything but a static character. He grows, passing through several initiations, evolving more than many a modern hero."³⁵ In his personal experience we learn that, as a young monster, Grendel lives with his mother in a cave on the outskirts of human civilization. A foul, wretched creature who long ago abandoned language, Grendel's mother is his only kin or companion. He is all alone in the world; he is neither an animal nor a human and thus he is excluded from both worlds. He says "I exist, nothing else;"³⁶ "I am a *lack*. *Alack!* No thread, no frailest hair between myself and the universal clutter;"³⁷ "I saw long ago the whole universe as not-my-mother, and I glimpsed my place in it, a hole."³⁸ He describes himself as "an alien, the rock broken free of the wall."³⁹

One day, the young Grendel discovers a lake full of firesnakes and, swimming through it, reaches the human world on the other side. He gets fascinated with the world of men as they speak his language and are thinking beings like him. As soon as he comes face to face with human beings, Grendel becomes aware that he is dealing with no dull mechanical animals but with pattern-makers, the most dangerous things he has ever met.⁴⁰ He watches from a safe distance as mankind evolves from a nomadic, tribal culture into a feudal system with roads, governments, and militaries. He eavesdrops and observes Hrothgar's hall, philosophizes on the human world, listens to bards' songs, sometimes attacks the thanes in the meadhall to take the revenge of his exclusion, and toys with them until Beowulf comes and kills him in the last two chapters.

The tales sung by a bard named the Shaper and Grendel's relationship with them are the main focus of this chapter. The Shaper occupies the most respectful position in Heorot and displaced all the other bards after his coming to the mead-hall. Listening to the tales sung by the Shaper, Grendel gets astounded by the pattern-making and creative imagination of the human beings and fears from this monstrous imagination. The Shaper plays the most crucial role in Hrothgar's civilization because, as his name signifies, he shapes the kingdom with his tales; he metaphorically establishes for the kingdom a socio-cultural value system and a historical identity based on heroism and on the creation of the monstrous other. In other words, he functions as the history-maker of the novel and creator of a belief-system in the kingdom. The Shaper sings of "battles and marriages, of funerals and hangings, the whimperings of beaten enemies, of splendid hunts and harvests," and "of Hrothgar, hoarfrost white, magnificent of mind."⁴¹ Emplotting human experience into history, he most of the time sings war songs. His harp mimicks "the rush of swords, clanking boldly with the noble speeches, singing behind the heroes dying words."⁴² Grendel says: "If the songs were true, as I suppose at least one or two of them were, there had always been wars, and what I'd seen was merely a period of mutual exhaustion."⁴³ He constructs a historical narrative in his songs as if there were nothing in human life other than wars and as if the experience without war, which Grendel sees, were not lived.

Reminiscent of Ricoeur's and White's definitions of historicity as the subjective location of being into time and as the configuration of human experience through

narrativity, Grendel says that the Shaper is the greatest of shapers, “harpstring scratchers;”⁴⁴ he is a shaper of the past, an “old heart-string scratcher, memory scraper,”⁴⁵ “always transforming the world with words.”⁴⁶ With his songs he has changed the world, “torn up the past by its thick, gnarled roots,” and “transmuted it.”⁴⁷ “He reshapes the world,” Grendel says, “he stares strange-eyed at the mindless world and turns dry sticks to gold.”⁴⁸ His songs consist of words “stitched together out of ancient songs, the scenes interwoven out of dreary tales, made a vision without seams,” and—reminding us of the phenomenological ideas mentioned above—he thus constitutes “an image of himself yet not-himself, beyond the need of any shaggy old gold-friend’s pay: the projected possible.”⁴⁹

Grendel knows that Hrothgar’s hall is built on bloodshed and destruction of nature, but the Shaper—“the blind selector” of historical events—tells tales as if no man in Hrothgar’s hall has ever hurt a living creature or “twisted a knife in his neighbour’s chest.”⁵⁰ Grendel questions the fictionality and the untruthfulness of the Shaper’s historical narrative throughout the novel. He is bewildered by the brutality of men and by their killing other living beings without any meaningful aim. He observes their *monstrosity* as they hack trees and build huts, kill cows, horses and men, and leave them to rot; they plunder lands, and whipped up the oxen to death while getting their piles of plunder to their land. He gets annoyed as he remembers what all men do to each other and to nature: “the ragged men fighting each other till the snow was red slush, whining in winter, the shriek of people and animals burning, the whip-slashed oxen in the mire, the scattered battle leavings: wolf-torn corpses, falcons fat with blood.”⁵¹

The gap between humans’ actual savagery and their false representation in the Shaper’s narratives can be best illustrated with [Chapter 4](#), when Grendel steps unknowingly on something fleshy as he approaches the meadhall as usual to eavesdrop the harper’s songs of “elevated human action.” He realizes that it is the corpse of a killed man. The clothes of the man are stolen. As if trying to show the untruthfulness of the Shaper’s songs, he slung the dead body upon his shoulder and approaches the meadhall. As he approaches the meadhall, he sees the Shaper singing as usual. Though Grendel comes to the full realization that humans are monstrous beings with their way of life and their savage attitudes to each other and other living beings, the Shaper is concerned with constructing in his historical narrative the glory and the untaintedness of human beings and the brutality and monstrosity of Grendel. Telling a tale also sung in *Beowulf* on Grendel’s origin, the Shaper relates that the earth was built long ago, that “the greatest of gods made the world, every wonderbright plain and the turning seas, and set out as signs of his victory the sun and moon, great lamps for land-dwellers, kingdom torches, and adorned the fields with all colors and shapes.”⁵² Hrothgar’s civilization was the centre of this phase of constant light until Grendel comes into being. Constructing Grendel in his historical narrative as the destroyer of this edenic state and associating him with Cain in biblical mythology, he tells that Grendel gave end to this state of paradise by beginning the first feud with his brother and thus among human beings; he relates that Grendel’s fight with his brother split all the world between darkness and light and identifies Grendel with the dark side, Cain. Though Grendel defeats Hrothgar’s men throughout the history

of Hrothgar's civilization, the Shaper establishes a heroic value system and tells how they fought Grendel, Cain, and all the other forces of evil gloriously, which, Grendel says, is a lie.

This tale that locates Grendel in historical time on the same line with Cain also takes place in *Beowulf*. In the Old English epic, it is said that the bards' songs in the meadhall angered Grendel, which is said just in passing and not elaborated on. When we observe the content of the songs in *Beowulf*, we see that they are all concerned with Grendel, posit him in historical time on the same level with Cain as the originator of all evil, and tell how he disturbed the Golden Age of humanity with his evil doings. Hence, it can be assumed that in both *Beowulf* and Gardner's novel Grendel's configuration in the bard's historical narrative as "monstrous" and as a descendant of Cain, even as Cain himself, seems to be the cause of his anger and the reason of his attacks. In a way, his attacks to Heorot in *Beowulf* and *Grendel* can be interpreted as a reaction to this religio-historical configuration.

Though Grendel is silenced in the old English epic, he voices his counter discourse to this religio-historical configuration in Gardner's novel. He states,

It was a cold-blooded lie that a god had lovingly made the world and set out the sun and moon as lights to land-dwellers, that brothers had fought, that one of the races was saved, the other cursed. Yet he, the old Shaper, might make it true, by the sweetness of his harp, his cunning trickery.⁵³

The Shaper's discourse is so effective that even Grendel himself is fascinated by it and begins to believe in his own monstrosity. He intrinsically begins to like hearing his monstrosity being told in the Shaper's narrative. "Though, they, vicious animals, cunning, cracked with theories, I wanted it, yes!" he says, "even if I must be the outcast, cursed by the rules of his hideous fable."⁵⁴ Being all alone in the disordered universe and leading a meaningless life, he is intrinsically delighted to be *meaningfully* constructed in the Shaper's narrative as "monstrous."

As Judy Smith Murr puts it in "John Gardner's Order and Disorder," "Grendel, symbolically the offspring of Cain, emerges from the underbelly of the world to confront mankind. . . The underground world of Grendel is dark, terrifying, and chaotic, but frightening and disordered than the above-ground of man."⁵⁵ He emerges from his underground world to find himself posited against myth, the myth that the world is ordered and that fact is transformed by song. Torn apart by poetry, "Grendel must face the search for meaning and balance."⁵⁶ After the magical effect of the Shaper's narrative, he is determined to find the connection between himself and the world even though "the world is a pointless accident,"⁵⁷ and in all his efforts he is but "spinning a web of words" between himself and all he sees.⁵⁸ Torn with internal conflict regarding his existence in the universe, he visits the Dragon—another outcast in the novel "cursed by the bards' hideous fables"—to find relief for his fallible condition and clarify his mind about the human world and its entangling narratives. The Dragon forms the philosophical core of the novel and plays a critical role in Grendel's thoughts and actions in the forthcoming chapters. He makes Grendel realize that he plays a constituent role in the human world because he makes humans define themselves and shape their world. The Dragon tells Grendel,

You improve them, my boy! You stimulate them! You make them think and scheme. You drive them to poetry, science, religion, all that makes them what they are for as long as they last. You are, so to speak, the brute existent by which they learn to define themselves.⁵⁹

Quite in accordance with the proposal in the theoretical framework of this chapter that the historian and story-teller bring order with their narratives to the chaotic human experience, the Dragon tells Grendel that the Shaper brings order with his narratives, configuring Grendel as the Absolute Enemy, the focal point on which he constructs the belief system and heroic values of his society. The reason for historical constructs is to be found in the human beings' effort to create established order and universe's refusal of "the deadening influence of complete conformity."⁶⁰

This is what leads Grendel to think towards the end of the novel that "all order. . . is theoretical, unreal—a harmless, sensible, smiling mask men slide between two great, dark realities, the self and the world—two snakepits."⁶¹ The Dragon criticizes human beings stating that they have "no total vision, total system;" they have "merely schemes with a vague family resemblance, no more identity bridges and, say, spiderwebs."⁶² They have no sense of connectedness; they take facts in isolation and when they come to connect them, "ands and buts are the *sine qua non* of all their achievement."⁶³ Their lives consist of "crackpot theories" and absurdities, and "they build the whole world out of teeth deprived of bodies to chew and be chewed on."⁶⁴ For the Dragon, this is the place where the Shaper saves them:

He provides an illusion of reality—puts together all their facts with a gluey whine of connectedness. Mere tripe, believe me. Mere sleight-of-wits. He knows no more than they do about total reality—less, if anything: works with the same old clutter of atoms, the givens of his time and place and tongue. But he spins it all together with harp runs and hoots, and they think what they think is alive, think Heaven loves them. It keeps them going.⁶⁵

Time, according to the Dragon, is an important tool for creating this illusion of reality based on artificial order and connectedness, but it also shows the impossibility of overcoming the absurdity of life. Though they emplot their experience by creating artificial beginnings and ends in their narratives, humans are unable to encompass all the fragments of experience in one pot, together with the beginning, the present and the end.

In this respect, causality, which is the main component of narrative, is only an imposition of order on actual human experience. In contrast to the causal time the Shaper creates in his narrative, real time is a flux because there is no time outside consciousness. Thus, the death of consciousness is the end of being and human time. The Dragon suggests, "pick an apocalypse, any apocalypse. A sea of black oil and dead things. No wind. No light. Nothing stirring. A silent universe. Such is the end of the flicker of time, the brief, hot fuse of events and ideas set off, accidentally, and snuffed out, accidentally, by man. Not a real ending of course, nor even a beginning. Mere ripple in Time's stream."⁶⁶ In this respect, as chronology in history is a human construct, there is no "Dark Ages" in history and thus no monstrous creature representing the darkness because "not that one age is darker than another."⁶⁷

Grendel comes to a full realization of his position in the Shaper's narratives after talking with the Dragon and becomes more aware of the absurdity of life. He learns

from the Dragon that human beings define themselves and make their lives meaningful by narrativizing him. Their existence depends on him, but he realizes that his own existence also depends on their narratives:

My enemies define themselves on me. As for myself I could finish them off in a single night, pull down the great carved beams and crush them in the meadhall, along with their mice, their tankards and potatoes—yet I hold back. I am hardly blind to absurdity. Form is function. What will we call the Hrothgar-Wrecker when Hrothgar has been wrecked.⁶⁸

He says that he existed alone before he knew human beings and the Shaper began to tell tales about him. Even his mother did not love him for himself, but for his “son-ness,” his “possessedness.” He asks, “If I murdered the last of the Scyldings, what would I live for.”⁶⁹ Thus, it can be concluded that each side exists *in spite of* and *because of* the other.

With this knowledge in mind, he is no longer torn apart by humans’ pattern-making minds and begins to rule over and make fun of their narratives. As Milosh states, “Grendel’s response to their violence results in the quick retreat of his attackers and, for the monster, an increasing awareness of his power, particularly his ability to toy with them.”⁷⁰ He says, “I had become something, as if born again. I hung between possibilities before, between the cold truths I knew and the heart-sucking conjuring tricks of the Shaper; now that was passed: I was Grendel, Ruiner of Meadhalls, Wrecker of Kings.”⁷¹

His toying with Unferth, one of Hrothgar’s thanes, is a good example of Grendel’s ruling over and mocking humans and their narratives. When he attacks Heorot with more self-confidence and sense of absurdity about life after his talk with the Dragon, Grendel confronts Unferth’s heroic—or it is better to say mock-heroic⁷²—acts, which Grendel describes as “crowning absurdity.”⁷³ In a shift from the original *Beowulf* poem, the thane Unferth—not Beowulf—represents the traditional Anglo-Saxon heroic code. Grendel says that among his fellow thanes Unferth is “like a horse in a herd of cows.”⁷⁴ Unferth begins his first battle with Grendel like an epic hero, making poetic speeches that exalt his moral code and highlight his bravery in battle. He speaks, holding his sword and shaking it, “tell them in Hell that Unferth, son of Ecglaef sent you, known far and wide in these Scanian lands as a hero among the Scyldings.”⁷⁵ Making fun of epics as well as historical narratives whose focus are “ideal heroes,” Grendel responds Unferth’s comical heroic speeches as: “I’ve never seen a live hero before. I thought they were only in poetry. Ah, ah, it must be a terrible burden, though, being a hero—glory reaper, harvester of monsters! Everybody always watching you, seeing if you’re still heroic. . . Always having to stand erect, always having to find noble language.”⁷⁶

Grendel undercuts Unferth’s attempt at traditional heroism by raining apples at him and turning the serious battle into a mock heroic poem, a grotesque clown show. However, though Grendel destroys the trappings of heroism, Unferth follows Grendel to his cave in the burning lake to take revenge. He shouts: “You think me deluded, tricked by my walking fairytale.”⁷⁷ “Except in the life of the hero,” he continues, “the whole world is meaningless. The hero sees values beyond

what's possible. That's the nature of the hero. It kills him, of course, ultimately. But makes the whole struggle of humanity worthwhile."⁷⁸ Unferth encounters the same problem Grendel does: a vision of the world as essentially meaningless. But while Grendel has decided to deny the possibility of imposing his own meaning on the world, Unferth chooses to use the ideals of heroism to create meaning for himself and all of mankind, which the historian also does with his historical narrative. For Unferth, the romantic ideal of heroism is a vision, encouraged by the Shaper, that holds existentialism and nihilism at bay.

Realizing that Unferth wishes to be killed by him to be assigned the title of "a hero killed in a heroic battle with the monster," Grendel makes Unferth's heroism more and more grotesque by refusing to kill him and taking him back to Heorot as if carrying a toy. Besides he makes Unferth more and more ashamed of his situation by killing everybody except him in each attack to Hrothgar's meadhall. This part mocks heroism and represents that heroism is a historical construct through which history-makers such as the Shaper impose an ideal meaning, a totalizing view on the absurd and disordered human world.

Though Grendel mocks the ideals created by the Shaper in this part of the novel, the existence of both the Shaper and Grendel depend on each other. Toward the end of the novel, Beowulf, the central figure of the Old English epic *Beowulf*, appears to save Hrothgar from the monster. Beowulf's entrance into the novel signifies a new beginning in the history of the Scyld and the end of Grendel's "story," the story created by the Shaper. Thus, it signifies the metaphorical death of both Grendel and the Shaper. As he speaks on the death of the Shaper in [Chapter 10](#), Grendel articulates this idea as:

End of an epoch, I could tell the king
We're on our own again. Abandoned.⁷⁹

The Shaper's death leads Grendel to philosophize on his existence in the world, on his personal development, his dependence on the Shaper's historical configurations and myth-making, and on how he and his existence have ceased to exist with the Shaper's death. The below words of Grendel are of particular significance in this respect and somehow summarize the theoretical proposal of the present article about history-making and narrative:

... because the Shaper is dead, strange thoughts come over me. I think of the pastness of the past. How the moment I am alive in, prisoned in, moves like slowly tumbling form through darkness, the underground river. Not only ancient history—the mythical age of the brothers' feud—but my own history one second ago, has vanished utterly, dropped out of existence. King Scyld's great deeds do not exist "back there" in Time. "Back there in Time" is an illusion of language. They do not exist at all. My wickedness five years ago, or six, or twelve, has no existence except as now, mumbling, mumbling, sacrificing the slain world to the omnipotence of words, I strain my memory to regain it.⁸⁰

The chapter ends with his mother's warning Grendel of the impending danger with the words "*Beware of the fish*"⁸¹—which symbolizes Beowulf's coming from the sea in the next chapter—and with Grendel's philosophical expression "*Nihilo ex*

nihilo,”⁸² which Grendel says pertaining to the Shaper’s funeral and mean “nothing comes out of nothing.” Thus, with the end of the Shaper’s historical narrative Grendel’s existence concurrently becomes a void and his forthcoming non-existence with Beowulf’s coming is signified.

Beowulf’s coming in the next chapter hints a new beginning and an end to Grendel’s life. As soon as he sees Beowulf, Grendel understands that the person he is face to face this time is an extraordinary one with a huge body and otherworldly look. Differently from Beowulf in the Old English epic, he is not presented as representing the traditional Anglo-Saxon heroic code. He appears as a fantastic and supernatural, almost like a science-fiction android. “The eyes slanted downward, never blinking, unfeeling as a snake’s.”⁸³ Beowulf is not simply described as a machine; he is described as a dead man. His voice is that of a “dead thing,” and his patience rivals that of a “grave-mound.” These images reinforce the idea that Beowulf will be the agent of Grendel’s termination. However, as a man who has risen from the dead, Beowulf also resembles the resurrected Christ. Grendel’s mother tries to warn her son of his impending doom by bleating “Beware the fish”—fish being a commonly recognized symbol for the Christ figure. Indeed, Beowulf is associated with fish images several times throughout this chapter. He comes from over the sea, “has no more beard than a fish”⁸⁴ and has shoulders as “sleek as the belly of a shark.”⁸⁵ Furthermore, the story of the swimming contest with Breca demonstrates Beowulf’s competence in the water.

Beowulf’s strange face, otherworldliness, unblinking eyes, and huge body begin to grow unsettling to Grendel after a while. He understands that “the stranger [is] no player of games.”⁸⁶ He grows “more and more afraid of him and at the same time. . . more and more eager at the hour of [their] meeting.”⁸⁷ Affirming the proposition above regarding Beowulf’s Christ-like connotations and in accord with Grendel’s identification with Cain in the Shaper’s narrative, looking at Beowulf’s features Grendel feels that Beowulf seems “from a dream” he has almost forgotten.⁸⁸ When Beowulf grips his arm with “crushing fingers. . . like fangs with poison,”⁸⁹ Grendel says he grotesquely shakes hand with his “long-lost brother.”⁹⁰ With Beowulf’s deadly grip, Grendel feels that his “long pale dream,” his “history, falls away.”⁹¹ The words Beowulf whisper as he kills Grendel validate the association of Beowulf with the fish and Christ above and presents a counter discourse of hope to the Dragon’s and Grendel’s nihilism; Beowulf begins his lecture to Grendel by quoting the dragon, describing the present moment as a “temporary gathering of bits, a few random specks, a cloud.” Actually, the writer gives the impression that Grendel in fact confronts the philosophizing Dragon instead of the Old English epic hero Beowulf. In an interview in *The Paris Review*, Gardner answers a question regarding this issue as follows:

As a medievalist, one knows there are two dragons in medieval art. There’s Christ the dragon, and there’s Satan the dragon. There’s always a war between those two great dragons. In modern Christian symbolism a sweeter image of Jesus with the sheep in his arms has evolved, but I like the old image of the warring dragon. That’s not to say Beowulf really is Christ, but that he’s Christ-like.⁹²

Beowulf, the Christ-dragon, accepts the Satan-dragon's explanation of the world as a place where everything eventually dies. However, while the Satan-dragon emphasizes death and decay, Beowulf looks beyond the moment of death and emphasizes the rebirth that always follows. Calling Grendel "my brother" he says:

The world is my bone-cave, I shall not want. . .As you see it is, while the seeing lasts, dark nightmare-history, time-as-coffin; but where the water was rigid there will be fish, and men will survive on their flesh till spring. It's coming my brother. Believe it or not. Though you murder the world, turn plains to stone, transmogrify life into I and it, strong searching roots will crack your cave and rain will cleanse it. The world will burn green, sperm build again. My promise.⁹³

He concludes his words with a phenomenological view of time and a belief in heroism and meaning in life: "*Time is the mind, the hand that makes (fingers on harpstrings, hero-swords, the acts, the eyes of queens). By that I kill you.*"⁹⁴ Beowulf's counter discourse tells Grendel that time is product of the mind; however, for a meaningful life, heroism, the Shaper's historical configurations, and everything related to human action are required. Against this background it can be said that Beowulf's killing of Grendel seems to metaphorically mean the victory of hope over nihilism, the aboveground over the underground, and perhaps more importantly, authoritative narrative discourse over the other discourse of the monster.

Returning to our philosophical framework and repeating Beowulf's words, time is the mind and history is time brought to language in the narrative form. There is a human action out there in the external world; after all it is the hand that makes. However, what the hand make, relying on the theoretical background of this chapter, are effects of such imaginative constructs as ideals, ideologies, utopian visions, heroism, freedom, and so on. Besides, human experience is implausible, fragmentary, and to some extent, absurd without the forming mind of the story- and history-maker. As the Dragon tells Grendel, the Shaper saves humanity from meaninglessness by creating an illusion of reality; creating ideals for which humans can fight to make them keep living for the future. Unlike what the Dragon thinks and Grendel later comes to think, this imposition of form on reality should not be rejected or mocked as absurd; human is a sense-making animal, and narrative and historical configurations are cognitive tools through which s/he makes sense of the world, gathers fragments of experience to configure a meaningful life vision. Thus, the Shaper, metaphorically speaking, is a basic component of all societies because, with his constructs, he makes human life organized around certain ideals and values. The configuration of a monstrous other to make these ideals of established order definable against the background of the disordered represented by the "monstrous" is ethically the main defect, but also perhaps the inevitable factor, of the Shaper's narratives.

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NOTES

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- ²² Hayden White, "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," in *The History and Narrative Reader*, ed. Geoffrey Roberts (London and New York: Routledge, 2001). p. 223.
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 71 *Grendel*, 80.
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 76 Ibid., 84.
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 79 Ibid., 149.
 80 Ibid., 146.
 81 Ibid., 149.
 82 Ibid., 150.
 83 Ibid., 154.
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⁸⁹ Ibid., 168.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 169.

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⁹² *The Paris Review*, Interviewed by Paul Ferguson, John R. Maier, Sara Matthiessen, Frank McConnell.
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THE POWER OF DANCE/MOVEMENT
AS A MEANS OF EXPRESSION

A B S T R A C T

We live in a world of movement and all of the creatures are in a gradual evolution and development. Indeed, the whole universe is in a dance/movement. The universe and all of its components are in a well-programmed movement. This movement is very effective in framing the order of the universe. The movement is the way of expression for humankind. The movement was the nucleus of the life for the primitive forms of the human; they had to be in movement in order to survive their life, to find their food and clothes, or even to protect the fire. They used movement in religious rituals and ceremonies to express their fear, happiness, passions or hope. The birth, breeding and death are all the essentials of human life and they all occur as a result of the movement. When the humankind is closer to the nature, the movement becomes more spontaneous in expression. The learning process in the early ages is performed through living and doing, therefore the movement activities are the natural method for such kinds of learning. The movement activities help individuals to develop their physical, mental, social and emotional growth. The movement activities are vital for individuals as much as art or math. By means of the movement activities, a child might recognize and be aware of his/her own physical skills and limits, as well as s/he might be able to explore and understand his/her body. The creative movement activities are also divided into two groups as personal movements and functional/physical movements. While the personal movement activities reflect the mood and character of an individual, the functional/physical movements serve for a more practical purpose such as development of motor behaviors. There is not forethought or pre-planning processes in creative movements. The individuals let themselves to the rhythms of the music and go to a totally different ball game. There is not a perfect or previously practiced movement type. Individuals learn how to perform a dance through practicing the movements and through combining those movements within the course of time. The knowledge of movement and experience in combining the movements to perform the dance lead the individuals to create a composition. All of these actions improve the movement knowledge of the children. Within the course of time, the movements become more controlled, fluent and elegant. This is also reflected in the quality of the dance (Lynch-Fraser 1991). Therefore, individuals should refresh their understanding about themselves and about the things in their environment through the dance/movement. This restrats

in learning will continue without any judgements. With reference to the above mentioned arguments, the following issues will be discussed in the present study:

- The power of dance/movement as a means of expression
- The relationship between individuals and dance/movement (The gains of dance/movement to the individuals)
- The need of dance/movement for the individuals in relation to his/her creative, artistic and aesthetical aspects.
- The relation of dance/movement with the other kinds of art

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The universe was created with a rhythm and this rhythm is still going on. From the beginning of the first movement, there were people in this rhythm. In ancient times people knew how to make a sound and they were moving like an animal with instincts. After a while they began to use movement to do something or to tell their troubles. From that, moment dance and movement began. For this reason dance is as old as human life on earth.

People were trying to explain something with the experience of sound and movement. After a while, these strange sounds and movements began to adopt each other. When the primitive people caught and brought their hunts, this awoke the curiosity of the tribe members. After this people began to turn this into a show and they were acting the moment of hunting. Therefore, they were playing in front of the people. This revealed a visual thing. This was dance/movement. Because people's using a combination of compatible or incompatible movements to express themselves was to make the sense of the universe.

We live in a world of movement and all of the creatures are in a gradual evolution and development. Indeed, the whole universe is in a dance/movement. The universe and all of its components are in a well-programmed movement. This movement is very effective in framing the order of the universe. However, it is rather complicated to understand this movement of the universe through the available senses of living creatures. The humankind, which is an important element of the universe, expresses themselves through movements that are similar to the movements of the universe. By the same time, the humankind's desire to make movement is the source of energy that is essential for the existence, survival and self-realization of humankind. The movement was the nucleus of the life for the primitive forms of the human; they had to be in movement in order to survive their life, to find their food and clothes, or even to protect the fire. They used movement in religious rituals and ceremonies to express their fear, happiness, passions or hope. The birth, breeding and death are all the essentials of human life and they all occur as a result of the movement. The more the humankind is closer to the nature; the movement becomes more spontaneous in expression. In other words, the movement is an essential and a natural need for humankind for self- realization, self-improvement and expression. The movement could be categorized under two main areas, which are the substantial

movements that were the genetic component of the humankind and the movements that come to scene with reference to the demands and desires of individuals. The babies, for instance, react with a variety of movements and they cannot stand still. These movements can be defined as the physical movements that meet the basic movement needs of the organisms. That is, it can be claimed that these instinctively encoded movements are the main functions of the living organism and have vital roles for humankind. For instance, the physiological system of humankind such as nutrition, excretion and circulation are reflex movements, which function within their own program and continuum. If there is any malfunction in these reflex movements, it might cause serious diseases or even the death of the person. The reflex movements are programmed as specific life cycles, which are repeated throughout the life of humankind within an identical rhythm. This rhythm or movement is also called as biological rhythm. All of the creatures in the world function within their own biological rhythmic cycles.

The movement capacity of humankind can be found in the biological rhythm of every people. Thus, humankind is in a search of other movements that might meet their expectations and such a deliberate search leads to new pursuits. During the search for the new movements, individuals use their imagination and creativity within their own potentials and capacities. As long as the experience of individuals is increased in performing movements, they become more creative in performing new movements and their desire to perform new conscious movements also increase along with their experiences. The movement might be a natural reaction to the music or any sound and it is physiological oriented. The dance, on the other hand, is one of the movements that come to scene in relation to the conscious demands and desires of individuals and it is an art, which consisted of creative movements. The movement could be turned into dance when it includes creativity and imagination. Although every kinds of dance include movement, it does not mean that every movement is a dance. Dance includes features of the movement, which are created by the individuals consciously. Dance keeps the play-think methods, physical activities, heuristic and fictional powers, as well as emotional responds together. The instrument of the dance is the body of humankind and the human needs to practice a variety of movements and actions in order to use this instrument functionally. Therefore, the human needs opportunities to develop these movements.

The movement activities help individuals to develop their physical, mental, social and emotional growth. By means of the movement activities, a child might recognize and be aware of his/her own physical skills and limits, as well as s/he might be able to explore and understand his/her body. According to Dewey (1900), the learning individuals should be active. Since, mentally and physical activeness of individuals is the fundamental requirement of the learning process. For instance, play, inquiry, fieldwork and self-expression were used by Dewey as teaching techniques in his laboratory school in 1896. This is a key indicator of using movement activities for teaching where the learners learn through doing and experiencing. In this respect, it can be claimed that as much as learning of art or math, the movement activities are also vital for the learning process of individuals.

The creative movement activities are also divided into two groups as personal movements and functional/physical movements. While the personal movement activities reflect the mood and character of an individual, the functional/physical movements serve for a more practical purpose such as development of motor behaviors. There is not forethought or pre-planning processes in creative movements. The individuals let themselves to the rhythms of the music and go to a totally different ball game. There is not a perfect or previously practiced movement type. Individuals learn how to perform a dance through practicing the movements and through combining those movements within the course of time. The knowledge of movement and experience in combining the movements to perform the dance lead the individuals to create a composition. All of these actions improve the movement knowledge of the children. Within the course of time, the movements become more controlled, fluent and elegant. This is also reflected in the quality of the dance (Lynch-Fraser 1991).

DANCE / MOVEMENT AND INDIVIDUALS

The most basic learning strategy of an individual is his/her endeavor to distinguish the world through using his/her own physical skills. Along with other activities, the movement activities provide great opportunities for individuals for their self-developments. By means of dance, which is a creative movement, individuals detach their self from the outside world, forget everything related to their self and let their self to the rhythm of the music and they trance to the imaginary worlds. They continue to search for new movements freely by means of the senses that the music and rhythm evoked in their minds.

As Husserl (1950) claims, like phenomenology, which suggest to restart learning in order to a better understanding of the world, the individuals should refresh their understanding about their selves and about the things in their environment through the dance/movement. This restarts in learning will continue without any judgments. An outstanding example of using dance and movement in such restarts in learning and search can be seen in “semah” (Dervish’s whirl) which was introduced by a famous Turkish philosopher Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi. It is believed that purifying from his/her physical and mental ties with the world, the individual, who perform movement through semah, becomes closer to “Allah” (God)—the creator of the universe. The individuals, who integrated with the universe by means of the rhythm and movement that was provided by semah, carry on learn and relearn process on his/her own.

Individuals use their body language for the first time through the physical movements. That is, they try to establish a nonverbal communication with their environments by means of physical movements. For instance, a newborn clearly expresses his/her needs through blinking, crying or contractions. S/he gets his/her first impression related to the world and his/her self through physical movements. The relationship with the environment creates a social identity for the individuals in the society. Since, socialization improves the sense of satisfaction as well as creativity.

The individuals are free to reflect their personalities through performing their own styles in their creative movements. If the movement is limited by external factors, the freedom and creativity in the movement are also restricted. Although a special rhythm and a movement figure was considered as the base of some of the dance and movements, there is not a very specific movement type that individuals should imitate in their own movements. The creative movements might come out at any time when the individuals feel free or wanted to perform a movement and this movement can be associated with a music, poem, and rhythm or even with silence. Through hearing their heartbeats and rhythm of their pulse or feeling their sensations and thoughts, children might use their body as an instrument. They might be everything that they imagine and it depends on their imaginations. The movements they have performed are the expression of their existence (Edwards and Nabors 1993).

The freedom, which forms the baseline of the creative movements, enables the individuals to use their imaginations freely and lets them become flexible, fluent and authentic. The functional movement activities include various actions that facilitate the development of small and gross motor skills. The functional movements also provide opportunities for individuals to act out their different feelings as well as to discover new skills and movements. The functional and personal movement activities also have an effect on the body development of individuals. Since, small and gross motor skills include various exercises that support the development of the children healthily. The individuals might enrich their internal experiences if they notice what they wanted to performed and what they expressed through their movements.

People dance for pleasure, satisfaction, exchange of opinions and fellowship, expression or for mutual advantages. The dance might be both the means of message and the message itself at the same time. Just think about the children, who waves, sings, forms a circle, falls down, chuckles and stands up to repeat all of these movements. They do all of them not for the sake of launching a communication with others but just for fun, learning or for new searches. In this respect, dance can be a self-serving activity and even it may have a unique language.

MUSIC, POETRY, NARRATION AND DANCE/MOVEMENT

Music is a natural way of bringing out the creative movements. Solely use of the body might be enough to produce music or rhythm for some of the creative movements. The start of a strong beat or rhythm of a clear-cut music is also the start of a movement. Murmuring to oneself or thinking as “do the same action slowly now”, “do it in another direction or in different pace now”, “try to do the same but be a bit more lively now” help bringing out the creativity in the movement (Jordan 1972).

Such a condition helps individuals become aware of new opportunities. Hence, an ordinary exploration in the world of music and movement might be transformed into an unexpected happiness. Listening to music is a natural way for discovering the creative movements. Different types of music and rhythm should be selected for the first practices. For instance, teacher might initiate a teaching and learning process

through playing music. The selected music should have a strong beat and rhythm and as well as a straightforward structure. The children should not be informed about what they will listen to. The teacher should let students listen to the music and ask their feelings related to the music. While the children listening to the music, the volume can be turned down and they might told to make a circle. The teacher should talk about the music one by one in the circle. Most probably, some of the children might already be fascinated by the rhythm of the music. The teacher might also join to the circle. The children can freely move in the room as they wish and do whatever the music tells them. The children might perform some movements such as clapping their hands, stomping to the floor, dancing and yielding during the activity. Such activities might serve the purpose. Playing a slightly soft and favorable music can be used to give children the feeling of conflict or might used to relax the children after the activity. This approach can be performed by toys, puppets or parts of the body such as hands, feet, or fingertips in different occasions with different groups.

The imagination of the individuals is the only limitation for performing rhythmic movements through using one's own body, objects or someone else's body. The children solve the conflict while they are struggling with movement activities and music. They use their logic to define which instrument sounds like a thunderclap, or how a scarf wings in the air. They create a schema by means of the musical instruments, their body motions or the words in the song. They learn the concepts related to the numbers while they are singing a song related to the numbers or while they are clapping their hands or stomping their feet on the ground with a pace. They learn thinking symbolically while they are imitating the elephant walk or while they are jumping like a rabbit.

Likewise, various fields of art also support the expressionist aspect of the dance/movement. For instance, like the rhythm or using an effective language, the poetry has also importance in the movement activities. It is not always necessary to use rhymed verses or prose. Every single word that was heard might be connotation of a character. What is important here is to listen to the sounds and express the connotations by means of the body. The discrimination of the quality and character will follow it. The facilities of the text and potentials of the body gain meaning through the practice.

The use of types and characters in movement help to understand the relationship between the endeavor and mood. The ratio of the tension in the body, the movement rate and the range, reflects the person's instant character, age and mood. Hence, a character in a stretched and bending body, with intertwined hands and rickety motions with a squint look might give the impression of an angry old man. This is the expression of the movement as a whole picture. Slight gestures and facial expressions might imply great expressions (Bruce 1965).

THE NARRATION POWER OF DANCE / MOVEMENT

Dance/movement is the origin of every human activity and used in all of the expressive arts, since, the movement is a means of transmission of the inner world and energy of human to outwards. Literarily, movement indicates more than a physical

motion. Movement is an activity, which includes the whole of a person. That is, not only physical motion but also intellectual, emotional and intuitional aspects of the person are included in the movement activities. Therefore, it can be claimed that the dance is an important movement activity and all people should be encouraged to dance.

Naturally, all kinds of expressional activities include a communication aspect and movement is a way of communication. Sometimes people start a communication unconsciously and sometimes the communication is carried out with a conscious endeavor. The power of communicating through motions or actions is usually connected with the endeavor of the babies to express their needs in their pre-language use period. Although in some cases it is believed that the habitual behaviors related to the motions are not characteristic, thus, they are used to mask the mood and personality, in fact, every motion or actions reflect the mood and personality of people throughout their lifecycle. However, a real communication exists only when the expression is interpreted by the receiver of the message. For instance, the communication in the children's play, where they create spontaneous movements, generally performed and developed within a form of ritual.

Children seem more compatible with the body and as they do in everything, they use their whole body to communicate. Thus, the creative process begins. In order to complete this process, the combination between skills and kinesthetic sense is required. Sight, touch and balance sense that is in kinesthetic contributes to awareness of motion. In order to develop these feelings, to communicate effectively and to get the creative movement, there is a need to offer opportunities to individuals. This situation will help them to have more confidence about their creative talent and provide them to have more positive relationships with their physical and emotional environment.

The ability to communicate through motions has a natural importance and it has a key role in the education process. Step by step, this ability leads up to the scene and dance. What is more, it has a central power in itself that is independent of the language power. Thus, the individuals become more social and more collaborative, and by means of developing their personal expression powers, individuals can create a balanced communication with their partners.

Another purpose of the dance/movement is to guide the individuals be aware of the connection between the emotions in the physical perceptions and the mental awareness. However, all of these skills should come together in order to complete the creativity process. What is more, people should be familiar with their body and identify their emotions in order to increase the sensitivity of the movement. Identification of these emotions and blending them into the movements might prevent the movements to become mechanical actions. The familiarity of the body, which supplies our physical presence and positioning in the space, will provide a confidence in performing our daily actions. Such features help to use the body in creative movements with multi purposes (Russell 1987).

While exploring the features of the movement, people also experience the unfamiliar features as well. What is more, while exploring the unfamiliar features, people can allow their less salient features to exist, thus in turn, this situation help them to

be ready for the conflicts that they might face. The creative movement is dependent to the body more than other creative actions. Providing opportunities during the creative movement activities enable the individuals to trust themselves in terms of their creativity and establish a close relationship with their physical and emotional environments.

CONCLUSION

Movement is a means for survival and search for new pursuits. By means of the movement, people can communicate with various levels spontaneously and the dance/movement transmits the consciousness of human being to upper levels. The communication that is established by the help of movement also satisfies the natural needs of people concerning the movement and rhythm. Such a movement might also increase the motivation of the people in the works they performed.

The power of the dance also includes a metamorphosis skill and a skill to run over the extraordinary things. While dancing, people change their emotions and thoughts through inspiring, enjoying, relaxing, cultivating and pondering their minds.

The learning in the real life is a whole process of activities, which lead people to struggle and develop skills to express their selves. One of the ways of supporting individuals to search for new opportunities is to lead their instant interests towards the actions, like transforming the instant emotions of people to the dance. Dance is a way for recognition and communication. Almost all of the societies used the dance as a means of personal or cultural communication and as a supplier of physical and emotional needs. No matter how adults opine the dance, everyone should watch the dances of children in order to see their inner enthusiasm.

While dancing, the children will be dismissed with the outside world, forget everything about themselves, they give themselves to the rhythm of music, and they dive into another world. In children's dance, there is not any perfect, pre-made or practiced form of motion. These movements can be associated with the effort of the child to know the world. Child's using his/her physical skills to recognize the world is the most basic learning strategy of the child. Compared to other activities, activities including motions are great opportunities for the whole development of children. In these creative movements, any previously thought or planned thing to put into practice cannot be seen.

Movement is the fundamental baseline of universe and it forms the structure and background of all substances in the universe. For instance, unless the particles of a metal perform a movement, the structure of it cannot be shaped or its color cannot be seen. That is, all of the features that form the metal become a unique thing through the movements of the particles. Likewise, the human beings become creative, lively, sensitive to others and act in a rhythm by the help of the art of movement and the experience that emerged as an outcome of movement. People, who perform movements creatively and actively, can easily associate their physical, emotional and intellectual skills as a whole and express themselves without the help of the words. The expression power of movement seems a more confidential way for the people, who have difficulty in expressing their thoughts verbally.

The performance of the movement should not depend on any form and shape and should be far from any judgment or evaluation. Individuals can be aspirant for explorations in such cases and might perform unique movements, as exploring the individual experiences in the phenomenology. People should relinquish their minds and bodies and should be ready for new explorations and experiences. Working with our bodies is a valuable gift for us and it is worth to work through.

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SECTION IX
INTERSUBJECTIVITY, FREEDOM, JUSTICE

MAKING HISTORY OUR OWN – APPROPRIATION
AND TRANSGRESSION OF THE INTENTIONAL
HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

“*Only ethical justice is ultimate justice*” (ca. p. 203–4, H&B)

A B S T R A C T

In this chapter I will sketch out a framework of an intentional history of human rights. This framework is based on the idea that intentional history – as the retracing of the essential argumentative steps that justifies our current situation – is a narrative mode of both appropriation *and* transgression of history as our own.¹ The traditional way of understanding intentional history, as we find it in Edmund Husserl’s latest work *The Crisis* (1936), emphasized the appropriative dimension which is meant to give a critical and rational account for the arguments that justify our current and globally embraced perspective on philosophy and natural science. In the case of human rights the ambition will be to justify its global hegemony and to give us a satisfying reason to be loyal to this tradition. This gives us the motive for retracing the steps of ethical-political thoughts backwards from the present through the UN declaration after the end of the Second World War, to the Classical democracy in Greece. In addition to this historical reduction as a questioning back, I suggest that we will have to include the transgressive dimension of intentional history. The appropriation of a history as our own involves both the generation of a normal lifeworld, a homeworld, and a liminal experience of a co-generational outside, an alienworld. The transgression of narratives implies in this sense the liminal experience of someone living in a history which generates an abnormal, i.e. alien homeworld; a mythical alien. The account of transgression as a generative dimension becomes ethical imperative due to the recognition of the irreducibility of the homeworld/alienworld structure in experience. Ultimately we will never be at home, with our own history, without the alienworld as the experience of an inaccessible generative depth that calls our ability to appropriate into question and sets limit-claims for the universal synthesis of humanity. The radical consequence of this account is a shift from the genetic idea of a universal ethical humanity² that will realize itself in the global political state founded on a constitution of human rights, to the generative idea of a unity of home and alien that expresses itself through their difference and does not depend upon a resolution in a higher synthesis. (Steinbock 1995, p. 246).

INTRODUCTION

When Edmund Husserl wrote *The Crisis of the European Sciences and the Transcendental Phenomenology* (1936), one of his central questions was: How did the current norms of science and philosophy constitute historically? More specific, he asked for the deep motives for a positivistic restriction of the ideal of science. Husserl found the answer to his question in the critical reflection on the intentional history from Galileo, through Descartes and the empiricists, most importantly Hume, to Kant. This historical reflection is not carried out within a phenomenological attitude, but is rather a teleological-historical answer informed by a phenomenological insight of the generational process. This insight in its turn was motivated by the transcendental significance of birth and death.

On one level this teleological-historical reflection in *The Crisis* can be read as a successful and exemplary appropriation of a traditional narrative by an insider: The development of a genuine humanity through the birth of Greek philosophy is put into question by the fall of the traditional rationalism, the following global dominance of positivism and its parallel skepticism for metaphysics (problems of reason: knowledge, valuation, ethics, history, freedom). By employing the narrative tools such as a “myth of origin” and a “crisis” (turning point, something is at stake), Husserl provides a competing narrative to the modern ideal of science and its foundation in the mathematical abstraction of nature, challenging the universe of mere facts by calling it a positivistic decapitating philosophy of its genuine metaphysical questions. In the end this could be a loss of something unique in the Greek idea of human life for the whole of human kind:

To be human at all is essentially to be a human being in a social and generatively united civilization; and if man is a rational being (animal rationale), it is only insofar as his whole civilization, that is, one with a latent orientation toward reason or one openly oriented toward the entelechy which has come to itself, become manifest to itself, and which now of necessity consciously directs human becoming. (p. 15, Husserl 1936)

On another level Husserl’s new definition of an historical humanity implicitly presuppose an ideal of a universal synthesis of the lifeworld. The genuine character to the European homeworld, as a generatively united civilization, seems to rely on whether or not it bears within itself an absolute idea which can become manifest as a universal philosophy. Apparently, there wouldn’t be a *real* crisis if it was confirmed that “Europe” was merely an empirical anthropological type, like “China” or “India”. It would only lead to the conclusion that Europe and the West was governing the world on the basis of historical non-sense, i.e. by brute force. Is there nothing in between these two extreme points of existence? Could we not recognize the European as our own, without having to condemn the Chinese or Indian normalities as to be mere empirical types?

It is important to notice that the generational process of becoming normal, like a child growing up, involves the appropriation of cultural and traditional ways, existing long before this child was born. Growing up the child appropriates a homeworld, described in generative phenomenology as “the pre-given lifeworld horizon as a mode of delimiting styles of interaction, of life and of sense” (Steinbock 1995,

p. 109). New possibilities are opened up as familiar and normal by a simultaneous limiting off. The favoring of a universalistic reasoning with its entelechy of unity, even if endlessly distant, seeks to transcend this delimiting and therefore ignores the irreducibility of the liminal structure of homeworld/alienworld. In other words, a universalistic project seeks to eliminate that which makes the teleological-historical self-reflection, a *Selbstbesinnung*, exactly an appropriation of a *homestory*: a making of the history as our own in its co-constitutional relation to an alien story.

In this chapter I will argue that the shortcomings identified at this second level can be met by an account of transgression as a second, co-generative dimension [appropriation being the first] of the liminal structure of homeworld/alienworld. I will also argue that this concern becomes even more acute when considering an example more directly related to the generation of our ethical context, like for instance the global community of human rights and the struggle for their recognition among the national states. In this case we can no longer restrict the discussion of generational ruptures to an epistemological problem of historical continuity, like with Thomas Kuhn's analysis of scientific revolutions or Michel Foucault's archeology of knowledge. Rather we must consider it as an ethical imperative to be able to respond to the liminal structure of homeworld/alienworld that is generated out of these historical breaks, as irreducible and not as something we can or should overcome.³

HISTORY FROM WITHIN – HISTORY AS TELEOLOGY

But first, let's look closer at narratives as the organizing principles of history. Generally we mean by a "narrative" a sequence of events represented in the mode of literature, theatre, cinema, musical, etc. It's usually restricted by a beginning and an end, it got roles of agents and it is obviously told by someone, the narrator, which can also be in plural as *We*. In *Time, Narrative and History* (1986) David Carr makes a point regarding this plural form of the subject arguing that the group, as a unity of a temporally extended multiplicity of experiences and actions, is constituted by a narrative prospective-retrospective grasp of what has been and of what is projected to come. Defending his point against the skepticism of narratives as mere social constructs projected on a in itself chaotic causally determined reality, Carr claims that: "the temporal structure or organization of experience and of action is not different from a story that is told about it; rather, the experience or action is embodied in and constituted by the story told about it." (p. 149, Carr 1986).

In the context of writing an intentional history, we hold this responsibility in a mode of self-reflection. We are aware that the history we appropriate as our own will embody and constitute our experiences and actions. An important moment in this story is the generational process of birth and death as reoccurring breaks in the progress of the developing realization of the idea of philosophy. The significance of these breaks seems to concretize differently according to various institutions of activity. Projects in the form of a deductive system, like mathematics and formal

logic, seems virtually untouched by the transition from one generation to the next. The coherence of the system disguises the implicit necessity of succeeding generations of loyal colleagues. An historical argument is more explicitly dependent on the generational succession, but is too often represented in the form of a complete dialogue with an overarching telos manifested in the resent conclusion or predicted soon to come due to a new attitude towards it. We've already located this structure in Husserl's intentional history, but there's an interesting openness in the crisis (in the sense of being an important turning point), that may serve as a leading clue for a more nuanced way of writing an intentional history.

The "crisis", is qualified by David Carr as the "quintessential element of narrative" and at the same time, related to the plural form of the agent, what he calls "the stuff of communal life" (Carr 1986, p. 159). The crisis is an important element for communal life because it identifies external and internal threats to the survival of the group. Related to human rights are of course the stories of oppression or exploitation and the survival through liberation, triumph over adversary, etc. (Carr 1986). In Husserl's concern it was the survival of the European homeworld as a philosophical tradition guided by the idea of reason. The concern was real – there was really something at stake. Contrary to Hegel, Husserl sees the crisis as a genuinely open and indetermined situation where the continuous fate of philosophy and humanity can be broken or at least take an unfortunate direction guided by "lazy reason". To the extent that we can identify the tradition of human rights with the tradition of philosophy, this crisis is also affecting the survival of a rationally founded community of human rights.

By questioning the violent and totalitarian tendencies of the history of progress in the Western intellectual tradition the "postmoderns"⁴ have certainly also challenged the phenomenological project, especially concerning the central role that phenomenology has given to the transcendental subject and the problem of foundation. Generally holding that these philosophers are engaged in a generative project similar to the generative phenomenology,⁵ I will focus on some problematic aspects of the teleological-historical reflection entailed by these post-structural or postmodern concerns, and then try to defend it by showing how a phenomenologically informed historical reflection may contribute in an original way of solving the problems of a generative philosophy. The post-structural method of Michel Foucault and Jean-Francois Lyotard's suspicion towards meta-narratives certainly puts into question the expectancy to find a continuous, step-by-step developed intentional history with the integrity of a deductive system, it also – especially related to principles of a global/universal humanism such as the human rights – calls into question the ideal of a foundation for a universal community.

Still, this French rupture in the modern tradition is too easily presented as a clean break with its tradition.⁶ Rather it seems more reasonable to claim that the phenomenologist and existentialist anticipated the postmodern critique of the Cartesian essentialism and foundationalism, and that this intentional, metanarrative forgetfulness left the movement with a problem of interiority or subjectivity, where attributes of the subject such as intentionality and volition are curiously substituted by a personification of discipline, language games, etc. This seems to imply, if not an

overarching telos, then at least the tendencies of an historical determinism driven by the “big subject” of discursive fields which leaves the individual subject with no choice and no genuine crisis. For instance, there seems to be no distinction between the motives (constituted by traditional narratives, of for instance human rights) and the acts of a social movement (carried out by the civil rights movement who made these narratives their own). (Kruks 2001) Nothing is at stake which calls to be acted upon by self-aware and responsible subjects.

Carr points to a similar problem in the interpretation of Hegel (Carr 1986). He claims that one should not read Hegel’s philosophy of history as a theoretical project, but rather as a practical one. This implies that the project of a universal community should be judged not as a more or less accurate description of an exterior historical truth, but as a more or less convincing (likely, persuasive, coherent, moral-politically appealing) story of our historical past and future. We might object to Hegel’s claim on the French revolution as a common European or even Human experience, on the premise of being one among several competing⁷ narratives which might be appropriated or negated by us from within a historical community. The narrative organizes the historical past and projects a future where the individual is given a more or less concrete part to play. In this way Carr is able avoid the obliteration of the individual while accounting for the constitutive function of narratives for the unity of a group. The “We” is sustained from within by its aware and loyal members. (Carr 1986) The question then is: Why do we accept one narrative instead of another? Why does each of us come to recognize the same narrative as coherent and perceive its calling as worth answering?

THE APPROPRIATION OF NARRATIVES – GENERATION OF A NORMAL LIFE WORLD AS HOME

“Appropriation is a form of sense constitution that takes up pregiven sense as stemming from a homeworld and its unique tradition.” (p. 180, Steinbock 1995) The uniqueness of the homeworld signifies both that it can neither be egologically founded (because it as a “Stamm” precedes it), nor can it be the all encompassing foundation for the world (which would eliminate the radical other). In the becoming of a group, such as a people or a state, the members appropriate a degree of awareness through different modes of communication (from the reversible intropathy of intercorporeal intimacy, to the irreversible and distant character of virtual communication) corresponding to various levels of community. The narrative modes are decisive for the constitution of an historical depth in experience, something small children don’t have.

When members of a community appropriate a sense of their history through a narrative grasp of their past and their future, it is no longer just an objective grouping of sensitive and emphatic subjects: It becomes a community of reflexive self-awareness, a “we”. Carr (1986) claims that “[. . .] the group is posited by its members as subjects of experience and actions in virtue of a narrative account which ties distinct phases and elements together into a coherent history.” (p. 155) Contrary

to an abstract, objective perspective, the historical horizon of a living community will always be situated from within, from the middle of where it comes from and where it's going.

Through accepting a narrative we come to perceive experiences and actions as common to us rather as belonging to me isolated. Understandably not everyone will be the author of the defining narrative which organizes this common, historical horizon. Most members will merely receive, evaluate more or less critically and eventually accept the stories told by the spokesmen and leaders. In most groups, from the smallest families to the large publics of modern society, there will be rival accounts of the identity and teleology of the community. And, on many occasions we'll get the chance of reconsidering our childhood beliefs or previous judgments about the coherence of traditional and new narratives. In large communities such as modern nation-states it is even a condition of democracy that the members are able to hold a complex of competing and conflicting narratives into play, integrating experiences and actions of many different groups. (See narrative imagination, Nussbaum). This all seems to correspond in general with the Hegel's concept of mutual recognition and Mill's idea of tolerance. In the terms of generative phenomenology: "Communication would be normal when it constitutes a concordant community of understanding that is optimal, integrating a rich diversity of perspectives in a shared unity." (p. 212, Steinbock 1995).

Even if this is a mere formal description of the optimal givenness of the coherent story, it gives us a clue of the best and most persuasive story as organizing a rich unity of perspectives in analogue to the kinesthetic-spatial system of intercorporeality. According to this principle, the appeal and persuasiveness of the homogenic narratives of the aftermath of a war, or of what might be as much a forced result: the winner of a scientific debate (See Hobbes and Boyle), will be seen as degenerative because the opponent version is no longer spoken of, though it might be revitalized later on. This degeneration is not just an abstract character of a narrative, it is something that will concretely materialize in the density of a culture as a failure to generate the best possible ethical context of which we are responsible in our ethical task as "functionaries of humanity".

In Anthony Steinbock's reading of *The Kaizo* and *The Crisis* he identifies a re-definition of the ethical task in Husserl's work from an ethical self-regulation (the givenness of individual genesis; the virtues of good life/the categorical imperative) to the more concrete generative dimension of the ethical context as communal and historical, of which follows that self-responsibility is at the same time before the other. The new definition of the ethical task:

[...] realizing the optimal in the ethical life means renewing the cultural community in its historical self-transformation, its institutions, organizations, and cultural goods of every kind: In short, realizing the best possible of the homeworld is the renewal of its generative force. (p. 205, Steinbock 1995)

This renewal of generative force requires a persistent attentiveness. The teleological-historical reflection is therefore called upon as a mode of historical inquiry, as a responsible and critical appropriation of history through an active examination and renewal of our tradition from within. So far so good. The problem is

that the generative definition of the optimal is merely formal and cannot be specified in advance. What is most likely certain though is that Husserl's intentions of expanding an immanent ethical reform – as a devoted continuation of the Greek ideal – from our homeworld to an all encompassing world, as a "universal ethical humanity", would actually destroy the generative force inherent in the liminal structure of homeworld/alienworld. In order to free ourselves from prejudices and open up new possibilities in the continuous becoming of an always indetermined/renewable content of the optimal narrative, we should welcome competing optima/normalities. In order to be able to respond to this without taking over the responsibility for the alienworld (which again would reduce it to the same), we will not only have to be critical in our appropriative encounters, but also responsive in our transgressive encounters. Ending this short chapter I will suggest the further development of this work by pointing at some decisive aspects of the liminal structure of homeworld/alienworld regarding transgression.

TRANSGRESSION OF NARRATIVES – RESPONSIVITY TO LIMIT-CLAIMS

As we saw in the beginning of this chapter, appropriation is simultaneously a liming-off that manifest itself in a horizon of pre-given, familiar styles of communication. By growing up in a culture, becoming member of a homeworld, we will at the same time become strangers to other styles of communications such as languages and narratives. The encounter with the alien disrupts our expectation of the typical, the other as behaving normally and according to the same coherent narratives as me. At first, this break might seem to be easily overcome by a simple appropriation and the eventual universal synthesis seems to be within reach. But this is soon proved more difficult than at first, and in the end impossible if the break is heavy enough.

First, it's important to notice that the different levels of communities (from families to national states) are not organized as concentric circles. It is not as if the national states are the end product of the synthesis of all lower levels, rather it is a level of fragile integrity surviving in a field on conflicting, criss-crossing and intertwining communities (family-profession, class-country, religion – civic duty, See David Carr).

Second, Husserl draws an important distinction between recognizing someone as normal, as member of my community, and recognizing cultural difference not only as abnormality, but as having the integrity of a normal tradition that is not normal for us. (p. 242, Steinbock 1995) This implies an asymmetry and irreversibility which cannot easily be overcome, but that still has an openness as accessible in the mode of inaccessibility.

If we want to renew our intentional history of human rights, we will have to take these accounts into considerations. It will open up the future as unpredictable and indeterminable, resisting our narrative typification, but at the same time give us possibilities that are new and unique and not resting on the symmetrical inversion of our normality.

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NOTES

¹ I'm of course inspired by the way narratives is used in the existential analysis of Dilthey and Heidegger, see Carr's *Time, Narrative and History* (1986). Another interesting concept I would like to work on later is "narrative imagination" and its significance for the experience of the other and the alien. The general though is that narratives is complex categorical structures that is dependent on communication in order to be constituted/generated.

² Quoted from the Kaizo-articles: "To a true human world-people over all particular peoples and to an over-people encompassing them, to a unitary culture, to a world state over all single systems of states." (H XXVII 58.f.) from Steinbock 1995, p. 238.

³ This ethical imperative is of course related to the problem of recognition as we find it in Kant (Groundworks, kingdom of ends) and Hegel (Phenomenology of Spirit, the cunning of reason). It is a problem exactly because they both presuppose that recognition must be based on sameness, and not on radical otherness. We find this point even more explicit in Levinas critique of Heidegger's concept of *Mitsein*. Anthony Steinbock has shown that Husserl's generative attention might give Levinas original description of revelation a new dimension of generative depth.

⁴ Due to the influential works of especially the French post-structuralists, narratives have become an important subject, not only for the study of literature, but for the reflection of method and representation in sciences such as history and social anthropology. It has given these fields of study a new sensitivity to the use of the available tools of representation. Unfortunately, I will not be able to discuss in depth the challenges toward writing an intentional history put forward by for instance Jacques Derrida's deconstruction and critique of the metaphysics of the present, Michel Foucault's archeology of knowledge through discursive formations and Jean-Francois Lyotard's suspicion towards metanarratives. See Jacques Derrida *Speech and Phenomenon* (1973), Michel Foucault *The Order of Things* (1966) and *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1969), and Jean-Francois Lyotard *The Postmodern Condition* (1984).

⁵ See Steinbock's article on generative philosophy and teleology in *Alterity...* (ed. Dan Zahavi)

⁶ See Jürgen Habermas *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (1991) and Sonia Kruks *Retrieving Experience* (2001)

⁷ In a crisis we may also see a conflict of competing narratives, both in order to define the situation as a crisis and in order to find a convincing way to deal with it.⁷ First one must make a persuasive story of how the community is threatened by something, like for instance economic recession or mass extinction of species (justice as prison/punishment vs. recovery/restitution). Then, if one accepts this story as defining a crisis, one must find ways of dealing with it in order to ensure the survival of the economic or ecological system.

VITALITY AND WOBBLINESS OF UNIVERSAL
MORAL VALUES IN THE POST-MODERN
WORLD: CREATIVITY AND REGULATIVE
FUNCTION OF THE LOGOS OF LIFE

A B S T R A C T

Transformations in the sphere of ethical values in the modern times are complex and dynamic. Their impact on the quality of collective and individual life of societies in the globalising world is increasing. The process of describing this phenomenon may be facilitated by the category of “wobbliness of moral values.” This term refers both to the existence, the functioning of values and their relation to human agents: intellectual and emotional reception, internal acceptance, impact on the recipients’ personality, their stances, behaviour, etc. In the first case, the category of “wobbliness” denotes the extension or the narrowing (in current social, cultural and civilisational contexts) of practically recognised and realistically complied with basic moral values and principles, as well as obligations resulting from them. This is the “yielding” under the impact of external factors (economic, political, demographic, ecological, etc.) and at the same time the “straightening” – in a specific time and place – of the backbone of elementary values and principles of conduct, the brightening or the darkening of the significant meaning of objective criteria for basic goods and moral choices, the integration or the disintegration of historically and practically verified systems of values and rules of conduct. In the second case, this category denotes the increase or the decrease in readiness and the need of personal acceptance and practical implementation of a circle of basic values and ethical principles, an increased or a lowered level of understanding and appreciation of the significance of moral culture in the life of people, the awakening or the muffling of the personal and collective moral sensitivity, the opening onto or the isolation from the other people, the revival or the decay of empathic, altruistic and humanistic references in inter-human relations. A characteristic feature of moral wobbliness – in both its meanings – is primarily the fact that in spite of differentiation between internal or external moral qualities, the moral core embedded in the human nature remains untouched in its foundations. This relatively durable and solid core of morality is inherent in the human nature, excluding pathological or deformed cases and particularly extreme external circumstances. The ethical element, known as the conscience or the moral feeling, constitutes the so-called natural morality, confirmed both in the contemporary philosophy (phenomenology, existentialism, personalism, eco-philosophy, recentivism, etc.), as well as in certain social sciences (developmental and personality psychology, neuro-psychology, social anthropology, recent morality theories and other theoretical and empirical concepts).

INTRODUCTION

Modern times, with their characteristic phenomena such as globalisation, technological and IT processes, as well as the growing influence of mass media, commercialism and consumerism, stimulate and dynamise the “wobbliness” of the existing order in the sphere of basic ethical values and principles and in the area of personal experiences, evaluations and moral choices with a power that is greater than in any previous age. However – let us emphasize this – the modern age does not interfere strongly and deeply (as will be shown) with the moral factor (no matter how it is called and explained in theory) that is rooted in the human nature; the modern age does not cause a caving in of the basic core of elementary ethical values and principles, which obviously has fundamental significance for the correct shaping of social life, including family life and the individual and collective existence of people in the unfavourable durability and universal nature of moral and axiological orders in the era of “liquid modernity.”

Therefore, theories that herald the collapse of moral foundations in the present, their decay or irreversible regression, seem philosophically and scientifically unauthorised; in a social aspect, they are destructive and deceptive. A similar evaluation can also refer to radical axiological relativism and the so-called destructivism which are influential nowadays [post-modernism, neo-pragmatism, chaos philosophies, etc. Cf. R. Rorty, J. Derrida et al.].¹

However, the situation in contemporary moral reality is very complex. This is indicated by the fact that the indisputable and, unfortunately, increasing process of relativisation of values in the consciousness and stances of the “post-modern” man is accompanied by a contradictory process which is becoming more and more visible and is gaining increased recognition. This is the so-called process of creating various anti-relativist, constructivist and holistic concepts. These concepts are present mainly in various types of environmentalist and ecological philosophies (T. Rolston, H. Clinbell, M.E. Zimmerman, A. Leopold, H. Skolimowski et al.), in more recent life philosophies (A.T. Tymieniecka, P. Singer, K. Lorenc et al.) and in dynamically developing trends of global ethics and eco-ethics (H. Jonas, P. Singer, Z. Bauman et al.).²

For example, in ecological philosophies (as well as in other trends of global philosophy), the issues that are worthy of attention are the new universal values, such as acknowledgement that people from all cultures, civilisations, traditions and regions of the world constitute equivalent autotelic values, thence moral obligations towards all people should be equivalent; that life in all its manifestations and forms (not only human, but also non-human), understood holistically, is also a value in itself . . . an autotelic value. Moreover, it is necessary to emphasise that new elementary principles and moral requirements are being formulated, such as, e.g., an empathic attitude to the entire eco-sphere and acceptance of the role of a responsible and careful guardian of this eco-sphere by every human being, acceptance of the equivalent rank of its every component, not only human, anthropological, but any other, etc.³

Obviously, everything in a man who is a human being in evolution and in the world created by him (including the world of values and moral principles) is changeable and relative, “liquid” and interdependent. Nevertheless, the “liquidity”

and relativity of anything in this sphere of being and existence, including the sphere of human existence (the individual and collective existence of people), its nature, spirituality and humanity, species and civilisational development, should not be absolutised as it is done by some authors who are ideologically tied to post-modernism or other intellectual orientations that are philosophically close to it.

Expressing the idea metaphorically, the “liquid” world and “liquid” situations contain “substances” that have been, so to speak, more or less “temporarily hardened” and systems and states of affairs that are temporarily solid; in other words, there are “crystals” which, flowing in the general stream, preserve their un-softened and relatively dense structure.

This group includes certain features of human nature, certain ingredients of subjectivity and the individual and collective identity of people, people’s individual and communal “I”, e.g. personal, ethical, national and human “I.” Here we also have some basic universal values and norms, whose evaluation, selection, compliance with or relinquishment of has to be differentiated from the issue of their “existence”, expiry or revival of their natural sources; their actual withering or demise has to be differentiated from their stronger or weaker wobbliness or shakiness. At the same time, it is necessary to assume that this wobbliness or shakiness does not determine their sources, roots or their existence in general, but only shows their greater or smaller “trembling”, “waving”, changing of functionality and dynamics and manifold dependency on subjective factors (psychical and personal) and external ones (situational, social, cultural, civilisational, etc.).

Therefore, it can be said that our civilisation, the Western civilisation at its current crisis stage of functioning (up to a certain degree crisis), does not cause any clear moral regress in the majority of societies, social groups and professional milieus. There is no clear step back in the development of moral culture of the majority of people. What is more, this civilisation does not create any major moral stupor, any excessive weakening of moral sensitivity and reactions of human consciousness, especially in situations and circumstances which definitely require such stances, e.g. in the case of natural disasters. Quite the opposite: this civilisation constantly creates certain possibilities for moderate moral progress, and in any case it does not create insurmountable barriers.

On the other hand, the Western civilisation greatly intensifies the “wobbliness” of basic values, including moral values and norms and their “liquidity”; in principle, it does not threaten the so-called “natural morality”, i.e. the main source and mainstay of these values and norms. Therefore, in relation to the comprehensively understood moral reality, its attitude is ambivalent. That is why determination of this civilisation as “liquid” does not seem to be entirely justified.⁴

In general, it can be said that moral reality (ethical theories and systems, culture and moral practice) is not, in its nature, identical with civilisational reality (technology, material infrastructure, social and political institutions, current life standards and styles). Moreover, it can be said that these two realities, separate and yet interdependent, do not develop in parallel: civilisational progress is not accompanied by moral progress, which is exemplified by the fact that certain communities on lower levels of civilisational development obtain a higher quality of moral life than highly developed societies and that in principle their moral culture – as well as

their entire culture – is mostly incomparable with moral culture and other cultural ingredients of highly developed societies.

On the other hand, one cannot deny the fact that there is a certain interdependency of specific types of civilisations and moralities which has been shown by social and cultural anthropology and the history of culture and civilisation.

Generally speaking, certain types of civilisations and stages of their development have been conducive to morality: they revived it and stimulated it in various manners – and they are still performing this role.

Other types of civilisations have been fulfilling – as it turns out – an ambivalent function with respect to morality. On the one hand, they have been inspiring and cultivating morality, providing it with strong developmental impulses, good conditions for its successful shaping, yet on the other they have been slowing down its progressive changes or even deforming and destroying it (obviously only these aspects that can be deformed or destroyed, as not everything in morality, as we tried to show above, can be completely deformed or destroyed).

The technical civilisation of the West at its current post-industrial and post-informative, “liquid” and “post-modern” stage of its development exemplifies this type of ambivalent attitude to morality.⁵

Speaking pictorially, economic, political and informative realities, as well as globalisation processes that overcome this civilisation definitely “beset” the moral reality and subjugate it brutally and uncompromisingly; these processes often make the moral reality a kind of “ghetto, where basic ethical values and principles are pushed in mechanically and involuntarily, yet quite effectively.”

The globalising economic system, which not only causes and increases exploitation of people by people, breaks inter-human solidarity on a local and international scale, generates and aggravates social injustice, opens the gap between poverty and affluence even wider, has ominous power in this area. It is also responsible for something that is socially and morally worse, i.e. it creates situations of exclusion from this system of growing groups of humans and transforms people into “disposable creatures” who are unwanted and ready to be thrown away and who are, at the same time, helpless with respect to this system.

This heralds the birth of new social and economic alienation which is very dangerous for people. It deprives more and more people not only of decent conditions to live, but also strips them of their basic rights and dignity, and intensifies not only the “wobbliness” of basic moral values, but also threatens (using the metaphoric terminology adopted in this text) the roots of morality as such (morality can be “uprooted” for some time in certain areas and in certain conditions).⁶

In general, we live in such a civilisation and at such a stage of its development when there is great intensification of various threats to morality and when the thesis that human nature is ambivalent with respect to morality and has not been disparaged (i.e. human nature is at the same time moral and immoral and both immorality and morality are the integral ingredients of human existence, or immorality is, in a certain sense, an inseparable part of morality, just as “unnaturalness” is, in a certain sense, an inseparable element of “naturalness”).

As a conclusion to these divagations, it can be stated definitely that a present-day man remains, in spite of numerous difficulties created by modern civilisation with respect to his spirituality and in spite of his ethical ambivalence and increasing “moral wobbliness”, a “*homo ethicus*” or “*homo moralis*” and that this human status is supported by the peculiar feature of his nature, which is called the “natural morality.”

THE CONCEPT OF “MORAL WOBBLINESS”

Transformations in the sphere of ethical values in the present-day world are – as we tried to show above – very complex and dynamic. Their impact on the quality of collective and individual life of many people from almost all societies of the globalising world is constantly increasing. However, the terms used to describe this very important and characteristic process of axiological, ethical and moral changes (intensifying on a daily basis and increasing their speed), such as “crisis”, “relativisation”, “destruction”, “collapse”, etc. are not sufficiently precise and adequate; they are not satisfactory with respect to their informative content. It is easy to demonstrate their heuristic and cognitive weakness at some examples (which will be presented in a further section of this article). However, it does not mean that they are completely useless and redundant with respect to describing the features and properties of the process that is of interest to us. The category of “moral wobbliness” is going to be helpful in the description and cognitive explanation of this process. It is adopted here as the leading category.

The author of this article will try – on the one hand – to provide this metaphoric term, derived from colloquial language, with an accurate connotation which, at the same time, will be wide enough to explain its character and the core of the process; on the other, attempts will be made to show its complexity and multi-dimensional nature, which is one of the purposes of such investigation. Therefore, the main course of changes in ethical and related values (cultural, aesthetic, customary, etc.) in the contemporary world will be called “wobbliness.”

In order to avoid a potential misunderstanding and possibly even a surprise, it is necessary to emphasise at the very beginning that this term will be used to determine one of the most characteristic and, at the same time, crucial type of changes in the contemporary world of values, especially moral values and moral life in general. It is not the only change and probably not the most important one, yet it is very significant and extensive. It is introduced here in order to avoid numerous misunderstandings and ambiguities which commonly appear in present-day debates on changes in ethical and other values.

Therefore, the attempt at more precise determination of the term “moral wobbliness” will commence with a statement that it does not refer to the existence and the functioning of basic (universal) values; these values are deemed relatively durable; the term “wobbliness” refers only to their changeable relations with the human agent: their intellectual and emotional reception, internal acceptance,

impact on personality of their recipients, the recipients' life stances, life style, behaviour and individual and communal existence of people in contemporary times.

Speaking more precisely, the category of "wobbliness" with the connotations adopted here determines, first of all: extension or narrowing, increase or decrease (in current social, cultural and civilisational contexts) of domains of basic moral values (practically accepted and factually recognised), as well principles and obligations resulting from them; secondly, it denotes the "yielding" under the weight of external factors (economic, political, demographic, ecological, etc.) and simultaneously the "straightening up" (in analogy to Pascal's reed) of the substantially vital – in a given place and time – "backbone" of order of elementary values and standards of behaviour; thirdly, it refers to the brightening or the darkening of the importance and significance of objective criteria of basic goods and moral choices; it denotes the integration or the disintegration of existing cohesions (verified historically and practically), systems of values and rules of conduct; fourthly – and this is the most important meaning of the category of "wobbliness": it denotes (it can denote) an increase or a decrease in readiness for personal acceptance and practical implementation of a specific group of basic ethical values and principles; it is the growing or the lowering of the level of proper understanding and appreciation of the role and the meaning of moral culture in human life; it is the awakening or the "freezing" of personal and collective moral sensitivity; it is the opening onto or the isolation from other people; it is the revival or the withering of empathic, altruistic and humanist reactions in human interactions; it is the revival or the drying up of humanitarian and caring tendencies and motivations of individual persons or entire human communities.

Obviously, "moral wobbliness" does not denote all changes in morality; it does not encompass – because it cannot – all types of its changes and transformations. It is restricted to – as emphasised above – a limited, yet very characteristic and important (especially in the context of contemporary civilisation), manifestations of changes. Speaking strictly, it is limited to violations of the general condition and stability, as well as periodical weakening of vitality, strength and functionality of the moral factor in the individual and collective life of the contemporary man, i.e. it denotes a temporary impairment of its role in people's lives.

Primarily, "moral wobbliness" denotes periodical shaking and weakening, narrowing and dilution or excessive singling out of subjective references to the existing world of ethical values and temporary extinguishment or suppression of the dynamics and vitality of elementary tendencies and ingredients of the "natural morality", i.e. the predisposition and moral inclination that have been shaped and became rooted in the human culture through a complex process of human development, in the course of biological, cultural, social and civilisational evolution.

A general premise (as it will be explained in detail in a further part of this article) is a thesis in line with which the aspects that are relatively durable and common for a given species (i.e. the system of common and universal values and principles and natural human reactions, feelings and moral stances or – using different words – moral predispositions and inclinations that are rooted deeply in the constitution of

every human being) are subject to staggering, impairment and even collapse in our “natural morality.”

This type of changes which is called the “moral wobbliness” here is primarily conditioned by specific cultural and social changes related to the current stage of development of the technical and information civilisation with its leading processes, such as globalisation and medialisation of life, its excessive pragmatism and instrumentalisation, and such characteristic phenomena as consumerism and functional reification of inter-human relations.

Therefore, it is clearly visible that the issue of durability and moral wobbliness discussed here is not solely a philosophical and theoretical issue. It is also a scientific and empirical phenomenon and, up to a certain degree, a commonsensical and sensory/intuitive one. It is not only a clearly cognitive issue, but also an important current practical problem. In relation to this, this text devoted to it does not have a strictly philosophical nature, but is, in a certain sense, a multi-disciplinary cognitive and practical (mainly ethical) presentation. On account of tight ties of this subject with the individual and collective life of a modern man, the issue is up-to-date, legitimate and potentially even indispensable.

THE CONCEPT OF “NATURAL MORALITY”

A characteristic trait of “moral wobbliness” – in its broad (as can be seen) meaning – is primarily the fact that in spite of greater or smaller wobbliness of internal or external moral qualities (values and principles), the “root of morality” embedded in the human nature remains practically untouched in its natural substratum. In any case, it cannot be “uprooted” easily; therefore, the “tree of morality” remains intact, disregarding the intensity and the frequency of “wobbliness” and the time and the social or existential situation in which such “wobbliness” takes place.

This primeval and relatively durable bud or, as it is called here, the “root of morality” is inherent in the human nature (excluding pathological or deformed varieties of this nature or exceptionally extreme external conditions). This ethical element, known as conscience or moral feeling, constitutes – as the author of this text discussed in a more detailed manner in his other texts – the so-called “natural morality.”⁷ This morality has been confirmed in numerous directions of contemporary philosophy (e.g. in phenomenology and neo-phenomenology, neo-psychoanalysis and humanist psychology, in Christian personalism and the so-called philosophy of dialogue, eco-philosophy and recentivism, etc.) and in certain social sciences (developmental psychology and personality, neuro-psychology, social anthropology, recent theories of morality and other theoretical and empirical concepts).⁸

In this article, attention will only be drawn to certain theoretical depictions of the phenomenon of human nature and the confirmation of – using the terminology adopted here – “natural morality” and the “moral wobbliness” that accompanies it in specific social and civilisational concepts in the works of selected philosophers: Roman Ingarden, Anna Teresa Tymieniecka, Peter Singer and Richard M. Hare.

Selection of such varied philosophical and ethical stances during a discussion on the issues of interest to us is not accidental. It results from a premise that various roads of theoretical and empirical cognition can lead to determination of a specific state of affairs or contribute to the solving of a given problem in numerous complex, cognitive, philosophical, scientific, commonsensical or common (natural) processes. These attempts derive from various intellectual options, points of view and manners of perceiving reality. Completely diverse theories and philosophical systems can lead to a common cognitive goal. Numerous meaningful and frequently astonishing examples of this characteristic and slightly surprising epistemological “affliction” are provided by modern physics,⁹ most recent philosophy¹⁰ and, in particular, historical and modern ethic as a cognitive domain.¹¹ It turns out quite frequently that various scientific theories, differing philosophical concepts and varied ideas and ethical tendencies have a given “common denominator” and “similar points of access”, which will be exemplified in a further part of this text.

For example, the issues of “natural morality” and “moral wobbliness” are the meeting point for R. Ingarden, A.T. Tymieniecka, P. Singer and R.M. Hare. Therefore, it seems worthwhile to take a look at this meeting of diversity and to follow not only the obvious differences in the presented standpoints, but also the puzzling, and, slightly astonishing, close (though unintentional) relations and similarities among them.

“NATURAL MORALITY” AND “MORAL WOBBLINESS”
IN A PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH: SELECTED
STANDPOINTS

Roman Ingarden’s Concept of Man and “Natural Ethics”.

Roman Ingarden, the co-creator of a well-known classical variety of phenomenology and author of famous philosophical works in his ontological, anthropological and ethical investigations (relying on a specific method of philosophical and experimental cognition – the so-called internal and external experiences) examines the specific, real and, at the same time, primeval “being-ness of man”, his unique human nature, which is the core and the centre of the human “I”, the personality and subjectivity and the source and the foundation of an extensive sphere of his creative acts and deeds, including moral deeds. The analysis of the character of this type of examination of subjective and objective reality is omitted here, along with its special ingredient, i.e. a man understood as a bodily, psychical and spiritual being.

The above-mentioned acts and deeds cannot always be assigned to a specific human agent; nevertheless, they are perceived by the philosopher as durable and unchangeable natural “equipment” of a human being as such, his durable and continuously up-dated dispositions and skills. In individual periods and circumstances of human life, they are subject to various changes and modifications; they undergo a process of intensification or expiry, yet they are always the real and the natural property of every person. They are the real feature of every human “I”; they are people’s inseparable element, an inalienable feature and “disposition”, similarly to

the immanent liberty of human beings and responsibility that is integrally related to this liberty.

Man, a specific man (the phenomenological approach to cognition offers only the idea of a specific man) is a one-time bodily-psychical-mental creature with specific and temporarily limited “continuity of existence” in which there is a constant exchange of matter between the body and its environment. From birth to death there are new physical and psychical processes constantly taking place; new cells are created and destroyed and the “characteristic and regulated developmental process of growth, maturity and aging until decay or disintegration of parts [. . .]”¹² is taking place. This relative “continuity of existence” is the fundamental condition of the entire spirituality of human beings, their internal “I”, of all creative deeds and moral stances, liberty and responsibility, intellect and thought, will and action, sensitivity and emotionality.¹³

The primeval nature and the spiritual subjectivity of human beings dependent upon it also release various interpersonal references in the “continuity of existence”: social, moral, emotional, etc. and create various references to values, including ethical values (virtues) such as justice, bravery, love, fairness, faithfulness, faith, hope, mercy, impartiality, nobleness, responsibility, etc.

It is worth emphasising that R. Ingarden accentuated the specific nature of ethical values. They cannot be reduced to utilitarian values, vital values or to hedonistic or moral values. They belong to the reality which is created by man by his conscious creative acts; man transforms this reality or provides it with new meanings. The subject of these values is always the human personality; they result from human deeds, acts of will, decisions, etc. Decisions of people with respect to a specific manner of conduct or approval or disapproval of own deeds are decisive for the creation of values. They are fully encompassed by the sphere of activities of a human being. They are, however – as has been mentioned before – real, i.e. people fight for them, they seek them or even die for them, yet these values exist independently from subjective determination of specific persons.¹⁴

Ingarden’s concept of a human agent and the world of values assumes the possibility and, at the same time, the inevitability of “wobbliness” of references of a specific human agent with respect to the world of values (ethical, social, aesthetic, etc.), which is ontically independent from people, yet also co-created by them. At the same time, this concept confirms the values’ durable “rooting” and one-off dependency upon the primeval and “reviving” human nature. The “reviving” of human nature takes place in individual persons and their respective lives. The elements of “natural morality” are positioned within the realm of primeval nature.

*ANNA TERESA TYMIENIECKA’S UNIVERSALIST
ETHICS AND THE ISSUE OF “NATURAL
MORALITY” AND “ETHICAL WOBBLINESS”*

A similar stance, yet explained and justified in a completely different manner (metaphysically- anthropologically and, in a certain sense, politically) in philosophical anthropology and ethic is represented by Ingarden’s pupil, Anna

Teresa Tymieniecka.¹⁵ In majority of her philosophical ideas, Tymieniecka is independent from her master; she is the leading representative of the contemporary neo-phenomenological movement and the author of numerous fundamental works in almost all areas of philosophy.

Similarly to Ingarden and many other outstanding modern philosophers (who are mentioned in a further part of this text), Tymieniecka provides serious and suitable explanations and justifications for the thesis adopted and developed here, in line with which the characteristic shakiness and wobbliness of moral stances and ethical order which is almost common in the modern times, but does not yet entail (and in principle cannot entail) a decline of their fertile soil, the source and relatively durable back-up for vitality and further development, in spite of the shakiness and wobbliness of elementary feelings, sensitivity, reactions and moral behaviour, as well as basic, socially and historically shaped, ethical values. Moral culture, which is nowadays subjected to strenuous tests (thence the discussed wobbliness and shakiness), is not only an issue of more or less successful socialisation and proper, but not sufficiently good, education or programmed learning (e.g. via ethical and cultural education), but it is also an issue of more or less skilful and spontaneous derivation of indispensable elements and ethical impulses from the source of primeval natural morality, which is still rich and vital (as the author of this text is trying to show in this article). This morality is potentially and, in general, strongly embedded in evolutionary and historically shaped human nature.

A. T. Tymieniecka also provides direct or indirect support for the thesis of the author of this article that in contemporary times we are dealing not so much with “a crisis of morality” but – temporarily – with “a crisis in morality”; a crisis of various manifestations of its social and individual functioning.¹⁶

A brief discussion of Tymieniecka’s standpoint with respect to this issue is presented below.

A human being is, by its nature, a moral agent. At the same time, human beings are creative agents and cognising subjects. An integral ingredient of a human being’s individual morality is the so-called “moral sense of human condition”, which is realised in the so-called “source experience.” It is tied actively and in manifold ways with the intelligible sense, the aesthetic sense and the sacral sense. All of them are the manifestations of the Logos of life. The above-mentioned senses are the basis of primeval experiences (moral, cognitive, aesthetic and religious) of their agent, which bear fruit in subjective morality, science, philosophy, art and artistic creativity and in religious beliefs. The “Logos of life”, in which all potential primeval sources of all morality are embedded, is the manifestation of the cosmic Logos; on the other hand, the cosmic Logos is the manifestation of the eternal Logos (nature). Therefore, morality, as well as other virtualities of the human soul (cognitive, aesthetic and religious), appear at a specific stage of evolution of the Universe, in the process of continuous beingness, i.e. in the course of “ontopoiesis.” A human entity is pervaded with the rights of the Cosmos. In its being, existence, actions and behaviour – also in moral acts and behaviour – it is a microcosm.

Morality embedded in the moral sense has a social nature. It is rooted in the social Logos and appears in relation towards others, e.g. in the relation “I” – “you”

and “I” – “they”, implementing various modalities of life, such as solidarity, intimacy, affiliation, guilt and others. In essence, it does not need any external principles and rules of conduct or specific standards and ethical codes. They are necessary mainly on account of their insufficient attractiveness, stiffness and a tendency to unify human choices, decisions and stances. The moral sense is autonomous with respect to any normative ethic and social rules; it is constantly developing and has not been finally shaped; it is subconscious and spontaneous and in its activity it is supported by the intelligible and aesthetic sense, thereby gaining certain rationality, sensibility and “beauty”, as well as purposefulness.¹⁷

The moral sense may influence the sense and the quality of the individual and collective life; it may open the human agent onto another people, recognise inter-human relations and introduce the feeling of kindness and justness into human stances. First of all, the moral sense may show a sense of moral conduct, stimulate ethical evaluations, i.e. open the platform for the functioning of the moral conscience which, according to Tymieniecka, is a “deliberating and justifying factor” that expresses care for another human being and considers what we owe each other, taking into account both the welfare of individual persons and the collective life (the individual and the general welfare). This last attitude encompasses motivation of individuals to live socially and to establish social assistance institutions and to practice inter-human justness and solidarity.

In this place, it is necessary to mention one more thesis of A. T. Tymieniecka’s moral philosophy, i.e. the statement that moral sense is closely related to the issue of natural human rights; these are rights vested in every person on account of their ontic status.¹⁸

In the context of such versatile and unfinished “interpretation” of the world and the man by A.T. Tymieniecka, which is performed in constant tension and cognitive effort, the concepts of the “moral sense” and the natural morality are being deepened and enriched. This is how the fundamentals of modern subjectivity and conscience ethic are being created. This ethic is individualised, subjective, personal and autonomous; it is not related to codes; it is strictly personal and interpersonal; it is subjective and yet, at the same time, pro-social and, in a certain sense, ecological and global. This is how the project of a new humanist constructive ethic (yet not normative) is being created. This ethic not only “reflects” the character and the transformations of the contemporary moral reality in a certain degree; it also discloses a significant ability for becoming a part of the main trends and tendencies of such transformation. Because of these aspects, this is the ethic of “here and now” and is functionally vital. This is the ethic that is able to build a strong support for ethical optimism, which is so needed these days. It sustains the belief about constant relation of ethics to the human nature and to the currently threatened humanity.¹⁹

*PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE OF A. T.
TYMIENIECKA AND BASIC ETHICAL PROBLEMS*

A question is raised about the name that should be given to the ethic contained in the above-presented complex of metaphysical and anthropological thoughts of A.T.

Tymieniecka, called the “phenomenology of life.”²⁰ How should it be positioned in the wide spectrum of contemporary ethical systems? And first of all, how should its main goals and tasks be interpreted and how to answer the question about its relation to the subject matter of this article?

Let us try to answer these questions.

First of all, this ethic has neo-classical character with clear references to ancient ethics, in particular Aristotle, and to ethical concepts of outstanding representatives of numerous directions representing later European ethical tradition: Kant, Schopenhauer, Bergson, M. Scheller, R. Ingarden, E. Levinas, E. Mounier, T. de Chardin, A. Schweitzer and other contemporary morality philosophers.

On the other hand, this ethic is radically modernist, with bold use of modern ethical ideas of leading representatives of ecological and globalist ethics, *inter alia* H. Rolston, T. Regan, P.W. Taylor, P. Singer et al. These diverse and rich sources of the discussed ethic, especially the classical and modern ones, influence the circle of its basic principles, values and the main goals and tasks set before it.

As far as principles and tasks of the discussed ethics are concerned, attention should be drawn to the fact that the most important ones (the classical tendency is revealed here) are these which are meant to shape the internal harmony of people, their versatile spiritual development, in three basic spheres: intellectual, moral and aesthetic. They are used to protect and stimulate the creative activity of people and people’s self-creation, as well humanisation of life and inter-human relations.

These are primarily such principles and values as life and self-individualisation of life, intellect as the main signpost for human conduct (including moral conduct), measuring and creative wisdom, courage and moderation, prudence and tolerance, restraint and deliberation, order and harmony, justice and spirit of joint activity, existential solidarity, the greatest happiness principle, the golden rule, the highest middle way and the right measure, the human moral excellence, and the requirement to counteract evil and brutality – in defiance of the destructive instinct embedded in the human nature.²¹

To these, so to speak, classical principles and ethical values derived – as can be seen – from greatest and most universal systems from the past, A.T. Tymieniecka’s ambitious or even heroic ethics (ethics focused mainly on vital values) adds several new, yet, in a certain sense, also universal principles and ethical and pro-ethical values from the contemporary trends of ethical thought, mainly ecological, environmentalist and globalist. These are:

- life in harmony with “Nature”;
- acceptance of responsibility for Nature, in particular for the forms and manifestations of life developing in it: starting from the life of minerals, plants, animals and ending with human life;
- discontinuation of thoughtless and catastrophic “hurting” and devastation of the eco-system; irrational wasting and destruction of the soil, water, air, mineral, plants and animals;
- acceptance of the fact that we are not vested with – in reference to Nature – special rights and claims, and that we are encumbered with liabilities and obligations

towards its non-human “settlers”, which means that in the area of Nature, we cannot do things that are only pleasant and convenient for us, and solely take care of our interests and specific human goals; we also have to take into account the “rights” and interests of all other creatures, i.e. we have to take care of the common welfare of the Planet;

- acceptance of the role of a submissive carer of Nature, wise and prudent, with broad imagination and possibly accurate predictability, its intelligent and rational manager; a good and wise farmer with respect to its resources; an effective “defender” of its riches;
- acceptance of the role of somebody who can secure its stability and balance, in particular the role of a “guard” or a “custodian of everything that is alive”;
- acceptance of the role of a “guardian” assigned to ensure balance and harmony of the entire biosphere, welfare of its individual elements, and therefore welfare of the entirety; a “guardian” assigned to remove, as far as possible, disharmony and destructiveness, disorder and chaos; a “custodian of life equilibrium”.

In other words, man in relation to the ecosystem and to other people should primarily be the “moral creature” (ethical man, *homo ethicus*).

The term “moral man” has a double meaning here: normative and empirical. In each of these meanings, man is a creature with a constructive reference to the phenomena of moral shakiness and wobbliness, moral disorder and decay. In the first case, by means of consistent acceptance and fulfilment in the onto-poiesis of life of a wide spectrum of the above-listed principles and moral obligations, man effectively becomes the virtuous man. It is easy to notice that we are dealing with elements of virtue ethics. In the second case, the man who determines himself morally and obtains his ethical identity – in situations of moral shakiness and wobbliness – acquires an ability to have a complete moral life thanks to the specific moral qualities vested in his nature, in the form of feelings, emotions, inclinations, interests and moral motivations. Man acquires human moral excellence, which is a peculiar synthesis of advantages and virtues of man as a moral being.²²

At the end of this brief summary of A.T. Tymieniecka’s philosophy of life and ethic, let us try to interpret her main goals and show them in the perspective of desires that are involved in the practice of human life in other contemporary ethics.

If we interpret the intentional and teleological side of the discussed ethic correctly, the main and, at the same time, specific goals of A.T. Tymieniecka’s ethics are:

- demonstration of groundlessness of currently fashionable and influential (especially in certain intellectual circles) ideas about clear and constantly deepening disorder and chaos of almost everything in the contemporary world, including disorder and chaos in the world of moral and other values and the pessimistic (even catastrophic) mood that accompanies them.²³

Going against the tide in relation to numerous contemporary ideas and the general “climate”, A.T. Tymieniecka justifies her different and moderately optimistic standpoint on the basis of metaphysical concept of the Logos; her concept is developed in

the major work entitled “Logos and Life” [2000],²⁴ where she formulates a thesis in line with which “listening” to the voice of the universal Reason, omnipresent in the entire “living Cosmos” (including the human life), and being guided by its intuitive and experimentally given guidelines leads to desired and sensible choices, provides rational criteria for choices and moral evaluations and proper life orientation. It also facilitates departure from temporary hesitation and moral wobbliness, rationalises the ontopoiesis of life and leads to moral progress.²⁵

The above thesis, as well as all other statements with metaphysical character, can be deemed disputable and empirically unverifiable and maybe due to this A.T. Tymieniecka refers to empirically confirmed facts whilst justifying further specific goals of her ethics. She refers to the elements of natural and anthropogenic morality, which are described in various manners, yet are unanimously confirmed in developmental psychology and personality psychology; these elements take the form of specific predispositions, tendencies and moral “skills.” According to the author of the “Logos of Life” these are – as emphasised above – moral sense, i.e. human ability to have moral reactions and inclination to do good things, “reasonable measure” and “moral measure” and the “human moral excellence”, etc.

All these dispositions and moral inclinations allow man, in majority of life-time situations, dilemmas and moral choices, etc. to “be moral”, in spite of difficulties, hesitations and wobbliness with respect to values, temporary collapses and regressions in the ethical stance. They allow people to practice the principle of the “happy medium”, harmony and equilibrium; this principle is particularly important in the epoch that is constantly balancing between drastic extremities in numerous areas of human life, e.g. between a radical relativism and moral nihilism and various types of extreme absolutism and ethical fundamentalism.

Both the “obedience” of the cosmic vital Logos and “identification” with its tendencies, as well as references to natural moral potential (this potential, according to the author, is evidently and durably present in the human nature) allow for reaching for certain specific and sceptically perceived ethical goals, such as looking for the lost “compass of life”, i.e. a sensible goal for the human existence, the humanising process of life and, in spite of increasing difficulties, obtaining “moral progress” (in an individual and social dimension) in the individual and collective life, developing deeper spiritual life, cultivating practically applied moral virtues, or – in general – setting the civilisation on an ascendant course, i.e. saturating it with authentically humanist values of life, with better and wiser moderation in the sphere of decisions and choices, with a permanent desire for knowledge and satisfaction of this truly human desire, with appreciation of the values of higher culture and ongoing aspiration to the objective truth and to the life’s equilibrium.²⁶

ETHICS OF PETER SINGER AND RICHARD HARE VS. “MORAL WOBBLINESS”

Theoretical concepts and ideas of two outstanding ethicists from a California university (educated in Oxford), i.e. Peter Singer²⁷ and Richard M. Hare,²⁸ are similar to the ethics presented above.

The former draws attention to the modern, cultural and social concept of “constancy” and relative “invariability” of human nature and morality that is related to it, and which, in the course of its natural evolutionary development (in psychological, social, civilisational and cultural context), is gradually becoming anthropologically “consolidated” and integrated, showing more and more distinctly these aspects that are common, whilst weakening and pushing aside these elements that are “various”, “different” and “other.” In this morality, its characteristic conflicts, tensions, hesitations and dilemmas are becoming more and more assimilated. This evolutionary process clearly shows that in all types of ethics and moralities which have been created by people throughout their history and have been shaped in their subsequent communities and cultures, there is something indisputably common. There are various confirmations for the fact that people, in the course of time, are getting closer together mentally and morally; their morality and its main base – nature – have certain repetitive features, transpiring in almost all societies (small, large, developed and under-developed, ethnically and culturally diversified and uniform). This is not contradictory to the ongoing development (progress) of morality practiced in life and in theoretical ethical thought. What is more, there is a certain similarity between selected features of human nature and the nature of “long-living”, “intelligent” and “social” mammals.

In this respect, one of the statements of P. Singer gains particular significance. Singer claims that “ethics is not [. . .] a senseless collection of fragments assigned to various people at various times. In spite of historical and cultural differences in beliefs with respect to moral obligations, our beliefs are drawing closer together. Nature has its fixed features and there are only few manners of co-existence of human beings and their development.”

“In fact,” continues P. Singer “certain features of human nature are repeated in all societies and they are common to all long-living, intelligent and social mammals. These features are revealed both in our conduct and in the conduct of all primates.”²⁹

Societies that are healthy in the sphere of collective psyche, mentality and social character and which do not succumb to significant disintegration and decay trends are becoming more and more alike with respect to their moral culture, in spite of their sizes and ethnical and other differences. This process also encompasses the area of values recognised by them, the hesitations that they experience and their moral dilemmas.

“[. . .] the aspects which, in a given society or in a given religious tradition,” says Singer “are considered virtues, are probably virtues in other societies; moreover, a group of virtues esteemed in the great moral culture will never be a basic part of a collection of moral vices in another culture.” Exceptions from this rule are short-lived and they refer to societies at the stage of collapse or final decay. On the other hand, within the scope of every tradition, we observe the same fluctuations³⁰ and the same manifestations of “moral wobbliness.”

Moral similarity growing in the historical and cultural process between various societies is also related to increasing similarity in the content of various ethical concepts and systems. This is the case with respect to Western culture, e.g.:

“The history of Western philosophical ethics shows that [...] starting from most ancient thought – the Greek thought – until the modern times we can find the same old beliefs and the same old disputes once in a while.”³¹ In relation to this, “[...] we are able to reach an agreement with respect to the basic sense of good and evil, just as we reached an agreement in other areas of intellectual life.”³² It turns out that the so-called golden rule is [...] a central category in several great ethical systems.³³

The thesis about similarities and closeness of major ethical directions became one of the main investigation threads in the so-called “universal prescriptivism” created by the famous contemporary ethicist, Richard M. Hare.³⁴

According to this thesis, adopted as a leading investigation premise within the scope of ethical issues, attempts are made at identifying and determining the common features of most important ethical directions and working out a certain constructive synthesis (a general “ethical theory”) confirming and justifying in it, logically and empirically, ethical universalism.³⁵

“Universal prescriptivism,” explains R.M. Hare “is an attempt at determining which errors and which accurate intuitions are hidden in other common ethical theories. This allows for avoiding mistakes in every such theory, at the same time preserving their accurate intuitions and allowing for their synthesis.”³⁶ On the other hand, the term “ethical theory” denotes an attempt at making the content of questions about morality more precise. What is the meaning of sentences used in a moral discourse? What is the nature of moral terms or morality itself? If these attempts have a successful outcome, we will obtain epistemological data that is important for the ethical theory: aspects that we could rely on when giving rational answers to our moral questions. Maybe there are no such answers; maybe there is only our moral feeling or customs imposed on us. On the other hand, “if we can consider moral problems in a rational manner, it would mean that there has to be a certain moral truth or facts that can be discovered.”³⁷

This relative ethical universalism, i.e. the thesis about similarity and repetitiousness of certain ideas and ethical concepts in various systems of ethical thought, reflects and confirms relative moral universalism, i.e. similarity and repetitiousness in various societies and standpoints of majority of people (however, not all) of basic feelings and ethical intuitions, reactions and moral behaviour, or identical or similar ethical doubts and dilemmas.

In R.M. Hare’s “universal prescriptivism”, special attention should be drawn to the emphasis on certain foundations which do not lose their significance in the currently undertaken evaluations, choices and types of moral behaviour, i.e. elements of every type of “living” morality that is practiced in life and not only expressed intentionally and verbally. The emphasis is on the great, and even decisive, role of practical wisdom and common sense in moral life (similar to Aristotle’s *phronesis* or the practical reason of Kant and similar concepts of other thinkers) and the so-called “wisdom of the ages”, i.e. an accumulation of verified intuitions, thoughts and individual knowledge and evaluations of moral situations which have been shaped in life experiences of people (both the individual and collective).

Historically shaped practical wisdom of life and the “wisdom of the ages”, only seemingly aged and old-fashioned, cannot be omitted in modern evaluations, choices and moral stances, if such acts are to be relatively accurate, just and decent. What is more, they are vested with a so-called ethical authority. This derives from

the fact that the “wisdom of the ages [. . .] is a result of reflections of many people in various situations.”³⁸

In his “universal prescriptivism” R.M. Hare also formulates certain valuable, even though disputable and difficult to apply in practice, praxological recommendations for moral conduct and, at the same time, rules of moral self-determination in various situations and inter-human relations or, using the category of “moral wobbliness” applied here, extrication from the condition of wobbliness and shakiness of moral stances.

These are some of these recommendations:

- it is necessary to work out such dispositions and features that are conducive to the conduct recommended by an “impartial thinker, capable of a perfect critical examination of moral issues”;
- it is necessary to develop such dispositions and features which – in case there is such need – would give us a skill of practicing spontaneous, intuitive or even involuntary moral acts or conduct, especially when lack of time makes intellectual examination impossible;
- critical deliberation of a moral deed should be undertaken only when moral attitudes, worked out previously by general intellectual dispositions, are in conflict, “even though we will doubt our potential even then”;
- we should “develop the same [moral – J. Sz.] intuitions to which intuitionists were making references throughout the history of ethics and morality and strong inclinations in order to pursue such intuitions and other moral feelings (for example love) which will strengthen these intuitions”;
- it is necessary to assume that “moral convictions common to thinking people are those which should be nurtured”;
- it is necessary to comply with the “golden rule” (of Kant) according to which “it is necessary to act towards others in a manner that we would like them to act towards us and to love thy brethren as thyself”;
- in the end, it is necessary to always treat a human being as a goal and never as a means.³⁹

It is easy to notice that in the above “recommendations” regarding the circumstances and the manner of making evaluations, choices, decisions and moral deeds, an important role is assigned both to the intuition and the reason, even though the former has usually the main role. In general, they combine the imperatives of Kant’s ethics with ethical requirements of utilitarianism, not omitting the basic indications and categories of ancient ethical thought, e.g. the current utility of the “just desire” of Plato in the shaping of moral attitudes or the “practical wisdom” of Aristotle. It is also possible to perceive a close relation of this ethical standpoint to the main ideas of the philosophy of life and ethics of A.T. Tymieniecka. This confirms the hypothesis contained in this article that the main trends of the modern ethical thought are significantly integrated in explaining and solving of the main moral problems of modern times, including the problem of the “natural morality” and the so-called “moral wobbliness.”

NOTES

- ¹ Cf. L. Gawron (ed.), *Filozofia wobec XX wieku* (Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej: Lublin, 2004); Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Polity Press: Cambridge 2000), Polish edition: *Płynna nowoczesność*, trans. Tomasz Kunz (Wydawnictwo Literackie: Cracow 2006).
- ² Cf. Witold Mackiewicz, *Filozofia współczesna w zarysie* (Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego: Warsaw 2008); Józef Bańka, Wiesław Sztumski, *Ekorecentywnizm jako idea ochrony środowiska człowieka współczesnego* (Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Śląsk": Katowice 2007).
- ³ Cf. Henryk Skolimowski, *Wizje nowego milenium* (EJB Wydawnictwo: Cracow 1999); Anna Teresa Tymieniecka, "The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life, Book I, The Case of God in the New Enlightenment," *Analecta Husserliana. The Yearbook of Philosophical Research. Volume C* (Springer: Dordrecht 2009).
- ⁴ Cf. Jan Szmyd, "'Odczytywanie' współczesności – możliwości, ograniczenia, funkcje społeczne i życiowe," in *Państwo i Społeczeństwo VII, No. 3* (Cracow: 2007) pp. 7–16.
- ⁵ J.F. Collange, C. Mengus, *Communication et communion: perspectives theologiques et ethics* (Medias et charite: Paris 1987) pp. 95–97.
- ⁶ Halina Promieńska (ed.), *Etyka wobec problemów współczesnego świata* (Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego: Katowice 2003).
- ⁷ Cf. Jan Szmyd, "Kryzys moralności w świecie ponowoczesnym" in *Edukacja Filozoficzna* (Uniwersytet Warszawski, Instytut Filozofii 46: Warsaw 2008) pp. 57–76; *idem*, "Pogoda dla etyk sumienia – nie dla kodeksów i nihilizmu moralnego" in *IDO – Ruch dla Kultury*, Vol. 10, pp. 11–16 and other works of this author.
- ⁸ Cf. *inter alia* Tadeusz Kotarbiński, *Sprawy sumienia* (Warsaw, 1956); Włodzimierz Szewczuk, *Sumienie, Studium Psychologiczne* (Książka i Wiedza: Warsaw 1988); Józef Bańka, "Sumienie jako poręczenie moralne wyboru najlepszego" in *Etyka wobec problemów współczesnego świata*, Halina Promieńska (ed.) op. cit.; Peter Singer, *One World. The Ethics of Globalization* (Yale University Press, 2002), Polish translation *Jeden świat. Etyka globalizacji* (Książka i Wiedza: Warsaw 2006).
- ⁹ Cf. R. Penrose, *The Basic of Quantum Mechanics* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2000); P. Williams, *Uncertain Journey* (Publishing House: New York 2001); Janusz Czerny, *Czy prawo Moore'a detronizuje osobę ludzką* (Wydawnictwo KOS: Katowice 2005).
- ¹⁰ Cf. A. Bronk (ed.), *Filozofować dziś. Z badań nad filozofią najnowszą* (TN KUL, Lublin 1995); Zygmunt Bauman, Keith Tester, *Conversations with Zygmunt Bauman* (Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers Ltd. 2001), Polish edition *O pożytkach z wątpliwości. Rozmowy z Zygmuntem Baumanem*, trans. E. Krasińska (Wydawnictwo Sic!: Warsaw 2003); *Człowiek i Świat. Współczesne dylematy. Rozmowy Zdzisława Słowika* (Biblioteka "Res Humana": Warsaw 2007).
- ¹¹ Peter Singer, *A Companion to Ethics* (Basil Blackwell Ltd. 1991), Polish translation: P. Singer (ed.) *Przewodnik po etyce* (scientific editor of the Polish edition: Joanna Górnicka) (Książka i Wiedza: Warsaw 2000); H. Promieńska (ed.), "Etyka wobec problemów współczesnego świata" op. cit.
- ¹² Roman Ingarden, *Książeczka o człowieku* (Cracow, 1987), p. 114.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- ¹⁴ Cf. Roman Ingarden, *Wykłady z etyki* (Warsaw, 1989), p. 274.
- ¹⁵ The main philosophical work of A.T. Tymieniecka is a four-volume treatise entitled "The Logos of Life" published between 1988 and 2000. On the other hand, one of her last works is entitled "The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life". Book I. The Case of God in the New Enlightenment (Springer: Dordrecht, The Netherlands 2009).
- ¹⁶ Cf. Jan Szmyd, "Post-Modernism and the Ethics of Conscience: Various 'Interpretations' of the Morality of Post-Modern World. Role of A.T. Tymieniecka's Phenomenology of Life" in *Analecta Husserliana, The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research, Volume CV. Phenomenology and Existentialism in the Twentieth Century. Book 3. Heralding the New Enlightenment* edited by A.T. Tymieniecka (Springer: Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York 2000), pp. 111–122.
- ¹⁷ Cf. A.T. Tymieniecka, "The Moral Sense. A Discourse on the Phenomenologiae Foundation of the Social World," in *Analecta Husserliana* (1983), XV, pp. 3–78; *eadem* "The Moral Sense and the Human Person within the Fabric of Communal Life. The Human Condition of the Intersection of Philosophy,

Social Practice and Psychiatric Therapeutics. A Monographic Study” in *Analecta Husserliana* (1986) XX, pp. 3–100.

¹⁸ Cf. A.T. Tymieniecka, *The New Enlightenment. A Review of Philosophical Ideas and Trends*, Vol. 32 (Hannover, NH 2008), pp. 3–4.

¹⁹ Cf. A.T. Tymieniecka, “Czy istnieje świat? Nowe spojrzenie na podstawy sporu Husserl – Ingarden – rozważania ontopojetyczne,” in *Roman Ingarden i dążenia fenomenologów w 110 rocznicę urodzin Profesora*. Post-conference materials prepared by Czesław Głombik (ed.) (Wydawnictwo Gnope: Katowice 2006), pp. 36–46.

²⁰ The full names of this concept of thought: “Phenomenology of Logos and Life and Human Condition.”

²¹ Cf. A.T. Tymieniecka, *The New Enlightenment*, op. cit.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Cf. Carmen Cozma, “Anna Teresa Tymieniecka’s ethics: an inspiration for the contemporary world,” in *Phenomenological Inquiry. A Review of Philosophical Ideas and Trends*, edited by Patricia Trutt-Coozil, (October 2009), XXXIII, pp. 23–34.

²⁷ Peter Singer, a philosopher, ethicist, one of the most outstanding and influential contemporary intellectuals; professor of philosophy and director of the Centre for Human Bioethics in Monach University in Melbourne, professor of bioethics at the University Center for Human Values at the University of Princeton, co-editor of international magazine “Bioethics,” author of numerous works on ethics, bioethics, global ethics and social philosophy, including: *Democracy and Disobedience* (Clarendon Press: Oxford 1973); *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals* (Aron Books: New York 1975); “Animal and the Value of Life” in *Matters of Life and Death* (Random House: New York 1980); *Practical Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), *The Expanding Circle* (Ferrari, Straus and Giroux: New York 1981); *A Companion to Ethics* (Basil Blackwell Ltd. 1991) Polish edition *Przewodnik po etyce. Pod redakcją Petera Singera*. Scientific editing of the Polish edition: Joanna Górnicka (Książka i Wiedza: Warsaw 1998); *One World. The Ethics of Globalization* (Yale University Press, 2002), Polish edition: *Jeden świat. Etyka globalizacji*, trans. Cezary Cieśliński (Książka i Wiedza: Warsaw 2006).

²⁸ Richard M. Hare, one of the most outstanding modern morality philosophers, professor at the University of Florida, retired professor at the University of Oxford, author of famous works in the area of philosophy and morality theory, including: *The Language of Morals* (Clarendon Press: Oxford 1952); “Waiting – Some Pitfalls” in *Agent, Action and Reason*, R. Binkley (eds.), (Toronto University Press, Basil Blackwell: Oxford 1971); “Nothing Matters” in *Applications of Moral Philosophy* (University of California Press: Berkley 1972); *Moral Thinking: Its Levels and Points* (Oxford University Press, 1981); *Essays in Ethical Theory* (Oxford University Press, 1989).

²⁹ P. Singer (ed.), *Przewodnik po etyce*. Scientific editing of the Polish edition – Joanna Górnicka, op. cit., p. 589.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 590.

³¹ Ibid., p. 589.

³² Ibid., p. 590.

³³ Ibid., p. 591.

³⁴ R.M. Hare, “Uniwersalny preskrytywizm” in *Przewodnik po etyce*, P. Singer (ed.), op. cit., pp. 499–511.

³⁵ Cf. Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 499.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 510

³⁹ Ibid., p. 509.

A TRUE AND BETTER “I”: HUSSERL’S CALL
FOR WORLDLY RENEWAL

A B S T R A C T

My article argues that Husserl’s late phenomenology centered on an ethics of worldly responsibility. This revision marked a considerable departure from the Brentanian axiology of his earlier seminars, and it introduced a new *ēthos*, never fully developed, of ethical engagement through philosophy. In Husserl’s twilight years, the world, not ego, received primary accent. This worldliness – outlined in the *Kaizo* essays of 1923–24, then buried under the egology of the late 1920s – reemerged in the 1930s *Crisis* work and surrounding manuscripts. Ostracized from Nazi society, a beleaguered Husserl raised worldly ethical concerns to new philosophical distinction, although he never wholly extricated them from either egological subjectivism or the well-known Cartesian mechanics of intersubjectivity. As a result, Husserl’s late ethics, like the *Crisis* text itself, is a potent but incomplete harbinger of new phenomenological lines. My essay also suggests how Husserl’s intellectual scion, Jan Patočka, appropriated and radicalized his mentor’s ethics in his own phenomenological activity, elevating worldly responsibility to the pinnacle of philosophical life.

As incarnate beings, wrote the Czech philosopher Jan Patočka, citing his mentor Husserl, humans transcend their individual world and its material limits through freedom; we are, in his words, “beings of the far reaches [*bytomnosti dálky*]” who make higher commitments and bear ethical responsibility as part of our essential being.¹ “We live turned away from ourselves,” explained Patočka in university lectures delivered in the late 1960s. “[W]e have always already transcended ourselves in the direction of the world, of its ever more remote regions.”² The world and its objects manifest themselves as possibilities, and our freedom, with its concomitant responsibilities, opens a life that reaches beyond enclosed self-concern, a life that can be lived into the distances of the earth and the depths of other beings.³ These ethical impulses, which informed Patočka’s heroic dissidence in the 1970s, grew in great part from his encounter with Husserl’s late philosophy.⁴

An elliptical phrase, Patočka’s “beings of the far reaches” evoked Husserl’s phenomenology of the lived body situated in the surrounding world. As Anthony Steinbock notes, Husserl’s *Ideas II*, drafted in 1913, had already introduced the body [*Leib*] as the “zero-point” of orientation, in which all concepts of distance and direction, near and far, took root.⁵ The physical, kinaesthetic sense of farness outlined there and at other points in Husserl’s oeuvre hints at the wider significance of Patočka’s summation, at the way that distant aspirations and endeavors redound upon subjective encounters. The “there” far away is a relative term that pivots on

my near surroundings. Though close distances may be bridged and each *Dort* made *Hier*, farness ultimately presents itself as an infinite horizon of effort stretching before me. For Patočka, who met Husserl in 1929 and studied with him in 1933, this corporeality betokened a much wider ethical *ek-stasis*, as human beings were called to live beyond themselves into the world:

[O]ur doing transcends itself in the direction of that totality to which our *ou heneka* [final cause] is the key and which, in virtue of that, merits the title of “world,” the “natural” world of our life. Or, philosophically speaking, it is not this concrete context, structured by our active life, that merits the name, as much as that about the very foundations of our actual life that makes such a structuring possible – the worldhood of the world toward which the human *Dasein* transcends himself.⁶

The world is the place of human activity, and Husserl’s Czech disciple saw an ethical commitment to the world beyond self as a central demand of his mentor’s thought, a call to live responsibly in the far horizons of nature and society, beyond the egological self in the shared environs that co-constituted our experience. The corporeal human lived within concentric rings of worldliness: The carnal body inserted a spiritual soul and ego into a social and cultural context, which in turn presupposed the wide horizon of an infinite world.⁷

The provisionality of Husserl’s final ethics is undeniable even for Patočka, but equally apparent is his firm conviction, reiterated in print and conversation, that phenomenology must tackle moral and social crises.⁸ Perhaps Patočka’s unavoidable entanglement in the agonies of the Czechoslovak mid-century pushed his phenomenology further toward engagement, but the common dismissal of Husserl as purely epistemological overlooks the worldly concerns and ethical agenda of his late career.⁹ Admixing Brentanian terminology with a Kantian sense of imperative and the spirit of Fichte’s absolute ought, the postwar Husserl modified his early axiological project in favor of a personal and social ethics of duty and intersubjective worldliness.¹⁰ As an early indication of the new direction, his ethics courses of 1920/1924 ended with a discussion of the best possible life as one subordinated to a personal calling [*Beruf*] and an overarching norm. Instead of the value taxonomies of his youthful career, the key question became a personal and social one: “Was soll ich tun?”¹¹ In answer, he urged a lifelong striving, always insufficient, for a self-regulating and norm-governed vocation, an effort applied not only to the “hypothetical” (i.e. instrumental) desiderata of adopting appropriate means for chosen ends, but also to the categorical imperative of weighing final goals.¹² In what James G. Hart has called the “ethical reduction,” Husserl defined a purposeful existence as one in which actions were viewed from the holistic perspective of a unified life in its worldly situation, a task whose horizons were infinite and historical.¹³ This phenomenological attitude allowed one to identify a personal norm as the guidepost of a moral life; with regular practice, fidelity to this norm could be habitualized.¹⁴ Husserl’s manuscripts from the mid-1930s, coupled with the *Crisis* work, took this worldly ethics still further by demonstrating the new centrality of intercommunal worldliness in his thought.

One can, in fact, identify three distinct formulations of post-axiological ethics in Husserl’s later oeuvre.¹⁵ The most well-known, exemplified in the Fifth Meditation, but present as early as the *Ideas II*, focused on the *egological* establishment of

otherness and intersubjectivity through empathy. This formulation exercised great influence, notably in French philosophy, because of its systematic and public exposition, but it has also invited criticism for an incomplete disentanglement of the other from the solipsistic ego. Empathy for an other, moreover, fell short of Husserl's aspiration for a communal and worldly outlook, and thus a second formulation of Husserlian ethics can be called *personalist*. As opposed to egology, which stressed the awareness of the other through the rational and corporeal self, a personalist ethics embraced a life motivated by individual but outwardly-directed determinations, rather than the lonely ego and (perhaps) her body. The motivated life had both rational and pre-rational dimensions, but its focus was the temporal and cultural individual regulated by self-given norms. The personalist ethic, echoing Brentanian and Kantian imperatives, took as its goal a purposive, self-regulated life. With seeds in Husserl's prewar lectures, this vision took shape in the seminars of the early 1920s, and we find it applied to communities – to “personalities of a higher order” – in the *Kaizo* essays on renewal. As Hart has shown, numerous manuscripts argue that the “I” already contains the other within it, that individuals within a community “penetrate one another” in forging a communal personality. “[W]e do not only live next to each other but in one another,” Husserl contended. “We determine one another personally.”¹⁶ These claims, of course, challenge the adequacy of the philosophical individualism found in *both* the egological and personalist visions, and they point to the worldly concerns that increasingly preoccupied Husserl from the 1920s onward. As opposed to the thrust of his younger phenomenology, a third, *worldly* ethic, evident in desultory sketches, took the intersubjective realm, not the unified ego, as man's founding experience and basic ethical situation. In earlier writings, the mention of social personalities already indicated the possibility of a trans-individual subjectivity, and the postwar introduction of pre-rational drives, little-known beyond Husserl scholars, suggested the primordially of protective, nurturing communities that preceded egological awareness. That Husserl never settled on a final vision or reconciled his views makes for a perplexing but bountiful foison.

WAR AND RENEWAL

Husserl's worldly ethics marked a new postwar emphasis in his thought. In the first half of his philosophical career, especially during the years between the *Logical Investigations* and World War I, he strove to elaborate an ethics based on Brentanian premises. Franz Brentano's promise of ethical certainty won a coterie of followers in its time, most notably his star pupil.¹⁷ If by 1900 Husserl came to reject his mentor's psychologistic assumptions, he always upheld the call to philosophical clarity and universality. He also retained his teacher's fundamental ethical tenets – that moral insights based on feeling could be universalized through cognition; that these insights, like logical judgments, enjoyed the corroborating evidence of pure perception; and that the chief practical imperative was to choose the best among possible options.¹⁸ In this early phase, Husserl's main criticism of Brentano's ethics was that it proffered a theory only in outline – failing, for example, to distinguish noetic

(mental) judgment from noematic (object) value. He would cultivate Brentano's "fruitful seeds" by expounding a scientific apparatus for ethics to parallel the rational underpinnings of logic.¹⁹ This endeavor, notably advanced in the Göttingen seminars, led to the elaboration of new subfields and coinages encompassing the theoretical and practical technicalities of moral experience: a noetic theory of ethical acts, an axiology of values, an apophantics linking ethical acts with their objects, and a formal moral praxis. More zealously even than his professor, Husserl espoused an ethics that was analogous to scientific logic.

The prewar seminars, however, already exhibited aporia that pointed toward later ideas. For one, Husserl's ethics revealed a tension between the description of moral phenomena and the prescription of proper conduct. Many early notes were taken up in detailing the subfields of ethical theory, describing the regions and logics appertaining to moral acts and values. At the same time, however, Husserl embraced Brentano's categorical imperative to do the best that was possible in each situation. Yet the shift from abstract description to the declaration of an imperative "ought" was not smooth, for it lacked a full conceptualization of the contexts within which ethical directives operated.²⁰ A second tension emerged in the contradictory drives to universalize and localize. While Husserl's empirical descriptions and categorical imperative were meant to ground a universal science, his guiding moral principle was not formal in the Kantian sense. Instead, he insisted that a concrete imperative – the content of the formal call to do the best that is possible – could only be specified in a particular time and place of action. It took the form of a local universality, of an "anyone in my circumstances should do as I do." In this form, Husserl's early ethics already implicated context in moral acts, an insight that would progressively deepen until he arrived at the notion of the lifeworld.

World War I introduced a new moral urgency to Husserl's project. The war was a personal tragedy for him – taking one son and injuring another – and the postwar years brought economic hardship and mounting dismay over Germany's social collapse. "The war," he wrote, in an article for the Japanese journal *Kaizo*, "revealed the falsehood and senselessness of this culture," prompting him to seek anew the purpose of his philosophical lifeworld.²¹ This intellectual demarche was not wholly unprecedented: Husserl's posthumously published *Ideas II*, drafted "in one stroke" in 1912 and emended over the subsequent decade, served in part as a précis for future ethical concerns and promised far more than the logical formalism of Husserl's earlier work.²² But in the postwar years, these aperçus blossomed into a new vision of a philosophy that would spearhead a cultural renewal by helping men to transcend political and material differences and nurture transnational ideals.²³ As early as 1917, in three lectures on Fichtean idealism delivered at Freiburg, Husserl declared the wartime crisis "a time of renewal [*Erneuerung*]."²⁴ Husserl's new ethics prized the recovery of human ideals as a domain of life experience, one that allowed men to dedicate themselves to the project of moral rejuvenation by envisioning a world that was not yet. "The human as human has ideals," he wrote. "[I]t is his essence, that he must form an ideal for himself as a personal I and for his whole life, indeed a double, both absolute and relative, and strive toward its possible realization." For both individuals and societies, this ideal stood as a "'true' and 'better I'", an "absolute

conception" that encouraged personal and social endeavor.²⁵ More than simply a goal-setting mechanism, idealization laid the groundwork for a pure and universal ethic and an individual absolute ought [*absolute Gesollte*].²⁶ Indeed, the assertion of ideals in the face of the empty facticity of modern science was nothing less, in his view, than the recovery of true humanity.

Although only three of five *Kaizo* articles appeared in print – and none were published in Europe – the opuscle helped to consecrate Husserl's ethical turn by offering his most sustained analysis of social and cultural life prior to the *Crisis* text.²⁷ His decision to publish on the theme of renewal, a topic prompted by the journal's title (*Kaizo* means renewal in Japanese), was driven partly by the need to bolster family finances. But the invitation from a former student also afforded the chance to reflect on the social collapse Husserl perceived around him and to outline a program of reform led by a rational philosophy determined to recapture its theoretical-*cum*-practical position as an existential guide. The first article introduced the theme of individual and social renewal and set as a goal the establishment of ethical norms for the modern world. "Renewal," declared its opening sentence, "is the general call in our present age of suffering and is heard throughout European culture."²⁸ Husserl's address urged the move from an ill-defined "natural feeling" of community and desire for reform to a rational individual and social renewal led by philosopher-functionaries.²⁹ As he had already lamented in his 1910-11 manifesto "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science," the human sciences lacked a rationally grounded *Wissenschaft* that could function as mathematics did for natural science. Humanistic methodologies embraced either a purely factual empiricism or a relativistic *Weltanschauungsphilosophie*; neither approach was grounded in true experience.³⁰ The missing science he invoked was distinct from naturalism because it did not seek the theoretical explanation of facts or elaboration of laws; instead, it sought to outline an *a priori* study of norms based on the open possibilities of a rational humanity, norms that could guide prudent action and lead a disillusioned mankind toward greater insight and humaneness. If laws established universal causal links, a norm defined a human possibility, an ideal role contained within each of us though never fully realized. Only a science embedded in the human world, he insisted, could annul the shameless "political sophistry" and Spenglerian "pessimism" of his age.³¹ The motivation that drove Husserl's career from the start – the desire for a foundational rationalism – worked here as well, animating the call for a scientific grounding of ethical impulses. The difference, however, was a stunning move from the logical and epistemological concerns of his prewar phenomenology to an outright call for an individual and social ethics based on the elaboration of human possibilities, a practical "mathesis of the spirit and of humanity" that could guide human betterment.³² While he retained a terminology, the enterprise changed.

Yet Husserl's new ethical concerns drew on an earlier methodological vision. Since the *Logical Investigations*, mathematics had exemplified the missing science of the *a priori*; every experiential reality, whether factual or imagined, contained its own mathesis, its own essential grammar that could be gleaned through the intuition of essences, or what Husserl called eidetic intuition. This core phenomenological technique relied on the imagination to vary perceptual objects so as to identify the

core *invariants* or essences that defined them. In the *Kaizo* series, Husserl talked of applying this method to human phenomena in a way that had more direct implications for the social world than mathematics did for natural systems. Calculation, according to Husserl, remained “reinen Phantasiedenkens,” a purely ideal reflection of real nature. Every human reality, by contrast, contained within itself a “pure possibility” that could mold and change it; man was distinct from animals because he stood under the norm of possible experience, not simply fact.³³ In this regard, the methodology of *Wesensschau* had distinct social and anthropological implications. Only mankind consisted of selves characterized by an “Innerlichkeit” that allowed men to re-imagine and remake themselves. This interiority and mutability meant that humans could not be explained solely by the causal laws of naturalistic psychology. Echoing Kant’s renowned distinction between man and nature, the first *Kaizo* essay rehearsed another side of Husserl’s familiar critique of psychologism: Not only did the fallacy conflate logic with psychology; it also voided humanity’s distinctive interiority, which formed an essential condition of the ability to differ from oneself, to change, to regenerate, to renew. The opening of the third *Kaizo* article reveals that the three themes introduced in the first two essays – the call to renewal, the systematization of ethics, and the essential openness of man – were, in fact, one: “The renewal of humanity [*Menschheit*] – both individuals and men in society [*vergemeinschafteten Menschheit*],” it said, “is the highest theme of all ethics.”³⁴

Under the dispensation of renewal, man was both subject and object of ethics, a free individual capable of judgment and exertion, not bound by the circumstances of the moment or locked into biological reflex. Humans could take a perspective that encompassed past and future, overseeing their lives and forging commitments based on a survey of prospects. In order to promote reform, Husserl called on people to view their actions under the rubric of their own best possible life. This aspect allowed one to choose a purposive norm as a guide to right and wrong. Indeed, the call to subordinate one’s life to higher ethical goal became for Husserl the expression of a new imperative: “To be truly human, lead a life that you can justify with thorough insight, a life of practical reason.”³⁵

The focus on an “echt humane Leben” was more than simply a methodological position, adopted or relinquished for theoretical aims. It was, for Husserl, a multi-stage transformation whose process formed the renewal he advocated. The first stage required individuals to commit to a calling [*Beruf*] based on the self-conscious review of personal circumstances and possibilities. This effort lifted an individual life from vague yearning to a conscious and guided commitment. But a life regulated by the demands of a calling was not yet fully ethical. While one could judge disparate activities against an overall goal and thus forge a kind of direction, it was important to evaluate the moral significance of that goal. A life regulated by a calling remained pre-ethical [*vorethische*] as long as it stayed within the framework of a particular profession and did not compare absolute aims against each other or against wider social needs. A calling, Husserl insisted, entailed merely relative value, whereas ethics concerned the absolute. Although the bridge between the pre-ethical and the ethical remained murky in this adumbration, he did suggest

one motivation for moving from individual dedication toward a wider striving for ethical purpose: personal dissatisfaction.³⁶ If the postwar collapse left people longing for moral direction, individual efforts at reform soon yielded to malaise when they were unable to justify choices according to wider criteria. Yet this discontent spurred further social and ethical development among some individuals, who recognized the imperative to move beyond the dreary "infinity" of dissatisfactions toward a life focused around freely chosen paragons, a life defined by "the consciousness of rational responsibility, or the ethical conscience."³⁷

Yet Husserl's essay did not stop with vague overtures. Although the ideal ethical life – variously called "das absolute Gesollte" or "die absoluter personaler Vollkommenheit" – was not fully achievable, Husserl offered concrete techniques for identifying and approaching it.³⁸ While it was not feasible to judge one's actions against an exemplar as a matter of constant daily practice, renewal could be engendered through a process of habituation, launched by conscious striving that gradually settled into more passive routine. Habituation required a commitment to regular procedures of thought and action, to a steady method of reform. "[T]he truly human life, a life of never-ending self-development," he wrote, "is, so to say, a life of 'method,' the method for the ideal humanity [*Humanität*]."³⁹ Tireless self-training and eventual habituation could secure an "ethical personality," first as outward expression and then as an inner will that fueled the ongoing process of individual renewal.⁴⁰

Achieving individual ethical renewal, of course, was but a half-victory, for it ignored our duties to others. A superlative individual remained error-prone in an unreformed society, and thus a new "Menschenform" required social regeneration – extending beyond communities to nations and international humanity – and a shared ethical will.⁴¹ Husserl used a host of metaphors likening societies to individuals: a community was a distinct "personality of a high order," a "many-headed [*vielköpfig*] and yet unified subjectivity"⁴² that manifested its own distinct style or cultural character, an *ethōs* determining its moral and cultural outlook.⁴³ Ultimately, individual and social renewal were mutually implicated. If communities could not simply be reduced to a sum of individuals, it was also the case that "true human societies" could only exist when they had as their members "true individuals."⁴⁴

He also proposed a pragmatic strategy for transmitting reform to wider sectors. Achieving an integrated culture ultimately fell to dedicated activists who could explain new possibilities and offer a unified vision to their confreres. Husserl described this activism as a "spiritual Huygens principle," with each reformed individual a node of wider moral renewal. Through writing and speaking, education and persuasion, these advocates would gradually transform society, person by person, from a collection of individuals into a *Willensgemeinschaft* rooted in a common tradition and shared vision.⁴⁵ These ethical envoys took the role of spiritual authorities, whom Husserl likened to mathematicians – rational instigators rather than political leaders – though he noted that cultural and religious dignitaries could also spearhead a *Willenszentralization*.⁴⁶ Presaging his famous characterization in the *Crisis*, Husserl designated philosophers the supreme functionaries of ethical renewal, "the appointed [*berufenen*] representatives of the spirit of reason." Philosophy, in turn,

would become a universal science dedicated to both the theory and practice of cultural revitalization.⁴⁷ This drama, at once utopian and technical, would lead to societies dedicated to the progressive *Technik* of reform, culminating in a rational *Übernation* and ultimately a world Imperium governed by ethical ideals.⁴⁸ This perfectionist vision, which combined aspects of Aristotelian society with Platonic philosophical leadership, was not authoritarian, he maintained, because submission to rational authority would be given freely. He did not, of course, consider the goal fully attainable. Renewal was a historical process of living toward a regulative ideal; it was not a final achievement. The ethical increase of mankind was gradual and asymptotical, originating in the individual habitus and social *ethōs* of communities and growing steadily toward fruition. In Husserl's own language, an understanding of the dynamic process of ethical renewal required the tools of a genetic rather than a static phenomenology, procedures that could grasp time and constitution in a temporal understanding rather than as structures or functions of experience.⁴⁹ As Hart found in other social and ethical manuscripts, Husserl perceived renewal as an ever ongoing "movement," an infinite entelechy that approached but never met its aim.⁵⁰

The posthumously published fifth *Kaizo* essay closed the prospectus with a macrohistorical survey of Western striving toward a rational ethical culture. The lengthiest of the sections, it highlighted the interplay between a religious worldview that presumed normative communities and a scientific outlook celebrating individual freedom and rational endeavor. According to Husserl, European thought had launched two essential movements. First, in the person of Plato, he found the cultural forefather who defined philosophy not merely as theory but as "vernünftigen Lebenspraxis," a union of theory and practice in one life-transforming science that foreshadowed the aims of phenomenology.⁵¹ The second, modern movement, epitomized by Galileo and consummated in the Enlightenment, advanced human striving through mathematization and the universalization of scientific reason. Cultural renewal would reconnect these two strands – faith and reason, norm and law, theory and practice – which had been severed in modern life.

That a Husserlian renewal would have profound political implications is undeniable, though Husserl's political remarks are sparse and perfunctory, at times suggesting statist leanings, elsewhere a more egalitarian communalism.⁵² One of the fullest sketches of the social import of his call came in the well-known 1935 Vienna lecture, one of his last public exposés. The community of philosophical reformers, he averred, was not meant to impose a Platonic hierarchy, but to serve as a model for others to emulate.

Philosophical knowledge of the world creates . . . a human posture which immediately intervenes in the whole remainder of practical life with all its demands and ends . . . A new and intimate community – we could call it a community of purely ideal interests – develops among men, men who live for philosophy, bound together in their devotion to ideas, which not only are useful to all but belong to all identically. Necessarily there develops a communal activity of a particular sort, that of working with one another and for one another, offering one another helpful criticism, through which there arises a pure and unconditioned truth-validity as common property. In addition this interest has a natural tendency to propagate itself through the sympathetic understanding of what is sought and accomplished in it; there is a tendency, then, for more and more still nonphilosophical persons to be drawn into the community of philosophers. . . . The spread . . . occurs as a movement of education, far beyond the vocational sphere.

Of course, conservative state leaders, fearful of losing authority, would react to this cultural efflorescence through persecution, but Husserl insisted that truthful ideas would outlast "empirical powers."⁵³ It is not hard to see why such a program, originally expressed in the midst of the Nazi consolidation, would inspire Patočka and fellow philosopher-dissidents.⁵⁴

For those familiar with the 1931 *Cartesian Meditations*, the *locus classicus* of Husserlian ethics, a surprising feature of the earlier *Kaizo* series is its lack of concern for the phenomenological problem of intersubjectivity – or more properly, the elision of individual and social ethics.⁵⁵ Five years before the *Meditations*, the *Kaizo* articles, as Donn Welton remarks, took it for granted that the individual existed in social relations rather than presuming the need to ground intersubjectivity in the mechanics of empathy.⁵⁶ Societies only become truly human, Husserl remarked without further explanation five years before the *Meditations*, "when they have as their bearers true individuals [*echte Einzelmenschen*]."⁵⁷ Five years after the *Meditations*, empathy and otherness again took a subordinate position in the *Crisis*, leaving the impression that Husserl viewed intersubjectivity as a technical facet within the wider problem of world apprehension and moral renewal, rather than as the crux of an ethics. In this light, the call for *Erneuerung* was not simply a cul-de-sac of Husserlian moral theory, but a new and central commitment to the human social world. Like Brentano, he saw ethics as a key to philosophy's practical relevance, especially in a time of crisis.

It must be said that Husserl's approach to social ethics in these essays failed to offer a convincing framework for ethical duty or practical social action. Indeed, Husserl himself seemed to be aware of its inadequacies in several passages that point to later developments in his thought. One of the main tensions of the analysis is between the overt social dimensions of the argument and the persistent Cartesianism of his ethical life reduction. Is the individual or society primary? At this stage, despite metaphorical equations between individuals and personalities of a higher order, Husserl had not yet developed his theories of empathy or horizons to such a degree that the project of renewal could be seen as anything but individually driven. Yet if a society was more than the sum of individual egos, as he insisted, then the greater whole was not yet explained, and there was no clear intersubjective juncture among reformed individuals that lifted them to a higher social plane. Nor did the universality of reason square with the particularity of individual and cultural norms. Husserl's commitment to a rational subjective experience would remain throughout his life, and it became one of the more fraught elements of his inheritance. All the same, his later work grappled with the nexus between a primordial subject and an *equally* primordial affective sociability, between intersubjective reason and a pre-rational *Triebssystem*. In a manuscript from 1921, Husserl introduced the notion of a community of joint striving [*Strebensgemeinschaft*] and a community of love [*Liebensgemeinschaften*] in which mutual contact and communication led to a shared motivation that ethically elevated the whole. In these *Willensgemeinschaften*, "every awakened person (ethically awakened) deliberately sets before himself his ideal I as an 'infinite task.'" The origin of personality lay in empathy and in social acts, in a social world that pre-existed and grounded the ego.⁵⁸ But so too did

social ethics, which grew from a communal love and mutual friendship whose perfect embodiment was Christ.⁵⁹ But these incipient notions made little impression in the *Kaizo* articles. The fact that Husserl felt the need to define a philosophical and ethical basis for activism betokened a shift in his phenomenological mandate, the embrace of a world of action that needed philosophical foundation. And the collaboration between phenomenology and social activism promised mutual benefits: If a world without philosophy was ethically directionless, a philosophy divorced from human societies remained nugatory and dry. To be relevant for a troubled age, phenomenology had to become a social philosophy. But it would require the subsequent decade for Husserl to recognize the superficiality of his earlier pronouncements and devote greater care to the phenomenology of intersubjectivity and the dynamics of cultural renewal.⁶⁰

THE CRISIS

The *Kaizo* essays stand as a crucial prehistory to Husserl's final opus, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. Though less socially and ethically explicit than its 1920s precursor, this incomplete final work was suffused with the despairs of its time. Like the postwar years, the German depression and Nazi rise brought Husserl professional and personal hardship. Facing straitened family finances, barred from university as a non-Aryan, rejected by his protégé Heidegger, and forced to publish outside Germany, the septuagenarian briefly considered abandoning his homeland for posts in California and Prague.⁶¹ As his workload increased and political life darkened, Husserl tried to remove distractions by avoiding newspapers and narrowing his practical engagements to pleas on behalf of self and family.⁶² Yet somehow, in this atmosphere of threat and isolation, Husserl achieved one of his most feverish bouts of philosophical labor, writing for six or seven hours daily as he elaborated a new account of the social and cultural life-world. The main argument of the resulting work is well known. Modern European humanity was experiencing cultural crisis because of a loss of meaning. The natural sciences, despite their commanding authority and technical efficiencies, had failed to provide humanity with a higher life purpose. Beneath the sheen of Western life, men struggled to glean significance from fractured and competing worldviews, and science was unable to explain the ultimate ends of their futile striving. Husserl's was, to paraphrase Eliot, a hollow age of hollow men. This crisis, he argued, took centuries to manifest, inherent even at the Greek inception of philosophy, but a crucial watershed came with the Galilean Renaissance, when natural philosophers disseminated a universalist mathematical science that dismissed subjective experience as mere *doxa*, unworthy of scientific concern. The fateful loss of original experience became especially acute in the nineteenth century, when the cult of positivist fact reached its apex and industrial advance lost a connection with deeper human urges. The disciplines fragmented; scientists became "unphilosophical experts;" and scientific rationality, while supplying life's technical accoutrements, quenched none of the thirst for greater meaning.⁶³ The result, said Husserl, was rampant skepticism

and a turn toward mystical sources of meaning.⁶⁴ The tendency of naturalistic science to sever itself from experience by valorizing a narrow objectivism produced a cultural void that invited extremism of all sorts. If a purely calculating reason lay at the root of modern crises, however, the abandonment of reason was not a proper response. Modern cynicism and irrationalism, both painfully prevalent in Husserl's old age, were symptoms of the scientific abdication of duty, not solutions to it. To counter their appeal, he hoped to reground science in an original subjectivity that bound together reason and meaningful human experience. The posthumously published third part of the *Crisis* famously elaborated a new concept of the lifeworld as the intersubjective ground of experience, from which all rational pursuits emerge.⁶⁵

Despite the obvious social and ethical motivations of the argument, Husserl's retention of familiar epistemological and scientific trappings mask the essay's moral agenda. But this gloss should not deceive us. Husserl's thought had shifted over forty years, and social ethics came to occupy a central position in his initially logical enterprise. Yet even where commentators grant this ethical cynosure its due, analyses focus primarily on the theory of empathy articulated in the Fifth Cartesian Meditation. This emphasis, while important for understanding Husserl's legacy in the ensuing decades, enables historians to pigeonhole him as a latter-day Cartesian and ignore broader, if less systematic socio-ethical commitments that also shaped his influence.⁶⁶

The desultory concern for empathy in the *Crisis* underscores this point. Husserl devoted far more space to the lifeworld concept, which placed intersubjectivity on a more primordial and communal basis, than on the empathetic affirmation of a dyadic Other.⁶⁷ Perhaps acceding to some of the philosophical novelties of the renegade Heidegger, Husserl *emeritus* increasingly saw intersubjectivity as a primordial characteristic of the lifeworld experience, available to intuition without the need for empathetic verification.⁶⁸ Indeed, the world did not require assurances of Others by lonely egos because it was already multitudinous in its experiential constitution. Object perception itself, noted Eugen Fink, took the intersubjective world as a fundamental assumption.⁶⁹ Though we can only see object profiles, we always perceive the whole, an impossible perception except through the admixture of an infinite number of compossible views. To perceive a thing was to presume an all-sided world of co-viewers emerging from sense-constitution without the empathetic verification of corporeal analogues. In this account, the singular ego of Husserl's earlier works came to appear as an abstraction from primal intersubjectivity. Instead of the binary relationship of a solo subject and its duetted other in worldless *a capella*, the late Husserl ventured the phenomenological primordially of a multitudinous, symphonic whole.⁷⁰

Husserl's parerga from the 1930s elaborated the primordially of worldly situation still further. According to one sketch, pre-intellectual drives, rooted in parent-child and sexual relations, sustained a primal worldliness that pre-existed egological rationality.⁷¹ Another described the earth as a body and suggested a trans-egological apperception that blurred the self into a transcendental worldhood.⁷² At once a body [*Körper*] and the "ground" of all bodies, the earth, encountered by individuals as a constant call to activity, formed a sphere of belonging-together, an "entire system of

perspectives” whose “style” privileged nearness but also acknowledged the distance of other views.⁷³

What is to be emphasized here is that I can always go farther on my earth-ground and . . . always experience its ‘corporeal’ being more fully. Its horizon consists of the fact that I walk about on the earth-ground, and going from it and from everything that is found there I can always experience more of it.⁷⁴

This claim, of course, has epistemological and ethical implications, and it is easy to see how a nascent moral responsibility grew from the experience of world apprehension. Indeed, Husserl described worldly and thingly awareness with a concept he had initially used to explain intersubjectivity: empathy.

The fixed system of sites of all perspectively accessible external things for me is obviously already constituted through self-propelled walking, and also, that I can carnally bring everything and every object closer (at first directly on the ‘face of the earth,’ but also indirectly, by means of empathizing with birds I understand flight, and then by idealizing I have before my eyes the ideal possibility of an ability.) . . . I can approach every site and be there, and thus my flesh is also thing, a *res extensa*, etc., that is mobile.⁷⁵

Empathy not only assured the existence of sentient others; it also opened the world for experiential insight. The ethical valence is hard to miss, whether one interprets it as a responsibility to know and wonder or as a duty to acknowledge the being of others and respect the world as such. To be sure, the emphasis on a core sphere of nearness, on a world “for me,” introduced a tension between a privileged self and the far, transcendent reaches. To read the writings after 1929, in fact, is to enter unexplored territory: Does phenomenology dismiss worldliness as a naïve assumption in favor of the primacy of ego, whence we reconstitute the world as a necessary presupposition of our experience? Or is the world pre-given as a constitutive horizon, even the fundamental ground, of our being – not a precondition derived from egological insight, as per the Cartesian approach, but a direct encounter prior to the constitution of the unified self? On this question, of course, rest some of the great debates of twentieth-century philosophy, and Husserl foreshadowed their direction by leaning toward the latter in his final years, though without ever abandoning his subjective commitments.

Indeed, Husserl took as his final phenomenological task the project of “initiat[ing] a new age” by reconstituting the social and communal homeworld for its individual members. “To be human at all,” he argued, “is essentially to be a human being in a socially and generatively united civilization; and if man is a rational being . . . it is only insofar as his whole civilization is a rational civilization.” This whole, he emphasized, was not simply static and fixed; it evolved historically, generatively, through a kind of social and cultural *entelechy*.⁷⁶ And while Husserl’s vision of renewal, his lifeworld of home and abode, of tradition and culture, grew from specifically European cultural premises, the rebirth of reason, he believed, promised to ramify across the modern globe.⁷⁷ Echoing the Brentano of yesteryear, Husserl’s new philosophy would ground a new humanity.⁷⁸

We must be careful not to narrow Husserl’s reformation solely to a cultural or spiritual process. A renovated phenomenological reason in a “new age” would provide a firm grounding not only in unified historical traditions but also in the “normative relatedness” of things. Not only the intersubjective human world, but

the physical world as well had a distinct character that unified subject and object in a temporal and spatial whole, while at the same time preserving them as distinct experiential poles.⁷⁹ Physical things, Husserl insisted in the second part of the *Crisis*, possessed an “empirical overall style [*empirischen Gesamtstil*]” of worldly “belonging together” rooted in the “invariant general style” of experience.⁸⁰ “[U]niversally,” he remarked, “things and then occurrences . . . are bound a priori by this style, by the invariant form of the intuitable world.”⁸¹ The argument for a stable intersubjective *ēthos* discernible from intuitable experience allowed Husserl to avoid the relativism of extreme subjectivity, the unknowability of Kantian noumenalism, and the cult of empirical fact that prompted his phenomenology in the first place. It also ensured that Husserl’s world was not simply a collection of disparate sensations or hyletic data, but rather a “whole” – a “unity” and not “mere totality.”⁸²

This experiential world-style formed a forgotten bedrock for the scientific systems of mathematization, mechanism, and technology. For the natural scientist since the Renaissance, geometry and mathematics had become a language of nature, a *mathesis universalis* whose clarification was the infinite labor of modernity. The subjective stylizations of nature in myth, religion, and personal experience were forced to give way to the higher truths of precise measurement, and residues of belief and faith were simply the unconquered terrain of future science. For Husserl, however, this mathematization, while a powerful and positive movement, threatened to void the human experience from which it originated. He made an example of geometry, whose limit shapes he traced back to the practice of surveying and measuring designed to accommodate human needs. A precise geometry divorced from this ground could achieve technical mastery, but its feats were increasingly disconnected from experience. Indeed, the tools of modern science were so potent that it was quite easy to ignore, as Galileo did in his astronomical revolution, the practical and historical traditions from which they emerged. The lifeworld was not only overlooked by modern science; it was degraded and replaced by an idealized calculus deemed more real than the subjective confusions of daily acquaintance. Only mathematics, and not experience, was epistemologically valid – and with this monopoly, the human world was lost.⁸³ It must be stressed that Husserl did not reject modern science or dispute its achievements; his was no traditionalist backlash. In calling for a return to “the naiveté of life” in order to transcend the “philosophical naiveté” of science, he did not mean to deny the latter its insights.⁸⁴ Indeed, his project had the sense of a Kantian critique, validating scientific reason by delimiting its sphere of expertise. And yet, the emphasis was different from Kant’s, for the crucial concern of his late thought was to recuperate the domain of experience for a phenomenological science whose methods were not natural scientific. The mistake of modern psychology was that it tried to annex the subjective field for the causal world of genetic science rather than recognizing the primacy of experiential intuition.

Thus, Husserlian worldliness encompassed not only an experiential intersubjectivity that was broader than the mechanics of empathy, but also a non-naturalistic, pre-scientific, and norm-governed engagement with things.⁸⁵ Objects themselves, we might say, *pace* Brentano, harbored a kind of intentionality, and tending toward subjective and intersubjective relationship that helped to establish an environing

world. And a relational intentionality came to designate the fundamental style of the earth as a ground of subject and object *Zusammengehörigkeit*, not simply an object of mental acts. Husserl himself may have shied away from this implication: After all, he clung to the pure transcendental self of the epoché, the “distancing abstinence,” until his death.⁸⁶ Yet the transcendental Husserl and the worldly Husserl are not wholly irreconcilable. For it is the preservation of the subjective moment in worldly experience, of the “Welt-All” there *for me*, on which his distinctive argument about philosophical responsibility rests.⁸⁷ From its origins in ancient Greece, the “‘philosophical’ form of existence” attempted to supplant mythology with a new form of theoretical and practical self-mastery: “freely giving oneself, one’s whole life, its rule through pure reason or through philosophy.” This “superior survey of the world,” according to Husserl – a “universal knowledge, absolutely free from prejudice, of the world and man . . . frees not only the theorist but any philosophically educated person.”⁸⁸ And a philosophical reason, as we have seen above, encouraged practical autonomy as well. Thus, modern philosophy had as its foremost task the exercise of ethical responsibility and the promotion of social renewal in a driftless world. It sought to recapture for the modern life what the ancients had introduced in Athens.⁸⁹

According to the guiding ideal of the Renaissance, ancient man forms himself with insight through free reason. For this renewed ‘Platonism’ this means not only that man should be changed ethically [but that] the whole surrounding world, the political and social existence of mankind, must be fashioned anew through free reason, through the insights of a universal philosophy.⁹⁰

But by reducing thought to mere problem solving, modern positivist science forgot its ethical mandate and “decapitate[d] philosophy,” substituting faddish *philosophies* (in plural) for the quest after theoretical and practical responsibility, the cult of fact for the search for meaning.⁹¹ Through the renewal of philosophy, Husserl sought nothing less than a renascent Europe – or, better, a European culture that could “renew itself radically” by reinvigorating a hollowed philosophical tradition. In this avant-gardist spirit, Husserl declared philosophers the “functionaries of mankind” who bear “responsibility for the true being” of humanity.⁹² This formulation marked a crucial shift from his earlier program, a reconception of theoretical responsibility as world-responsibility, situated in the human community. In other words, Husserl came to see phenomenology not primarily as a philosophy of mind, an epistemology, a logic, or even an ontology, but as a philosophy of our embeddedness in and engagement with the world. He came to see it as an ethics.

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NOTES

¹ Patočka, *An Introduction to Husserl’s Phenomenology*, trans. Erazim Kohák (Chicago: Open Court, 1996), 135.

² Patočka, *Body, Community, Language, World*, trans Erazim Kohák (Chicago: Open Court, 1998), 36. These lectures were recorded by students from memory, not directly transcribed.

³ Ibid., 36, 103.

⁴ In fact, their joint involvement in a 1934 Prague colloquium launched Husserl on the *Crisis* project that would shape Patočka's own phenomenology as well as his later dissidence. Husserl could not ultimately attend the conference, and he asked Patočka to read his letter to the participants. For an account of this colloquium, see the chapter "Achter internationaler Kongreß für Philosophie in Prag (1934)" in Ludger Hagedorn and Hans Rainer Sepp, eds., *Jan Patočka: Texte, Dokumente, Bibliographie* (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 1999), 176–87. In late 1935, despite travel restrictions, he finally presented his *Crisis* argument in Bohemia before the *Cercle philosophique de Prague pour les recherches sur l'entendement humaine*. Beyond this, an early Patočka essay appeared in the same first issue of the Belgrade journal *Philosophia* that published Part I of Husserl's *Crisis*, along with essays from other members of the newly formed Prague Philosophical Circle. On this, see Petr Rezek, "La 'phénoménologie de l'esprit' de Patočka dans le contexte du Cercle philosophique de Prague," *Les Cahiers de Philosophie* 11/12 (Winter 1990/1991), 103–115. To be sure, Patočka's thought in the heady days of the Prague Spring and the bleak sequel of early normalization exhibited equal parts Husserl and Heidegger. He preferred Heidegger's sense of worldly context as the *Zuhandenheit* of active use rather than Husserl's *Vorhandenheit* of theoretical contemplation and phenomenological constitution. Indeed, his apocalyptic tenor in early 1970s mirrored Heidegger's in the age of "Only a God can save us," although Patočka's seems more comprehensible in the dark days of normalization. Yet his themes and terminology reflect Husserl's ethical program, the sense of Europe's cultural crisis, and the need for a renewed scientific-cum-social purpose. And Patočka's most extended Husserl analyses and encomium, *An Introduction to Husserl's Phenomenology* (Chicago: Open Court, 1999) came from this era.

⁵ Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern, 1995), 115; Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, Zweites Buch, Husserliana IV (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1952), 158–59. The discovery might be dated even earlier to the Winter lectures of 1910/11 (published in English as *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology: From the Lectures, Winter Semester, 1910–1911* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006)), where Husserl first introduced the 'natural world concept,' adapted from the positivist philosopher Richard Avenarius. The English-edition editors note that Husserl frequently referred to these lectures in his later career. Some scholars trace Husserl's insights into corporeality and worldliness to his 1907 introduction of the phenomenological *epoché*, the reduction from the natural assumption of circumstantial reality to an immediate experience that preserves worldly attributes without affirming their external reality. See, for example, Emmanuel Housset, *Husserl et l'énigme du monde* (Paris: Edition de Seuil, 2000).

⁶ Patočka, "Edmund Husserl's Philosophy of the Crisis of the Sciences and his Conception of a Phenomenology of the 'Life-world'" in *Jan Patočka: Philosophy and Selected Writings*, ed. Erazim Kohák (Chicago: Chicago, 1989), 235. In fact, during his months in Freiburg, Patočka worked more closely with Husserl's assistant Eugen Fink than with the master phenomenologist himself.

⁷ The situational priority remained ambiguous for both Husserl and Patočka, with individual corporeality at times receiving stress while elsewhere open-ended horizontality seemed to win phenomenological precedence.

⁸ As Dorion Cairns reports, Husserl insisted on the importance and attainability of a phenomenological ethics. See Cairns, *Conversations with Husserl and Fink* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1976), 50–60. Recent scholarship has inaugurated a new understanding of Husserlian thought that departs from the narrowly epistemological view of an earlier era and highlights his interest in worldliness. See Ulrich Melle, "Husserl's Personalist Ethics," *Husserl Studies* 23 (2007), 1–15; R. Philip Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1992); Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity* (Columbus: Ohio State, 2001); Janet Donohoe, *Husserl on Ethics and Intersubjectivity: From Static to Genetic Phenomenology* (Amherst: Humanity Books, 2004); James G. Hart, *The Person and the Common Life*; Steven Galt Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning: Paths toward transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern, 2001); Donn Welton, *The Other Husserl: The Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology* (Bloomington, IL: Indiana, 2000); Welton, *The New Husserl: A Critical Reader*, ed. Donn Welton (Bloomington, IL: Indiana, 2003); Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*.

⁹ Erazim Kohák, in *Jan Patočka*, argues that the tenor of Patočka's active philosophy differed markedly from Husserl's 'contemplative' as a result of the pressure to confront national tragedy, a claim that underestimates Husserl's own social and ethical despair.

¹⁰ The Brentanian imperative of living best possible life appeared in Husserl's prewar Göttingen lectures on ethics as well, although it stood within a framework of taxonomic value hierarchies. See Husserl, *Vorlesungen über Ethik und Wertlehre, 1908–1914*, Husserliana XXVIII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988). Its postwar reappearance in the Freiburg ethics seminars brings out the Kantian dimension of lifelong self-legislation and regulation: an ethical life is one governed by clear intentional norms. Yet Husserl modified Kant's formulation, partly due to the influence of his wartime study of Fichte's *System of Ethics*, by emphasizing its substantive rather than formalist quality. Husserl gave three speeches on "Fichte's Menschheitsideal" in 1917–18 at the University of Freiburg, published in Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1911–1921)*, Husserliana XXV (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1987), 267–93. For an analysis of Fichte's influence on Husserl, see James G. Hart, *The Person and the Common Life: Studies in a Husserlian Social Ethics* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1992). For an examination of the relation between Husserl's and Brentano's ethics, see Michael Gubser, "An Image of a Higher World: Franz Brentano and Edmund Husserl on Ethics and Renewal," *Santalka* 17: 3 (2009): 39–49.

¹¹ Husserl, *Einleitung in die Ethik: Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1920/1924*, Husserliana XXXVIII (Kluwer: Dordrecht, 2004), 245.

¹² Unlike Kant, Husserl conceded the impossibility of following this procedure with constancy.

¹³ The term comes from Hart not Husserl. Hart's *The Person and the Common Life* provides an extended analysis of Husserlian social ethics. For a shorter account, see Hart, "The Absolute Ought and the Unique Individual," *Husserl Studies* 22 (2006), 223–240. The classic Husserlian term "reduction" denotes the taking of a particular perspective in order to remove assumptions and reveal new insights. His phenomenological method hinges on key reductions that open up new domains of insight: the transcendental reduction (which suspended, or *bracketed*, the assumption of natural reality, thereby opening the world of pure experience); the eidetic reduction (in which imagination varies a perceptual object mentally in order to identify the core *invariants* or essences that came to define particular things); and Hart's ethical reduction from fragmentary experience to one's own whole life.

¹⁴ Other documents from the early 1920s also attest to this new phenomenological sociality. See, for example, Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923/24): Zweiter Teil: Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion*, Husserliana VIII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1959), 296–97.

¹⁵ These were, I emphasize, different but overlapping positions, not discrete stages. There is a long-standing debate among Husserl scholars as to whether his work is best understood in terms of successive phases – static, genetic, generative; epistemological, Cartesian, worldly – that superseded one another, or as a career-long continuity in which with different themes were progressively elaborated. I do not engage this debate deeply. While I do see World War I as an important watershed in Husserl's thinking, many of the themes he developed in his postwar oeuvre were adumbrated in prewar writings, and some of the terminology from his early career lasted into the later. My concern is to highlight the increased attention devoted to social and ethical concerns in the 1920s and 1930s, a trend most commentators acknowledge whether they see it as marking a break with his earlier phenomenology or developing prospects already contained within it.

¹⁶ Quoted in James G. Hart, "I, We, and God: Ingredients of Husserl's Theory of Community," in *Husserl-Ausgabe und Husserl-Forschung*, ed. Samuel IJsseling (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990), 136. Cf. Husserl, "Gemeingeist I. – Person, Personale Ganze, Personale Wirkungsgemeinschaften. Gemeinschaft – Gesellschaft," in *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität: Zweiter Teil: 1921–1928* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), 172, 174.

¹⁷ On Brentano's ethics, see Michael Gubser, "Franz Brentano's Ethics of Social Renewal," *Philosophical Forum* 40: 3 (Fall 2009): 339–366.

¹⁸ Husserl, *Vorlesungen über Ethik und Wertlehre, 1908–1914*, Husserliana XXVIII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988), 90–101. See also Ulrich Melle's helpful introduction to these lectures.

¹⁹ Husserl, *Vorlesungen*, 90; Husserl, *Einleitung in die Ethik: Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1920/1924*, Husserliana XXXVII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004), 15.

²⁰ Alasdair MacIntyre reminds us that Husserl's phenomenological empiricism responded in part to Humean skepticism, including perhaps the stricture against moving from is to ought. See MacIntyre, *Edith Stein: A Philosophical Prologue, 1913–1922* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 19–49.

²¹ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze über Erneuerung," in *Aufsätze und Vorträge: 1922–1937*, Husserliana XXVII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 5.

²² "We could not be persons for others," he wrote, "if a common surrounding world did not stand there for us in a community, in an intentional linkage of our lives." Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Second Book (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 201. The manuscript was redacted first by Edith Stein and later again by Ludwig Landgrebe. Sections Two and Three in particular offered lengthy, if somewhat preliminary discourses on empathy and otherness, the intersubjective constitution of the world, and the distinction between the naturalistic and personalistic attitudes, physicalist and spiritual realities. Husserl even asserted that worldliness precedes and grounds intersubjective otherness.

In a 1919 letter to the young philosopher Arnold Metzger, introduced and translated by Erazim Kohák for *The Philosophical Forum XXI* (1963), 48–68, Husserl acknowledged that in his early career he had "no eyes for practical and cultural realities." (56)

²³ See Husserl's July 8, 1917 letter to Roman Ingarden, in *Briefe an Roman Ingarden* (The Hague, 1968), 6–7.

²⁴ Husserl, "Fichtes Menschheitsideal," 268. See Thomas Nenon and Hans Rainer Sepp's "Einleitung" to that volume.

²⁵ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 35.

²⁶ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 33. Again this is a Fichtean evocation. See also Andrzej Gniazdowski, "Phänomenologie und Politik: Husserl's These von der Erneuerung der Menschheit," in Paweł Dybel and Hans Jörg Sandkühler, eds., *Der Begriff des Subjekts in der modernen und postmodernen Philosophie* (Frankfurt, 2004), 67–79.

²⁷ Donn Welton in *The Other Husserl* and Anthony Steinbock in *Home and Beyond* provide two recent interpretations of these articles.

²⁸ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 3.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁰ Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper, 1965), 71–147. See also "The Dilthey-Husserl Correspondence" in *Husserl: Shorter Works*, eds. Peter McCormick and Frederick Elliston (Notre Dame: Notre Dame, 1981), 198–209.

³¹ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 5.

³² *Ibid.*, 7.

³³ *Ibid.*, 14, 16.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 36. Again, the Kantian vocabulary should not mislead us into seeing a Kantian project. Just as Husserl's phenomenological gaze took in more of human experience than Kant's transcendental, his imperative was not rooted in a formal concept of universal duty; instead, it found the particular universal within individual circumstances and experiences annealed in the cauldron of intuited possibility.

³⁶ Patočka, too, would highlight the liberating value of a dissatisfaction that rejected factual earthly bounds. See the 1950s essay "Negative Platonism," translated in Kohák, *Jan Patočka*, 193.

³⁷ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 32.

³⁸ Most remarkably, Husserl occasionally wrote of "die Gottesidee," the infinite potential contained within men though never attained in life. This divinity, as it were, formed a double, a "better I," toward which a person could orient herself. Only God, noted the Lutheran convert, could achieve true rational perfection. *Ibid.*, 33–35. Again, Patočka, too, often celebrated liberating value of religion in orienting humans toward their higher freedom.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴² Ibid., 22. This formulation first appeared in the *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Second Book, trans by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 205. For a discussion of this formulation, see Hart, *The Person and the Common Life*.

⁴³ Husserl himself did not use this Greek-cum-Heideggerian term, but the *ethōs* is similar to an individual's "seelischer Habitus." Ibid., 23. For Heidegger's famous evocation of the term, see Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 256–57.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 48.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 57.

⁴⁷ "The humanity of higher human nature or reason," he later wrote "requires . . . a genuine philosophy." Husserl, *The Crisis*, 291; (*Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, Husserliana VI (Dordrecht, 1976), 338).

⁴⁸ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 58.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 55.

⁵⁰ Hart, "I, We, and God," 126.

⁵¹ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 86. Cf. Patočka, *Plato and Europe* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford, 2002). The concept of movement formed the core of Patočka's later phenomenology.

⁵² In numerous essays, Hart and Buckley try to extrapolate political positions from Husserl's various pronouncements. While Robert Sokolowski's assertion, in *Introduction to Phenomenology* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1999), 203–04, that phenomenology has not developed a political philosophy may be strictly accurate for Husserl, it ignores the political interests and implications operative in his work. It certainly does not hold for later phenomenological thinkers. For explorations in the political potencies of phenomenology, see Kevin Thompson and Lester Embree, eds. *Phenomenology of the Political* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000).

⁵³ Husserl, "The Vienna Lecture," in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern, 1970), 287–88.

⁵⁴ Aviezer Tucker argues that Patočka's late-1970s dissident writings owed more to his Husserlian inheritance than to the Heidegger he celebrated in his despair a half-decade earlier. Tucker, *The Philosophy and Politics of Czech Dissidence: From Patočka to Husserl* (Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh, 2000), 58.

⁵⁵ By this time, of course, Husserl had already broached the topic of intersubjectivity in the 1910–11 lectures, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*.

⁵⁶ Welton, *The Other Husserl*, 319.

⁵⁷ Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze," 48. See also pp. 4, 20.

⁵⁸ Husserl, "Gemeingeist I," 171, 174, 175.

⁵⁹ Husserl, "Gemeingeist I," 175–84.

⁶⁰ See not only the famous Fifth Cartesian Meditation, but also the extensive lectures and notes, dating from 1905, in the three *Husserliana* series volumes published as *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität* (XIII, XIV, XV) The latter two volumes fall at or after the date of the *Kaizo* essays.

⁶¹ Prague in particular afforded the chance to renew ties with Landgrebe and Patočka in the land of his "first teacher," Tomáš Masaryk, who fulfilled the "spirit of international humanity" that Husserl's philosophy endorsed. Letter from Husserl to the Austrian legal philosopher Felix Kaufmann, May 5, 1936 in Husserl, *Briefwechsel, Band IV: Die Freiburger Schüler* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), 224–25. His family suffered as well from the Nazi race laws. His son, a World War I veteran, lost his post as a jurisprudence professor, and his daughter was unable to secure domestic help. Husserl, Letters to Landgrebe, December 19, 1935; and the Dutch philosopher Hendrik J. Pos, January 17, 1935; in Husserl, *Briefwechsel, Band IV: Die Freiburger Schüler*, 343, 448.

⁶² Husserl, Letter to Felix Kaufmann, January 5, 1934 in Husserl, *Briefwechsel, Band IV*, 201.

⁶³ Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaft und die transzendente Phänomenologie* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1996), 10; *Crisis*, 11.

⁶⁴ In his critique of these attitudes, Husserl remained a solid Brentanian. For Brentano's condemnation of modern philosophical skepticism and irrationalism, see his essays in *Die Vier Phasen der Philosophie und ihr augenblicklicher Stand* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1926) and *Über die Zukunft der Philosophie* (Leipzig: Meiner, 1929).

⁶⁵ As Guy von Kerckhoven has noted, the term lifeworld first surfaced in *Ideen II* in the early 1920s, when Husserl was rethinking his philosophical project along cultural and ethical lines. It was not carefully elaborated, however, until the end of his life. See von Kerckhoven, "Zur Genese des Begriffs 'Lebenswelt' bei Edmund Husserl," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 29 (1985), 182–203.

⁶⁶ In fact, Husserl ultimately abandoned his goal of publishing a German edition of the meditations due to dissatisfaction with their analyses. Several recent works have challenged this focus on empathy, showing that Husserl's late and incomplete "generative" phenomenology took a novel tack on questions of world, community, and intersubjectivity. See Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*; Welton, *The Other Husserl*. For an earlier work that makes similar claims regarding Husserl's analysis of history, see David Carr, *Phenomenology and the Problem of History: A Study of Husserl's Transcendental Philosophy* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern, 1974).

⁶⁷ He may, of course, have presumed that the problem was already dealt with by this stage in his career, yet even so there are tensions between the worldliness of the *Crisis* and the egology of the *Meditations*. As Steinbock argues, the Cartesian approach to subjectivity retained an egological core, for the Other always appeared as a second and subordinated self. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*, 49–78.

⁶⁸ On the relation between Husserl and Heidegger, see Steven Galt Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning*. I do want to stress, however, that Husserl's worldly inclinations can already be found in writings prior to the appearance of Heidegger's famous analysis in *Being and Time*, that they cannot simply be written off as a reaction to the ideas of his student-turned-apostate.

⁶⁹ A joint student of Husserl and Heidegger, Eugen Fink spent a career arguing that the transcendental origin of the world was the *Grundproblem* of Husserl's phenomenology as early as the *Logical Investigations*. See his essays "Die Spätphilosophie Husserls in der Freiburger Zeit," *Phaenomenologica* IV (1960; from a 1959 lecture), 99–115; and *Die Phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik* (Berlin: Pan-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1934). On Fink, Husserl, and Heidegger, see Ronald Bruzina, *Edmund Husserl and Eugen Fink: Beginnings and Ends in Phenomenology* (New Haven, CT: Yale, 2004).

⁷⁰ I do not mean by this statement to sweep aside Husserl's frequent resort to primal subjectivity even in his late works, most famously in the posthumously published *Crisis* Part III §54 on the *Ur-Ich*. But, because it is downplayed by critics of Husserlian egology, I do want to argue with James Dodd that there is a fruitful and influential "tension between, on the one hand, Husserl's development of the theme of history [as a fundament of extra-subjective worldliness] and, on the other, his unrelenting focus on the personal dimension of philosophical life." See Dodd's thought-provoking *Crisis and Reflection: An Essay on Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004), 67. This tension lends the *Crisis* a greater openness and suppleness than many critics allow. For example, Husserl may have already foreseen the danger, which Adorno and Habermas later censured, of the excessive subjectivity inherent in transcendental egology. See Adorno's famous complaint: "The 'absolutely other,' which should arise within the phenomenological $\epsilon\pi\alpha\chi\eta$ is . . . nothing other than the reified performance of the subject radically alienated from its own origin." *Against Epistemology: A Metacritique*. Trans. Willis Domingo (Cambridge: MIT, 1983), 163; Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston, MA: Beacon, 1985). Dodd, in fact, interprets the *Ur-Ich* not as an individual subjectivity in the world but as the subjectivity of the world, a world subjectivity.

⁷¹ Husserl, "Universale Teleologie. Der Intersubjektive, Alle und jede subjekte umspannende Trieb transzendental Gesehen. Sein der monadischen Totalität," in *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität*, Part III (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), 594.

⁷² Husserl, "Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature: The Originary Ark, the Earth, Does Not Move," in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern, 2002).

⁷³ Husserl, "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World that is Outside the Flesh," in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology*, 118, 132–33.

⁷⁴ Husserl, "Foundational Investigations," 121.

⁷⁵ Husserl, "The World of the Living Present," 153.

⁷⁶ Husserl, *Crisis*, 14–16.

⁷⁷ Lifeworlds (in some manuscripts separated into home- and alien-worlds) were constitutive experiential frameworks characterized by a unifying *ēthos*.

⁷⁸ Husserl, *Crisis*, 1, 12, 7–103. Of course, Husserl's analysis is Eurocentric in both neutral and negative senses; it seeks the roots of phenomenological reason in the European tradition and then proposes Europe as the vanguard of humanity universally. The wide non-European interest in phenomenology from its earliest days suggests that its methods can be severed from the Eurocentrism of its founder. Patočka would later criticize his mentor for this lingering rationalist Eurocentrism, though he did not fully escape it himself. See his manuscript "Réflexion sur l'Europe" [untitled in the German original], published posthumously in French translation in the essay collection *Liberté et sacrifice: Ecrits politiques* (Grenoble: Jerome Millon, 1990), 181–213.

⁷⁹ See his discussion of the "perspectival style" of world and experience in two manuscripts from the early 1930s, "Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature: The Originary Ark, the Earth, Does Not Move," and "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World that is Outside the Flesh," published in Merleau-Ponty, *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology*.

⁸⁰ Husserl, *Crisis*, 31.

⁸¹ Husserl, *Crisis*, 32.

⁸² Husserl, *Crisis*, 31–2.

⁸³ Husserl, *Crisis*, 21–57. Cf. Husserl, "The Origin of Geometry," appended to the English *Crisis* volume, 353–78.

⁸⁴ Husserl, *Crisis*, 59.

⁸⁵ In this, his critique moved him beyond the Brentanian legacy of intentionality, which linked subject and object but nonetheless preserved a divide between mental and physical phenomena, between the mind and its environs.

⁸⁶ The term comes from Bernhard Waldenfels, "Experience of the Alien in Husserl's Phenomenology," *Research in Phenomenology* 20 (1990), 19. For an example of his persistent late invocation of transcendental phenomenological abstention – his goal of becoming a "non-participating onlooker", a "mere spectator, or observing ego," an "impartial observer" of the "life-process in reduced form," see the "The Amsterdam Lectures <on> Phenomenological Psychology" in Husserl, *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927–1931)* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997), 222–24.

⁸⁷ "[W]orld is a validity which has sprung up within subjectivity, indeed . . . within my subjectivity," he wrote in the *Crisis*, 96. His disciples would reject this configuration. For Heidegger, the self became an empty clearing, and Fink espoused an asubjective phenomenology.

⁸⁸ Husserl, *Crisis*, 8.

⁸⁹ Klaus Held, in fact, maintained that Husserl's commitment to philosophical responsibility was rooted in his vision of the Greek tradition. At its origins, Attican philosophy grew from two intellectual commitments: *theoría* (an organized sense of human wonder and curiosity); and *lógos/lógon didónai*, a responsibility to explain or account for things (in words). See Held, "Husserl's These von der Europäisierung der Menschheit," in *Phänomenologie im Widerstreit: Zum 50. Todestag Edmund Husserls*, ed. Christoph Jamme and Otto Pöggeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1989), 13–39.

⁹⁰ Husserl, *Crisis*, 8. Again, see Patočka, *Plato and Europe*, for the next generation of this argument.

⁹¹ Husserl, *Crisis*, 9.

⁹² Husserl, *Crisis*, 17.

THE QUESTION OF THE SUBJECT: JAN
PATOČKA'S PHENOMENOLOGICAL
CONTRIBUTION

Oh, those Greeks! They knew how to live. What is required for that is to stop courageously at the surface, ... to adore appearance, to believe in ... the whole Olympus of appearance.

Nietzsche, *Gay Science* (Preface to the Second Edition)

ABSTRACT

Can phenomenology offer a meaningful alternative to the structuralist and the post-structuralist pronouncement of the death of the subject? I suggest that a meaningful alternative could be established on the basis of Jan Patočka's phenomenological revival of Antiquity. According to my central thesis, Patočka's notion of the "Care for the Soul" provides the phenomenological resources for a novel sense of subjectivity. To substantiate this claim, my chapter is divided into six parts. After sketching the central problematic in the first part, I turn in the second part to a description of the central reasons that underlie the death of the subject thesis. The third part shows how from Patočka's works one can unearth the *phenomenological* basis that underlies this proclamation. The fourth part inquires into the close ties between the "death of the subject" thesis and Patočka's asubjective phenomenology. The fifth part spells out how Patočka's revival of Antiquity, under the heading of the "Care for the Soul," generates a novel sense of subjectivity. On this basis, my concluding section suggests that Jan Patočka's revival of Antiquity provides the resources needed to raise the question of subjectivity in the aftermath of the "death of the subject" thesis.

1. Nothing has unified European philosophy over the last century more than the question of subjectivity. On the one hand, the phenomenological analyses of subjectivity arguably are the most profound and deep-reaching that we can find in the whole history of philosophy. On the other hand, the structuralist and the poststructuralist critiques of the subject are the most piercing critiques the subject has ever seen.

In what follows, I would like to turn to Jan Patočka because his works provide the needed resources to open up a dialogue between these traditions, which sometimes seem to be almost diametrically opposed to each. I would like to suggest that Patočka provides the most forceful, robust and intriguing expression of the phenomenological standpoint in the context of the debates that surround the "death of the subject" thesis; and he does so by incorporating the philosophical insights that have found expression in the radical critiques of the subject. Thus in what follows, I will argue that the structuralist and the poststructuralist critiques of the subject

notwithstanding, phenomenology has the resources needed to raise anew the question of subjectivity. Such a possibility of reconstructing subjectivity will lead us further (or back) to Antiquity; it will lead us to the *epimeleia tes psyches*, the care for the soul.

Yet before turning to this theme directly, I would first like to say a few words about the “death of the subject” thesis.

2. This thesis springs from the realization that *subjectivity is not autonomous* and that therefore, *it cannot be conceived as the ultimate source of meaning and intelligibility*. Subjectivity is not autonomous because it is always determined by the unconscious mind, by history, by the opacity of language, and by social power. According to the proponents of the “death of the subject” thesis, the autonomous subject that was, for instance, so forcefully defended by the Enlightenment thinkers, is nothing more than a utopian dream.

Yet here we find ourselves on slippery ground and we need to be cautious. From the very start, the “death of the subject” thesis faces two serious objections. First, the proponents of this thesis can all-too-easily be accused that, at best, they only build straw men. The history of philosophy is filled with examples of how a certain thinker rejects the conception of the subject defended by earlier thinkers and replaces the discarded conception with a new notion of subjectivity. For instance, Kant’s transcendental subject emerges out of a critique of Descartes’ ego, just as Hegel’s notion of spirit is built upon a rejection of the Kantian subject. Similarly, Husserl’s transcendental subjectivity is an alternative to Descartes’ ego and Kant’s “I think,” just as Heidegger’s notion of Dasein emerges out of a rejection of Husserlian subjectivity. One could therefore argue that the proclamation of the “death of the subject” can only address a particular notion of the subject and for this reason, it cannot help but must leave other notions of the subject intact. This means that, paradoxically, the subject can only “die” a number of deaths—all metaphorical, and thus incapable of bringing about the subject’s demise.

Such is the first objection. Secondly, the very fact that the subject has been attacked from so many perspectives, and for so many reasons, makes it difficult to conceive what the proclamation of the “death of the subject” could possibly mean. For anyone who seriously aims to proclaim the death of the subject, the subject turns out to be, like Typhon, a monster with a hundred heads: it is a highly hybrid figure which embraces Descartes’ *res cogitans*, Leibniz’s monadology, Kant’s transcendental subject, Hegel’s Absolute and finally Husserl’s intentional consciousness. The subject announced dead turns out to be so *obese* that in fact, it can no longer be considered a subject at all; in the aftermath of its demise, it is in no way clear that it is truly a *face* of the subject that was drawn in sand before, as Foucault has put it, it has been “erased at the edge of the sea.”

Here I am reminded of a beautiful story told by the great Argentinean writer, Jorge Luis Borges. The story is called “A New Refutation of Time.” In this story, Borges aims to extend the critical function of British empiricism to the problematic of time. Berkeley denied that there exist any objects independently of our perceptions; Hume took this argument further and claimed that any kind of subject is nothing more than a recollection of sensations; so Borges wants to take the matter even further than

Berkeley or Hume and argue that *there is no time*. Why? Here is Borges' argument: if man is nothing more than a collection of sensations, and if these sensations can be remembered, then the recollection of these sensations means that the same sensation can repeat itself at least twice. But this repetition breaks apart the linear flow of time. And thus, if there is no subject, there is no time.

Yet interestingly enough—and this is the reason why I turned to this story—Borges finishes his analysis with a *refutation of this refutation*. As he puts it, “the world, unfortunately, is real; I, unfortunately, am Borges” (Borges, 234). One might very well wonder whether we, in the aftermath of all the critiques of the subject, will not be drawn to a similar conclusion.

At least one thing is uncontroversial: *to give up the subject as the autonomous source of meaning and intelligibility does not yet mean to give up the subject in any sense you please*. Yet before turning to the notion of subjectivity that the “death of the subject” thesis leaves intact, it is proper to raise a different concern: What is it that motivates the proponents of this thesis to speak of subjectivity's *demise*? Echoing Nietzsche, one could say: these proponents of the “death of the subject” thesis—*they are interesting!* What do they really want? What is it really that always drives them in just *this* direction?

Arguably, what underlies the death of the subject thesis is the very fact that most of the critiques of the subject have not culminated in the subject's downfall. *The proclamation of the death of the subject is precisely triggered by the limits from which less radical critiques of the subject suffer*.

Consider in this regard Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things*. Like many other proponents of the “death of the subject” thesis, Foucault is well aware that not all critiques of the subject lead to the proclamation of the death of the subject. In fact, Foucault's proclamation of the “death of man” is not so much directed against the Enlightenment notion of autonomous subjectivity but rather against those discourses that defend the subject on the grounds of its *heteronomy*. For Foucault, anthropology, as an analytic of man, emerges out of a critique of the sovereignty of the “I think.” Anthropology emerges precisely when the sovereignty of the Classical discourse on the subject reaches its limit, i.e., when subjectivity comes to be conceived as a living, speaking, and laboring individual. For this reason, for Foucault, biology, philology, and economics are anthropological disciplines *par excellence*. Foucault goes as far as to suggest that the emergence of these disciplines marks the *birth* of man.

This clearly means that it would be a mistake to reduce Foucault's proclamation of the death of man to a merely forceful turn of phrase, which does nothing more than call to abandon a particular conception of subjectivity. Less clearly, it would also be a mistake to confuse this proclamation with a critique directed only against transcendental notions of the subject. Foucault's proclamation of the death of man is first and foremost directed against the *anthropological* critiques of the subject, viz., those critiques, which merely aim to correct an illegitimate notion of subjectivity. Foucault's analysis is geared toward the realization that just as the anthropological narrative (conceived as the analytic of finitude) surpasses the Classical discourse (based on the primacy of representation), so the anthropological narrative must also

be surpassed by the death of man. According to Foucault, anthropology inevitably leads to the anthropological sleep, because *the primacy of discourse is irreconcilable with the being of man*. As Foucault puts it,

But the right to conceive both of the being of language and of the being of man may be forever excluded; there may be . . . an ineradicable hiatus at that point (precisely that hiatus in which we exist and talk), so that it would be necessary to dismiss as fantasy any anthropology in which there was any question of the being of language, or any conception of language or signification which attempted to connect with, manifest, and free the being proper to man. (Foucault, 339)

How does Foucault support this claim? At first glance it seems that his argument relies on a mere conjecture that the being of man and the being of language are incompatible: “The only thing we know at the moment, in all certainty, is that in Western culture the being of man and the being of language have never, at any time, been able to coexist and to articulate themselves one upon the other” (Foucault, 339). Yet a closer look reveals that this conjecture is further grounded in what Foucault sees as an *irreducible confusion of the empirical and the transcendental*. It is interesting to note that this confusion is nothing other than a particular formulation of what Husserl has called “the paradox of subjectivity.”¹ Even more interestingly, while Husserl was full of optimism that phenomenology has the resources to resolve this paradox, for Foucault, its resolution is not feasible. Lacking a successful resolution, this paradox leads to the ultimate conclusion of *The Order of Things*: “Man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end” (Foucault, 387).

How exactly is one to understand the above-mentioned confusion of the empirical and the transcendental? On the one hand, anthropology reverses the Classical priority of the transcendental over the empirical; it discovers the irreducibility of life, discourse, and labor to any kind of transcendental narratives. Yet on the other hand, anthropology covers up its fundamental discovery, it masks the “grey space of empiricity” by doubling the transcendental function: “the man of nature, of exchange, or of discourse, [are made to] serve as the foundation of his own finitude” (Foucault, 341). Put otherwise, anthropology’s great discovery of the primacy of discourse is thereby covered up by the reinstated primacy of subjectivity. Foucault sees only one possible solution to this irreducible confusion of the empirical and the transcendental: only the destruction of anthropology can awaken thought from the anthropological sleep (Foucault, 341–342).

As I have indicated above, this confusion of the empirical and the transcendental can be conceived as a version of the paradox of subjectivity. As Husserl had formulated this paradox in the *Crisis*, “how can a component part of the world, its human subjectivity, constitute the whole world. . .?” And as he went on to say, “the subjective part of the world swallows up, so to speak, the whole world and thus itself too. What an absurdity!” (Husserl, 179–180). How can I conceive of myself as a subject *in* the world and a subject *for* the world? Needless to say, Husserl’s resolution of the paradox is quite different from the one that Foucault offers. For Husserl, the paradox leads to the realization that there is a good sense in which one could claim that the subject’s worldly existence is an accomplishment of his own transcendental subjectivity. A mistake to avoid here is to resist the temptation to conceive the primal

ego in terms of what Heidegger has called *Vorhandenheit*, i.e., to conceive this ego as an *independently* existing substance that brings about subjectivity's own worldly existence. Rather, Husserl's insight is that my self-understanding, as the understanding of my "empirical" existence, remains inadequate for as long as I conceive of it *independently* from transcendental accomplishments. More precisely, for Husserl, my understanding of subjectivity remains incomplete and distorted for as long as I do not take into account that subjectivity is irreducibly both transcendental and "empirical," both for the world and in the world.

A detailed comparison of the two resolutions of this paradox would take me too far afield. In the present context, it suffices to see that the emergence of what Foucault calls "the confusion of the empirical and the transcendental" does not necessitate the conclusion he is drawn to. It is therefore meaningful to once again return to the question I had posed earlier—what is it that motivates the proponents of the death of the subject thesis to speak of the *death* of subjectivity?

One could think of the matter in terms of the Oedipal complex: a new generation of thinkers needs to establish itself independently from earlier generations. Now the structuralists and the poststructuralists were brought up in the eras that were heavily dominated by phenomenology and existentialism. What better option do you have to "kill your father" within such a context than to proclaim the death of subjectivity? Yet if one were to stick just to this explanation, a feeling would continue to linger that one has done no more than swept the problem under the carpet: what motivates the death of the subject thesis still remains unexplained.

Here, with this problem in mind, I would like to turn to Jan Patočka. I, personally, feel indebted to this thinker for having shown to me the phenomenological reasons that underlie the death of the subject thesis.

3. In *Plato and Europe*, Patočka provides an intriguing phenomenological description of the situation in which mankind finds itself today. With Eugene Ionesco in mind (and Heidegger in the back of his mind), Patočka asks: would it be possible to find an expression of the entire mood that could capture present day humanity? From the response offered, one can also extract an answer to the question I posed in the previous section—the question regarding the motivating force that underlies the death of the subject thesis.

And this mood is: a deep helplessness and inability to stand upon anything in any way solid. In the nineteenth century people still had the sense that they could somehow direct their fate, that humanity could control its affairs. This sentiment has completely abandoned us. Now we live with the opposite sentiment: something is carrying us away; and what is carrying us away is contradictory, it prevents us from taking a univocal position. We do not know what we want; nobody does.

As Patočka goes on to say,

we are the victims of contradictory prophets; some proclaim the unleashing of instincts, others absolute discipline and obedience. Thus a deep helplessness and distress. Every human initiative or deed is socialized, controlled, and integrated into current affairs and carried off alone into the unknown. This is the sentiment of estrangement. What grows from it is surprisingly a will to power, but power that has no subject. Power is just accumulated and accumulating, and it does what it wants. Here is an awareness of a horrible trend toward the abyss.

The world in which we find ourselves no longer appears as the self-realization of reason. To speak of such a realization in the aftermath of two world wars and in communist Prague would be simply absurd. And arguably, some thirty-five years later, our situation is, at least in principle, not that different. We enter into wars and we do not know the reasons that lead us to them or the ways that can get us out of them. We find ourselves in an economic crisis, and all that remains is to guess what it is that has led us to it, or what it is that will lead us out of it. When we reflect on our past experience, we are bound to discover that at least some of the most profound decisions that have shaped our existence have been reached without any awareness regarding their value and significance. In a way, all our lives are decided for us, and not decided by us. Everything around us is arbitrary and contradictory. To posit a subject in such a context would mean to close one's eyes to this arbitrariness and these contradictions. Nothing in our experience warrants the trust in the subject. At best, what the subject can do is *try* to catch up with itself, nothing more than *try* to appropriate its own being. But what is this if not a fruitless attempt to catch up with one's own shadow? Along with Heidegger, one could say that the subject is always ahead of itself; yet in contrast to Heidegger, one should also add: the subject is not ahead of itself because *it* projects its own possibilities; *for this it cannot do*. The subject's possibilities do not belong to the subject itself; the subject's possibilities are always already projected for it.

If such indeed is the overwhelming mood in which humanity finds itself today, then the proclamation of the death of the subject is only understandable. One could thus say that what Patočka provides is a phenomenological description of the experiential resources that underlie the death of the subject thesis. Not only does this thesis reflect our present condition; there are good reasons to conceive of it as a thesis that *emerges* out of a reflection on this condition.

Now if phenomenology can be characterized as a philosophical reflection on lived-experience, then here we come across a new realization and a new demand. We come to the realization that phenomenological reflections remain sterile for as long as phenomenology opposes the death of the subject thesis. And thus we face a new demand, *viz.*, the need to incorporate the death of the subject thesis into phenomenology.

Yet is this demand reasonable? How can the recognition of the death of the subject give rise to phenomenology? After all, as the textbook definitions suggest, phenomenology is the analysis of the structures of subjectivity. Yet Patočka's phenomenology is not its orthodox interpretation. While it is well known that what Patočka represents is *asubjective* phenomenology, it is often overlooked that asubjective phenomenology emerges out of the same grounds as the death of the subject thesis. Taking this into account, one obtains the means to interpret asubjective phenomenology as a phenomenological alternative to the death of the subject thesis.

4. As Erazim Kohák has pertinently remarked, Patočka "considers Husserl's philosophy a towering achievement, for having freed modern thought from psychologism, for having contributed to its concepts of eidetic intuition and intentionality, of *epoche* and reduction, of temporality and of the body-subject, of the intersubjectivity

of the realm of reason and the radical interdependence of world and man—and, fundamentally, for having provided a diagnosis of the crisis of modernity” (PSW, 97). This deep appreciation notwithstanding, Patočka is also convinced that Husserl’s phenomenology suffers from a significant limitation, viz. from the illegitimate privilege it bestows upon transcendental subjectivity. Patočka’s characterization of his own project as asubjective phenomenology suggests not only that phenomenology has the reasons to correct Husserl’s misinterpretation (or at least imprecise formulations) of his own fundamental discoveries, but also that asubjective phenomenology has in fact found the means to overcome them.

So as to make sense of Patočka’s critique of Husserl, let me turn to the fundamental distinction that underlies classical phenomenology: the distinction between the thing itself and its manners of appearance. This distinction is the dominating theme in Husserl’s phenomenology. It is already operative in Husserl’s early *Logical Investigations*; and in the last and unfinished *Crisis*, Husserl famously remarks that “the first breakthrough of this correlation between the experienced object and its manners of givenness . . . affected me so deeply that my whole subsequent life-work has been dominated by the task of systematically elaborating on this a priori of correlation” (Husserl, 166). The distinction between the object and its modes of givenness also plays a central role in Patočka’s thought. However, it is crucial not to overlook that for Husserl and Patočka, this distinction means something significantly different. It is precisely in these differences that one can discern the central reasons that underlie Patočka’s call for asubjective phenomenology.

On a general level, one could say that the correlation of objects and their modes of givenness highlights the manner in which human existence is bound to the rest of what is. To clarify this point, let me draw your attention to something very commonplace: If you find this text interesting, you will be absorbed in it, and therefore you will remain *indifferent* to things around you. If you find this text tedious, you might very well direct your attention to the pen in your hand, the cup of coffee on your table, or the voices coming in through the open window. As a subject of experience, you can be either concerned with, or indifferent to things in the surrounding world. Inanimate things, on the other hand, can be neither concerned with us, nor indifferent to us. *They are fully cut off from us, while our existence is such that we always stand in relation to them, even when we are indifferent to them.* This difference is trivial, one is willing to say; yet at a closer glance, it becomes highly intriguing.

Its significance becomes clear as soon as one asks: What is it that allows for the subjects to be concerned with objects? That is, what is it that subjects have that inanimate objects lack? And the answer is the following: Things themselves *appear* to the subject. They do not appear to the pen in my hands or the cup of coffee or the table; yet they do appear to me. But clearly, this must mean that insofar as I am a subject, I am aware not only of things, but also of appearances. *I am a being that is not restricted to the domain of beings.* I am free from beings and it is this freedom that links me to them: things show themselves to me; things *appear*. It is this distinction between things and appearances that is so central in phenomenology.

But what is it that we really know of appearances? With this question, we find ourselves in an awkward situation: on the one hand, all that we can know about

things depends on how they appear to us. If things did not appear to us, our being would be not that different from the being of inanimate objects that surround us. Our being would be even more restricted than the being of a person in a vegetative state, assuming, of course, that such a person is still capable of dreams. On the other hand, as soon as we raise questions about the appearance of things, we immediately end up reducing appearance to things. Appearances are, to borrow a metaphor from William James, like snowflakes caught in the palm of our hands: as soon as we catch them, they become something they are not—drops of water. So similarly, as soon as we start to reflect on appearances, we end up transforming them into something they are not: we transform them into *objects* of appearances.

As I have mentioned above, Husserl was the first philosopher to reflect on the irreducible difference between objects and their manners of givenness. Overstating the matter only slightly, one could say that the central ambition of Husserl's phenomenology has been that defending the autonomy of appearances from the natural tendency to reabsorb them into what they are not, i.e., from the danger of transforming appearances into *objects* of appearances. Yet according to Patočka, Husserl's battle has been successful only in part. Husserl has failed to notice that the autonomy of appearances needs to be defended on *two fronts*, for just as there is a *natural* tendency to reduce appearances to objects, so there is also a *philosophical* tendency to reduce them to subjectivity. Thus Patočka insists that Husserl's fixated defense of appearances against their naturalistic misinterpretations led him to reaffirm and even strengthen the philosophical illusion that appearances could be derived from subjectivity. On Patočka's view, Husserl did not liberate himself from the danger of reducing appearances to something they are not: he reduced them to the structures of subjectivity.² But this reduction is unjustified: appearances retain their autonomy not only from objects, but also from the subject. This is the reason that underlies Patočka's qualification of his project as *asubjective* phenomenology.³

One could characterize asubjective phenomenology as a type of phenomenology that restricts itself to the analysis of the structures of manifestation and does not reduce manifestation either to objectivity, or to subjectivity. Arguably, there are certain laws of appearances that are not reducible either to objects or to subjectivity. Asubjective phenomenology is meant to be nothing other than the analysis of these non-objective and non-subjective laws of appearances.

The phenomenon of the *world* is an apt illustration of such laws. On the one hand, the world is clearly not reducible to subjectivity. "We come into this world"; "we leave this world": the finitude of human existence calls for the recognition of the world's transcendence in regard to the subject. But if the world does not belong to the subject, does this mean that the world is an object of sorts? Here again, we have to answer with a No. I can see a number of objects around me, but clearly, I cannot expect to see the world as one object among others. This points to something curious: on the one hand, I cannot experience a single thing that does not belong to the world; on the other hand, the world itself is neither an object, nor the subject. So how can the world still "be," despite these negative qualifications? Patočka has the resources to answer this question: the world belongs neither to the subject, nor to the object; it belongs to the domain of appearances.⁴ And it prescribes a law to

objects. This law states: Each and every object will be an object only insofar as it belongs the world.⁵

Such a refusal to restrict the source of meaning to either subjectivity or objectivity brings Patočka into proximity with the proponents of the “death of the subject” thesis. One could even contend that under the heading of asubjective phenomenology, Patočka takes the critique of the subject further than is done by the proponents of this thesis. The reason for such a contention would lie in the realization that here we are not facing a limit that has to do with discourse, interpretation or understanding. Patočka brings to light the need to give up the primacy of subjectivity at much more basic levels of experience—at any level, in fact, at which appearance is operative. Put otherwise, here the limit on subjectivity is not imposed “from outside”; here subjectivity is itself driven to the realization that it is always something derivative and consequential.

Yet Patočka’s central contribution to the problematic of the subject lies elsewhere. It is indeed remarkable that the qualification of phenomenology as asubjective leads him to inquire into the notion of subjectivity that this phenomenology would not only legitimize, but also calls for.

To make sense of this, one can begin by raising some classical phenomenological questions: could there be appearances without something that appears, i.e., without objects? To this we are to answer with a No. Correlatively, could there be appearances without a subject to which appearances are given? That is, could there be appearances without anyone who “has,” or experiences them? Again, we have to answer with a No. It thereby becomes understandable why Patočka would claim that “the structure of the phenomenon as the phenomenon renders possible the existence of—what?—the kind of beings such as man” (*PE*, 31). Thus having made a circle, we come back to the original and, arguably, central phenomenological question: what is subjectivity?

Initially, one can answer this question by saying that *subjectivity is the dative of manifestation*. Subjectivity is that to which appearances are given. However, for Patočka, such an answer would be insufficient. Patočka has pursued a number of different ways in which the question of subjectivity could be thematized.⁶ I will address one of them—the one I consider most promising and most intriguing. Let me turn to Patočka’s notion of subjectivity conceived in terms of the Ancient Greek notion of the *care for the soul*.

5. What is the soul, and what does it care for? As Petr Lom has pertinently remarked, just as Patočka himself is neither a mystic, nor a theologian, so for him philosophy is neither myth, nor religious consolation.⁷ For Patočka, philosophy has exclusively to do with the ability and determination to seek the truth. And what is it that enables human beings to pursue truth? It is nothing other than what Patočka calls the soul. The soul is “just that which is capable of truth within man” (*PE* 36); the essential care for the soul is nothing other than “living in truth.”⁸

It is interesting to note that the notion of “living in truth,” which was to become so central in the Charta 77 movement, has its origins in Patočka’s conception of the Idea of philosophy. It is no less interesting that for Patočka, the concept of “living in truth” has its origins in Husserl’s notion of philosophical responsibility. Both

of these themes point back to the birth of philosophy in Ancient Greece. In the Warsaw Lecture from 1971, Patočka interpreted Husserl's reflections on the birth of philosophy as an approach that singles out "living in truth" as the very "spirit of Europe":

As Husserl sees it, what makes Europe special is precisely the fact that reason constitutes the central axis of its history. There are numerous cultural traditions, but only the European places the universality of evidence—and so of proof and of reason—at the very center of its aspiration. The vision of living in truth, of living, as Husserl has it, responsibly, emerges only in Europe, and only here did it develop in the form of a continuous thought, capable of being universally duplicated and of being deepened and corrected through a shared effort. (*PSW*, 223)

It is no exaggeration to suggest that for Patočka, the care of the soul, on which the possibility of living in truth rests, is nothing less than the secret axis of European thought. This concept has its historical origins in Ancient philosophy. Within this context, we find the care of the soul in Plato's reflections as well as in those of Democritus and Aristotle.

Patočka singles out three crucial ways in which care of the soul has been articulated in Antiquity. First, this care has been thematized as ontocosmology—as the search for understanding the world as the horizon of one's existence. Secondly, it has been also understood in the context of political life—as the search for a communal life that would open the space for human being's freedom. Thirdly, it has been also thematized in terms of the relation of the human being to her own mortality.⁹

When Patočka characterizes the present condition as that of a crisis, he means by this that the three elements of the care for the soul no longer find their resonance in our existence. For Patočka, this signifies a double crisis: the crisis of philosophy and of Europe. For Patočka, the future of philosophy and of Europe is dependent upon finding the means to reawaken the care for the soul. Hence the significance of the questions that we find in the introductory lecture: "Can the care of the soul, which is the fundamental heritage of Europe, still speak to us today? Speak to us, who need to find something to lean on in this common agreement about decline, in this weakness, in this consent to the fall?" (*PE*, 14)

If we ask about the reasons that underlie this crisis, we are in an interesting way led back to the death of the subject thesis. "What led us into this state? What brought Europe here? The answer is simple: her disunited and enormous power" (*PE*, 9). More precisely, it is the emergence of autonomous and sovereign states, when coupled with the powers of science and technology that brings about the inner dissolution of Europe. One can conceive of this dissolution as Europe's internal fate, or at least a consequence that stems from its inner logic.

But what exactly is this inner logic? On the one hand, it has to do with technical power; on the other hand, it has to do with the instrumental reason, that reduces nature and subjectivity to a mere tool for exploitation and domination. Yet when so much is said, a new question emerges: what exactly underlies the domination of this technical instrumental rationality? On this more fundamental scale, Patočka's answer points in the direction of subjectivity itself. Following Nietzsche and Heidegger, Patočka argues that the present crisis is engendered by modern subjectivism, which aims to derive all understanding from subjectivity.¹⁰ The subject,

conceived as the origin of all meaning and intelligibility, gives rise to the will to power as the only measure of conduct. Yet just as Cronus was overpowered by his own children and vanquished into Tartarus' domain, so this subject is overcome by its offspring as well: we are left with "something like a will to power, but power that has no subject. It is not that someone should want this power; it is just accumulated and does what it wants with us" (*PE*, 6).

At first glance, it might seem that the care of the soul and asubjective phenomenology are completely unrelated themes. And yet, for Patočka, these themes are simply inseparable from each other.¹¹ As he puts it, "the entire essence of man, the whole question of his distinctiveness and of his possibilities is connected to the problem of manifestation" (*PE*, 26). More precisely, for Patočka, our capacity to live a life in truth derives from the givenness of appearances. For this givenness of appearances, this mere fact that we are the datives of manifestation, means that we can stay truthful to the manner in which things appear to us. On Patočka's view, *our capacity for truth is nothing other than our ability to remain truthful to appearances.*

To make sense of this, let us ask: what is truth? As Patočka has remarked, we all know that people have died in the name of truth. To die in the name of truth is to conceive of one's life in terms of *responsibility to how things show themselves*. In the highest peaks of humanity, we encounter those remarkable individuals who refuse to reject the manner in which things appear no matter what the consequences of such a refusal might entail. What these exceptional individuals represent so forcefully is something not exceptional at all: In regard to manifestation, subjectivity is not free. The manner in which the world reveals itself to us has always already engaged us and imposed a responsibility upon us. In contrast to the long-established and habitual attempts to reduce manifestation to semblance and thereby oppose it to truth, Patočka brings to light that truth is nothing other than the manner in which things manifest themselves; that truth is the manner in which things are; or better, that truth is the manner in which the very nature of things shows itself to us.¹² "Man is the caretaker of the phenomenon . . . Man is a creature of truth—which means, of the phenomenon" (*PE*, 35). If this is accurate, then it is no exaggeration to suggest that the fundamental possibility of humanity coincides with the problem of manifestation.

Thus for Patočka, the death of the subject is a highly ambiguous theme. On the one hand, it is a symptom of "the crisis in which Europe finds itself today." On the other hand, when thought through under the heading of asubjective phenomenology, it offers a possible cure to this crisis, that is, it is something that provides new resources to reawaken the care for the soul. To express this differently: on the one hand, the death of the subject is a symptom of the fact that the care for the soul no longer speaks to us today. On the other hand, it is also a sign that appearance is more original than subjectivity and that the primacy of appearance can provide us with the resources needed to reawaken the care for the soul. To express this duplicity yet in another way: on the one hand, care for the soul stands for subjectivity's search for self-unity; care for the soul means "to want to be in unity with one's own self" (*PE*, 189). Yet on the other hand, such a notion of subjectivity is an accomplishment that rests upon the lack of unity in question; or in Patočka's own terms, the care for

the soul is rooted in the fact that “man originally and always is not in this unity with himself” (*PE*, 188).

So what is subjectivity? Subjectivity is the dative of manifestation, but not only that. Subjectivity also holds a responsibility in regard to manifestation. For Patočka, this responsibility in regard to manifestation, conceived as the possibility of living in truth, is what defines the history of philosophy. Therefore, for Patočka, the thesis of the death of the subject, when not coupled with the question of subjectivity’s rebirth, is in fact nothing other than the thesis of the death of philosophy. Herein lies Patočka’s fascinating contribution to the problematic of subjectivity. For Patočka, in the aftermath of the radical critiques of the subject, the task of philosophy should be that of raising the question anew: what is subjectivity?

6. In my concluding remarks, let me once again return to Borges, to his short story “A New Refutation of Time,” to which I had already referred earlier. At the end of this story, Borges writes:

And yet, and yet . . . Denying . . . the self is an apparent desperation and a secret consolation. Our destiny is not frightful by being unreal; it is frightful because it is irreversible and iron-clad. Time is the substance I am made of. Time is a river which sweeps me along, but I am the river; it is a tiger which destroys me, but I am the tiger; it is a fire which consumes me, but I am the fire. The world, unfortunately, is real . . . (Borges, 233–34)

. . . and for better or worse, so is subjectivity. Some thirty years ago, at the peak of the structuralist and poststructuralist critiques, the question of the subject seemed to be foreclosed. The general consensus was that these critiques have put the subject to death. Could it not be so that thirty years later, *presently*, one of the central philosophical tasks should be precisely that of reengaging the question of subjectivity?

I hope to have shown that Patočka’s phenomenology provides plenty of resources for a phenomenological reconstruction of subjectivity.

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N O T E S

¹ See in this regard Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, pp. 178–186.

² Erazim Kohák has succinctly expressed Patočka’s position in regard to Husserlian phenomenology: “the great value of Husserl’s work is its recognition of the dependence of particular objectivity on interaction with the subject. Its weakness is its failure to recognize the other ‘objectivity’—the ontological irreducibility of the world-horizon, given equiprimordially with the being of subjectivity.” (PSW, 92).

³ According to Patočka, Husserl’s phenomenology succumbs to an imprecise formulation of its own discoveries. So as to correct these imprecise formulations, Patočka argues for the need to draw a clear and sharp distinction between the *epoche* and the reduction. Patočka identifies the *epoche* with the authentically phenomenological attitude of suspending natural theses; *epoche* is exactly what is needed to enter into the phenomenological domain. When it comes to the reduction, Patočka suggests that this theme falls outside the scope of phenomenology proper and belongs to something that could be labeled as

phenomenological philosophy. More precisely, the reduction carries the threat of the return to subjectivity at the expense of phenomenality.

⁴ As Tamás Ullmann has put it, “for Patočka the whole is not an ontological but a profoundly phenomenological term: it is the essence of appearing, appearance as such” (“Negative Platonism and the Problem of Appearance,” unpublished manuscript).

⁵ As I have mentioned repeatedly, this domain of appearances is not reducible either to objects, or to subjectivity. It is an absolutely independent domain. One could say that what Patočka defends is a middle ground between Husserl and Plato. In regard to Husserl, he qualifies his position as asubjective phenomenology. I have explained this already: according to Patočka, Husserl’s reduction of appearances to subjectivity lacks phenomenological legitimacy. On the other hand, in regard to Plato, Patočka qualifies his position as negative Platonism. This means that Patočka fully agrees with Plato that objects are determined by something that is independent of them. Yet this “something” in question, according to Patočka, does not point in the direction of ideas. Why? Because ideas themselves are objects of a particular kind. For Patočka, this transcendent domain, without which objects could not be objects, is not metaphysical; it rather is phenomenological, i.e., it is the domain of appearances themselves.

⁶ One such highly intriguing way has to do with the three movements of human life, the first of which Patočka calls *anchoring*, or *sinking roots*; the second one—self-sustenance, or reproduction; and the third one—self-achievement, or integration. See Jan Patočka, *Body, Community, Language, World*, trans. by Erazim Kohák, ed. by James Dodd (Open Court, 1998, 143–163).

⁷ See Petr Lom’s *Foreword to Jan Patočka, Plato and Europe*, xiii–xxi.

⁸ “For Patočka, philosophy is not simply reflection about the meaning of life or the order of the world; it is a practice to shape the soul (the self) not simply in order to attain an abstract and eternal truth but to realize a true life: a life that is stable, is able to withstand the loss of meaning, of disorder, without closing the opening of freedom and receding into an ossification of social and human existence.” (Arpad Szakolczai, “Thinking beyond the East-West divide: Foucault, Patočka, and the care of the self.”)

⁹ For a concise treatment of this theme, see Petr Lom, *op. cit.*, xvi.

¹⁰ See in this regard Petr Lom, *op. cit.*, xviii.

¹¹ Not surprisingly, therefore, in *Plato and Europe*, after providing a brief account of the current state of Europe, Patočka immediately turns to an account of asubjective phenomenology. See *PE*, [Chapters 2](#) and [3](#).

¹² Or as Patočka puts it, “how do we get to the nub of this most important thing—that thing on the basis of which only then can we have something like truth and error—because manifesting is the ground, without which truth and falsehood do not make sense” (*PE*, 25).

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“HUMAN CREATIVITY ACCORDING
TO THE BEING” AND NARRATIVE ETHICS:
AN ACTUALIZATION OF ARISTOTLE’S
ACCOUNT OF IMAGINATION

A B S T R A C T

In the first part of the chapter, a couple of textual references from Aristotle’s *De Anima* will be provided. According to the definition of imagination that can be found in Book Γ, imagination is not a sensation, but it is allowed due to sensation. In the second part of the chapter it will be shown that imagination has an intentional structure which can be assimilated to the teleological constitution of human condition. From this point of view, Aristotle’s account of imagination has an intrinsically teleological structure: it can create either new events or new meanings only starting from the concrete limits of human condition. In the third part, it will be pointed out that, according to its hybrid nature, imagination, as a faculty, cannot be reduced neither to the plain reproduction of the existing order, nor to the radical invention of brand new features of human beings. In this being situated, the ontological quality of imagination can be discovered, or rediscovered. Human creativity (in the sense of *creation according to the being*) can be reached also through the innovative power of imagination. It is not a creation *ex nihilo*, but, rather, a way to project actions in order to testify a sense of the being itself. As a conclusion, an actualization of the theory of imagination as the condition of possibility of the contemporary revival of narrative ethics will be provided.

The following quotations, elicited from Aristotle’s *On the Soul*, might be a good starting point to explain the proper nature of imagination:

“Imagination is different from both perception and thought; imagination always implies perception, and is itself implied by judgement.”¹

“Sensation is always present but imagination is not. If sensation and imagination were identical in actuality, then imagination would be possible for all creatures; but this appears not to be the case; for instance it is not true for the ant, the bee, or the grub. Again, all sensations are true, but most imaginations are false. Nor we say “I imagine that it is a man” when our sense is functioning accurately with regard to its object, but only when we do not perceive distinctly. And, as we have said before, visions are seen by men even with their eyes shut. Nor is imagination any one of the faculties which are always right, such as knowledge or intelligence; for imagination may be false.”²

“If, then, imagination involves nothing else than we have stated, and is as we have described it, then imagination must be a movement produced by sensation actively operating. Since sight is the chief sense, the name *φαντασία* (imagination) is derived from *φῶς* (light), because without light it is impossible to see.”³

According to these extracts, the Aristotelian definition of imagination can be divided into three main parts, each of them corresponding to a quotation. First of all, his definition is reached *via negativa*: he asks both himself and the reader what imagination is not. So, according to the first one, imagination is neither a perception nor a thought: it is situated “in the middle”. It isn’t thinkable without perception which is its condition of possibility. Moreover, imagination itself is the condition of possibility of judgement. In other words, imagination couldn’t exist without perception; in the same way, judgment couldn’t exist without imagination: it really is a middle term, just like in a mathematical proportion. The fact that imagination couldn’t exist without perception means that the latter provides the former with “material”, and it is, among other features, the most Kantian one or, finally, the very Kantian inheritance.

A very interesting definition of imagination is, in fact, provided by Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: “*Imagination* is the faculty of representing an object even without its presence in intuition. Now, as all our intuition is sensuous, imagination, by reason of the subjective condition under which alone it can give a corresponding intuition to the conceptions of the understanding, belongs to sensibility. But in so far as the synthesis of the imagination is an act of spontaneity, which is determinative, and not, like sense, merely determinable, and which is consequently able to determine sense *a priori*, according to its form, conformably to the unity of apperception, in so far as the imagination is a faculty of determining sensibility *a priori*, and its synthesis of intuitions according to the categories must be the transcendental synthesis of the imagination. It is an operation of the understanding our sensibility, and the first application of the understanding to objects of possible intuition and the some time the basis for the exercise of the other functions of that faculty. As figurative, it is distinguished from the merely intellectual synthesis, which is produced by the understanding alone, without the aid of imagination. Now, in so far as imagination is spontaneity, I some time call it also the *productive* imagination, and distinguish it from the *reproductive*, the synthesis of which is subject entirely to empirical laws, these of association, namely, and which, therefore, contributes nothing to the explanation of the possibility of a *a priori* cognition, and for this reason belongs not to transcendental philosophy, but to psychology.”⁴

Imagination is the power to manipulate different products of perception without necessarily corresponding to real course of things. It can, for instance, put together perceptions which are not together in the reality or, on the contrary, it can divide what is not divided into reality.

As previously stated, judgement couldn’t exist without imagination, which is a sort of “laboratory” for it. Like in a laboratory, in fact, judgement takes form from a frequent exercise of imagination, which puts together and project the concordance

between a subject and its predication. According to this view, the word “judgement” is taken in the very Aristotelian meaning. Like perception for imagination, imagination itself provides “material” for judgment, and it is able to give a configuration to possible ways of judging, by representing them in the mind.⁵ Therefore, according to the first Aristotelian quotation and, moreover, according to the *history of its effects*,⁶ the first feature of imagination is to be located in a middle position between perception and judgement and, subsequently, to be able to allow communication between them.

The second quotation from Aristotle’s *On the Soul* corresponds to the second part of the definition: imagination is not a sensation. If they were the same in actuality, then imagination, like sensation, would be possible for all creatures, and this is not the case. The most relevant point is that imagination can be experienced in a phenomenological way *only when there is no clarity of sensation*. When you clearly see, there’s no need to imagine; when you clearly hear, there’s no need to imagine a conversation nor a symphony; when you’re tasting a flavour or touching, or smelling an odour, you don’t need to ask your faculty of imagination for help. This is because sensation and imagination are not the same, from the point of view of actuality: they don’t correspond to the same process; in their transition from potentiality to actuality their radical difference can be better pointed out.

They both are seen as a process, as a transition between a potential state and an actual one. It is exactly within this transition that one can take a very well shaped picture of their differences. On one side, sensation is always true; on the other side, imagination can be false; moreover, sensation is always present,⁷ but, in opposition, imagination is not always present. It doesn’t mean that sensation is always actual, but that imagination is actual, only when sensation is potential. Therefore, sensation can be re-activated through imagination in any moment of our life, even while sleeping. In this sense, if it is true that imagination cannot exist without having had a perceptual experience before, it is as much true that it is more pervading than perception. This statement can be demonstrated also if we think that we can even imagine of having a perception.

According to this second quotation, it is clear that the radical power of imagination consists of being able to move itself away from reality, only after (and thanks to) having experienced some elements of reality itself. In this way, the creative power of imagination confirms its being situated in a perceptual field, or, to express it in a hermeneutical way, in a perspective over the truth.

Another relevant feature of imagination can be provided by the third quotation from Aristotle’s work. The quotation describes a meaningful analogy: as it is impossible to see without light, it is impossible to imagine without sight. In fact, the Greek word *φαντασία* (imagination) is derived from *φῶς* (light). First of all, it is just the case to quickly mention the primacy of sight over the other senses, and it is a typical Western philosophical paradigm, from Plato on.⁸ A synecdoche can be easily recognized here, that is, a part is taken for the whole; secondly, sight is the condition of possibility of imagination. There can be no imagination without the actuality of seeing (that is, the actual side of sight).

Thirdly, the semantics of perception and the semantics of sensation in the English version both correspond to the Greek semantic field of *αἴσθησις*; from this last notation, a question (if not a contradiction) can be raised. If we accept that perception and sensation are the same, and we must accept it according to the original Greek text, it can be easily realized that Aristotle says that imagination presents itself only when perceptions are not so clear; but, later, he adds that imagination is impossible without sensations, like sight is impossible without light. Moreover, he tries to clarify this point saying that sensation can be either potential or actual, while imagination is given only when neither sight nor seeing are present. Presence here means either potentiality, or actuality.

One way to answer these questions and to overcome the contradiction is to consider once again the hybrid nature of the faculty of imagination and, what is more, to remember that imagination has a process form, which represents the tension between potentiality and actuality. Imagination, according to this point, is not always present, but it can always be made present. That is, unlike sensation, it is not easy to distinguish between its potentiality and its actuality, between form and content, because its borders are not so neat. It is a kind of perpetually potential faculty, whose function is to create dynamic images not *ex nihilo*, but rather according to the being.

In this sense, the products of imagination are the products of a peculiar kind of *human creativity according to the being*, whose semantic field evokes a conscious and aware teleology, which isn't able to create *ex nihilo*, but is able to create from a given world of beings, and to give them a sense, a direction. At this stage, one could ask which being should imagination be accorded to, and the answer is quite simple: imagination is a creation according to the sensations, either present or not, either past or present. In other words, sensation is the *inescapable framework*⁹ of imagination: if ontology can be assimilated to an inquiry concerning the conditions of possibility, and if a condition of possibility can be represented as an inescapable framework, then it is demonstrated that sensations are the "being" of imagination, which can create only according to them.

Imagination is perhaps an emblematic case of *human creativity according to the being*, because its structure itself, as already stated, calls for the ontological *substratum* of sensitive data or phenomena collected by the sensitive apparatus. Sensation isn't itself properly a *being* (even if it could be considered a *being* whereas *being* signifies the relationship between potentiality and actuality: in this sense, one could say that sensation is *in being*, that is, *in fieri*); rather, it provides imagination with *beings*. Thus, imagination neither creates *ex nihilo*, nor accomplishes a necessary teleological "destiny"; rather, it uses images, sounds, smells, and so on, coming from sensation and it works on them, modeling or combining their parts together.

Therefore, imagination has a tight relation with human creativity, which indicates a *creation according to being*: teleology represents the conceptual connection between them, that is, imagination develops a form of life, a way to be moral, a new and original project over the future. But it performs all these mental operations only because of its being situated in an ontological historical perspective; moreover, this kind of mental operations is not necessary, but, on the contrary, free: the freedom

of imagination is, thus, a situated freedom, rather than an absolute one. Imagination does not accomplish a written destiny nor carries it out an ontological necessity: it has the potentiality to “give ear” to the being and to carry out its potentialities, or, the other way round, it can betray the being by not carrying it out. It has the capability of reading the potentialities of the present, of a person, of a child, of a situation, and to make them either flourish or not.

As previously stated, teleology is an essential concept in order to explain the role and the richness of imagination. First of all, teleology represents a human hypothesis concerning a very relevant point: it might be the very human way to make sense of one’s life. In order to make one’s life meaningful, it is necessary to believe in the possibility, even in the presence, of a sense in history, and in every life story; and the most reasonable attempt to give a sense is to give an ending to the story: there is a close connection between teleology and *the sense of an ending*.¹⁰ In a second sense, teleology describes human intentionality in a very proper way; intentionality can, in fact, be found either in the individual dimension of the personhood, or in the collective dimension of history. In each case, however, intentionality means the human tension toward a sense, and it signifies that humanity structures the life experience *as if* there be a sense. Thus, intentionality means openness to a sense and attempt to organize oneself’s life in a teleological perspective.

The fact that humanity tries to organize personal life and history *as if* there were a sense, doesn’t represent itself an empirical certitude, nor a radical denial of the presence of a sense in history. Rather, it indicates the ontological and moral engagement of each personal life. In this context, imagination can be assumed as a paradigm of the ontological and moral engagement of personhood. In fact, imagination can be considered as the faculty which best explains the teleology of life. It is situated in the space between ontology and ethics: as a standpoint for its creations, it can use the ontological background of sensation; as a teleological aim, it has morality. Its work can either grant or deny the possible harmony between ontology and ethics.

The agreement between ontology and ethics is not external in respect to imagination, but it concerns its own structure: it is the capability of personal imagination to represent to itself a different point of view, assuming the ontological (and “ontic”) perspective of its own life as a standpoint, and transcending from the bare ontology in order to gain an ethical overview over the teleology of life. Imagination is, thus, structurally directed to an aim, and the quality of the aim depends on the ethical orientation of teleology. Imagination is teleological because it is intentional, and it can find a direction towards an ethical teleology. In a nutshell, imagination can be morally oriented: it can potentially become a moral faculty: we could also speak of *moral imagination*, as S. Lovibond, among the others, does.

As previously stated, imagination is able to show that intentionality can be both personal and collective; moreover, it can also be the connection itself. On moral imagination as a connection between individual and collective dimension, the American philosopher S. Lovibond thinks that moral imagination can be a critical scrutiny of existing institutions by “seeing new aspects, and – arising logically out of such scrutiny.”¹¹ She goes on pointing out the relevance of language as argumentative ethical strategy: “The speculative construction of alternatives. The fact of

syntactic structure in language ensures that as competent speakers about ethics, we can represent to ourselves moral justifications for replacing existing institutions by others – even though this competence is itself grounded in our personal history of incorporation in our personal history of incorporation into the existing institutions – imagination as a linguistic capacity.”¹²

Moreover, the American philosopher postulates a close connection between imagination and expressive skills: “Even if no one within a particular community actually possesses this philosophical conception of moral and political conflict, outside speculators (e. g.) historians can still, where appropriate, describe the experience of that community in the terms which it suggests – in terms of a struggle, that is between those forces tending towards a breakdown of ethical substance and those resisting such a tendency.”¹³

According to the quotations, it is easy to realize that the morality of personal relations must not be taken for granted, but they must always be imagined in a different way. This feature of imagination can be also called *empathy*, and it denotes the competence of a person to put herself in someone else’s shoes and to somehow revive her inner feelings. Thus, without imagination, not only judgment, but also empathy would be impossible. The ascription of morality to imagination is of a particular kind: it is neither totally necessary nor completely accidental; once again, also because of its morality, imagination seems to have a hybrid nature. Imagination can be moral, and its constitutional *being* allows it to be ontologically oriented to morality. In other words, moral orientation is not taken for granted; on the contrary, it requires a practical engagement and a continuous reflection over personal and social bonds.

A parallelism can be made to better explain the grade of externality (or, vice versa, of internality) concerning the ascription of morality to imagination. In the epistemic field, imagination is essential because it connects an extreme variety of sensations (or perceptions) and allows to make hypothesis to define an object or a phenomenon: this kind of process hides a deeply teleological structure, because from some perceptual premises – through imagination – a mental object is constructed and a hypothesis concerning its reality is made. The teleological structure is precisely the attitude of knowledge to give a sense (or a form, or an ending) to the external *stimuli*: this attitude is intrinsically morally oriented, even in the case of the epistemic process of knowledge.

In the moral field, imagination has the same role as in the epistemic field: it joins sensations and images and can formulate different kinds of moral actions, by projecting them in the mind and trying to empathize with one’s future life. Such a faculty is thus intrinsically moral, because of its power to orient human agency towards good. Suppose you have to make a choice which involves others, and that the result of your choice is influential to others (to *your* others). What happens in this case is that you cannot but imagine the ethical implications of your choice, even if you are either an utilitarian or a *homo oeconomicus*; that is because our agency is situated among others’ agencies, and our definition of good is always conditioned by our deep relations.

Imagination is thus intrinsically oriented to morality: the reason is that it is a relational faculty, a dialogical faculty rather than a monological one; it represents,

in fact, personal intentionality, and personal constitutive openness to the otherness. Imagination completes partial moral images and moulds them in order to create new and different courses of action. It is the very human (and the only) way to create, an ethical-ontological way, whose claim should be the faithfulness to the potentialities of human kind. Like in the case of epistemic imagination, in the ethical field imagination shows its attitude to unify fragments and to give them an order, constructing mental courses of human action, which represent, for the ethical life, possible models of action. It provides moral judgment with *schemas* for judging, exactly as it happens in the relation among sensation, imagination and judgment according to Aristotle's *De Anima*.

Such a characteristic makes possible to define imagination as the *laboratory* of moral judgment, as Paul Ricoeur describes it: "This mediating function performed by the narrative identity of the character between the poles of sameness and selfhood is attested to primarily by the *imaginative variations*, to which the narrative submits the identity. In truth, the narrative does not merely tolerate these variations, it engenders them, seeks them out. In this sense literature proves to consist in a vast laboratory for thought experiments in which the resources of variations encompassed by the narrative identity are put to the test of narration."¹⁴

According to the Aristotelian definition of imagination, it is quite easy to point out the analogy between the teleological constitution of human personhood, which structurally searches for a meaning, and the intentional nature of imagination. The close connection between the notions of teleology and intentionality is a standpoint of this analogy; the meaning is an aim: the human personhood must be predisposed to get it, without necessarily possessing it. The analogy between teleology and intentionality is thus a crucial condition to fully understand the sort of creative power of imagination. The force of imagination is exactly its being situated: its limit is not an accidental feature among the others, rather it is its structural way of being. Imagination cannot but start from the limits of knowledge, of sensation, and it cannot but try to overcome them, moulding new possibilities and imagining new scenarios of *fullness*, because its aim is fullness "according to the being".

The fact that fullness is the aim of imagination may help to clarify its intentional structure; if we mean the fullness in each grade it can be given, it is not difficult to understand the relationship that it has with imagination: starting from a merely epistemic standpoint, fullness can be in fact intended as the fullness of an object that we only partly perceive, and in this case intentionality of imagination makes it possible to predict and to metaphorically see the complete object; moreover, in a moral sense, fullness can signify the perfect action we can choose only imagining and evaluating its consequences, giving them the possibility to live in our minds, also in this case, intentionality of imagination is crucial to get the "fullness" of the action, that is, it is essential to express the tension towards the "good" in action; finally, fullness may signify the human need for a meaning, the projection of this need out of human history and, indeed, its capacity to orient history itself; the intentionality of imagination is crucial in this case too, because it provides both the lexicon and the iconography to think a conciliated world.

Intentionality and teleology share the same structure. Firstly, they are both situated in a living perspective; in other words, they both start from a standpoint, that is

the living life itself. It is clear that this being situated represents an unavoidable limit, an *inescapable framework*, but it is the proper human way to tend to the fullness and to highlight the tension to it. Secondly, they both tend to something: whatever this “something” is, it is in both cases able to orient the fragments of knowledge, or of morality, we can experience in our lives in a coherent and well-ordered account. Therefore, both intentionality and teleology share a kind of propulsive linearity, which does not produce necessity, but freedom, and which starts from a point and is directed to another one. The peculiar kind of relationship between intentionality and teleology could also be described in the following terms: intentionality (and, obviously, the intentionality of imagination) is the very human way to decline teleology.

If it is true, the concept of personhood is nothing but this unique way to live the tension towards an end (in the sense of an aim); this aim has basically two possibilities to be realized: the first one is to fit itself to the teleology of being and, by doing so, to reach “fullness”; vice versa, because of the freedom of intentionality, it can betray the tension and tend to fragmentation, rather than the unification of the self in a historical context. The core of human creativity is situated exactly here: according to its main meaning, it is quite close to imagination, thanks to the intentional structure of the latter. Imagination is, in fact, situated in a space, in a time, in a story of life; and therefore it cannot but work according to its being situated, and according to the being which the sensations provide to it. Imagination can get to know the being; it can, subsequently, choose whether either to be faithful or to betray it. In both cases, its intentionality is proved.

The fact that the intentionality of imagination can be faithful to the being must be better explained, because it is exposed to many objections. One of the most relevant critiques could be that, since imagination has the only function of “respecting” the being, of “carrying it out”, of fitting itself to it, there is no space to its creative power, and any possible representation of good action as a new element is impossible, because every image is already determinate and almost necessary, every possible future can be found all along as a possibility in the being: the creative force of imagination drowns into the *great see of being*.¹⁵ The reply to this powerful objection is useful to clarify the relation between imagination and being and, as a consequence, between imagination and morality.

The solution of this dilemma could sound as follows: as a premise, one can consider the fact that imagination is situated not only as a limit, but also as a resource; the possibility that imagination can be faithful to the being means that it can find morality into the being and is able to make it evident, to work on it in order to let morality emerge from the being and to orientate it. Imagination is thus valued for its creative power, which is able to discover and, what is more, to shape, a sense of morality which consists on an ethical direction to be impressed to the reality. Imagination has the capability to recognize a regulative ideal into the being: once having found this regulative ideal, it is able to indicate a direction to action, by transforming ideality into a concrete image. In a nutshell, there is no way to avoid or misrecognize the creative power of imagination, even if we take into account its

limiting and narrow bond with the being; the creative power of imagination is the very human way to decline intentionality.

Another suitable way to analyze the relation between the *intentionality of imagination* and the *teleology of the lifeworld* is the notion of participation: as far as imaginative intentionality participates in teleology, a teleological structure can be ascribed to the imagination as its main feature. As previously stated, intentionality of imagination is the authentic human way to assume the teleology of life and to freely accomplish it. The fulfillment of vocation to teleology is thus supposed not to be a necessary feature of imagination, but an intrinsic possibility, which can be confirmed or denied by the moral agency of each person.

According to its being closely related to imagination, *human creativity according to the being* can be defined as intrinsically moral. In fact, it is not a neutral process, which would regard only an increase of being, but as a morally oriented process which testifies the dialogical structure of each either imagined or real experience. This dialogical and “opened to the otherness” structure imposes to considerate morality as potentially intrinsic into the being, even though not definitively necessary. The discovering of the morality of the process of creation according to the being can be equated to a radical paradigm shift: from the paradigm of quantity, which is interested in the bare increase of being, there is a transition to the paradigm of quality, in which any moment of being can be transfigured into a moral one: it deals with a conversion, always possible, but never necessary.

To sum up, imagination can be considered the human way to decline the teleology: from one side, it is essential to rediscover the moral potential of the being and to avoid the automatisms of a totalitarian ontology of necessity; from the other side, imagination is able to represent the only human way to create, that is the assumption of the “being situated” as a resource, rather than as a limit. The limitedness of imagination, which can create only taking into account its sensations or perceptions, signifies its unavoidable historicity, which determines the conditions of the being imaginable of events. But the historicity of imagination doesn’t draw the line at its transformative power; on the contrary, it makes this transformative power realizable and discloses the radical concreteness of imagination.

As a faculty, imagination cannot be reduced neither to the plain reproduction of the existing order, nor to the radical invention of totally new features: its hybrid nature reflects the middle position of human personhood in the world, so that imagination can’t be assimilated to a bare description with the “mind’s eye”, neither can it be assimilated to a prescription; or, in other words, imagination is both descriptive and prescriptive, because it can’t escape the historical and ontological framework, but it can operate in history in order to transform it; its providing models to action is similar to the force of the examples.

A. Ferrara, who has recently dedicated a book to this topic, describes the force of example as follows: “Alongside the force of what is and what ought to be, a third force gives shape to our world: the force of *what is as it should be* or the force of example. For a long time unrecognized and misleadingly assigned to the reductive realm of the aesthetic, the force of example is the force of what exerts appeal on us in all walks of life [...] by virtue of the singular and the exceptional *congruence*

that what is exemplary realizes and exhibits between the order of its own reality and the order of normativity to which it responds".¹⁶ Just like the force of examples, the kernel of the imaginative power is to create models for action, and, moreover, to highlight a *congruence* between what is and what ought to be. Imagination, like examples, exerts a force on human action, especially in the ethical field.

Another relevant analogy between examples and imagination is the concept of *congruence*: the force of the example is based on a congruence between description and prescription. An example represents a sensed history, in which concreteness goes together with the possibility to be universally valid. The congruence here is between what is and what ought to be. The same congruence can be found in the field of imagination: it looks at the way in which imagination finds and aims to creatively reproduce an order according to the being; it describes, in the sense of a reproduction, the world, and, what is more, it is able to model a morally oriented direction to the life, not only indicating it, but also prescribing what to do in order to reach this goal.

As the example, which highlights a congruence between the *is* and the *ought to be*, imagination can show a congruence between being and his moral declination, a congruence between images and their moral tension and, finally, a congruence between what is (that is, the realm of images) and what ought to be (that is, what images could become through their being oriented). The core of the analogy is thus the congruence between what is and what ought to be. Imagination has the force to show the possibility of the being to be morally oriented towards a sense. Imagination is able to reply to the questioning of a sense of history, describing the reality and making efforts to read differently the reality itself. The power to differently read reality is not morally neutral, because, by describing, it projects new possibilities and indicates the way to reach them.

The next step of this article is to highlight the close connection or, to properly speak of, the implication between imagination according to Aristotle's definition of it and contemporary narrative ethics. In the quotations below, Aristotle describes imagination as a middle faculty, which is possible thanks to the perceptual field and which makes judgment possible. This characteristic of being median is what makes possible the re-actualization of a theory of imagination from the viewpoint of contemporary narrative ethics, because narrativity too has a median role. In fact, it is either a description, or a prescription. In this sense, examples, especially those elicited from literature, represent a privileged perspective from which it could be easy to focus on the analogy between narrative ethics and imagination.

Once the definition of imagination as the proper faculty of *human creativity according to the being* has been accepted, a textual reference from P. Ricoeur can be useful to confirm and to prove this definition. According to the French philosopher, the value of imagination consists of "a free game with some possibilities, in a state of non-engagement towards the world. It is in this state of non-engagement that we experience new ideas, new values, new ways of being in the world. But this "common sense" connected to the notion of imagination can be fully recognized only in the fertility of imagination is connected with that of language, which is exemplified in the metaphorical process."¹⁷ It is worth to note that the state of non-engagement

does not mean a radical disengagement towards the world; on the contrary, the state of non-engagement is the condition of possibility of a really authentic ethical engagement, in order to reach which it is necessary to exert the faculty of judgment in a situated and both free way.

Only this continuous exercise of going out from the self to leave place to the otherness, that is an empathic exercise, allows the impartiality in moral judgment. Imagination is thus the capacity to freely combine different images or situations and to project a different course of action, starting from an unavoidable situated perspective. The non-engagement is thus the real possibility of a true engagement. From Ricoeur's perspective, language is able to establish a link between imagination and narrative ethics, because every representation is immediately translated into language and configured in a (hopefully) meaningful story. Man cannot but represent himself in a linguistic way: it is therefore confirmed the intentional structure of language, which represents a common feature of imagination, language and narratives. In *Oneself as Another*, Ricoeur starts from the literary narratives and proves that they structurally imply moral judgment: "The pleasure we take in following the fate of the characters implies, to be sure, that we suspend all moral judgment at the same time that we suspend action itself. But in the unreal sphere of fiction we never tire of explaining new ways of evaluating actions and characters. The thought experiments we conduct in the great laboratory of imaginary are also explorations in the realm of good and evil."¹⁸ Even if one starts from narratives, the crucial point is that imagination seeks out the morality of new possible courses of action.

Moreover, in order to show the close connection between imagination and narrative ethics as one of its possible actualizations, it is necessary to try to exactly define what it is currently intended with *narrative ethics*. An exact definition of this recent declination of ethics could be problematic, because of the plurality of meanings it has in the contemporary studies. I choose here to quote three main definitions, as they appear in a recent German book.¹⁹ In her introduction to the volume, K. Joisten lists three meanings of *narrative ethics*. According to the first, the language of narratives (and of narratology) renders ethics a scientific discipline, providing it with some useful categories; the category of "narrative" provides ethics with a rigorous language which let it "employ narrative elements in order to describe moral phenomena. Of course it is able to come through this trial, once it is considered as a science especially to critically analyze traditional customs, and to formulate moral judgments in a scientific way."²⁰

The second meaning refers to the possibility to extract moral *examples* from literary or life narratives: "in this case, the word "narratives" has got, as its field of application, the wide range of stories and narrations."²¹ The third and last meaning highlights a quasi-transcendental essentiality of narrativity in the constitution of human beings, who cannot but live and experience the relations and the world in a narrative form, from the beginning to the end of their lives. Narrativity isn't, thus, an accidental feature of human life, but it represents a proper ontological constitution: "to be a man means to be constitutively entangled in histories, that is to be narrative, to demonstrate to be disposed to be constantly structured and re-structured in a narrative form."²²

Each of the listed meanings is useful to prove the hypothesis of an implication between Aristotelian imagination and contemporary narrative ethics. The first one points out the capacity of the narrative categories to give an order and a scientific form to ethics: it is as if narrative categories could create a model of the world, in which characters would be free to act and the spectator (who corresponds to the subject of the future action) could reflect carefully to take the best choice, once having imagined a parallel world, with its own characters and relational dynamics which are the copies of the real ones. It is quite easy to note the essential role of imagination in this first meaning of narrative ethics.

The second meaning is close to Ferrara's account of the force of the example, and highlights the close connection between examples and narrativity. Examples provide models for moral action; they are almost narrated and for this reason they exhibit a teleological structure, that is they seek out a sense: they signify something universal through concrete situations: "a judgment that unites a focus on particulars and yet an universal scope in its claim to validity is possible insofar as it appeals to *exemplary validity*. Exemplary validity represents an alternative way of understanding how it is that we are able to identify single objects as instances of a certain type of objects [...] A central role in validity so conceived is played by the *imagination*. For it is imagination – "the faculty to make present what is absent" – that evokes in our mind examples that might apply to our case. Imagination allows us to join together, under the different modalities of determinant and reflective judgment, particulars with general notions."²³

What imagination does, is to create new models by using old images and combining them. Each model manifests a tendency towards a meaningfulness; moreover, each model can be equated to an example. Therefore, firstly, examples are narratives because they present themselves as stories, as real narratives; secondly, examples are narratives because of their intentional constitution and the possibility for them to be assimilated to imaginative models which tend towards a sense. Like examples, imagination is able to connect the particulars with general cases; narratives have got the same capacity: they are able to refer to universality, even if they give an account only of the particulars. Examples can be properly pieces of narratives, or they can be translated into narrative categories, but this translation seems to be necessary, or at least quasi-transcendental.

The third meaning that K. Joisten lists is crucial: narrativity is not an accidental feature of the human being, but it is their essential feature. Narratives are the tissue of every life, from their very beginning to their end. Narrativity means in fact dialogical openness and relational constitution; the person is constituted by others and it is represented in others' words and stories. Narrativity is the tissue of the human experience, which can be thus described as an experience of radical heteronomy, and it should engender a grateful attitude towards who has made possible everyone's life story. The intentionality of stories and, in particular, of every life story, highlights the tensional structure of the human personhood.

To sum up, the definition of narrativity which is the standpoint of the third meaning of narrative ethics can be described as a combination of four features: dialogical openness; relational constitution; linguistic translatability; intentional orientation.

According to the dialogical openness, mankind is originally open to the otherness, which precedes and constitutes his lifeworld; it is because (and this is the second feature) to be relational is not accidental for the human beings, but it is constitutive, which means that relations are the main tissue of humanity, without them humanity is not thinkable; this relational constitution does not automatically correspond to a moral orientation towards the ethical life, but represents its condition of possibility, without which the orientation towards ethical life would not have the space to actualize itself.

The third feature is represented by the linguistic translatability: this feature cannot be assumed as a datum, but rather as a problem, because it is not taken for granted that any human experience can be said, or narrated, or communicated: the experience of evil, for example, or that of extreme suffering, are not so easy to tell or to be linguistically configured. If, in fact, the language, especially the language of narratives, express an attempt to give a sense, it is always possible not to find a sense. From this standpoint, it can be equally said that language is “onni-pervading”, because it shows a tendency which is constitutively human. The dramatic (even tragic) feature of humanity is being intentionally linguistic, together with the absolutely not granted possibility to express oneself.

The fourth feature is intentional orientation: according to the foregoing notations, this feature allows the possibility to focus on the close connection between imagination and narrative ethics. Imagination has a teleological orientation towards an end, intended as an accomplishment, either of an object, an action, or even of a history; moreover, its being situated represents the very human condition: the power to start a new course of actions, having thought of it before, is the only way to create. Imagination is thus the faculty of *creation according to the being*. Narrative ethics is at the same time teleologically oriented towards an end (both in the sense of an end and in the sense of an aim); it is able to configure a possible future and to create a model to the ethical action, starting from a situated perspective: in this sense, also narrative ethics can create *according to the being*, even though this kind of creation is not necessary but ontologically possible.

Therefore, narrative ethics can represent a proper way to actualize the hypothesis of the ontological force of the imagination. Firstly, what they have in common is the intentionality which manifests a teleological structure according to the being; secondly, their common structure is signified also by the relational constitution; both imagination and narrative ethics are fitting metaphors for this relational feature, because they represent the impossibility to find a sense of life in a complete isolation from the others. They confirm, rather, that the relationships with others are the condition of possibility of one's ontological being and of the reaching of a sense of fullness and commonality.

In a few words, like imagination, also narrative ethics can operate a *synthesis of the heterogeneous*. It means that they are both able to order epistemic processes (just think of the recent studies of narrative psychology²⁴ and to the relevance they give to the narratives in the learning process), human actions and entire life stories, in order to render ethical the ontological teleology. Without this kind of ethical reflection, the teleology would only remain ontologically possible, not being able to actualize

itself. What is more, without this kind of reflection, teleology could not be defined *ethical*, because it would be automatic and it would not imply the individual freedom to choose whether to be moral or not: that is, in a state of necessary teleology, no one would be good or bad, because no one could choose and people would remain in a state of indeterminacy.

As a conclusion, two theoretical cores are worth of mentioning. The first one is that both imagination and narrative ethics point out that the only way for men to create is to create according to the being. Whether a person thinks of a new course of action, an accomplishment of history, a life story to be morally oriented, it is necessary to recognize the essential role that imagination plays in these cases and to identify its contiguity to the ethical-ontological processes of creation according to the being. Imagination is implied in narrative ethics, as already seen, because it represents a state of non-engagement through which different ways to project common life are highlighted. Narratives, for their part, represent the configuration of these projects of different ways to live the community relations, if we intend with “community” the relational tissue of the human experience. Before having a story to tell, we ourselves are stories, concrete living match points of stories and dialogical living tissues.

The second theoretical core can be described as follows: imagination and narrative ethics (that is, the narrative tissue and structure of the ethical life) are useful to rethink and to reflect on the configuration of the bonds (from the familiar ones, to the social ones) both in a retrospective and in a prospective direction. In a retrospective way, imagination is crucial in order to make present what is absent; moreover, it is crucial because of its heuristic power to empathize with past characters and to go back over the history imagining the real course of events; finally, it is very relevant because it allows to think the hypothetical consequences of a different course of history, in order to correct the perspective over the future.

In a very similar way, narrative ethics has a both a retrospective and a prospective validity. The case of the retrospective validity can be easily shown because of one’s account with the past, it can contribute to better understanding of the present, either according to the personal life story, or according to the collective history. To be disposed to be hosted in the stories narrated by the others (stories which are made of words) means to recognize the structural heteronomy of the personhood. The possibility to be differently narrated, with different voices, corresponds to the possibility of an ethical reflection on one’s relationships; this capacity is very ambiguous if we think of the past and of its possibility to be manipulated. Lastly, the prospective validity of narrative ethics concerns its capacity to project imaginatively different ways to decline relations and new ideas of common life ethically oriented. Imagination as “human creativity according to the being” revives thus in the contemporary perspective of narrative ethics, confirming once again its being a teleological capacity to implement and to actualize human condition.

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NOTES

- ¹ Aristotle, *On the Soul*, trans. W. S. Hett (2nd ed., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 157.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 159.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 163.
- ⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. J. M. D. Meiklejohn, T. Kingsmill Abbot, W. Hastie, J. Creed Meredith (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), pp. 54–55.
- ⁵ Malcolm Schonfield writes: “It is natural to assign such interpretative activity to the imagination. This is particularly the case where the interpreting is conscious.” [Malcolm Schonfield, “Aristotle on the Imagination”, in Martha C. Nussbaum, Amélie. O. Rorty, *Essays on Aristotle’s De Anima* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992, p. 259)]. Following this interpretative line, Dorothea Frede writes: “For it will turn out that there is a wide *gap* between the two, and that at least one of the functions of imagination is to fill that gap. This is not to deny that some *phantasiai* are ‘mere appearance’; it is just to show that not all are. I will confine myself to a depiction of two main functions of *phantasia* in Aristotle’s psychology: its role in the *synthesis* and retention of sense-perceptions, and its role in applying *thought* to objects of sense-perception.” (Dorothea Frede, “The Cognitive Role of *Phantasia*” in Nussbaum, Rorty, *op. cit.*, p. 282).
- ⁶ See, for instance, the following works on Aristotelian imagination: Jan J. Chambliss, *Imagination and Reason in Plato, Aristotle, Vico, Rousseau, and Keats: an Essay on the Philosophy of Experience* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1974); M. Schofield, *Aristotle on Imagination* (2nd ed., London: Duckworth, 1979); Thomas Claviez, *Aesthetics & Ethics: Otherness and Moral Imagination from Aristotle to Levinas and to Uncle Tom’s Cabin to the House Made of Dawn* (Heidelberg: Winter 2008).
- ⁷ It could be interesting to show the surprising modernity of this Aristotelian statement: just think of Maurice Merleau Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. C. Smith (2nd ed., London: Routledge, 2002).
- ⁸ The primacy of sight has been clearly pointed out by Hans Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator: Paradigm of a Metaphor of Existence* (Cambridge, MA, London: MIT Press, 1997).
- ⁹ This expression is used by Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self. The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Such an expression can be defined in the following way: “My underlying thesis is that there is a close connection between the different conditions of identity, or of one’s making sense, that I have been discussing. One could put it this way: because we cannot but orient ourselves to the good, and thus determine our place relative to it and hence determine the direction of our lives, we must inescapably understand our lives in narrative form, as a ‘quest’. But one could perhaps start from another point: because we have to determine our place in relation to the good, therefore we cannot be without an orientation to it, and hence must see our life in story. From whichever direction, I see these conditions as connected facets of the same reality, inescapable structural requirements of human agency.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 51–52).
- ¹⁰ See Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending. Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (London, New York: OUP, 1967). Kermode writes: “The physician Alkmeon observed, with Aristotle’s approval, that men die because they cannot join the beginning and the end. What they, the dying men, can do is to imagine a significance for themselves in these unremembered but imaginable events. One of the ways in which they do so is to make objects in which everything is that exists in concord with everything else, and nothing else is, implying that this arrangement mirrors the dispositions of a creator, actual or possible.” (*Ivi*, p. 4). A few pages after, he continues: “The matter is entirely in our own hands, of course; but our interest in it reflects our deep need for intelligible Ends. We project ourselves – a small, humble elect, perhaps – past the End, so as to see the structure whole, a thing we cannot do from our spot of time in the middle.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 7–8).
- ¹¹ Sabina Lovibond, *Realism and Imagination in Ethics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), p. 117.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 194.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. K. Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 148.

- ¹⁵ This expression is from Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy, Paradise*, trans. C. E. Norton (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), Canto I, line 113, p. 107.
- ¹⁶ Alessandro Ferrara, *The Force of the Example. Explorations on the Paradigm of Judgment* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 2–3.
- ¹⁷ This quotation is elicited from the Italian edition of Paul Ricoeur, *Imagination in the Discourse and in the Action*, in Paul Ricoeur, *From text to action*, trans. K. Blamey and J. Thompson (London: Athlone, 1991). The Italian edition, from which the quotation is taken, is: Paul Ricoeur, *L'immaginazione nel discorso e nell'azione*, in *Dal testo all'azione. Saggi di ermeneutica*, trans. G. Grampa (Milano: Jaca Book, 1989), p. 212.
- ¹⁸ Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, p. 164.
- ¹⁹ Karen Joisten *Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer narrativen Ethik*, in Karen Joisten (edits), *Narrative Ethik. Das Gut und das Böse Erzählen* (Berlin: Akademie, 2007), pp. 9–21. See also Claudia Öhlschläger (edits), *Narration und Ethik* (Paderborn: Fink, 2009); these two books are not translated in English.
- ²⁰ Joisten, op. cit., p. 10.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- ²² *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.
- ²³ Ferrara, op. cit., pp. 47–48.
- ²⁴ See at least the very complete study of Janos László, *The Science of Stories* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

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SECTION X
SEEKING THE LOGOS IN DIFFERENT
CULTURES

*THEOSIS AND LIFE IN NICOLAI BERDYAEV'S
PHILOSOPHY*

A B S T R A C T

The concept of *theosis* constitutes a central theme in the Byzantine theology and, generally, Eastern Christian spirituality. In his mystical realism, Nicolai Berdyaev refers to this tradition. For him, the mystical experience reveals the specific status of man as created in God's image. In his creative life, man can be divinized and, consequently, participate in the divine community. Berdyaev analyses the process of *theosis* referring to the most perfect example of Christ. *Theosis*, in the Russian philosopher's view, constitutes the aim of human existence. It discloses the reality which, from the perspective of contemporary philosophy Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka in her phenomenology defines as "the Fullness in the Ex-tasis of life, in the Glory of the Divine".

Nicolai Alexandrovich Berdyaev began his philosophical quest by looking for truth in Marxism, next to such philosophers as Sergei Bulgakov, Siemion Ludvigovich Frank, and Mikhail Ivanovich Tugan-Baranovsky. Accordingly, Berdyaev was initially seen as a member of the group of thinkers recognised as the so-called legal Marxists who spread the Marxist ideas in the 1890s in Russia. However, likewise most "legal Marxists", in his search for truth he did not remain a Marxist but instead turned to Christianity.

Berdyaev became a religious thinker not through a sudden conversion but rather as a result of the evolution of his ideas. His main interests lie in the question of the existential dialectics of the relation between man and God. Most interpreters of Berdyaev's philosophy regard him as an existentialist. This existential aspect is especially stressed by Fuad Nucho.¹ Berdyaev claims that the authentic philosophy is the representation of man's existential experience. As such, it bears a direct relation to life. According to F. Nucho, the anthropocentrism of Berdyaev's philosophy stems from the fact that the Russian existentialist acknowledges as the most important in the formation of philosophy concrete human experiences which form the image of man as a person.

Berdyaev maintains that the Divine element in man is revealed in the experience of the actualization of the indestructible image of God, which acquires its definitive form in the perfection of the existence of person. According to his idea of God-manhood, man is the co-creator and participator in God's existence to the same degree as God Himself assumes an active part in man's existence. This ontic interdependence between the divine and human existence, the conviction that neither God can be fully Himself without man nor is man himself without God, implies their mutual openness. It leads to the "mutual co-existence of the human

reality in God and of the God's reality in man", as Waclaw Hryniewicz notices.² Berdyaev illustrates the essence of these dialectic relations between man and God in the following terms: "By realising in himself the God's image, man actualizes the human image, and by actualizing in himself the human image, he actualizes the image of God. This is the mystery of God-manhood, the greatest mystery of human life. Manhood is God-manhood."³

The concepts of image, likeness, and person constitute the foundations of all anthropological reflections in Berdyaev's theory. They aim at confirming the thesis of man's birth in God. Within the orthodox thought, the realisation of the image of God in man found its theoretical justification in the complex idea of *theosis*, viz. the divinization of man's existence. This notion is founded on the conviction common in the orthodox thought that man has a theophoric nature, guaranteed by the indestructible image of God which is present within him. The idea of divinization reveals in man his Divine image. At the same time, divinization constitutes a full realization of the image of God. As W. Hryniewicz explains, the idea of *theosis* "means a spiritual development of man in the likeness of Christ, which takes place in the Holy Spirit. This development leads to the achievement of the true manhood."⁴ As a result of divinization, man achieves the highest degree of the ontic realization of his existence – the spiritual state. Only the divinized state of human nature, which reveals God's image within it, can lead to the affirmation of the fact that man has become a person. Within the orthodox thought, this state can be achieved here in our life, which is symbolized by the "light of Tabor". That is why the orthodox anthropology is so optimistic. It does not regard the divinization and participation in God's nature as an unachievable ideal, but rather confirms the belief in man's ability to accomplish this purpose. Seen in this light, man is not the prisoner of sin but rather, as a partner and collaborator of God, is called to the divinizing participation in the life of God already on earth.

The eternal process of the coming-to-life of the Holy Trinity, which takes place in the dynamics of God's Nothingness, implies the revelation of both God and man within it. In Berdyaev's theory, there is no original ontic separation between God and man. God does not exist "prior to" man. The births of God and man take place simultaneously in the theogenic-anthropogenic process. Thus, the existence of man constitutes an irreducible element in God's self-determination, as well as a necessary moment of co-creating the essence of the Holy Trinity life.

This dynamic vision of the Holy Trinity does not allow for the understanding of creation as a single act achieved in the eternity by God. The creation must encompass three dialectic moments of the manifestation of the creative power which correspond to the properties of each of the Three Divine Persons.

In Berdyaev's philosophy, the archetypal ideal image of creation within the Holy Trinity assumes the following form: the emanation of the Father's Divine might contained in the idea of the perfect world; the actualization of this idea in the world personified in the Son, who is the "absolute norm" for the world because it is Him who restores the ideal image of the creation; the divinization of the whole universe by the Holy Spirit, which constitutes the universal fulfilment of the idea of God-man individually actualized in the world.

The idea of God-manhood emphasizes the fact that the rule of synthetic balance between the Divine and the human element must be applied in the understanding of the relations between God and man. As Waław Hryniewicz puts it: "(...) the idea of God-manhood inherent in man aimed at overcoming both transcendence and immanentism. It aimed at exposing the partial truth present in both of them and at contributing to the revelation of the harmonic synthesis between the Divine and the human in the structure of the created reality."⁵ The question of mutual transcendence and immanence of God and man finds its definite solution in the values pertinent to the God-man being, the essential meaning of which is co-created by the non-exclusive and non-contradictory principles of divinity and manhood.

In order to maintain his thesis of God-man and God-manhood, Berdyaev must assume a critical position in regard to the ontological monism (which treats man as one of the manifestations of the life of the Divinity, i.e. as one of the transitory moments in the Divinity development), pantheism (which allows no place for human freedom and creativity), and transcendent dualism (which excludes the reconciliation of divine and human nature, and the cooperation between God's and human will). Instead, he clears up his own understanding of dualism. He namely advocates a creative Christian God-man anthropology, a position which allows for independent existence of two united natures: divine and human, as well as for the cooperation between the divine and human freedoms.

The author of the *Truth and Revelation* emphasizes the fact that cognition is an act directed toward the foundations of reality. The philosopher must first grasp the source-presence of reality, and only on the basis of such experience can he formulate judgements about the world. This type of proceeding is both subject-rooted and highly creative which is why philosophy in Berdyaev's system becomes more akin to art than to science.⁶ The existential philosopher thus criticises the perception of metaphysics as an objective science which analyses the Aristotelian notion of *Being qua Being*, and treats its substantiality in static categories.

The quest for authenticity in Berdyaev's philosophy is connected to his search for truth. The truth about life is not a concept reached by the intellect or by abstract logical reasoning. Rather, the truth reveals itself in the manifestation of the original sources of life, in which the human being takes an active part. Therefore, the recognition of truth goes hand in hand with the recognition of life, and it can be said that man cognizes truth to the extent he knows life. That is why the truth constitutes a dynamic process in which entire man must take an active part: both his spiritual side, his psyche, and his body.

The active engagement in the quest for truth corresponds to one's faith that its essence and value will eventually become revealed. This is where the religious aspect of the experience is founded, since, according to Berdyaev, God constitutes both the ultimate meaning of the existence of the world and the reason for it. On the level of the knowledge that is certain, there is no difference between the acquired philosophical wisdom and religious revelation, because God, understood not as a supernatural being but as the unquestionable value of the whole existence becomes the only standard of the acquired knowledge adequateness.

The author of *The Destiny of Man* proposes an answer to the question of the personal self-knowledge and the method guaranteeing the actualization of the authentic life by introducing the idea of God-man. David B. Richardson points out a specific aspect of Berdyaev's existentialism, viz. the fact that it becomes truly Christian owing to the assumption that man affirms his existence in the authentic way only when he becomes God-man.⁷

The authenticity of personal existence is actualized only within the image of God-man. What follows is that man's divine-human nature reveals itself fully in the area of the deepest existential experiences. These experiences are connected with the response man gives to the Divine. It would be pertinent to quote Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka in this context, who observes: "Thus to our viscera the Divine calls, and we 'respond' in our inward vision of the world, life, the existence of all thorough infinite understanding, mercy, forgiveness, generosity, love. Our vision of our universe is lifted above abysmal suffering to exalted enchantment with all the 'gifts' that nature, our Human Condition, and imagination shower upon us."⁸ The existence of God-man reveals the manner of person realization in the finite, limited, temporary, and historic world. Christ's self-knowledge and the divinization of His human nature, break with, and, to certain extent, nullify the solidity of the phenomenal world. At the same time, the optimism which follows from the certainty of the person full realization in Christ, leads to the ultimate conclusion related to the value of man and affirmation of the entire world.

In order to explain the complex relations between God and man, Berdyaev specifically goes back to the religious experience, which – according to him – is the best possible way of grasping the truth about God and man.

In Berdyaev's philosophy, the religious experience is founded upon the meeting of God with man, in which God's reality proves to be *conditio sine qua non* of the authenticity and irrefutability of this experience. In such experience, God reveals Himself as a person, as a personal love, that both requires and awaits man's response. Thus, the religious experience, according to the Russian existentialist, is of the existential-dialogical nature, it is an experience of the conscious "I – thou" relation.

The Russian existentialist assumes that intuition plays the major role in religious experience. It is owing to intuition that the cognition of God acquires its spontaneous character. Intuitive cognition transcends the purely intellectual scope because it engages those aspects of human being which are related to emotions and volition. This allows for the thesis that Berdyaev regards intuition to be the constitutive characteristic of the subject,⁹ the property which not only enables the subject to recognize and define any being, but also allows him to co-create it by means of his participation. In other words, in the intuitional act man attempts to grasp and understand the meaning of the universal, i.e. the archetypal structures of the world, by reaching the original source of all being.

The fullest kind of religious experience is the mystical experience, in which the personal "I", while maintaining its uniqueness, at the same time experiences the unmediated presence, acting, and union with God. In the philosophy of the Russian existentialist it becomes clear that the mystical experience reaches far deeper than

any discursive knowledge of God. Compared to the dynamics of religious experience present in the former, the latter turns out to be both shallow, static, and schematised. Within the mystical experience, in the meeting and dialogue between two loves, any judgements or explications prove needless.

The first step in mystical cognition, seen as the way of entering the domain of God, is to clear the idea of God from any elements borrowed from the world of phenomena. Then we waive the conviction of our knowledge of God by means of putting in doubt and negating His anthropomorphic or sociomorphic image created by the empirical ego's stereotypical thinking. Since discursive cognition turns out to be insufficient to satisfy human yearning for the full knowledge about God, man has to engage his entire being, all its aspects, in order to fully open his existence so that God can present Himself in his immense greatness. On this level of cognition, man must first master his knowledge of himself, so that through self-knowledge he can cleanse his ego and within this new acquired purity "create space" for God's acting. At this point, man realizes his unity with God gained through *theosis*. In this context, we can employ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's words to clarify Berdyaev's idea: "Only now in the apparition of the Witness in the soul, in his entire presence which affirms himself in his transnatural meaning, do we discover that our personal destiny, so much sought after, was transnatural, that the modality elaborated in our soul, was the modality of the sacred."¹⁰ The mystical cognition accepts every existential state of experiencing contradictions, inner fights, heroic spiritual battles. Each of them is in itself the emblem of the great effort of man on his path towards the full-knowledge of himself. The purified "I", that has overcome the states of existential conflicts and contradictions, gains the assurance of reaching the full union with God, Himself the ultimate aim of human pursuance and its definitive fulfilment.

Berdyaev does not regard mystical experience as a passive cognitive process. Mystical cognition, which activates the supra-consciousness, expands the limits of man's cognitive abilities. It reveals the limitless noumenal world, the original source of existence. Mystical realism, the key postulate in Berdyaev's philosophical approach to the world, foregrounds man's active existence within the world – his creative continuation of the act of co-creating the reality with God. While emphasizing the multifaceted character of human creativity and activity, the author of *Truth and Revelation* also stresses the fact that the creative power itself is gained through the mystical experience. It is in the mystical experience that infinity (which inspires man to actualize the truth about himself as God's image) opens to him the opportunity to gain the unquestionable knowledge about himself, and to divinize both himself and the world in accordance with this knowledge.

Berdyaev also applies negative theology in his description of the states of the deification of human nature, in which man becomes God. The negative theology is based upon the experience of the direct presence of God who reveals Himself within the subjective depth of person.

The object of the apophatic cognition and contemplation of the Three Persons of God is not only God Himself, whose nature cannot be expressed in any human thought, but also man. One can only experience the essence of manhood in the region of spiritual "pure existence". In apophatic theology, cognition consists in

transgressing the limited cognitive method based upon rational concepts. On the way of gaining the apophatic knowledge of God, one begins to gradually question and reject everything that is learned in a positive way through subsequent stages of cognition. Such purification of one's consciousness can lead to the direct union with God. The apophatic cognition is ultimately crowned by man's experience of Divine luminousness, i.e. the inner light of God that deificates the human nature. Yet, in the experience of God's light, the divine and human nature remain separate.

Apophatic theology, seen as "the spiritual interpretation of God's mystery", is for Berdyaev the method of man's entering the "realm of pure existentiality", both through the consciousness transformation and the acquisition of supra-consciousness. It is not until reaching this cognitive level that the revelation of God's mystery becomes possible: God who has no name in any human language.

The person is considered a fundament of the *theosis* realization. Broadly speaking, in the view of Berdyaev's philosophy the person is created by God in eternity as an idea which is to realise itself in the self-development of man: through his conscious acting in the temporary existence. Thus, the Russian thinker assumes that the person comes directly from God since the achievement of the heights of man's development presupposes the existence of something greater than himself.¹¹ In his writings, Berdyaev often relates the concept of person to the concept of God: "The personality is the image and likeness of God, and that is its sole claim to existence; it appertains to the spiritual order and reveals itself in the destiny of existence."¹²

Berdyaev's concept of God-man, i.e. of man becoming God in his personal existence, stems from the personalistic premises of Christianity. The process of the formation of a personal consciousness in man began in the Old Testament and Greek culture, and reached its final stage in Christianity. According to Berdyaev, the essence of Christianity can be summarized in its recognition of the absolute value of every human person as the image and likeness of God.

Berdyaev, a fervent advocator of personalism defends the thesis that the person in his unique existence constitutes the highest possible value as he focuses within himself the perfection of being as such. Christianity, which discovers and respects the absolute value of every person, takes for its example the figure of Christ in whom personal life reaches its absolute fulfilment. "Human being, says Berdyaev, in the word's true sense, exists only in Christ and through Christ because Christ is God-man".¹³ Taking into account the difference between image and likeness, one should notice that in Berdyaev's theory Christ has fully realized the idea of likeness understood as dynamic progress, as growing in Divine spiritual self-knowledge and in God's life, with the participation of man's freedom.¹⁴ Thus, Christ restored the possibility of being entirely like God, that is of constituting God's image and likeness.

In Berdyaev's philosophy, the person has a paradoxical nature. He has a changeless fundament – God's image that actualizes itself as likeness within the variable. Although God's image of man belongs to the world of noumenal eternity, perfection and freedom, it realizes itself in the domain of temporality and time, within the world of phenomena, ruled by the principle of necessity and specific laws. These laws determine and limit the manner of actualizing God's image.

It is vital to clearly distinguish within the philosophy of the Russian existentialist between the corporal-psychological and the spiritual man. Man as a corporal-psychological being belongs to the objectified world and, accordingly, he can easily become objectified himself, that is lose the authentic character of his being. On the other hand, the spiritual man is a person, a free subject who is radically different from psycho-physical manifestations of his objectified nature. Hence, he cannot be defined or described in empirical categories. Personal existence is deeply rooted in the spiritual world and "the spirituality stemming from the depths is the force which both creates and sustains the person in man."¹⁵

In Berdyaev's theory, the fact that man belongs to the noumenal world means that only person – thing-in-itself – exists in an authentic way and is the creator of non-objectified meanings. The personal spirit regards creative acting within the world of phenomena as his greatest duty. Through creative acting, the spirit overcomes all types of transcendental appearance, restores and reveals its true image, the source of its personal existence as a free subject.

There is a point of contact between man and God in the original indestructible image. The image is as though a common form which allows for the actualization of the contents of the fundamental God-human relationship. The perfection assumed "at the beginning" in the image of the potential state, turns out to be the task set before man, which he is obliged to realize within his temporary life, engaging all his creative powers and abilities in the process. The fulfilment of this task means the actualization of God's likeness, a pleromatic fulfilment. Only then, once man has fully realized his likeness to God, does he become a person. Man's existence as the person means that God's image and likeness present within himself become fully revealed.

The exceptionality of Berdyaev's approach towards the realization of God's image lies in the fact that in this process he includes the actualization of the universum within the person's unique life. The person is the spiritual centre where microcosm meets macrocosm in this process, the individual fate unites with the fate of the world, and the individual history with the history of the universe. In this centre, a mutual infiltration occurs which leads to the union and harmony, instead of fight with the outer, objectified nature. Berdyaev describes this state of personal integrating spiritual centre in a metaphor of the sun radiating from man: "The sun should be inside man – the centre of the universe – the man himself should be the sun of the world, around whom everything circulates."¹⁶

Although the spiritual essence cannot be expressed directly in any conceptual philosophical system, its attributes can be grasped and described. Among them Berdyaev quotes freedom, creativity, love, integrity, as well as intuitional cognition, the pursuit of knowledge and reconciliation with God's reality.

In the meaning related to human structure, the spirit is treated as the decisive factor in the authenticity of personal existence. Seen as such, the spirit does not act as impersonal pre-rule of existence or the ideal fundament of the world, but shows its concrete nature, revealing itself in the personal existence. The spirit is "both the subject and subjectivity, both freedom, and a creative act."

The spirit has the power to deificate the human nature because “through spirit man becomes a Divine image and likeness. Spirit is the Divine element in man; and through it man can ascend to the highest spheres of the Godhead.”¹⁷ Following Berdyaev’s thought we could thus say that in man who has become a spirit incarnate, “spirituality is the highest quality, a value, man’s highest achievement. Spirit is, as it were, a Divine breath, penetrating human existence and endowing it with the highest dignity, with the highest quality of existence, with an inner independence and unity.”¹⁸ The unceasing influence of the Holy Spirit on person’s life manifests itself both in the achievement of the source depth of spiritual life and in the attainment of the highest level in the development of the spiritual life. According to the author of *The Destiny of Man*, spirit and the Holy Spirit turn out to belong to the same reality, which is actualized to various degrees in various people.

The state of divinization, in which man acts by the power of the Holy Spirit, is only attainable if the spirit has succeeded in the integration of the psycho-physical dimension of existence and has achieved firm dominance over it. However, should man’s spirituality remain still hidden and not actualized, his development will stop on the level of such experience and such self-knowledge which will neither allow him the insight into the essential and immeasurable profoundness of the spirit, nor prepare him for living in accordance with the spirit’s principles. Berdyaev confirms this position when he says: “The failure to fully reveal the nature of the Holy Spirit is in Christianity a failure to fully reveal the ultimate, overwhelming profoundness of the spiritual life; it is a constraint of the spirit by the soul, it is the lack of awareness that all spiritual life, all true spiritual culture, originate in God and in the Holy Spirit.”¹⁹

Through the Holy Spirit man enters the sphere of pure spirituality. The Holy Trinity then turns out to be a symbol encompassing both God’s and man’s essence. God becomes incarnate in Christ, while through the acting of the Holy Spirit man surpasses his carnality and is incorporated in the mystery of God’s inner life.²⁰ God’s incarnation creates the opportunity for man to attain divinity. It is primarily Christ as God-man who neither diminishes nor annihilates His divinity, but rather maintains it entirely, completing and enriching it with the human element. Thus, Christ who is born in the spirit and delivers His spirit to people, elevates human nature to His own Divine-human dignity. People “are gods” by dint of Christ’s actualized archetype of the self and they can actualise this archetype themselves. Accordingly, the “Christ-transformed” people who bear the image of Christ-Anthropos within themselves, through the divinizing influence of the Holy Spirit, can reveal the fullness of the divine life in the Holy Trinity that is inexhaustible in its manifestations.

As Marek Styczyński notices, in Berdyaev’s thought Christ actualizes the spirituality which corresponds to the “everlasting man”, and by doing so, he becomes the precursor of a new spiritual humanity. The author of *The Meaning of History* explains this idea as follows: “The appearance of Christ marks the beginning of a new human species, i.e. a Christ-governed humanity, spiritual humanity, born and reborn in Christ.”²¹

As a new Adam, Christ stands in opposition to the old Adam – the man of nature. The beingness of Christ is formulated not as an abstract idea of perfection but as an attainable form of existence, which excels the way man of nature exists. Christ sets the example on how to overcome the old Adam's nature and how to reveal in his nature the spirit which has been dormant or restrained by the order of the phenomenal world. He also shows how to include the spirit in the process of reforming and divinizing the human nature. Hereby Berdyaev confirms that this type of idea of the spiritual man – unknown to the ancient world – is a specifically Christian concept.

Christ is the prototype of perfection. It is in Him that the universum finds its realization. It should be once again emphasized that this realization of the fullness of life in Berdyaev's idea of God-man is related to the idea of *theosis* – divinization – which stems from the stoic idea of all creation's participation in God's nature. Owing to Saint Athanasius the Great, this idea has become the central one within the Eastern soteriology. As the philosopher states: "Theosis makes man Divine, while at the same time preserving his human nature. Thus, instead of the human personality being annihilated, it is made in the image of God and the Divine Trinity. The personality can be thus preserved only in and through Christ."²² Through the divinization of His human nature, Christ achieves the highest level of the realization of His being – the spiritual state. The divinization of Christ's human nature does not lead to its identification with God's nature, but rather it furnishes Christ's human nature with a new quality – not present in the nature of the old Adam. John Meyendorff very aptly describes the state of divinization when he asserts that Christ's divinized human nature never forfeited its human features. Rather, these features become even more real and authentic through the contact with the divine ideal, by power of which they were created. "In Jesus Christ, Meyendorff continues, God and man are one, in Him God becomes accessible not because He replaces or eliminates the *humanum*, but rather because He actualizes and reveals humanity in its purest and most authentic form."²³

It is because Christ is also fully human, that the human nature becomes fully integrated within the life of the Holy Trinity. Man becomes God's Son when in the state of divinization of his nature he can ascertain without doubt that: "Christ does not exist outside of us, but in us, He is the Absolute Man in us, He is our participation in the Holy Trinity."²⁴

The person achieves ultimate fulfilment when man has actualized his spiritual nature, and when he fully reveals the spiritually which at the beginning of the process of self-realization remains potential and unconscious. As a result of full realization of person's spiritual depth, man's existence is from then onwards judged and looked upon from the position of pure spirituality. At this level of existence, the person, as the highest realization of the spirit's essence, "can reveal the pure and original conscience, free from objectification, and sovereign in all matters."²⁵

Berdyaev takes the heart to constitute the person's core. The notion of heart symbolizes the intangible centre of the essential spiritual unity of man who is substantially multifaceted. "The heart (...) is the seat of wisdom and the organ of the moral conscience, which is the supreme organ of all evaluation",²⁶ elucidates Berdyaev.

Theosis is actualized in life in which no radical separation between time and eternity exists. Time and eternity are not autonomous, absolute and contradictory values, but they co-exist and infiltrate each other. As Berdyaev puts it: "Eternal life is revealed in time, it may unfold itself in every instant as an eternal present. Eternal life is not a future life but life in the present, life in the depths of an instant of time. In those depths time is torn asunder. It is therefore a mistake to expect eternity in the future, in an existence beyond the grave and to look forward to death in time in order to enter into the Divine eternal life. Strictly speaking, eternity will never come in the future – in the future there can only be a bad infinity. (. . .) Eternity and eternal life come not in the future but in a moment, i.e. they are a deliverance from time, and mean ceasing to project life into time."²⁷ Berdyaev associates the concept of eternity in the first place with the perfect character of being, with the ultimate form of divinized life.

Within the context of the development of personal life, eternity is the synonym of the fullness of being together with the most intensive experiences of the authenticity of existence. It means an end to projecting life within the objectified forms of time, an end to the objectification of existence, as a result of which the spiritual sphere of existence is attained. Thus, according to Berdyaev, eternity encompasses spiritual life in its incessant and absolutely self-actualizing form. The hallmark of this fullness is the creative dynamism of spirit, which holds a decisive advantage over psychological and physical aspects of human existence and, through its power leading both these aspects to renewal and divinization, similarly to the "cosmic miracle of Christ's resurrection". This dynamism of the self-actualizing spirit leads Berdyaev to the claim that eternity is the eternal newness, eternal ecstasy of creation and dissolution of being within Divine freedom. From the perspective of personal self-realization, eternity is not just a state of happiness to come in distant future, but it rather reveals itself in every moment of the lasting itself which is experienced as the present.

Time has its source in eternity and, as such constitutes its manifestation, or, as Berdyaev puts it, its degraded form. D.B. Richardson, by discussing the meaning of time in Berdyaev's theory as epiphenomenon of eternity, paradoxically concludes that eternity is temporary. The positive value of time stems from the fact that in time there exists the potentiality to experience eternity. If this potentiality is actualized, then within the most secret depth of time the Divine image of man is revealed. That image constitutes the basis for the divinization of human nature and for his participation in God's eternity in its fullness. Man acquires this possibility thanks to the existential time. The existential time is subjective, it constitutes the immanent property of the subject, and is formed on the basis of changes, which through their dynamics decide on the form of personal existence. This category of time wholly depends on man who modifies it depending on the quality of his existence, the kind and intensiveness of experience.

As a "personal time", in which personal inner self-realization takes place, the existential time favours the realization of spirit in its source depth of eternal existence. It should be noted that only the person in their spiritual dimension can really affect

the shape of that time, and only in this dimension time can be utilized and directed according to the person's own conscious intentions.

Close connection between the existential time, in which man experiences the fullness of being, and eternity itself is rendered in the Greek concept of *kairós*. *Kairós* literally means "the point which is selfsame to the attainment of the goal", as well as "the critical point", "appropriate moment", "convenient moment". This concept implies the cooperation between God and man, human positive answer to God's call, which man gives through the full use of the possibility of self-determination presented to him within the limits of his whole life. "Convenient time" spent in appropriate way gives man the chance to attain full existence, the crowning achievement of which is *theosis* taking place in spite of the enslaving limitations of the objectified time.

In a narrower sense, *kairós* means the precise moment, the unrepeatable "while", in which human perfection actualizes itself, thereby confirming that this "thought time" regarded in a broader sense – as the whole human life – has been spent fully. The perfection reached within this one unique moment of the present is the authentically experienced fullness of divinized life which participates in eternity. In this context, Czesław S. Bartnik's statement is very apt: "(...) eternity not so much 'is' at the end of time, but shows through the inside of each moment of time, each *kairós*. The point of transformation of all time is Jesus Christ, who is 'the fullness of time and eternity' through their personal connection."²⁸ Those "convenient moments", "points selfsame to the attainment of the goal", each time saturating and fully fulfilling the present "now" with their perfect content bring closer the ultimate realization of the idea of God-manhood.

According to Berdyaev, the process of self-realization, of the achievement of the fullness of existence in which the Divine-human unity of being is revealed in all its clarity, is tantamount to redemption.

Within the Orthodox tradition, redemption is understood as the ontological transformation and renewal of human nature, its deification and initiation into the participation in God's life. In accordance with the Orthodox thought, Berdyaev does not regard redemption as a gift, a reward or exculpation by God. Primarily, he sees redemption as the achievement of the perfection of life, and as a creative transformation of human nature, which leads to divinization and rebirth of all creation. The perfection of existence is not a gift from God, but rather a task which man must face in his great effort to create himself anew, in the process of his own creative self-perfection. Thus, redemption depends to a great degree on man himself, who grows to his greatness, i.e. the greatness of personal fulfilment.

In order to be redeemed man must activate the creative aspect of his nature. The question of creativity, extensively discussed by Berdyaev, stems primarily from the position that man is the image and likeness of the Creator. As W. Hryniewicz concisely puts it: "According to Berdyaev, the essence of God's image is to be found in man's creative nature. Through creativeness man both transcends and overcomes himself, his own duality, and he becomes most similar to his Creator."²⁹

In Berdyaev's theory, becoming a person changes radically the relation of man to the act of creativity. The person in whom God has been born, is able to become a co-creator absolutely compatible with God's plan. Berdyaev calls this type of creation theurgy. "Theurgy, he writes, is man's cooperation with God. It is God-acting, God-man active creation. In theurgic creation, the tragic contrast between the object and the subject is ultimately abolished (. . .)"³⁰

In his vocation to create, the person actualizes the plans of God who expects man to consciously undertake the trouble to continue Divine act of creation. In the theological language this continuation is referred to as "the eighth day of creation". Berdyaev identifies "the eighth day of creation" with time or the eon in history, in which man cooperates with God, thereby proving that the history of Divine-human existential relationships has not been determined once and for all, but rather it reveals itself in ever new manifestations of creativity. Divine co-creation with man will not end until the world reaches its perfection, or even until this perfection is constantly present.

The field of actualization of Divine-human plan is the world of persons, things, and phenomena. The diversity of the world's nature corresponds to various possibilities of the expression of man's creative abilities. Since Divine-human synergism encompasses all the manifestations of life, Berdyaev says that in theurgy – understood as universal acting – all forms of human creativity meet. The central role of the person, confirmed in the theory of the author of *Slavery and Freedom* by his call to create, reveals itself in his active life in the world, and not in a contemplative passivity. Man's creativity takes the character of work for the benefit of others, of the whole human and cosmic community, and it manifests itself in the spiritual openness to others, the world, and all supra-personal values.

From the perspective of person's individual life, eschaton requires that man through creativity thoroughly activate his Christological nature within the "power and fame" of God's might. It means that Christ will come only to the humanity that performs Christological act of self-revelation, i.e. reveals Divine might and fame in its nature. The condition to "see Christ's visage in might and fame" is to discover in the act of creation our own "might and fame", and only then will creativity, through which the true human nature becomes manifest, become the continuation and ultimate revelation of Christ-the Absolute Man.³¹

The Absolute Man in the age of God-Manhood does not emerge under the form of self-sacrifice, but under the form of persons who transcend their own pain in creativity. In this context, "the second coming" of Christ does not refer to His special "coming", His reappearance within history, but rather the "attainment" by humanity and the world – through the universally realized idea of theosis – of Divine-human reality, of the existence of resurrected Christ, who lives "in the body" of God Himself.

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NOTES

- ¹ Cf. Fuad Nucho, *Berdyaev's Philosophy: The Existential Paradox of Freedom and Necessity* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), p. 149.
- ² Waclaw Hryniewicz, *Bóg naszej nadziei. Szkice teologiczno-ekumeniczne 1966* (Opole: Wydawnictwo św. Krzyża, 1989), p. 168.
- ³ Nicolai Berdyaev, *Existential Dialectics of the Divine and the Human* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1952), p. 138.
- ⁴ Hryniewicz, op. cit., p. 142, cf. also pp. 170, 279.
- ⁵ Ibidem, p. 167.
- ⁶ H. G. Gogochuri, one of the Russian critics of Berdyaev's thought, stresses this fact by showing that for Berdyaev philosophy constitutes a specific unity of creativity and religious faith. He claims that Berdyaev transforms philosophy into a kind of religion. Compare also H. G. Gogochuri, *K marksistskoy kritike religiozno-ekzistencialisticheskogo ponimania specifiky filosofovskogo znania (Na primerie filosofi N.A. Berdyaeva)* (Tbilisi, 1980).
- ⁷ David B. Richardson, *Berdyaev's Philosophy of History: An Existential Theory of Social Creativity and Eschatology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), p. 135.
- ⁸ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life, Book I: The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, in *Analecta Husserliana, The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research*, Vol. C (New Hampshire: Springer, 2009), p. 253.
- ⁹ In Berdyaev's theory intuition is no longer a cognitive method but turns out to be an ontic characteristic of the subject which encompasses "real religious experience", as is noted by W. A. Kuwakin in his *Kritika egzistencialisma Berdyaeva* (Moscow, 1976), p. 43.
- ¹⁰ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 239.
- ¹¹ Cf. N. Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, trans. N. Duddington (London: G. Bles, 1954), pp. 55, 248.
- ¹² Berdyaev, *Solitude and Society*, trans. George Reavey (London: G. Bles: The Centenary Press, 1938), p. 168. About man as God's image and likeness compare also: Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, op. cit., pp. 53–55, and N. Berdyaev, *Spirit and Reality*, trans. by George Reavey (London: G. Bles, 1946), p. 33.
- ¹³ Nicolai Berdyaev, *Filosofia swobodnogo ducha. Problematika i apologia christianstva* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1927–1928), Vol. II, p. 40.
- ¹⁴ It is worth remembering, though, that in Berdyaev's theory man is not only God's image and likeness, but that in his nature there is also undetermined freedom. This freedom participates in a decisive way in either the realization of the image or in the efforts conducting to its destruction. Thus, the realization of the personal being places the Divine idea of man as well as the irrational principle of meonic freedom at the point of departure. Taking into account the existence of the meonic freedom we could say that in Berdyaev's philosophy the ideal fulfilment of the person includes also a permanent victory over the destructive energy of freedom.
- ¹⁵ N. Berdyaev, *Existential Dialectics*. . . , op. cit., p. 165.
- ¹⁶ N. Berdyaev, *Smysl tvorchestva. Opyt opravdania chielovieka* (Moscow: G. A. Leman & S. I. Sacharow, 1916), p. 72.
- ¹⁷ N. Berdyaev, *Spirit and Reality*, trans. George Reavey (London: Geoffrey Bles: The Centenary Press, 1946), p. 33.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., p. 6.
- ¹⁹ N. Berdyaev, *Filosofia swobodnogo ducha. Problematika i apologia christianstva* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1927–1928), Vol. I, pp. 83–84.
- ²⁰ A.-T. Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 234.
- ²¹ N. Berdyaev, N. Berdyaev, *Filosofia swobodnogo ducha*, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 18.
- ²² N. Berdyaev, *Spirit and Reality*, op. cit., p. 149.
- ²³ Cf. John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology. Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979).
- ²⁴ N. Berdyaev, *Smysl tvorchestva*, op. cit., p. 254.
- ²⁵ N. Berdyaev, *Solitude and Society*, op. cit., p. 177.
- ²⁶ Ibidem, p. 169.
- ²⁷ N. Berdyaev, *The Destiny of Man*, op. cit., pp. 261–262.

²⁸ Czesław Stanisław Bartnik, *Chrystus jako sens historii* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Wrocławskiej Księgarni Archidiecezjalnej, 1987), p. 258.

²⁹ Hryniewicz, *Bóg naszej nadziei*, op. cit., p. 140.

³⁰ N. Berdyaev, *Smysł twórczości*, op. cit., p. 243.

³¹ Cf. *ibidem*, pp. 312–314.

HARMONIOUS BALANCE: THE ULTIMATE
PHENOMENON OF LIFE EXPERIENCE, A
CONFUCIAN ATTEMPT AND APPROACH

ABSTRACT

The concept of harmonious balance reflects the ultimate phenomenon of a dual structure operating in complementary contradiction through a cyclical progression to attain the ultimate balance of being and becoming amongst all things and events in the world. In the Chinese language, this phenomenon is written and pronounced as *zhong huo*, now abridged to one word, *zhong*. Upon the ascendancy of Confucianism as the state doctrine, as proclaimed by Emperor Wu in 136 B.C. during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–220 A.D.), it became synonymous with the identity of China, *zhong guo*, following the presentation of the yin-yang correlation by Confucian scholar, Dong, Zhongshu, long after the death of Confucius (551–479 B.C.). The reciprocity of harmonious balance can be seen in the natural world as well as the foundation of moral order. It can be seen in human dynamics as well as the cosmos. Will the Confucian appeal and recognition of the import of harmonious balance become commonplace worldwide?

HARMONIOUS BALANCE: THE FUNDAMENTAL
PRINCIPLE OF CONFUCIAN WORLD VIEW

The concept of harmonious balance reflects the ultimate phenomena of a binary or dual structure operating in complementary contradiction through cyclical progression to attain the ultimate balance of being and becoming amongst all things and events in the world. In the Chinese language, the phenomena is written and pronounced as *zhong huo*, now abridged to one word, *zhong*. It became synonymous with the identity of China, *zhong guo*, upon the ascendancy of Confucianism as the state doctrine proclaimed by Emperor Wu in 136 B.C., during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–220 A.D.), upon the presentation of the yin-yang correlation by Confucian follower, Dong, Zhongshu, long after the death of Confucius (551–479 B.C.). In actuality, *zhong* is a metaphysical rendition of harmonious balance in the Chinese language, and should not be inaccurately interpreted as Middle Kingdom or center of the Earth, nor defined as its other interpretation of china, or porcelain.

Obviously, the basic ontological assumption of a binary or dual structure of the universe derives from commonsense observation of phenomena of the world and life experience. For example, human beings rely on light to carry on daily activities. The sun rises bringing daylight and then the sun sets bringing darkness. In a sense,

the interaction of opposing phenomena of light and dark correlate with states of sleep and wakefulness operating in a continuum and reflect a harmonious balance. It serves to reveal the connectedness of past and future and passage of time. Within this premise, Indian Buddhists deny the existence of past and future, positing the only truly relevant time is the present, the here and now.

Operating in the same manner, a duality exists in human perception of our physical place and sense of location. We perceive left and right, front and back, up and down, forward and backward and in and out, among others. These characterize place and space.

In order for us to live, air is indispensable. The moment we stop having air to breathe or stop breathing, we die. Not only the act of breathing follows a binary structure of the opposing actions, inhaling and exhaling, to attain harmonious balance, but it also invokes the phenomena of the mind in its totality to harmonize the opposing functions of consciousness and unconsciousness for sustaining life. While consciousness may prompt us to seek fresh air as a manifestation of our will, the unconscious mind directs the breathing process even as we are sleeping; only through grave injury to the brain by intentional self destruction can this unconscious process be interrupted. The discovery of the phenomena of homeostasis in life deserves further enlightening.

Why are sunshine and air, for example, abundant on Earth and critical in supporting life? Science, the most reliable knowledge of human cognition, explains best the how versus the why. From the point of view of structuralism, Claude Levi Shaurr contends what makes us human is the minds' ability to reconcile those opposing phenomena in a binary structure to attain balance.

Long before Confucius, the legendary tribal chief Fu Xi is alleged to have created a symbolic representation based on this foundation. He used a solid line and an broken line (— and - -) to represent the primordial pair to imply a binary structure of the world, which subsequently evolved into the sequence of eight diagram used to calculate and predict the consequences of human action. This rendition of a broken line, representing yin, and the unbroken line, representing yang, later on became the foundation of the yin-yang duality and the Chinese written language. Even today's 0.1 digital unit can be allied with the yin-yang duality of the solid and broken line.

Following Fu Xi, King Da Yu of the Neolithic Xia Dynasty is reported in the *Book of History* (Shu Jim, Da Yu Mou: *Analects*, BK XX, Yao Yueh, Ch. 1) exhorted people to maintain a balanced approach to resolve world affairs (Yun zhi jue zhong). Later on, Confucius not only reinforced this concept of Zhong by insisting on upholding a neutral posture to keep up with the momentum of creativity (Zhi lian yong zhong) but also reinterpreted it as a timely change in order to assure survivability and durability (Qiong tung da bian) in the *Book of Changes*. In his view, change is inevitable, yet it is also necessary for existence. On an ontological basis, harmonious balance arises prior to imbalance and existence prior to change. Mencius acclaimed Confucius as a sage of change (Shen zhi shi). Too much or too little change violate the principle of Zhong, which means "just right."

In the spirit of harmony and unity, the *Doctrine of the Mean* (Zhong Yong,) purported to have been composed by Zi Si, the grandson of Confucius, to preserve the

original ideas of Confucius on the concept of Zhong, declared that “balance is the root of the world, while harmony is the universal path for all. Let the states of balance and power prevail, heaven and Earth will be placed in their order and all things will be nourished and flourish” (James Legge, translator *The Four Books*, Paragon, N.Y. 1966, p. 351). Neo-Confucian Zhu Xi rendered it as a prime text for all Chinese since the Song Dynasty (960–1271 A.D.).

Naturally, the assumption of a binary structure symbolized in the primordial pair (yin-yang) interacting in complementary contradiction to attain balance in cyclical progression envelops the nature of polarity, the phenomenon of interdependence and interpenetration within interaction. Within this process of mutual generation, the aspect of complementarity evolves in a dominant state of balance or symmetry that constitutes the being of an object or event which is identifiable, concrete or constant. Conversely, a contradictory state evolves into a dominant state of disharmony, imbalance or asymmetry which brings about a change or transformation of the object or event, which constitutes the phenomenon of becoming. In such a relationship, the maximum development of the state of complementarity is also self-limiting. The polarity of a thing or event contains within it the seed of its opposite. Neither the state of harmony nor the state of disharmony is exclusive or absolute but an approximation of infinite magnitudes and levels. The dominance of one aspect over the other does not exclude the other nor annihilate the polar interaction process altogether. Every thing or event in the Universe contains a yin-yang. It is a continuum of cyclical progression. The *Book of Changes* concluded: “complete not yet.” This process of being and becoming amongst world phenomena is self-evident. Commonsense tells us that it takes two either to balance or to disrupt the other. Neither of the primordial pair can exist alone. The phenomena of the world are ever-changing and fundamentally ever-lasting. For instance, the zenith of the sun is the beginning of its decline. In humankind, the unity of male and female leading to reproduction is the foundation upon which existence is based. In the study of science, experts are not certain why negative and positive forces exist in the world but know without this complementary yet contradictory interaction the world as we know it would cease to exist. It is difficult to contemplate the possibilities if this duality did not exist – would the world such as it is today continue to operate?

However, the implications of the non-causality and non-locality of nothingness as it evolves into the concrete world, as represented by yin-yang interaction and the neo-Confucian Taiji Diagram, make it difficult to reconcile with Newtonian physics and its laws of causality and the exclusion of the middle. When these scientific precepts are weighed against Confucian metaphysics, some posit that the emergence of modern science was hampered in China and contributed to the decline of Chinese civilization. Realistically, this criticism may have its merits. For example, China’s state examination system established by Emperor Tai Tsung Li Shimin, 627–649 A.D., during the Tang dynasty was originally hailed as a significant advancement in selecting qualified scholars to be government administrators. Some even saw it as an effective implementation of the democratization of government. Yet, in practice, this system turned into a pure memorization contest of Confucian classics, known as the eight-legs style. Questions and answers were restricted to whatever written material

was contained in the *Analecets*, *Mencius*, *Great Learning* and *Doctrine of the Mean*. Since advancement was only possible through this rigid system, all creative and innovative thinking was eliminated by the process.

Nevertheless, the world continued and continues to change. Confucius called for daily renovation as a way of life, intending it to facilitate one's adaptability to constantly changing situations. In his view, knowledge as such produced by the human mind was approximate and provisional. To know what is unknown also constituted knowledge (zhi bu zhi wei shi ye). He admonished people not to be self-righteous and self-assertive, stating "if there are three people on the street, one could be his teacher."

Naturally, change occurs. The emergence and advancement of quantum mechanics in physics not only led to the "information age" but strengthened world unity through what R.I.G. Hughes claims as "the unassailable truth that Taoist-Confucian speculation on the universe has in common with quantum mechanics" (R.I.G. Hughes, *Quantum Mechanics*, Preface, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1989). As well, the surprising parallels between the identities between the DNA reproduction sequence as addressed by Kary B. Mullis (Kary B. Mullis, "The Unusual Origin of the Polimeras Chain Reaction," *Scientific American*, April 1990, p. 58) and the hexagram progression sequence of neo-Confucian Shao Yan as practiced in the *Book of Changes*. Both processes follow seven stages ending in sixty-four units and demonstrate what Niels Bohr, the father of quantum mechanics, declares to be the principle of quantum mechanics interacting in complementary contradiction within a binary structure following a cyclical progression. Bohr was so taken with the confluence of these two fields that he adopted the Taiji Diagram as his coat of arms. Quantum mechanics revealed that our world consists of two fundamental particles, quarks and leptons. Operating in harmonious balance, their perpetual cycle sustains the being and becoming of all things and events. Each particle has a corresponding anti-particle; matter has anti-matter; and positrons have electrons, among others. Particles such as electrons never cease to spin. What gives an object its shape and definition is its spinning particles operating in a binary structure to reach a state of symmetry. Eventually, this state of symmetry is altered and objects change. This state of symmetry and asymmetry perpetually cycle in a complementary yet contradictory manner manifesting in a non-directed, experiential, moving, spinning, microscopic uncertain world (yin) operating alongside a directed, experiential, relatively stable, predictable world (yang). In daily living, the macroscopic immediately observable world takes precedence over the microscopic one. For example, we experience the land and earth around us to be flat, but quantum mechanics indicates that space is curved providing a source for gravity (Eduardo Crueron, "Adventure in Curved Space Time," *Scientific American*, Aug. 2009, pp. 38-45). At present, in dispute is the extent to which dark matter and dark energy exist in the known and unknown world. Recent concepts of super-position and super-symmetry proposed by scientists, Steven Weinberg, Dan Hooper and Gordon Kane, seem to describe the ultimate phenomena of harmonious balance and tend to convey the long-held Confucian world view using different linguistic terms. (Gordon Kane, "The Down of Physics

Beyond the Standard Model,” *Scientific American*, Sept. 2006, pp. 96.) In the same manner as Bohr’s quantum principle, Confucian Dong, Zhongshu’s thesis (*xiang fan er xiang cheng*) stated that a quantum bond or entanglement unites us all.

Since Confucius was reluctant to engage in theoretical issues and stressed actions according to what he considered as the prevailing world view to sustaining survival along with the enjoyment and fulfillment of the meaning of life, his views were based on the human beings’ existence within the nature as it was observable then. Thus, the implications taken from the principle of harmonious balance operating within human nature became a significant focus among his followers. To what extent their approaches succeeded require further inquiry.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CONFUCIAN WORLD VIEW
IN HUMAN BEHAVIOR: THE CONCEPT OF REN
AND ITS PRACTICE

In the Confucian view, the greatest attribute of heaven and earth (nature) is to provide for and nourish life (*tien di zhi da de yue sheng*); yet, the greatest enemy and predator of man is man himself. Confucius chose the concept of Ren (*jen*) as his principal focus as a way to harmonize human relations and realize the goodness in man. The profound meaning of Ren can be seen in the etymology of its Chinese character, consisting of two people.

Although Confucius was reluctant to engage in the ontological exploration of the sense of Ren, it did not deter his followers from their attempts to systematize this concept on metaphysical grounds. For example, Dong, Zhongshu standardized the criteria of Ren in terms of a correlation theory. Later, neo-Confucians searched for the self-realization of Ren through the analysis of the essence of the mind. As a result, the concept of Ren has evolved from its original more commonsense approach to ontological, psychological and anthropological renditions. Throughout, the principle of centrality (*zhong*) or harmonious balance in twofold complementary contradiction has played a critical role. This evolution of thought can be characterized in three stages: (1) Ren as the manifestations of the life process of love and reciprocity; (2) Ren as the prerequisite for evolution, the moral order and cosmic order as one; (3) Ren as the internalization and individuation of the original mind, or the creation of the universal mind.

*REN AS THE REFLECTION OF HUMANITY:
FILIAL PIETY IN RECIPROCITY*

In answer to the universal question “What is man?” Confucius proposed that the meaning of man was the man of Ren (*Ren zhi ren yi*). In his view, human beings differed little from animals except for their sense of Ren. Confucius defined Ren in many ways but the fundamental one was man’s ability to love mankind (*Ren zhi ai ren*). Yet, Confucius also recognized the duality of human nature, the emotions

of love and hate. He admonished his followers that “to love those whom men hate and to hate those whom men love is to outrage the natural feeling of man, disaster cannot fail to visit upon one who does so.” He rejected the Buddha’s approach in the *Dhammpada* to practice self-humiliation to dilute hatred nor responding with love to neutralize hate. He proposed that man love what is Ren and hate what is not Ren (Li Ren, Book IV, Ch. VI) thereby esteeming nothing above Ren and disallowing anything not Ren to effect one’s person.

Perhaps the human mind’s plasticity and capacity to reconcile and harmonize the opposite poles of emotion for the benefit of humankind are what sets us apart from other living creatures. The end result appears not just to be peaceful co-existence but the enrichment of others and ever-developing civilizations. The strongest urges humans feel appear to be centered on the two poles of life-love and death-hate but are both necessary and complementary. One state exclusive of the other is nearly impossible and would create a severe imbalance directly affecting the survival of the species. If we accept that every thing or event in this phenomenal world has a beginning and an end; all creations will perish, one’s attitude is more flexible and more able to endure the torments of disappointment and the suffering of disease and death. It is irrefutable that a negative and a positive path exist for all things.

Human survival depends on the cycle of life. Evolutionary biologists point to the significance of reproductive fitness. Organs, homeostatic mechanisms and patterns of behavior that increase reproductive fitness are selectively favored and those considered harmful or less attractive are discarded (Francis Ayada, “Teleological Explanation in Evolutionary Biology” *Philosophy of Science*, Mar. 1970, p. 8). It might have been this view of priority in reproduction that prompted Confucius to place the enduring love between parents and children above that between husband and wife. In a recognizable, experiential world procreation takes precedence over sexual liaison. A self-centered love is perceived as a sickness. The satisfaction of one’s needs, sexual and otherwise, is dependent on one’s contribution to them in a dual exchange process. Confucius presented this concept of Ren through the principle of filial piety with the practice of reciprocity as its starting point.

Zi Kung, a student of Confucius, asked “is there one word that can serve as the guiding principle for the conduct of life?” and Confucius is purported to have replied reciprocity. “Do not do to others what you would not want to be done to you” (*Analects*, Book V, Gong Ye Chang, Ch. VI). Reciprocity serves as the kernel of human relations and the foundation of humanity. Confucius further elaborated, “Desiring to establish himself, he seeks to establish others; desiring to succeed himself, he helps others; he endeavors to enlarge the lives of others to enrich himself and serve others more adequately.” Confucius counseled his followers to practice Ren one should subdue oneself to return to propriety and possibly even sacrifice oneself for the overall realization of Ren. One was expected to acquire knowledge to sustain life and realize Ren but not to use that knowledge to deprive others of their livelihood or life. And, on the most fundamental level of reciprocity and what is most commonly viewed as filial piety, one’s son should serve his father as he would expect his son to serve him.

In *Classics of Filial Piety* (Xiao Jin) three principles were set forth. The first principle called for the priority of reproduction. One must have a wife and then a son to carry on the family line. The second principle exhorted one to never disgrace the family. The third principle called on one to contribute to society. Paternity was not seen as the sole factor in establishing a bond between father and son. An exchange of ideas and support was critical to filial piety. The universality of love and affection between mother and child seems to be natural but this type of love does not subvert the guiding principles of filial piety and reciprocity.

*REN AS THE PREREQUISITE FOR EVOLUTION:
THE FIRST OR ULTIMATE CAUSE OF HUMAN
EXISTENCE, THE TOTALITY OF HUMANITY*

There is a Chinese saying that human beings are not wood and stones (*ren fei mu shi*) but a unique structure of blood and flesh (*sue ru zhi qu*) with the highest intelligence (*wan wu zhi lin*). From this universal Confucian vantage point, one can make three deductions. First, human beings are fundamentally part of nature, constituted from the most fundamental particles of the Universe, quarks and leptons. Yet, those particles are not natural elements since they have no “life” to them. Second, the vital energy which supports human life is supposedly derived from matter but it is still impossible to measure and quantify a human being’s vital energy. Is an infant’s energy solely dependent on its mother’s milk? Third, becoming aware of one’s existence in the world only is possible when one achieves a certain level of consciousness. While it may mean everything to the person, it is not measurable. Little is known about how consciousness comes to be or when it appeared in the evolutionary process.

In spite of growing exploration of cognition and scientific discoveries regarding the human brain, these advancements seem to raise more questions than provide answers. The more we know about an object, it seems, the less certain we are about it. Philosophers have been pondering these very questions over the ages as well. While scientists now feel the Big Bang theory answers questions about the origin of the universe and hence humankind, Taoists centuries ago envisioned “*hung tung*,” or primordial chaos, as the beginning. The Confucian concept of *yuan* described by Dong, *Zhongshu* during the Han period or the Buddhist concept of emptiness or the zero state also speak to the primordial beginning. The question arises as to whether the evolution of the human species was a purposeful event or merely an accident. With that said, Taoists ponder why the development of civilizations and its many benefits has not also brought with it the ability for all humankind to live in peace and harmony. One wonders whether these developments have only served to further complicate the human condition.

As scientists delve deeper into all facets of human functioning and development, absolute belief in Darwin’s theory of evolution through natural selection has been modified. Information regarding the role of RNA as well as DNA in molecular behavior has revealed its critical importance to metabolism and reproduction, hence evolution. These discoveries demonstrate that conscious-less molecules function

with a specific orientation which is purposeful rather than purposeless (Thomas R. Cech, "RNA as an Enzyme," *Scientific American*, Nov. 1986, pp. 69–73).

If constituent molecules of an organism behave with a special purposeful orientation, then, it would logically follow that the most intelligent beings known on this universe, human beings, would have some intention in their evolution. The primary goal of human evolution, perhaps, lies in its survivability in a negative sense and reproduction in a positive sense. The universal worship of reproductive organs beginning with primitive cultures is an indication of this intentionality. Parental love and devotion among most creatures is universal. Sexuality seems to be a cosmic archetypal phenomenon constituting different expressions of one continuum. Maternal instincts and the determination to give birth, even in the most adverse conditions, serves as another indication of intentionality in human evolution.

While the evolution of each individual human being may seem to be a random and purposeless process, the evolution of the human species as a whole appears to have a unique group orientation bound together by a cooperative spirit intended to accomplish a common objective. According to Xiong Zi, human beings are not only social animals but are the most powerful ones. One-to-one a human cannot match the physical strength of a lion but its creative intelligence and cooperative efforts in organizational activities allow it to control a lion. Recent research indicates that human beings are even more group oriented than primates (Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Break Down of the Bicameral Mind*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston MA, 1976, p. 127). Interestingly, a thirsty baboon does not leave its group to seek water. It is only satisfied within the patterned activity of the group. Evolutionary history reminds us that what is best for the species may differ from what is best for its component individuals (Paul W. Ewald, "The Evolution of Virulence" *Scientific American*, April 1993, p. 86).

The reason why force, particularly military force, has been decisive in shaping the course of history and human life, may be due to its nature as the most effective organizational power in the human species. Positive human relations are critical for any organization to function effectively. The essence of Ren lies in its focus on the human relationships. Organizational activities involve the capacity for human beings to fuse reason with emotion for unity in action. This harmonious cooperation among individuals is essential for effectiveness. Intellectual commitment, belief in a common goal and enthusiastic support all come together among the constituency. Neither reason nor emotion alone will suffice. Their unity and will to action through the harmonization of individuals' altruistic and egoistic impulses lead to achieving a common goal. Confucians consider this realization of harmony in human existence to be Ren.

Military force, in its ultimate sense, fulfills this purpose of Ren. Xiong Zi, an avowed Confucian follower who was rejected by other Confucians, tells of a dialogue between Chen Xiao and the reknown military theoretician, Sun Qing Zi, in power during the Warring States period (403–221 B.C.). Chen questioned Sun about why his discourses on war were based on the principles of Ren and Yi, righteousness, when Ren meant to love man and Yi meant to uphold order, while war lead to disorder, struggle and killing. Sun was said to have retorted that Chun

was ignorant because “to love man those who may injure men must be prevented from doing so, and in order to uphold order those who may lead to disorder must be restrained to prevent its occurrence. Thus, the essence of the armed forces is to suppress violence and establish order as a way of nourishing life.” Sun assured him, “If the armed forces of Ren prevailed, it will bring divine transformation to the people, just as timely rain nourishes life in happiness.”

No evidence has been found that directly shows that Confucius subscribed to Xiong’s arguments but he did not dismiss the use of force in the *Analects*, unlike Buddha. He stated that military force was essential to government (Yan Yuan, Book XII, Ch. VII) and that a ruler of Ren must “employ the upright and put aside all of the crooked” (Yan Yuan, Book XII, Ch. XXII). It is the Confucian contention that harmonious cooperation among people through a self-regulated system designed to attain a goal is derived from the belief they are all part of a hierarchy of the unitary whole, Yuan (the source of Ren) as its totality of humanity.

This totality of humanity is reflected in the etymology of the character for Chinese, tien, which incorporates the symbol of person with two lines over the head indicating that an individual naturally exists within a two person relationship.

*REN AS THE INTERNALIZATION
OR INDIVIDUATION OF THE ORIGINAL MIND:
THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSAL MIND*

Whether or not the phenomena of the mind can be analyzed without prejudice by our own mind does plague the rationality of such inquiry. Yet, in the cognitive process, there is no other way to elevate life except by elevating its ideas. It is the intuitive creativity of the mind which makes real those imagined forms or states that can or may exist for the benefit of the lives of others. In order to resolve this challenge surrounding the nature of the mind, we have discovered that this is not a hopeless situation; the world is knowable. Scientists are able to observe how the mind operates to reach approximate inferences even though they may not be exactly accurate. Our mind, as well, is most often able to accomplish our intentions.

In view of recent scientific discoveries on the phenomena of the mind, neither the Buddhist assumption of a universal mind existing unseen outside of the body nor the view of consciousness only comprised of ideals seem to hold ground. Even the prevailing contention by materialists of the existence of a mirror image of knowing is losing purchase because of the discovery that the mind does not only reflect a negative image, it does not operate in the same manner as a photocopier. As a consequence, the Confucian and neo-Confucian contention that with modification the mind, a unique attribute of the human species, has evolved from the unitary whole, or yuan, through the evolutionary process with its own unique structure and function, could be a viable alternative for the exploration of the phenomena of the mind. Cognition may be the unique manifestation of Ren, the totality of humanity (Tien da di da ren yi da). Zhu, Xi, the neo-Confucian from the Song dynasty, introduced the concept of Li (principle of reason) to explain the phenomena of the mind but insisted that it exist in Qi (the concrete energy or matter of the world). It is Zhu’s

contention that every thing or event in the universe must have a reason for its being and becoming. All Li originates from the same Li of the universe. Since human beings are part of the world, the human mind is derived from the Li of the unitary whole and exists in the human body. The assertion seems akin to that of science. In the first place, science has discovered that the basic material of the unity of human beings and nature is the same, quarks and leptons. Consciousness may depend on neuronal activities but awareness does not. The phenomenon of acupuncture analgesia still mystifies scientists but the existence of its effect has been confirmed. Secondly, despite the residual dispute regarding the classification of consciousness and unconsciousness of the mind, scientists generally have observed the fact that consciousness seems to arise from unconsciousness. Consciousness makes us aware of the self and ego, from which cognition springs. But is much of what occurs in the unconscious makes life possible because the autonomic nervous system manages all human systems fundamental to survival. Thirdly, although artificial intelligence has been developed to run computers, robotics and many types of instruments, it would not be possible without human development. The full spectrum of human cognition has not yet been replicated by computer scientists. The experience of pain and the broad array of emotions remain the privilege of the human mind.

The tremendous power of the human mind occurs on conscious and unconscious levels. It could be categorized as being managed by the autonomic nervous system and the self-conscious nervous system. Both exist within the same structure and demonstrate the mind's profound process of integration and harmonization. It seamlessly reconciles and synthesizes the complex phenomena occurring inside and outside the body both on an unconscious and conscious level. With each event a new cognitive event takes place. As we probe deeper into how things and events are perceived, or manifest themselves, we can see a common thread of contradictory phenomena, which can be categorized as primordial pairs. Quantum mechanics has revealed that the polar relationships of primordial pairs occurs even at the most fundamental level too. For instance, the mind perceives symmetric unity in asymmetric diversity, constancy in everlasting change and the finite in infinity, among others. It is the mind which resolves the contradictions of these two-fold world phenomena through coordinating unity; the outcome of which is better understanding and functionality. As perception is understood further, certain patterns of recognition and syntax appear to be genetically established in our physical makeup. It appears human beings have been endowed with certain cognitive, linguistic and inferential competencies. This constancy was highlighted by Mencius, when he described an innate ability to know or understand (*Lian zhi*) and the capacity to act (*Liang neng*) on what is right or wrong. How the link between RNA, DNA and the human mind's operations relate to the origins of the universe and evolution have yet to be fully understood.

What we have been able to ascertain is that the functions of the mind appear to have developed through a hierarchical structure from the most fundamental operations to higher level thinking and decision making, or intellect, and ultimately the integrative functions of understanding. If the mind achieves a sufficient level of organization along with the ability for focused concentration, it appears to lead

to a creative intelligence through which the highest levels of consciousness can be attained. Whether or not a collective consciousness exists is still debatable. It is generally accepted that self-awareness goes through a process of refinement and is shaped by an individual's cultural values and traditions as well as the social environment which includes peer pressure.

Human nature reveals itself through the essence of cognition as the mind processes, integrates and harmonizes the complex feedback and information set before each individual. Only through reconciliatory openness or separation from the self by elevating one's mind above extremes and self-righteousness can we attain the freedom to resolve the double-bind of subjectivity versus objectivity in the creative process. Self-awareness may be the highest function of the mind, but it is not its essence.

In the Confucian view, educability is an innate human trait which can be fully developed to attain the utmost goodness in human existence. This is the goal enunciated in *Great Learning*. In *Analects*, Confucius implied that knowledge is Ren. "How can one attain Ren if one is not knowing?" (Wei zhi yan de ren) (Kung ye Chang, Book V, Ch. 18) He expounded, "Knowing can reach Ren and thus Ren can hold on to it," (Zhi ji zhi Ren neng sho zhi) (Wei Ling Kung, Book XV, Ch. 32) In Zhu Xi's rendition, the goal of cognition is to assure the unencumbered development of one's potential for the full self-awareness of Ren (Shi ren), the Universal mind.

CONFUCIAN ATTEMPT ON FAMILY-CENTERED AND COSMOPOLITAN PRACTICES

The spirit of Zhong that permeated Chinese culture may have contributed to the shift in identity among the Chinese people and, therefore the state, from a focus on race and nationality to that of ethics, or from ethnicity to the philosophical connotations of its actions. When one describes the Chinese people as Han Chinese, it is not an anthropological marker but political and culture identification with the characteristics of the Han dynasty. The true meaning of China in the Chinese language is Zhong Guo; most accurately translated as a state based on the Confucian principle of harmonious balance rather than the geographic description of the middle kingdom or center of the Earth. The traditional Chinese society was non-litigious with the absence of a civil code, legal profession and even police. When Han emperor Wu-ti elevated Dong Zhongshu's Confucian teachings to state doctrine, a correlation between man, nature and the universe was advanced. Dong firmly supported the continued existence of other schools of thought, thus Taoism, legalism among others coexist and continue to be influential.

For a period of time, the subtleties of metaphysical contemplations about life and the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism obscured Confucianism. Yet, the mentality of Confucian Zhong eventually diluted Buddhist metaphysics. Followers liberated themselves from their sole focus on the process of life and death, or the ultimate ending of the perpetual chain of sentient existence by nihilistic absorption into Nirvana. The doctrine of "all in one, and one in all" advocated by the Tien Tai and Hua Yan

schools of Chinese Buddhism were ostensibly free from the severe polemic tensions that plagued other religions. The difficulty which proponents of Christianity encountered with the Chinese culture arose not so much from Chinese xenophobia but from the exclusivity of the practices of Christianity. For example, the celebrated case of the rites controversy among the Jesuits come to mind.

Since Confucius declined to speculate on issues such as the origin of the Universe or the origin of human beings and refrained from contemplating the supernatural phenomena of ghosts or the after life, he battled with the dictates of chance and fate. Confucians gradually shifted from their reliance on religious observation to the idea of sovereignty of the conscience through the power of the internalization of Ren as the means of salvation. For instance, a "clear conscience" is a reward in itself. This optimistic approach was derived from their faith in the rationality of human nature. In their view, rationality was a precondition of existence. Mencius described this rationality in human nature as reflective equilibrium or a normative principle prevailing both in human logic and in ethics. This faith in rationality naturally fostered a mentality of intellectual cosmopolitanism, which prevails upon the follower to recognize and acknowledge the diversity in the unity of world phenomena and to endeavor to search for this unity while preserving the diversity (Qiu tong cong yi) as a way to attain the benefits of mutual complementariness.

From the vantage of this intellectual atmosphere, they perceived that the ultimate goal of all religions was the same, to achieve the ultimate goodness of human nature (San jiao jiu liu, shu to tong gui). The practice by some to attempt to reach either an absolute idea or a classless society in which the two-fold contradictory process would cease, violated the Confucian principle of the unity in opposites. If contradiction is the root of movement, as Hegel claimed, then, the annihilation of contradiction by eliminating opposition would not succeed in ending contradiction because the world is not static. In human nature, the urge for love and the desire to prolong life as well enhance aesthetic appreciation appears universal. If human beings are part of nature, an individual should be able to act in harmony with the Universe; then, what one obeys is internally dictated by his moral conscience and not an external authority. In the past, there had been recalcitrant Confucian scholars but no Confucian missionaries. There was religious discrimination but no religious wars. Comparatively, Chinese Confucians appeared to have been less immediately dependent on religion than most other people.

Since human existence is a fundamental priority of Confucian concern, the process of reproduction and importance of its role in the structure of family life is of utmost importance to Confucian ideology. This is why the virtue of filial piety constitutes the basic Confucian tool for fulfilling Ren. In Chinese culture, the family is the main source of economic security, education, social contact, recreation and happiness as well as an organizational model. The ideal of such a social unit, in the past, was to have every generation reside in one great household with the father or a senior member of the family exercising the authority as its head. The importance placed on marriage was intended to solidify the family as an institution. Confucius declared that the Tao of a superior person begins with the relationship between husband and wife.

However, in the evolution of the human species, the reproductive process does not end with the immediate family unit but extends with greater complexity and diversity as it expands. In order to assure survival as a whole, there must be elemental rules of behavior for group activities which require obedience and the support of all the members of a given group. Under these circumstances, the fatherly role is extended to the entire group as a way to maintain the natural order and sustain life. Confucians considered this extension a necessity in order to confer the true meaning of the mandate of heaven. The ruler of a state is considered the father who discharges his heavenly responsibilities of providing for the livelihood of his people and leads them towards a moral life according to Confucian values. In the Confucian *Book of Li*, it sets forth the ideal of politics as a family-oriented welfare state:

When the great Tao prevails, the world (government) belongs to all the people. Persons virtuous and capable were selected to serve the state with sincerity emphasized and peace cultivated. People did not love only their parents nor did they treat their own children as their only children. Provisions were secured for the aged, employment was given to the able-bodied, and the means raise the young were established. People disliked seeing the natural resources underdeveloped and hated those who worked only for their own profit. . . .

Mencius reinforced the idea that the manifestation of the mandate of Heaven is through the will of the people, even though he failed to recommend free elections as a method for the peaceful transfer of political power based on general acceptance and the acquiescence of the people. Instead, the Confucians later on devised an examination system for selecting a centralized bureaucracy to perform government functions under the direction of an emperor whose power was established by military might. The emperor was viewed as the son of Heaven; while autocratic, emperors rarely claimed divine rights or advocated absolutism. In general, the examination system was administered fairly and without undue discrimination.

In such an atmosphere, cultural centrism or arrogance was unchecked. Yet, Confucius clearly defended his ideal in the sage rulers of Yao and Shun, who were not native Chinese but Yi, because his cosmopolitan doctrine allowed whomever was the most virtuous and qualified to govern China. He declared, "all are brothers within the four seas." The concepts of a nation state, citizenship, or even sovereignty were absent in past Chinese political vocabularies. Had it not been for the Confucian cosmopolitan attitude toward so-called non-Chinese, the Manchus might have become an independent political identity today. Peaceful absorption was the rule. Not one single word can be found in Confucian pronouncements which call for conquering for the sake of conquests. The fact that the Chinese did not colonize others at the height of their power was not so much because they were unable to do so but rather because they were not inclined to do so. Building the Great Wall was a defensive measure even though it was constructed during their mighty military power and the legalistic rule of the pre-Confucian Qin dynasty. The surprising Ming maritime expeditions were not motivated by colonization and even more perplexing was their sudden suspension. In the vicissitudes of Chinese history, whenever Confucianism asserted itself, the cosmopolitan tendency toward a highly civilized universal state prevailed under one ruler. Perhaps this is why the Chinese enjoyed a more prolonged

peace than the rest of the world despite the fact that prolonged peace was typically associated with inertia and stagnation.

Confucius viewed harmonious balance as the most simple concept and, therefore, easily understood and able to be put into practice. Yet, he lamented that it was also hard for man over time to hold on to properly (zhong yun zhi wei de qui zhi mingy an ren yu xiu). The reciprocity of harmonious balance can be seen in the natural world as well as the foundation for moral order. Confucianism and harmonious balance are inextricably linked to China's civilization. The tenets of Confucianism may be seen as the reason why China has the most people on Earth and have contributed to its longevity and relative stability compared to other nations. One prescient Confucian edict set forth in the 8th century B.C. that no two people with same last name could marry enforced the healthy genetic separation of its people. Yet, it also had less desirable effects. Was it responsible for the subjugation of women, discrimination against merchants, enforcing degree worship, prevailing upon families to follow only one head, allowing its people to too readily accept foreign governments without stirring up nationalist feelings, discouraging free elections through teaching the "one hundred idiots remain idiots," promoting service as the sole function of government, reinforcing the idea that the "son of Heaven was the father of the people" and their rightful ruler and leader thereby inciting socialist leanings? Does the right to revolution exist?

Harmonious balance did not exclude any world phenomena. Its binary, dual structure of yin and yang continues to resonate with today's understanding of the cosmic and moral order. One wonders what the implications are for the latest trend regarding the growing number of Colleges of Confucius (at least 280) that China is establishing both within its borders and world wide. Will the Confucian appeal and the import of harmonious balance become commonplace worldwide?

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“DANCE: WALKING AND SELF-MOVING
IN HUSSERL AND MERLEAU-PONTY”

Here I will treat a subject I first considered at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study for the “Economies of Art” conference in June 2009. At that time I examined the relationship between the texture of a dance and its dissemination (whether through performance touring or through electronic image transmission). In this study I look at the lived experience of dance as it is sensed by choreographer, dancer, and audience. In order to do this I consider works by Edmund Husserl that examine both ordinary and unusual bodily activities (self-moving, walking to the edge of Germany, bodies falling off the earth, etc.). I combine Husserl’s observations with ideas on the expressive body from Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* in order to lay the groundwork for a theory of dance texture based on specific actions within lived expression. In this trajectory the forms of choreography are never “ideal”, but always emanate from the aspirations of daily chores and daily gestures.

I will begin by examining Husserl’s discussion of the body in the chapter “The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body” in his *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book*. I then consider two short research manuscripts by Husserl. “The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism” is particularly concerned with the constitution of a world as “external” and “present” only through the actions of self-movement, and indeed it can be argued that for Husserl the presence of the world (the surrounding world) can only be constituted through self-moving. I also discuss Husserl’s “Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature” which considers that the idea of movement of the body cannot be distinguished from an understanding of the idea of space, and the perception of space has a contingent relation to a subject’s moving body. While these two research manuscripts of Husserl have been available in English with the publication of *Husserl, Shorter Works* there has been relatively little commentary on them.

What is of particular interest within these three texts to be considered is the tentative quality of Husserl’s thinking, and how he is often able to stylistically mime the physicalized activity of cognition that he is investigating. For Husserl the body in motion does not appear as an essential component of his overall philosophical program. This is one reason, as we can see in his chapter “The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body,” that the movement of the animate body is not discussed with specific focus, and is only part of Husserl’s discussion on the functioning of the body’s sensory processes. Thus, tactual, visual, and auditory descriptions both complement and intrude upon his discussion of the body’s movement in this chapter. These sensations are linked with the movement of the body, suggesting

an equivalence between them, rather than a dominance of the visual. It can be argued elsewhere that while Husserl does not discuss the movement of the body as an operative principle, the body's movement actually functions operatively within his phenomenological program.

In "The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body" Husserl writes, when lifting a thing, "I experience its weight, but at the same time I have weight-sensations localized in my Body" (153). The body is constituted doubly, having both a particular materiality, and also the sense and approach of things external to it: "warmth on the back of the hand, coldness in the feet, sensations of touch in the fingertips. I sense, extended over larger Bodily areas, the pressure and pull of my clothes" (153). The body belongs to the subject, and is a "field of localization of its sensations." The subject is an Ego that can "freely move this Body" (159).

In his manuscript, "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World External to the Organism," written in 1931, he discusses how the activity of walking is abstracted from the concept of "I am in motion in space" (248). Conversely, physical rest "is only experienced as rest through the power of those changes of appearance whereby physical movement is constituted" (249). Rest is therefore not necessarily the primary state.

Husserl defines walking:

Walking thereby receives the sense of a modification of all coexistent subjective appearances whereby now the intentionality of the appearance of things first remains preserved, as a self-constituting in the oriented things and in the change of orientation, as identical things. (250)

He then poses a particularly important question. Is the objective world constituted through "self-moving and having-moved"?

The third manuscript I will consider, "Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature," was written between May 7 and May 9, 1934. The physical act of walking, combined with the "synthesis of actual experiential fields," and combined with the idea that "I have not paced off and become acquainted with what lies in the horizon, but I know that others have become acquainted with a piece further on, then again others yet another piece" creates from the act of walking itself, as well as the comprehension of the walks of others, the "idea of Germany" (222). This idea of the traversing of the physical earth and its 'boundaries' leads not only to the idea of a nation, but to the idea of the earth itself.

This process of combining the physical activity of walking with the mental and physical apprehension of what is "further on" is important for Husserl because the idea of the earth is thus not only physical, but the earth itself, as he states several paragraphs later, is a body. For "we Copernicans" realize that "The earth is a globe-shaped body," a synthesis of my perception and that of others, a "unity of mutually connected single experiences. Yet, it is a body!" The earth as a body is an "experiential basis for all bodies." Initially the basis is not "experienced at first as body but becomes a basis-body at higher levels of constitution of the world" through experience. Where is it that motion occurs for Husserl? Husserl writes, "Motion occurs on or in the earth, away from it or off it" (223).

He then considers aspects of motion as normative. Husserl begins with hesitation, “actual or possible mobility and changeability,” then considers bodies “thrown into the air.” Husserl continues, these bodies are thrown in the air “or somewhere or other in the process of moving, I know not to where—in relation to the earth as earth-basis.” Even when motion ends there is the possibility of additional motion.

Bodies moveable in earth-space have a horizon of possible motion and if motion ends, experience nevertheless indicates in advance the possibility of further motion, perhaps simultaneously with the possibility of new causes of motion by a possible push, etc. . . . Bodies are in actual and possible motion and <there is> the possibility of always open possibility in actuality, in continuation, in change of direction, etc. (223)

We can now consider how Merleau-Ponty amplifies Husserl’s sense of the circumlocution of the body. As Merleau-Ponty writes in *Phenomenology of Perception*, “I know that objects have several facets because I could make a tour of inspection of them, and in that sense I am conscious of the world through the medium of my body” (82). There is “a certain field of action” which is “spread around me”:

I do not need to visualize external space and my own body in order to move one within the other. It is enough that they exist for me, and that they form a certain field of action spread around me. (180)

The body acts as a fulcrum for its own form as it moves toward action and the gesture. Merleau-Ponty then conjoins the gesture and the body together within activity. Gestures have in themselves the action of the body form out of which they are composed. Furthermore, that action has a rhythm,

One can see what there is in common between the gesture and its meaning, for example in the case of emotional expression and the emotions themselves: the smile, the relaxed face, gaiety of gesture really have in them the rhythm of action . . . (186)

But for Husserl the body still has a functional purpose, for example, to determine whether something is an illusion. The body must move from here to there in order to know something about here and there, and that thing, that illusion there. Merleau-Ponty’s sense of the body, on the other hand, knows itself already moving there, and thus there is no illusion over there in need of determination. What is over there is already known by my body moving there with it.

Merleau-Ponty outlines his project on motion as follows:

The project towards motion is an act, which means that it traces out the spatio-temporal distance by actually covering it. (387)

Merleau-Ponty introduces the notion of transitions:

If we want to take the phenomenon of movement seriously, we shall need to conceive a world which is not made up only of things, but which has in it also pure transitions. The something in transit which we have recognized as necessary to the constitution of a change is to be defined only in terms of the particular manner of its ‘passing’. (275)

Indeed, “movement is a fact,” Merleau-Ponty writes (277); this is a principle for Merleau-Ponty rather than a description.

In his lectures at the Sorbonne in 1957–58 Merleau-Ponty returns in more complete detail to actions of the expressive body in motion. He writes “Thus, in walking,

the gaze spontaneously re-establishes the fixed line of the horizon and it is only when one pays attention to one's perception that one sees the landscape jump." The movement of walking is "the power of organizing at each step certain unfoldings of perceptual appearances" (164).

I'd like to now tie the discussion of bodily movement in Husserl and Merleau-Ponty to some of the activities found within Western concert dance. Curiously, by observing and sensing what the body is doing at the moment of its action, both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty assume characteristics of the dancer and the choreographer. How does the dancer sense self-moving? I have not treated here the subject of Husserl and memory, but for the dancer memory is key. The dancer would like to resist mnemonic notation, yet must apply observational skills in order to have a navigational system. These self-aware observations of the dancer are able to align remnants of the memory of danced movements. The dancer's body is both a mnemonic base and a self-moving system. Indeed, the dancer's observation of her or his movement propagates additional and continuous dance making.

The choreographer also searches for a notational system, concomitant with the observational system, but is more likely to find a memory system that is extended from the bodily fabric. For the choreographer, in a similar operation to that of the philosopher of bodily action, extends the body into a writing instrument of a differing grammatical index (whether a pen, typewriter, video camera, or a student or disciple, etc.).

We can consider at another time how the Greek tragedians were making choreography within their productions and how the Greek tragedies maintained a balance between writing and movement. The question remains, how does a writing system or a dancing system changeover to its extension? Likely this occurs when the world presents itself through action, such as how the decelerating train, in the moments before it stops, allows the body to glide through the air or hop off-kilter because of the sudden lack of forethought and lack of a projected mission. Also we see how the pedestrian signal lights at the intersection pull the body from this written page. Both of these examples do not consist of signs, but of extended writing and dancing functions.

What, then, is the role of the audience? The body of the audience member is not an indexically reduced subject situated at a mediating point between other artistic subjects. The audience member has the writing and dancing extension of the dancer, and those tools as well of the choreographer, and the philosopher of movement. The texture of the dance is the place where such extensions are viable, where such extensions come together and propagate. Walking and self-moving are the basis of dance making, and therefore the basis of dance texture. The body of the audience member shares the knowledge of walking and self-moving, and this knowledge is shared within the dance texture.

The distinctions I have shown between Husserl and Merleau-Ponty are gradational, and are contained within the notions of sensation and expression. For Husserl, there may be the need to make a determination concerning an illusion "over there". This determination has a relationship to the vectors of movement. Thus the illusion could be understood by Husserl to be the audience itself. Yet Husserl's theories of

walking and self-moving suggest that the illusion is already a subset of walking and self-moving. The illusion comes about, and is contained within the walking and self-moving. This shows that for Husserl the illusion is therefore not “over there” since the walking and self-moving bring us to the place of the illusion which is then erased through the activity of getting there.

For Merleau-Ponty the expressiveness of the body clarifies that the illusion is not “over there”, but rather embellishes the quality of walking and self-moving. The illusion, allied with the body, works to destabilize the customary functionality of walking and self-moving. The illusion is a finesse of the imagination which enfolds the artfulness of the activity of moving. In this way the expressivity of walking is already a dance, and is already filled with dance texture.

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THE SONGLINES: DREAMING THE ANCESTORS
AND SUSTAINING THE WORLD
IN ABORIGINAL ART

Yet, in the East, they still preserve the once universal concept: that wandering re-establishes the original harmony which once existed between man and nature.

Bruce Chatwin, *The Songlines*¹

By spending his whole life walking and singing his Ancestor's Songline, a man eventually became the track, the Ancestor and the song.

Bruce Chatwin, *The Songlines*²

At the point when sleep has not yet come and wakefulness vanishes, being is revealed.

SHIVA

ABSTRACT

This chapter is based on the November 2009 New York University exhibit "Icons of the Desert," a selection of modern and contemporary Australian Aboriginal art from Papunya, perhaps the most significant center for such art. Issues of the ancestor realm, Dreaming, singing, and the walkabout serve as a context for discussing Aboriginal art in ritual, narrative, and artistic manifestations. Among the oldest art traditions in the world, these paintings of semi-abstract and patterned spaces can be viewed as a living connection to the mythic realm or Dreaming that presupposes the very essence of basic survival and social continuity in the present as well as the moral order and fate that continues to sustain the present. The Aboriginal artist is immersed in Dreamtime, a mythic past eliding into the present, that challenges certain Western views of consciousness and basic reality.

The first attraction to modern Australian Aboriginal art may very well be its suggestion of modern Western abstract art. Aboriginal art is filled with abstract-seeming and semi-abstract patterns of lines, dots, and geometric forms, often with patches of often bright color filling in the forms and background, suggestive of Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, and Juan Miró. Aboriginal art is, however, highly symbolic of a central theme of ritualized sacred space. If one recalls the Andrei Tarkovsky film *Nostalgia* in which a man believes he can redeem a fallen world by repeating a ritual gesture: walking slowly across a shallow indoor pool holding a lit candle, they would have a metaphor of what Aboriginal art is for the Aboriginal. It is moreover ontologically grounded. The idea of a spiritual pilgrimage to a sacred site, such as the Sufi poet Jelaluddin Rumi's tomb, in cultures worldwide or to an aesthetic site celebrated in poetry, as in the Japanese *utamakura*, combined give a good indication of what Aboriginal art is: a reference to a mythic time when the specific

subject of the painting, a ritual encounter within an actual part or parts of a landscape, was thought to have been created. The artist in a ritualized act is engaging the *illud tempus* or time of origins. The deceptive abstraction and focus on sacred typography is carried over to the modern world in Charlie Tarawa Tjungurrayi's *An Audience with the Queen* (1989) in which a Kasimir Malevich-like white space encompassing twenty concentric alternating black and white circles is bordered by various colored squares but is actually a design of the palace area where the artist met Queen Elizabeth II.³ Ronnie Tjampitjinpa's *Untitled* (2003) looks like a bull's eye target surrounded by maze-like formations but recounts an ancestor's visit to the actual site of Tjintjintjin.⁴ Likewise, Shorty Lungkarta Tjungurrayi's *Mystery Homeland* (1972) with white concentric circles on a black or maroon background in compartmentalized rectangles,⁵ Freddie Ngarmaliny Timms' *Blackfella, whitefella* (1999) where four stacked small shapes hover in a black background,⁶ or Minimini Mamarika's *Orion and the Pleiades* (1948) in which a horseshoe shape containing thirteen circles hangs above a capital "t" shape containing six radiating circles⁷ contain symbolic meaning, connected to myth or contemporary issues.

Such symbolism appears in sacred body paint,⁸ on sacred boards,⁹ as sand mosaic,¹⁰ or as totem display.¹¹ Wally Caruana, an expert on such art, offers keys to the symbolism: concentric circles "denote a site, a camp, a waterhole or a fire . . . Meandering or straight lines may indicate lightning or water courses, or . . . paths of ancestors and supernatural beings . . . U-shapes . . . represent settled people or breasts . . . arcs . . . boomerangs or wind-breaks . . . short straight lines or bars . . . spears and digging sticks . . . fields of dots . . . sparks, fire, burnt ground, clouds, rain . . ." ¹² In Clarise Nampijinpa Poulson's *Flying Ant Dreaming* (1990)¹³ the abstract-like complexity of pattern, with concentric circles, U-shapes, and squiggly lines represent a diagram of the Flying Ant ceremony taking place at a specific site. Some of the circles are termite mounds, housing a staple food for the Aboriginals, and the camps of those harvesting the food.¹⁴ The connection of the contemporary Aboriginal world and the ritualized nature of that world is called Dreaming.

The Dreaming refers to issues related to the mythic past which define the present landscape and Aboriginal rituals. The Dreaming story, ritual, associated imagery, and land upon which the primal Dreaming took place are inherited and have the equivalent of a copyright.¹⁵ Thus Peggy Napurrula Poulson, Maggie Napurrula Poulson, and Bessie Nakamarra Sims' *Possum Dreaming* (1988) incorporates the story of Possum Ancestor who created the local waterholes, the circles in a vertical line. The squiggly lines are the tracks of the nocturnal possums as well as the dance movements of the ritual associated with the Possum ancestor.¹⁶ Likewise, Uni Nampijimpa Martin and Dolly Nampijimpa Daniels' *Fire Country Dreaming* (1988) relates the Blue-Tongued Lizard Man's punishment of his sons' ritual breach by burning the landscape, such as contemporary farmers do to revitalize the earth, and was followed in the myth by a revivifying rain storm. The tracks of the participants of the Fire Dreaming ceremony move around circular icons, which could also represent the collected rain.¹⁷ The majority of the ritual Dreaming refers, according to Caruana, to the "activities and epic deeds of the supernatural beings and creator ancestors" such as the Rainbow Serpents, the Lightning Men, the Wagilag

Sisters, etc.¹⁸ These figures occur in rock painting, such as the representational one of the Lightning Men at Katherine River in the Northern Territory.¹⁹ More usually, in Dreaming ritual design and art derived from such design, the art is predominantly symbolic as to form. In Patricia Lee Napangarti's Miro-like *The Death of the Tjampitjin Fighting Man at Tjunta* (1989) an ancestral heroic battle is depicted in such form. The large inverted U-shape at the center is the hero facing off against the gathered U-shapes at the painting's bottom. The hero has brought his staff, a long brown line surrounded by white dots and sacred clan symbols, small bent brown shapes similarly surrounded by white dots, on his left and right. He had stopped for a drink at a pool, a round blue circle containing his footprints. The top represents his journey to the battle, a blue line following a drainage bed to an immense rock hole. The hole is bracketed by curved black, red, and white forms. This site is probably a ritual one as such structures seem important to ritual settings, as water is precious in the desert.²⁰ Perhaps the ancestor drew strength from a ritual setting before battle.

The epigraph attributed to the god Shiva describes the nature of altered states of consciousness. One prominent theory aligns such states in the spirituality of primal cultures with neurological patterns of mental imagery, such as dots and squiggles.²¹ Two of the means of accessing such imagery are sensory deprivation and sensory overload. The rock hole in itself and when connected to a cave represents a passage to another dimension in many primary cultures. When Aboriginals enter a cave for a ritual or dance and sing in a ritually important setting, they are entering altered states of consciousness and a socially designated spiritual consciousness sanctioned by the Dreaming. The representation of such ritual is sacred to the Aboriginal and, except for an early period in modern Aboriginal painting, non-Aboriginals are not permitted to view such a representation directly. Tim Payungka Tjapangarti's *Cave Story* (1971) and Yumpuluru Tjungurrayi's *Cave Story* (1972) depict the consciousness of experiencing the Dreaming in a cave. This consciousness experiences both the external cave (the bottom of each painting) and the interior of the cave (the top of each painting). The first may depict ritual objects, elongated lozenge forms, within the cave. The second represents a rock hole dripping water, lines of white dots, into the cave. White dots in fact dominate both paintings as outlines of objects, as paths of water, or as demarcations of objects in the landscape, thus sacralizing the paintings indirectly.²² Though three paintings are focused on a central concentric circle form, Tommy Lowry Tjapaltjarri's *Pintupi Medicine Dreaming* (1972) may be contrasted to Shorty Lungkarta Tjungurrayi's *Classic Pintupi Water Dreaming* (1972) and Old Walter Tjampitjinpa's *Rainbow and Water Story* (1972). The first painting, looking like a rudimentary Gingerbread Man surrounded by three ovals is a representation of an initiation ceremony with sexual overtones, the elongated arms and legs and the ovals representing male and female sexuality in a manner similar to the earliest cave and rock art of Paleolithic and primal societies. The other two allude to mythic water hole formation by snakes, the lines around and leading into the central concentric circle, in *Water Dreaming*, and by a lightning storm, the yellow thatch-patterned upper left corner, in *Rainbow and Water Story*. In the latter painting, the two arcs enclosing the water hole are simultaneously the rainbow and

a design associated with the Water Men ritual.²³ Dreaming accounts for the mythic origins and ritual sustaining of flora, fauna, and meteorological conditions necessary for Aboriginal existence. Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri's *Yala Dreaming* (1971) is an astounding Miró-like canvas of wild potato plants against a bright yellow background. It includes the curved forms of women harvesters and water holes, three of which are connected by footprints and identified as ritually significant by the white dots surrounding the lines between them.²⁴ Paddy Jupurrula Nelson, Paddy Japaljarri Sims, and Larry Jungarrayi Spencer's *Star Dreaming* (1985) relates to a fire ceremony celebrating the formation of the constellations. The central area of two concentric circles connected with red and black bars of various lengths seems a ritualized setting. Similar concentric circles border the left and bottom of this central space. Above are a profusion of star burst forms, the constellations that meld in the right border to sacred sites.²⁵

Bruce Chatwin tried to account for the wondrous amalgam of geography and myth in *The Songlines*, summarized in the two epigraphs from that work. His 1987 work and the overly romantic view of the walkabout Aboriginal singing the universe into continuous existence is now considered fiction. Nicholas Roeg's 1987 film *Walkabout* likewise romanticizes the Aboriginal trek as a kind of Native North American Indian vision quest done while walking rather than sitting. The recent film *Australia* also romanticizes the walkabout, now considered an Aboriginal's general need to visit relatives and so forth. Yet the gist of Chatwin's placing song and dance in a sacred typography and the intricate knowledge of nature of the young Aboriginal in Roeg's film are close to an essential understanding of the Aboriginal consciousness and its spiritualizing the world, including patterns of Aboriginal behavior. In fact, even though Aboriginals share common concepts under different names, major distinct groups, in Arnheim Land in the north, Kimberley in the north-west, Victoria in the southwest, and the central desert area surrounding Papunya, have different respective typography and their respective art reflects this difference. Amazingly, the modern art of Papunya can be dated from the year 1971 when an art teacher encouraged the Aboriginal men to paint traditional imagery on the school walls. The subsequent individual and collaborative acrylic art work at first directly expressed the most sacred aspects of Aboriginal Dreaming. Later, it was felt that such expression was not appropriate for non-Aboriginal viewing and such art was modified and even obscured for non-Aboriginals, as in fact some of their publicly viewed tribal ceremonies and sacred earthworks were. Yet a sacred aspect in the modified paintings comes through as they are reflections of Dreaming.

Thus the paintings of the desert are dominated by water holes and the sacred history associated with the holes. Wimmitiji Tjapangarti's *The Artist's Country* (1989) represents the sacred typography where the artist lives: rectangular forms that are hills, meandering lines that are creeks, and round forms that are the water holes in a Jackson Pollack-like profusion. To the upper right are zinc white bird tracks associated with the ancestral Old Woman who turned into a bird.²⁶ Accordingly, Susie Bootja Napangarti's *Kutal Soakage* (1989) is centered on a water hole understood to be the dwelling of the Rainbow Snake that produces rainstorms and lightning alluded to in the multitude of the local dotted marbled stone forms which are all

oriented to the central water hole, including serpent-like shapes.²⁷ Kaapa Mbitjana Tjampitjinpa's *Mikanji* (1971) depicts at its center the ritual Dreaming of a local water hole. The hole is bounded on the left and right by sacred poles and on the top and bottom by the primordial serpents that created the hole and bullroarers, ritual sound producing objects connected here directly to the hole. Across the bottom are ancestral kangaroo tracks, and at the extreme left and right are bands of water holes and ritual emblems.²⁸ The relationship of human sexuality and the water is evident: one produces life and one sustains life. This connection is dramatically illustrated in Uta Uta Tjangala's *Yumari* (1981) in which an ancestral male with prominent genitals runs through a landscape covered with water holes, images of which cover his body.²⁹ The ancestral male is probably the Old Man whose testicles have a life of their own and often go travelling by themselves. Long Jack Phillipus Tjakmarra's *Medicine Story* (1971) depicts this cartoonish improbability. The central cactus-like green penis is demarcated as sacred by white decorative dots. The ten red, brown, black, and white runaway testicles, perhaps on different journeys, are connected to the penis with straight red lines. The yellow, white, red, and black wavy lines are probably sperm.³⁰ Uta Uta Tjangala's *Medicine Story* (1971) repeats the central cactus-like form, here brown, connected to sixteen wandering brown and white testicles. At the bottom is a horizontal brown cucumber shape that is the Old Man lying down.³¹ Other Dreamings relate to the origin of bush food and totems. Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri's *The Honey Ant Story* (1972) alludes to the ancestors who came to earth as honey ants and later turned into men. The central roundel is the honey ant nest imposed on a ritual shield-like board. Four rows of three vertical sacred stones are to the left and right. A ritual spear extends vertically between each of the two rows of stones. On the spears may be men dancing the Honey Ant dreaming.³² Billy Stockman Tjapaltjarri's *Possum Dreaming* (1972) relates the wanderings of this mischievous totemic animal. The central wavy colored lines are the possum's main trail which is bordered by delicate going and coming possum tracks and concentric circles where the creature rested. In turn, all this is bordered on the left and right by pairs of sacred ceremonial stones.³³

In addition to the thorough encompassing of the Aboriginal world in a sacred geography, it is ontologically bound more often than not in sacred time, particularly with regard to ritual acts and ritual objects. One of the most prominent objects in both enacted ritual and ritual allusion in painting is the *tjuringa*, defined by Caruana as "sacred and secret incised boards and stones . . ."³⁴ These objects are stored in caves where ritual ceremonies are carried out. Thus Mick Namararri Tjapaltjarri's masterful *Big Cave Dreaming with Ceremonial Object* (1972) depicts the rock stratum of the cave with *tjuringa* in the largest stratum in the upper half of the painting. The lower half depicts ten men engaging in a ceremony to the right. An enormous *tjuringa* hangs from the cave in an expression of a trance state reception of its importance.³⁵ Similarly, Shorty Lungkarta Tjungurrayi's *Mystery Sand Mosaic* (1974) depicts a sacred sand painting, perhaps of a water hole entering a cave, the concentric circles in the center. Below the area are four larger-than-life *tsuringa*.³⁶ Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri's (1972) *Emu Corroboree Man* (1972) represents the Emu Dreaming ceremony. Such ceremonies include singing, dancing, and musical

accompaniment. Sacred *tjuringa* boards with clan emblems appear on the dancer's back and bracket him on all sides as do the emu and their tracks on his left and right. At the extreme bottom are two bullroarer instruments, a flattened piece of wood, often a *tjuringa*, swung by a piece of string in a horizontal circle to produce a whirring sound.³⁷ Sometimes this instrument is accompanied by clapping sticks and, rarely, the long *didgeridoo* wind instrument. Shorty Lungkarta Tjungurrayi's *Snake Dreaming at Lampintjanya* (1972) also focuses on bullroarer *tjuringa*, here accompanied by snakes and water holes, alluding to the mythic creation of the holes.³⁸

Rituals and ritual objects occur in real time but are transformed into sacred time by the allusions evidenced in specific designs and movements. The actual paint color and design and the effect of light on these produces a trance effect that is regarded as an opening of sacred time, what Caruana refers to as "visual shimmer."³⁹ He further suggests that for the Aboriginal "designs embody the power of the supernatural beings, [and] they are intended to be sensed more than viewed."⁴⁰ The effect is not unlike that approached in the artistic intentions of op art. This effect is found in any number of Aboriginal paintings without support or easily discernable support of recognizable objects through an intensive treatment of design and compression of color opposition, such as Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri's *Bushfire Spirit Dreaming at Napperby* (1972),⁴¹ where the stippling hides a central water hole and paths, perhaps streams or snakes leading to it, and Kaapa MbitjanTjampitjinpa's *A Small Snake* (1972), with similarly obscured snake tracks.⁴² Two paintings completely obscure their subjects through inclusive miniaturizing of their compact patterning: Mick Namarari Tjapaltjarri's *Tjunginpa* (1991), associated with *Bettong* (kangaroo rat) Dreaming and the creature's tracks,⁴³ and Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula's *Straightening Spears at Ilyingoungou* (1990), a depiction of spear straightening in a fire.⁴⁴ Two other paintings reflect semi-abstract forms against op art-like backgrounds: Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri's *Dreaming Story at Warlugulong* (1976), an explosion of brushfire related to an ancestral event with the black and white dots reflecting the burnt landscape,⁴⁵ and Anatjari Tjakamarra's *Yarranyanga* (1989), an ancestral allusion taking place among rock holes, a pattern of dizzying black and white concentric circles and their similarly colored connecting paths upon a variously colored stippled background, a claypan.⁴⁶ Incorporating many of the previous approaches, Anatjari Tjakamarra's *Pakarangura* (1972) surrounds a water hole and cave of concentric black, white, and red lines with four huge, intricately patterned water *tjuringa*. These forms are set against scalloped concentric semi-circles of alternating maroon and white lines suggestive of traditional Japanese depictions of waves but here probably desert effects.⁴⁷ The conjunction of water, a cave, and *tjuringa* with the optical effects reflects the ritually important impact of this Water Dreaming. It is not surprising that this painting is one of eight of the fifty featured paintings in Roger Benjamin's book *icons of the desert, Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya* that do not appear in the main text but rather in a supplement because of their especially sacred imagery.⁴⁸

The concern, accordingly, by Aboriginal artists to hide sacred imagery in their work is one aspect of the seemingly obsessive use of dot fields while those very

fields may reflect the tangible presence of the sacred. Caruana thus asserts: “Areas of dots may mask sacred designs, and they may be used to produce visually stimulating effects intended to evoke the presence of supernatural power in the earth.”⁴⁹ The Shiva epigraph suggests that true ontology is elicited in a hypnagogic state. In the Aboriginal world as seen through a ritual trance state in a Dreaming precipitated by singing, dancing, music, body paint, sacred objects and their signs, sitting in a dark cave, and so forth, another true ontology is revealed to the Aboriginal. The visual stroboscopic effect of such elements carries over to Aboriginal painting. Looking at Emily Kame Ngwarreye’s *Untitled* (1991), an infinite field of jumbled colored dots,⁵⁰ or Robert Ambrose Cole’s *Untitled* (1994), an infinite field of orderly white dots almost covering its black background,⁵¹ one gets a visual effect that may be suggestive of neurological imagery experienced in a trance state, a state that may certainly be part of the Dreaming. The fact that Aboriginal artists have been seen singing while they painted is not surprising. They were calling up the Dreamtime. The Dreaming is communion with the first beings and the ancestors through allusion in body paint, songs of the first time, dance, art, and sagas of the ancestors that define how the genders and their respective rites are arranged, how Aboriginals are connected to their landscape, to the heavens, and to their totem animals, and to the water and bush food they rely upon. Just as animism supports the worldview of Shamanism and Shinto, the Dreaming and singing orders the Aboriginal world in its tangibility and enlightens it in what is spirituality.

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NOTES

- ¹ Bruce Chatwin, *The Songlines* (London, England: Penguin, 1987), p. 178.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 179.
- ³ *Icons of the desert, Early Aboriginal Paintings from Papunya*, ed. Roger Benjamin (Ithaca, NY: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, 2009), pp. 164–165.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 172–173.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- ⁶ Wally Caruana, *Aboriginal Art* (London, England: Thames & Hudson, 1993), pp. 181–182.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- ⁸ *Icons of the desert*, op. cit., p. 35.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- ¹² *Aboriginal Art*, op. cit., p. 103.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 141.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 104.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 139.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 136–137, 139.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

- ²⁰ Ibid., pp. 158, 160.
- ²¹ David Lewis-Williams and David Pearce, *Inside the Neolithic Mind, Consciousness, Cosmos and the Realm of the Gods* (London, England: Thames & Hudson, 2005), pp. 46–55.
- ²² *icons of the desert*, op. cit., pp. 90–91, 112–113.
- ²³ Ibid., pp. 116–117, 122–123, 124–125.
- ²⁴ *Aboriginal Art*, op. cit., p. 114.
- ²⁵ Ibid., pp. 134–136.
- ²⁶ Ibid., pp. 154–156.
- ²⁷ Ibid., pp. 157–158.
- ²⁸ *icons of the desert*, op. cit., p. 84 and supplement, p. 3.
- ²⁹ Ibid., p. 34.
- ³⁰ Ibid., pp. 86–87.
- ³¹ Ibid., pp. 88–89.
- ³² Ibid., pp. 104–105.
- ³³ Ibid., pp. 102–103 and supplement, p. 7.
- ³⁴ *Aboriginal Art*, op. cit., p. 102.
- ³⁵ *icons of the desert*, op. cit., pp. 136–137.
- ³⁶ Ibid., pp. 154–155.
- ³⁷ Ibid., pp. 108–109, and supplement, pp. 10–11.
- ³⁸ Ibid., p. 58.
- ³⁹ *Aboriginal Art*, p. 60.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 60.
- ⁴¹ *icons of the desert*, op. cit., pp. 138–139.
- ⁴² Ibid., pp. 140–141.
- ⁴³ Ibid., pp. 168–169.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 43–44.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 156–157.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 166–167.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 134–135 and supplement, p. 13.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 134. The statement on the black space for each of the eight is: “For reasons of its secret/sacred imagery, this image is reproduced in the supplement only.”
- ⁴⁹ *Aboriginal Art*, op. cit., p. 116.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 152.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., p. 159.

SECTION XI
CONTEMPORARY RETRIEVING OF THE
PRINCIPLES OF THE UNIVERSAL ORDER

LOGOS AND LIFE: UNDERSTANDING
OF RHYTHM

A B S T R A C T

Human being exists in the flow of time and where there is interaction between time, space and energy there is some rhythm. Physical sciences tend to attribute to rhythm a mechanical overtone but phenomenology of life shows a rhythm in the context of logos and life. Phenomenology of life describes logos of life realizing in time, place and creative acts. Concept of creativity developed by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka is similar to concept of energy recognized by Lefebvre. It means that we can investigate the problem of meaning of rhythm at the logos and life as creative experience. Rhythms appear as cosmic, natural, psychological, cultural, social and can be described as: (1) a repetition of movements, situations, acts; (2) cyclical processes of development or decay, (3) living beings birth, growth, decline, death, (4) philosophical ideas of cyclical time and eternal recurrence. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka rhythm describes: (a) cycles, (b) pulsations, (c) circuit, (d) recurrence, (e) the swings of pendulum (analysis of literary works). Idea of eternal recurrence as cosmic/human being's rhythm mainly is developed at Nietzsche's philosophy.

The phenomenon of rhythm directly influences understanding of human life as a whole. Human being exists in the flow of time and where there is interaction between time, space and energy there is some rhythm. Physical sciences tend to attribute to rhythm a mechanical overtone but phenomenology of life shows a rhythm in the context of logos and life-world. Rhythm can be explained as a sequence of movement, changes, speed, pulsation; economists and social scientists speak about rhythm of economical periods, repetition of financial crisis, representatives of cultural and social studies – about eras, changes of civilizations, social cycles. Philosophers mainly did not include concept “rhythm” at the list of fundamental categories, only some of them have described cyclical development of cosmos, life and culture. Among them are ancient philosophers Heraclitus, Pythagorus, at 19th century – Hegel, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, among contemporary philosophers – Gaston Bachelard and Henri Lefebvre with his idea of rhythmanalysis.

Stuart Elden writes about Henri Lefebvre concept of rhythmanalysis that French philosopher recognizes – everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and energy, there is rhythm. Phenomenology of life describes logos of life realizing in time, place and creative acts. Concept of creativity developed by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka is similar to concept of energy recognized by Henri Lefebvre. It means that we can investigate the problem of meaning of rhythm at the logos and life as creative experience.

Lefebvre shows the interrelation of understandings of space and time in the comprehension of everyday life: music, the commodity, measurement, the media, political matters, city life etc.¹ Lefebvre's study includes a rhythm analyst portrait – he [or she] listens to body, calls on all senses, experiences present moments, past and future images. The human being thinks with his body in lived temporality.

The rhythm analyst has some points common with the phenomenologist – description of phenomena, body experience in the life-world and lived temporality, inner time consciousness. Analyst learns rhythms first from his personal body which serves as a metronome. The difficulty is to perceive distinct rhythms from the personal body, they can damage body existence if differ from universal natural or societal rhythms.

Rhythms appear as cosmic, natural, psychological, cultural, social. They can be described from the philosophical point of view as: (1) a repetition of movements, situations, acts; (2) cyclical processes of development or decay, (3) living beings birth, growth, decline, death, (4) ideas of cyclical time and eternal recurrence. Rhythm can be individual, particular and universal, it represents the lives of individuals or groups and appears as cosmic, natural order. Rhythms unite with one another or dis-unite creating a chaos. Unity of rhythms means polyrhythmia, disunity – eurhythmia, break of rhythm – arrhythmia.

The philosophical idea of the logos of life means recognition of the possible unity of rhythms – cosmic, natural, human and spiritual. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka recognizes the creative act as the point of contemporary phenomenological access to the human condition. It means the radical change of the classical phenomenological perspective and gives a new interpretation of man as the creator and his specific telos. Logos of life has been interpreted within the creative inwardness. Description of pure conscious mechanisms of Husserlian phenomenology has been changed to the grasp of the rules of creative effort. Phenomenology of life opens a wide horizon of explanation of cosmic forces. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka writes: “The mind is incarnate in living nature, finds in its processes and its generative forms a destiny parallel to its own. Thus arises a network of connections, which assigns its place to each phenomenon after having orchestrated all of them in the same symphony, to use the image dear to Leibniz. Living nature and fabricated nature bear the stamp of universal designs and have a role in the cosmic symphony.”² The concept of “cosmic symphony” is very characteristic for phenomenology of life – it means orientation to the harmony of cosmic and human life rhythms, to the correspondence of cosmic, natural and existential life dimensions, *symphonic* polyrhythmia.

Henri Lefebvre classifies rhythms by crossing the notion of rhythm with those of the secret and public, the external and internal:

- “(a) Secret rhythms: First, physiological rhythms, but also psychological ones (recollection and memory, said and the non-said, etc.).
- (b) Public (therefore social) rhythms: calendars, fêtes, ceremonies and celebrations; or those that one declares and those that one exhibits as *virtuality*, as expression (digestion, tiredness, etc.).

- (c) Fictional rhythms: Eloquence and verbal rhythms, but also elegance, gestures and learning processes. Those which are related to false secrets, or pseudo-dissimulations (short-, medium-, and long-term calculations and estimations). The imaginary!
- (d) Dominating-dominated rhythms: completely made up: everyday or long-lasting, in music or in speech, aiming for an effect that is beyond themselves.”³

Phenomenology of life does not emphasize classification of different rhythms but include rhythmanalysis in the creative orchestration of beingness within the Human Condition.

Phenomenology of life developed by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka characterizes reality as the objectivity of the life-world. She describes: (a) cycles, (b) pulsations, (c) circuit, (d) recurrence, (e) the swings of pendulum (analysis of literary works). Reality is governed by logic of real facts. “Its stability in the *ever-recurring cycles of life* (it is characteristic feature of rhythm, M.K.), as well as in the seemingly foreseeable future progress within each cycle and above it, is naturally assumed by us to be *grounded in unchangeable rules and laws of our existence within the world of beings and things.*”⁴

Phenomenology of life does not classify rhythms as a movement of life physiological and social process and development of inner/outer experience. Rhythm exist in life cycles, it can be described as a vital pulsation and circuit. “In fact, the innumerable acts which we perform and which carry our vital progress (for example, acts of pulsation, instinctual acts, acts of sensation, feelings, desires, volitions) and which express our vital or as it is usually said ‘animal’ phase of existential progress, and express our specifically *human circuit* of experience as well, and which begins with the entrance into play of our cognitive, valuative, aesthetic, etc. faculties – that is, our fully developed human acts – are tempered in their respective intensities by the entire circuit within which they participate.”⁵

In “Tractatus Brevis” Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka writes about the swing of the pendulum characterizing fictional rhythm.

Similar characteristic of rhythm gives Russian literary critic and philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin. He writes: “Rhythm is a value regulating internal (implicit) givenness, availability. Rhythm does not express experience, which is not well founded within it, it is not an emotive-volitional reaction to an object or meaning – it is a reaction to this reaction. . .”⁶ Culture is an expression of rhythm. If rhythm may be likened to music, culture would be its lyrics. Understanding functions according to a certain rhythm.

Phenomenology of life recognizes that human beings are organized beings and we exist in a relatively stable world and are not fragments of dissolved chaos thanks to the system of recurrent order. Rhythm belongs to the phenomenon of recurrence.

The idea of rhythm is closely connected with the metaphor of eternal recurrence. Eternal recurrence demonstrates how an originally mythological sensually concrete image has been transformed into a philosophical idea. Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the originators of this idea⁷ at a peculiar time when a trend of post-classical thinking emerged, concerning values and human life that radically altered the

contemporary cultural orientation. Nietzsche himself broke the rhythm of Western culture by his “dynamite” style of philosophizing. It is noteworthy that at such crucial periods revived cultural phenomena as cyclical time, recurrence, previously discarded as unacceptable or incomprehensible, give an impetus to human life. There appears a diffusion of mythologico-poetico-religious terminology in Nietzsche’s philosophical texts.

Alphonso Lingis interprets Nietzsche’s idea of eternal recurrence in the context of the process of culture: “For Nietzsche the problem of the possibility of a culture today is not that of whether the lessons of the creative epochs of culture can be recalled today, but whether the forces of the creative ages of culture could recur today, whether the very feelings, the very dreams, from which the cultural forms which stand issued as monuments of the great festive moments of humanity, could recur in the late-born, civilized, rationalized life of today, that is, in the philistine life produced by our civilization that answers only to the need for comfort and for security”.⁸

Idea of cycles and recurrence at the phenomenology of life is connected with the same motif – lessons of the creative experience.

The idea of eternal recurrence interprets time without beginning and end as a circle. In believing that man is experiencing each moment of his life for the first time, the human being is deceiving himself. But in reality, explains Nietzsche, man has already experienced it before and its passing is only apparent, since it will reappear in the future *ad infinitum*. Of course, it is hard to believe in the absolute recurrence of the human being’s life and of the processes taking place in the world. But it is not difficult to believe in the existence of rhythm and eternal creativity of logos of life.

However, the notion of eternal recurrence is not a simple mythological image, a fancy idea that each moment of my life (as well as that of all the other people’s) will recur again and again like a line of a song on a worn record. Eternal recurrence has nothing to do with the idea of a spoiled world. On the contrary, it is the idea of the fulfillment of the world, a peculiar symbol, a mystery incorporating deep archetypal statements concerning the circle (ring), rhythm, eternity realized in time and the value of everything that exists. Eternal recurrence symbolizes polyrhythmia as an unification of rhythms in cosmic harmony and normal human existential everydayness without catastrophe.

Nietzsche has said that if but one single moment in the world were to return then all the other moments would have to return too. This idea is not only a meditation on the flow of time and its direction. It is a strong belief in the orderliness of the world, in its changelessness and in the human potentialities for sufferings and attitudes towards them, belief in the appearance of value and its affirmation, the interconnection between a single moment and eternity, movement, changes and peace.

Recurrence as a symbol of cyclical time means ever returning of creative acts and existence of logos. In a word, it is a strong belief in the stability, value and firmness of all that exists, which manifests itself not in duration but in rhythm as reiteration and affirmation.

Friedrich Nietzsche has found a new way of affirmation that is no longer utilitarian, pragmatic or theological. The same but in alternative way has been done by the

phenomenology of life with the concept of “logos of life”. To affirm value of something does not mean to grasp its referentiality or utility. Value is not interpreted with the view of something else, or with the view of the human being. Affirmation is an end in itself, and not a performance for some reason within us. Forces are found in some sphere beneath human consciousness – in the creativity of life and especially in the human being’s creativity. Stability in the world is retained in spite of the flow of time and not irrespective of it. The idea of eternal recurrence is originally a mythological image but in the context of the present-day cultural process it can be interpreted as a content-saturated metaphor and even a philosophical idea, which demonstrates the meaningfulness of rhythm and original affirmation of values.

Eternal recurrence contains the following significant dominant moments: rhythm and affirmation of meanings, which are accompanied by cosignificant elements – figure as circle, circuit, movement as time.

Moving along a circle and forever returning to the beginning (though – to be more exact – there is no beginning or end to a circle) means moving in a steady rhythm. Ancient cultures saw the mythological unity of the human being and the Universe and expressed this unity in a sense of rhythm.

The world’s movement according to a rhythm is not alien to Latvian mythology, it finds expression in the language forms: *ritums*, *ritējums*, *aprīte*. The Latvian female name *Rīta* is rooted in Indo-European mythology. Latvian folksongs – *dainas* – tell how the contiguity of the Sun and the darkness begin revolving the eternal wheel of life.⁹ They represent the ancient mythological sense of rhythm as a basis for creativity and stability against chaos.

The most distinctive dominant feature manifested in rhythm is the circle (ring, wheel). The return to the beginning of the curve of time locks up, as it were, into a circle. That is a universal symbol of eternity in the mythology of many peoples. To ancient people the circle signified the orderliness and fulfilment of the world, a uniform rhythm, which characterized the firmness and stability of everything that existed. The circle is known as the symbol of the Universe, all the movement in the Universe proceeding in a circle.

Circle, uniform rhythm as well as a specific understanding of eternity form the frame of eternal recurrence. It would not be correct, however, to reduce the idea of eternal recurrence to these forms. Not every concept, a feeling of the world, or an idea that admits of the circular movement is identical with the concept of eternal recurrence. There might occur similarity of form, yet, not of content, because the most essential notion of eternal recurrence is obtained by posing the question: what is it that returns?

In its primordial form the idea of eternal recurrence exists in its mythologically cosmological variant. Dominating in the above is the mythological image in combination with the cosmological interpretation of the Universe. The teaching of the eternal recurrence of the Universe dates back to ancient times as manifested in the world outlook of the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus, the Pythagoreans and the Stoics.

The purpose of eternal recurrence is the affirmation of the return itself. So that the questions: What is the sense of revolving? And what is the human’s role in it?

do not apply. Rhythm exists in itself. These questions lie outside the logic of the idea on which the metaphor of recurrence is based. Antique philosophy represents the cosmocentric model of the world, in that it regards the human being as a natural part of the Universe, which picks up all the processes of the Universe and does not set himself apart as the subjective ruler of the world. The phenomenology of life developed by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka recognizes similar structure of this model: the human person as the all-embracing functional complex and the transmutation center of the logos of life. The question is only about the meaningful role of human being.

Martin Heidegger shows how the human being in the course of civilization has lost understanding of the Being (*Sein*) and changed the rhythm of all living beings. This changes the rhythm of things because they become enslaved to the human being's rhythm of civilization.

As part of the Universe the human being has no purpose outside its rhythm. Though being transient and irrelevant, human actions will command the future, since every human deed bears eternity. Therefore the affirmation of oneself in the circulation of the Universe becomes so important. Heidegger interprets it as hearing of the voice of Being. The question about purpose does not apply either because its posing is based on the logic of a different idea, which acknowledges that the evolution of the world may have an aim outside its existence.

The dominant moment of rhythm is the circle. The typical characteristic of modern culture (time, history, the uniqueness of personality, way of value affirmation and etc.) is a "straight line" and feeling of historicity. The difference between the two significant moments – the circle and the straight line – is best laid bare in the understanding of time: there is cyclic time and linear time. The mythological sense of rhythm, which is based on the cyclic understanding of time, differs from the standpoint of Christianity, which creates a new (different) sense of the world, by postulating a historic dimension, irreversibility and the linear flow of time from the past to the future.

Linear time is a potentiality of historical thinking and a system of record. Mircea Eliade in his book *Le mythe de l'éternel retour* writes that the difference between the outlook of the human being of archaic society and that of modern society brought up in the Judaic-Christian tradition lies in the feeling of an intimate link with the rhythm of the universe and seeing one's own essence closely linked up with history.¹⁰

The idea of eternal recurrence portrays the clash of the cyclic and the linear time. It is a clash between the rhythm that affirms place and the rhythm that pushes forward. The first is represented by eternity going into depth; the second finds itself in prolongation. Friedrich Nietzsche interprets historical sense as a disease of his time. But the roots of historicity are much deeper. When The New Testament came in conflict with the views of antique philosophy advocating the cyclic rotation of the world, a clash of ideas and the opposition of the different sense of the world became unavoidable. Ridiculing the cyclic view St. Augustin wrote that it looks "...as if, for example, the philosopher Plato, having taught in the school at Athens which is called Academy so, numbers of ages before, at long but certain intervals, this same Plato, and the same school, and the same disciples existed, and so also are to be

repeated during the countless cycles that are yet to be – far be it, I say, from us to believe this. For **once** (underscored by me – M. K.) Christ died for our sins; and rising from the dead, He dieth no more [. . .] And that too which follows, is, I think, appropriate enough: ‘*The wicked walk in a circle*’; not because their life is to recur by means of these circles, which these philosophers imagine, but because the path in which their false doctrine now runs is circuitous.”¹¹

The rhythm that pushes forward presupposes value affirmation between the positive and the negative values. But the cyclic rhythm appears without value distinctions, beyond good and evil.

The Russian specialist of Byzantine literature S. Averintsev writes: “If the world of Greek philosophy and Greek poetry is *cosmos*, i.e. a law-governed symmetrical spatial structure, then the world of the Bible is *olam*, i.e. a stream of time process carrying all things within itself. Inside the *cosmos* even time is given in a spatial modus: indeed, the teaching of eternal recurrence patently or latently present in all Greek conceptions of being, both mythological and philosophical, robs time of its inherent characteristic, namely its irreversibility, and lends it symmetry, which is only conceivable of space. Inside the *olam* even space is given in the mode of time-dynamics as a receptacle for irreversible events.”¹²

Time connected with eternal return is spatial, i.e. spatially structured in the form of a circle obeying the principle of symmetry. The linear time, in its turn, does not allow events to recur. In this respect St. Augustine’s statement is excellent: “Christ died but once”. And that is all there is to it. The cultural paradigm has undergone a change from *always* to *but once*. Now the testimony of value is in singularity. A special place is assigned to individuality, to the unique, peculiar, matchless. The idea of personality as a unique, singular and deeply individual being, strictly speaking, is only possible in the paradigm of contemporary rhythm of life, for a personality is rooted in its history.

Man’s uniquely life process as man’s self-interpretative individualization describes phenomenology of life. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka writes about self individualization: “It is the element of constructive differentiation from life-conditions while transforming them into *his conditions* [human being’s, M.K.] of the life-world.”¹³

The teaching of logos of life, creativity, individualization and rhythm acquires a new dimension in phenomenological philosophy. It is no longer the ancient cosmological idea, but a notion based on the phenomenology of creativity, on the hermeneutical understanding of cosmic life. Thus, a new interpretation of the idea is conceived – one that while retaining the features of an ancient understanding of logos – the moral sense of life –, emphasizes to a much greater extent the problems of subjectivity, morality, values and sense as against the problems of cosmologically by neutral rhythm. For phenomenology of life to believe in the logos of life, is to believe, that all creative and moral possibilities, what were once possible in humanity are still valid and in force in each individual, and at each moment of history.

In the context of modern civilization the idea of creative individualization resounds in the form of an appeal to become part and parcel of the life-functioning of the world, to appreciate the importance of the moment and not to exaggerate the

role of history in the formation of the human being's life. It urges to remember the stability and order of the world which is not at all the making of human will. We see the horror of individual existence and yet we do not despair. The consolation cuts us off from the sphere of the changing phenomena. The struggle, sufferings, extinction, moral sense seem necessary now in the endless variety of forms resulting from life. Notwithstanding the fear and compassion we are all happy to be alive, yet not as subjective individuals but as everything alive with which we are inseparably linked.

The rhythm of creative process is a phenomenon uniting the world. It is a borderline state, which most often arises when culture is dissatisfied with pluralism, inner chaos, when the world is too divided and culture has become relative. The road from pluralism to monism is well known in the history of the world. One of the main questions of philosophy arising when the world stands at a crossroads of pluralism, disharmony, is how to substantiate the value and existence of separate individual things. One of the ways is to attribute value to things themselves; the second is to attribute value to them within the entirety of the world which affirms itself returning or locking itself out of the relative flow of time and including them into the development of logos of life. The individual being is not senseless. Namely, in the individual it is not the abstract form of humanity, but all the vital forces of all individuals that keep returning.

The anthropological line, which characterizes the idea of eternal recurrence, is described in Nietzsche's work *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*. Nietzsche writes that the past and the future is the same, namely, it is something that in its obvious variety is typically uniform, and representing a constant return of unchangeable types it is essentially an image of eternally equal importance and changeless value. "If you are to venture to interpret the past you can do so only out of the fullest exertion of the vigour of the present: only when you put forth your noblest qualities in all their strength will you divine what is worth knowing and preserving in the past. [...] When the past speaks it always speaks as an oracle: only if you are an architect of the future and know the present will you understand it."¹⁴

That is the sphere where we can talk of rhythm – the world of values, sense and meanings. Meanings in the world of the human being exist only insofar as they are continuously affirmed anew. Without eternal recurrence human life is impossible. That is the eternal love, which returns from generation to generation, that is the eternal recurrence of likes and dislikes, of friendship and hate as long as there is human companionship. Thoughts, ideas, meanings return when they are thought out and comprehended anew. The values common to all mankind, a stable world order and a meaningful life cannot exist without it. Its precondition is rhythm characterized by stability. When the human being living in a world has detached him from the order of the cosmos, quite a specific problem arises as to how should the human world be put in order. The rhythm plays the role of a regulator then, for it provides an appraisal of every moment one has lived through, every action and every thought. The moral inherent in the phenomenon of rhythm appears to be even more ruthless than any other rigoristic moral. For phenomenology of life not the notion of being functions as a principle which sustains what there is. The main principle is

“beingness”, which means the principle of individualization and through which as a vehicle, life expands in its rhythm.

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NOTES

- ¹ Stuart Elden, *Rhythmoanalysis: an Introduction to the Understanding of Rhythms*, in: Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmoanalysis. Space, time and everyday life*. (London, New York: Continuum, 2004), p. vii.
- ² Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life: Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, in: *Analecta Husserliana* (Kluwer, 1988), Vol. XXIV, p. 81.
- ³ Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmoanalysis. Space, time and everyday life*. (London, New York: Continuum, 2004), p. 18.
- ⁴ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life: Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, in: *Analecta Husserliana* (Kluwer, 1988), Vol. XXIV, p. 307.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 416.
- ⁶ Михаил Бахтин, *Эстетика словесного творчества* (Москва, 1979), с. 110.
- ⁷ Joachim Köhler in his book *Who was Friedrich Nietzsche? Thoughts in a Centenary Year*. (Bonn: Inter Nationes, 2000) comments that Nietzsche’s idea on eternal recurrence appeared as his hallucination figure, when he turned to opium. Such a bizarre notion is well known in the spheres of hallucination and epileptic attacks. But such an explanation of the genesis of the idea, to my mind, does not mean that the idea of eternal recurrence has no philosophical sense.
- ⁸ Alphonso Lingis, *Mastery in Eternal Recurrence*, in: *Analecta Husserliana* (D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1986), Vol. XXI, p. 93.
- ⁹ See: Vaira Vikis Freiberga (ed.), *Linguistics and Poetics of Latvian Folk Songs*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1989).
- ¹⁰ Mircea Eliade, *Le mythe de l’éternel retour*. (Éditions Gallimard, 1969).
- ¹¹ Saint Augustin, *The City of God*. (New York, 1950), Вк. XII, 13.
- ¹² Сергей Аверинцев, “Порядок космоса и порядок истории в мировоззрении раннего средневековья», *Античность и Византия* (Москва, 1975), с. 269–270.
- ¹³ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life: Creative Experience and the Critique of Reason*, in: *Analecta Husserliana* (Kluwer, 1988), Vol. XXIV, p. 399.
- ¹⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 94.

LIFE POWERFUL FORCE BETWEEN
VIRTUALITY AND ENACTMENT

A B S T R A C T

The chapter discusses the *peculiarity* and the *continuity* of Tymieniecka's phenomenology of life and philosophical enterprise, in relation to the renovation of the ancient concept of *logos spermatikos*, seminal reason. The theme is introduced by focusing on the central interrogative issue of philosophy as inquiry about life and its developmental features and conditions. Concepts, such as force and energy, receive a new relevancy in phenomenology of life, according to the demanding attempt to grasp the way how life develops itself and how it generates different living beings and their own unfolding.

W O N D E R A N D C L A S S I F I C A T I O N

A main problem lies under the whole human philosophical enterprise, as desiderative tension for knowledge: to uncover the veil of error, doubt, delusion that is always beyond human experience. The approach to reality, thus, whereas on the one hand is originally made possible by experience (which attests directly, even if not without already fallacious mediations, existence and the many characteristics of surrounding world), on the other hand it invokes the enterprise of the cognitive, analytical, transcendental peculiar ability of human thought. There are two in some way *a-symmetrical* poles, then, in the human cognitive attempt: *reality* itself, and *thought*, which tries to shape, reflect, narrate and penetrate reality, in turn grasped as a nucleus of beingness which is paradoxically "always-there", around us (but also inside us or physically far from us), still again out of reach for us and, nevertheless, "in sight". There is, so to say (continuing mentioning some ideas that have been at length assumed in the philosophical *koiné* of all times, despite the opinion of those who think that the philosophical thought could be *weakly* exercised), a continuous dialogue, as perennial challenge of human thought to reality, of which thought claims the authentic view, the unambiguous comprehension, the "embodiment" in his own "glance". But in this dialogue a problematic element appears soon. In fact, where is reality, or where experience shows that reality would be likely to be, man realizes that there was already something "behind", which does not appear immediately or plainly, which does not reveal itself in that "presumed" reality, and which is able to invalidate, falsify its pretension of completeness, immediacy, simplicity.

We come in this way to the birth-point of a most radical conceptual couple of the philosophical thought: reality/appearance, which is correspondent, even

though not coincident, to the couple truth/illusion: we can see that, typically in the non-coincidence between these two conceptual couples, lies the *proprium* of phenomenology, as well as its novelty as a philosophical methodology and as a discipline of reasoning. But, at the same time, reality, as “thought” and “said” (*logos*), establishes itself as field that presents a gap in relation to its wrong, distorted mirroring: the “said”, therefore, becomes the genetic field of appearance, of appearance intended as illusion and – let us recall Plato here – the misleading and deceptive (or, at least, incorrect) opinion (*doxa*). In this sense, at the birth moment of the inquiring thought (the philosophical thought in particular), reality is, no more, not only an experience which is in itself meaningful, but also an image to which the interrogating subject can ask for the credentials for exhibiting itself as truth or, on the opposite case, as illusion. Nietzsche, then, posed himself rightly in the core of this problematic connection when, in his criticism of “truth” and in his appreciation of *perspective*, he saw that reality, originally connected and incorporated to the living as such – that is, as *alive* and thus self-perceiving – becomes illusion as soon as it is established as *truth*, or, better, as soon as a representation of it is crystallised and identified with a supposed *true* reality. In simpler words, and even before that Nietzsche underlined it with strong emphasis, truth hides itself as such when an image of reality is declared as an unequivocal and faithful representation of reality.

Here we can understand why the theme of mutation and that of cause have become so crucial: every image of reality, while declaring itself authentic, falsifies itself, not being able to bear the evidence of its stability: the focus on the gap between reality and illusion, in this regard, recalls and requires, as a complementary and unavoidable theme, to focus on the great problem of mutation and becoming.

On this second level of reflection, however, the gap reality/illusion appears once more, even if provided with a dynamic connotation. We find that, maybe, falsification is not inherent really to the representative procedure itself, but rather to the constantly dynamical nature of what is, in any case, a cause of experience, of the experience that witnesses, to man, mutation, variation, mutability, ageing. Using a synthetic term to represent the passage between these two phases (not necessarily put in succession) of the philosophical attempt, we could say that, where the analytical level stops to the verification (or not) of representation, there is a “spirit of *classification*” acting, whilst, where one wants to discover the reality of mutation itself, there is a “spirit of *wonder*”, as a key feeling and thinking attitude at the birth-point of philosophy and even of science. Now it seems to us that phenomenology could be said a crowning synthesis of both those two attitudes of “classification” and “wonder”, generating *method*. Phenomenology, in fact, does not conceal the representative aspect of experience and thought, but at the same time, through the Husserlian discovery of intentionality, it wants to be faithful to the experienced, lived reality, embodied in the sentient and thinking being itself, in the interrogating living being, namely the human being.

In phenomenology, classification and wonder, now fused, or, rather, put in an ever-fusing dipole, receive a fecund improving, because thought there becomes effectively an “interrogating glance”, which is not impersonal, simply ordering

juxtaposition of the subjective “lens”, but rather its reality in its “being-shown” and self-sharing, still remaining a partial and perfectible glance, however not separated from the universal whole. And the reason for this resides rightly in the fact that reality is not negated by phenomenology in its appearance, an appearance which is fatally consigned to a destiny of negation; but that it is approached as phenomenon which shows, even if partially (and it could not be otherwise), its own credentials of reality. In the words of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka: “Phenomenology remains a path of inquiry focused on the very *sense* of phenomena, on what makes them “phenomena” for the acting and cognizing subject, what maintains articulation and order amid the fleeting, ungraspable appearances in which the real manifests itself and so grounds our vital, psychic, and mental existence”.¹ In this way, phenomenology makes room, at the same time, both to the exigency of ordering, experiential and categorical² rigour, and to the vital necessity of fidelity to a reality that, if true, is “real”, real in the infinitely fecund manner of life.

From this original attitude and novelty of the phenomenological approach – that here we cannot specify, limiting ourselves to refer to its father Husserl – a fundamental consequence, or better an interesting opportunity for thought comes out. This opportunity has been intellectually caught and developed by the whole philosophical work of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka: we should underline the originality of her reflection together with its full adherence to the instituting question of perennial Philosophy, through a new elucidation of the nuanced implications of the couples reality/appearance and truth/illusion, balanced on the new barycentre of *life*. But she grasps a further element in those couples, by characterising logos both as a feature, organizational principle of vital becoming, and as an essentially interrogative logos.

APPEARANCE OF LIFE AND BEYOND

In Tymieniecka’s fully phenomenological attempt, the dichotomy reality/appearance is stepped over (but not ignored or misunderstood) since it overpasses the level of an inquiry that is conceived as mere analysis and mirroring; rather, it seeks to “penetrate” reality in its making-itself as such, as, also, appearance and apparition, that is to say as “phenomenon”: “The logos that humanity has been pondering for centuries and which we cannot fail to encounter all over again now through phenomenology we may seek to pursue either in full light or by unearthing it from thus far inaccessible locations as it radiates through the entire sequence of life and beingness-in-becoming pointing to further areas through the relevancies of each segment”.³

However, Tymieniecka gives one more, new hint to phenomenology, a contribution to its further implementation rightly in the direction of the continuation and perfecting of its original characteristic of synthesis and conjunction between the inquiring rigorous approach and the intuitive, penetrating attitude. And this synthesis actually manifests itself as the true counterbalance to the rationalistic drift of some transcendental philosophy. Essentially, this element consists in the inquiring focus centred on life: this one is not assumed simply as object of a sectorial discipline (like

in the case, for example, of biology), but almost as a counter-concept in relation to that of reality.

Life is reality not just in the sense of a “real” that man can find already-produced, in a sort of still-nature at hand, ready-to-be-seen; it is, rather, the *source* of an organised reality which is full of powers of change, a source of dynamisms, qualities, relations, energies, constructive and perennial virtualities and “voices” that ontologically “call” the response (a constructive, active, fecund or, differently, disruptive response) of other living beings. Life is phenomenon of genesis, production, growth, vitality, creativity of the real, since it is dynamism, process, becoming: thus, it is not just phenomenon or appearance, but source and generating process of appearance and phenomenon itself (not remaining simply noumenon, so to say). In this regard, life, as a concept, contains much *more* than the simpler – and, let us say, opaque, unqualified, “grey”, *abstract* – concept of reality.

Even from this observation we could grasp the phenomenological continuity of such a philosophical approach with questions that (not without an extreme simplification, here needed for brevity) we were mentioning before: phenomenology of life is conceived as able to restore a reality that is *true* (real) inasmuch as – and because – it is process of its making itself a generative, creative and at the same time disruptive, transformation process: “*Life is the conveyor of beingness*”.⁴

The gravity centre, put on life, of this new phenomenology, overpasses then the focus of a philosophy centred on reality and on the idea of a rational mirroring of reality through the analytical lens of human intelligence. In this approach, life, in fact, is still reality, but it is not reduced to the traditional notion of reality: the idea of life makes up for classical aspects of philosophy, as inquiry oriented to causes, to the Principle (*arché*), to the innovative and welding element of multiplicity that is attested by experience; nonetheless, it gives to it new and determinant features. The fundamental idea that the focus on life contains is that the principle and *ratio*, the sense of reality as phenomenon is creation of itself as life, as generating dynamism of beings that, in turn, are creative participants in a becoming, in a sensed becoming constructively oriented. Life, in other words, is not static reality, so that an image, a representation of it, an enunciation declaring a state of affairs could adequate it in order to remain truthful intellectual experience; on the contrary, it is creative and fecund process and interaction of aspects, potentialities, realizations, but above all irreplaceable beings. To that corresponds the idea that logos is not merely a formal principle, but – we could say – virtual, ordering and self-conferring material, temporal, operative devices that are necessary for its own deployment in any form of life, what Tymieniecka includes in the concept of “individualising beingness-in-progress”.⁵

From there the dynamic characterisation of logos follows, in the sense of an evaluation of its original connection with life: “Decisively, the nature of this course has been envisaged principally in terms of its formative, constructive progress, which implies forces and energies at work: it implies a self-prompting, that is, inner, dynamism”.⁶ But dynamism, in this conception, is not synonym of vitalism or chaotic aggregation of energetic drives: in fact, we are speaking about “logos”, this is about an ordering principle: “The force of the Logos manifests itself in the logos’

effusion of life. It acquires “shape” in its performance and is then intuited through that performance, from the inside, as it were. First of all, logos, the reason of reasons and the sense of everything, is not simply a set of principles articulating “matter”. It is above all a force, a *driving force* that through its modalities is accountable not only for the incipient instance of originating life in its self-individualizing process but also for the pre-origination, pre-ontopoietic ground and for the subsequent striving toward the abyss of the spirit. Life, as the ontopoietic progress of the logos’ drive in the self-individualization of beingness, emerges then as a manifestation of the ontopoietic process”.⁷

Here is at stake a different vision of mutation and becoming, that tends to assume in deep the sense of reality as *evolution*, thus approaching in an interesting way some acquisitions of the biological and cosmological sciences. Moreover, it appears fecund just as a key to overpass the rationalist cage of thought, by thinking reality and beingness in the key of an entelechial order inside life’s unfolding, which lets the “new philosopher” interpret the variety, fantasy, variability of the forms of life in the balanced view-point of both the particularity of concrete vital realisations and devices, and the general design underlying to the passage from virtuality to enactment. Tymieniecka highlights then the presence of a necessary spatio-temporal structure of life’s becoming, and an order in which she rehabilitates the precious ancient concept of *entelechy*, rightly to explain the manifestation of order, enactment of virtualities, together with the selection of life’s strategies and possibilities. But this is “order” not only in the sense of a classification, of an arrangement principle of already-made elements, beings or matters, but in the sense of a constructive order, capable of establishing hierarchy, order, arrangement in the (quite different) sense of becoming and growth.

The constructive design of the entelechy is not a mere formal blueprint. It is above all a set of selective virtualities – forces and energies endowed with propensities toward intergenerative fusing as well as toward entering into these fusions with appropriate elements such that a pattern of growth will be spontaneously outlined by their release. It is from this time-conditioned constructive project that spring forth constructive means, constructive postulates: inner/outer, and present/past/future. In other words, it is the inner postulates of growth that brings forth what we call the spatiotemporal schema of life.⁸

SEEDS OF LOGOS

The decisive point, then, in the phenomenology of life by Tymieniecka, is the new relation which is assumed and acknowledged between the creative principle of the fecund dynamism of life, its prompting and creative drive, and life itself as appearing reality, that is to say, at the same time, as object of the phenomenological “glance”, and source of becoming manifestation itself: a manifestation which is both gnoseological and possibly representative on the one hand, and effective deployment and continuous genesis of reality on the other hand.

In fact, logos is conceived, in this perspective, not as abstract principle of knowledge or of subjective cognitive activity, but as concrete, effective, consistent “constructive track”, “drive” that “carries the entirety of the givenness

discovered”⁹ on the road of life manifestations and of a wonderful order: the two essential features of “logos of life” are, in the words of Tymieniecka, the twofold fact that “it [the logos] harnesses the universal becoming into the genesis of self-individualizing beingness as it both participates in the universal flux of life within the world, constituting it, and simultaneously makes it present to itself in innumerable perspectives”.¹⁰

This means that logos is essentially “logos of life”, first, in the sense that it provides life with its constructive recognisable sense and beings’ and beingnesses’ differentiation, interaction, variation, and so on, and, secondly, because it makes life capable of recognition and “vision” to itself, to at least some of its forms (and eminently, the human one). In this sense, Tymieniecka writes about an onto-poietical level of life – a level of life in which life assumes its creative and, at the same time, structured multiplicity –, on which also phenomenology, as interrogation of logos about logos (in life), becomes re-conjunction with life itself, by means of its inquiring and “re-cognitive” attitude. In this sense, Tymieniecka argues that life, both as onto-poietic and logoic reality (and now understood in its being manifestation of logos), can be said the really ultimate “being the yield of the very last reduction”.¹¹

In this perspective, that, as we can see, recuperates and renovates the philosophical and specifically phenomenological enterprise, one aspect in particular can be noted and analysed of life. It deals with the peculiar real (or, better, generative) and displaying (from the point of view of thought) dual characteristic of life. Tymieniecka, in other words, poses herself not *over* thought, nor *on this side*, but rightly on the bridge that originally connects the inquiring subject to the vital reality, from which it yet comes and in which still remains immersed, embodied. This aspect, really crucial from a gnoseological point of view, can be grasped in its peculiarity (and we should observe that it is at the basis of any reading of Tymieniecka), noting that it establishes the centrality of logos not beyond, over, or “at the margin” of life, but in its very heart, at the heart of its deployment *as* life: “Life as life, life in its emergence, let us emphasize again, is not merely an articulated line of construction, but on the contrary this rationale of the self-individualization is “animated”.¹²

We thus jump to the question of the link between logos and life, or of the way in which logos should generate itself from life and then we proceed assuming that it can be found in life because life itself is logos. But we should be careful not to confuse this affirmation with a re-presentation of a quasi-Hegelian position. Of course, we must observe that logos does not coincide here with reason, as an abstractedly intended idea. On the contrary, it means that life is dynamism manifesting logos, principle, orientation, dynamic creativity. It means that, in the heart of reality, even of the inorganic one (which does not mean a field excluded from life), there is a kernel which produces itself as logos and “logoic force”.

One more peculiarity of phenomenology of life, conceived as interrogative movement of thought and as follower of life’s own genetic movement, consists in the *constructive* connotation of logos, what let us approach the peculiar content of the conceptual renovation obtained in the main concept of “seminal logos”: “It is not

though anticipating its furthest constructive results, such as human consciousness, and not by assuming an outside realm beyond it, but by laying out intuitively the logos' own life involvement and its realization in concrete life development that we may get to its ultimate constructive roots. They lie with the nature of the logos, which crystallizes its virtualities in projecting life".¹³

This aspect can be better clarified by going deeper into the original re-elaboration by Tymieniecka of the concept of seminal reason, or it would be better to say, with the Greek words, of *logos spermatikós*. In particular, we should grasp the double "direction" of this concept, which has been living throughout history of philosophy in a Kars line connecting the Stoics, Early Christian theologians, and later on Leibniz: life as carrier of sense and meaning that can be individuated in logos, but, also, logos as life provided with an own poietic, operative and coordinative directionality, as prompting force, as constructive *élan*.

The logos of life articulates itself into an organised network of forces, drives, elements, thus trespassing the status of a chaotic, simply magmatic aggregation of energies and opaque forces. It provides reality – and now we understand the essential difference between the concepts of reality as simple *be-there*, and reality as living beingness or *becoming-real* – with organisation, coordination, effectiveness regarding a sensed becoming: "Life is, then, a dynamic flux, but is far from a wild Heraclitean flux, for it articulates itself".¹⁴

Life, in other words, carries with itself constructive onto-poietic patterns, in virtue of which the flux of becoming starts being connoted with living forms, coordination and organisation, not only in the sense of intentionality, but, differently, in that of creativity, as constructive and creative drive in the constitution of reality.¹⁵ "The logos of life is not an uncommitted stream of neutral force; on the contrary, it exhibits a shaping force".¹⁶ This idea of a "shaping force" connotes Tymieniecka's idea of "logos of life" of its activating power, of the really life-essential feature of modelling energy, the same energy as that which lets the *seed* become a *tree*. This aspect of double powerful and shaping force of logos is clearly at the stake in the conception of onto-poiesis as the real way-to-become of life.

And we know, as Tymieniecka observes, that this organisation and this structured order, even if totally variable and creative, manifests itself in the order of time (with its "timing"), of space, but also in the other dimensions that include the "remembering" aspect of the living forms. It comes to light, then, the question of force, in the sense of life as force-connoted: "Form and force appear prima facie to be factors of life most intimately enmeshed with each other. Can we disentangle their respective roles, or are they irremediably fluid? Where does the inquiry into the formal delineation of the deployment of life stop and the inquiry into the force carrying this deployment begin?".¹⁷

Tymieniecka underlines that this becoming is not unqualified, indifferent, brutal force of change or disruption; rather, it is force of production, energy which "calls" the beings in their ontological structure, which is tuned in the deep nature of beings and puts it into action, enacts the being' forces so to generate new ramifications of life.

The fundamental change in perspective that this new sense of logos brings, therefore, in the point of view of phenomenology of life, is linked with the dynamic connotation – in the sense of the *dynamis*, of the force – of life and of logos of life. The change in perspective is declared as follows: “To understand life it is indispensable to envisage from two perspectives: one may take in its surface phenomenal manifestation in a formal, structural, constitutive fashion, or one may peer into the depths of the energies, forces, dynamisms that carry it relentlessly onward”.¹⁸

In this second sense of the inquiring attitude, posing ourselves, so to say, “on this side” of life as generative and patterning propulsion, we discover that life, as ontopoiesis, has the possibility to produce and change the world because its structure is based on internal *virtualities* to be put into activity and effectivity.¹⁹ These virtualities recall, in our reading, the ancient notion of seminal reason, since they represent the connection point – in the sense of dynamism – between the evolution and enacting process of life’s becoming, and its ordered structure.

We must underline the “germinal” and ontopoietic connotation of these virtualities which are at the same time vital and logoic, that approaches directly to a renovated sense of the idea of seminal reason. The germinal and seminal characteristic of the logos of life indicates that life is equipped with a inter-chained and phased structure even in its smallest corners and kernels, by which life shows continuity in creativity in any single being, and a peculiar “leaning forward” its development.²⁰ There are, hence, “germinal virtualities”, virtualities that “shape”²¹ the ontological material in the direction of life.

There is, here, a deep renovation of the idea of reason, that carry a genetic and preparatory order *in fieri* in the considered thought. And it is not haphazard that in this fecund field of explication, *enactement*, play of life-informed forces is called by Tymieniecka, with a highly evocative language, the “womb of life”;²² in it occurs a “virtual intergeneration”,²³ which preludes to the incarnation of life, as able to modify itself in relation to the circumambient conditions.²⁴

Here we arrive, finally, to one of the most interesting peculiarities of Tymieniecka’s phenomenology of life in its innovative revisiting of ancient philosophy: “germinal” is virtuality and force that promotes and articulates life, but it is all other than a mere physical force, mechanically posed in relations of static balance and cause-effect. On the contrary the “germinal” attribution refers here to what is susceptible to inform in an original way the internal composition of beings; moreover, their *interior* composition, interior because proper of a living being.²⁵

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¹ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *The Fullness of the Logos in the Key of Life*, Book I. *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009), “Analecta Husserliana”, Vol. C, p. 14.

² She specifies this, still in one of her most recent texts, carrying on her long-term close confrontation with the Husserlian philosophy; Tymieniecka, *The Case of God in the New Enlightenment*, op. cit., p. 13.

- 3 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 15.
- 4 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 3, our italics.
- 5 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 34.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 33.
- 8 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 6.
- 9 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 27.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 6.
- 13 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 30.
- 14 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 11.
- 15 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 25.
- 16 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 30.
- 17 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 34.
- 18 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 35.
- 19 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 37.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 39.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Tymieniecka, op. cit., pp. 41 ss.
- 25 Tymieniecka, op. cit., p. 38.

VISUALIZING TYMIENIECKA'S APPROACH
WITH STRING THEORY

A B S T R A C T

This chapter argues that to better understand Tymieniecka's thought, we might look to outside philosophy to the aesthetics of string theory. Brian Green's explanations and Tymieniecka's prose evoke a vibrating dynamism that call for a multidimensional approach to and understanding of the world whose "order may not be visible from any single dimension."

I am an art critic, so when I read philosophy, I test it in terms of the art I know. My philosophy books are annotated with lists of images, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's, the most heavily. For example: The fourth book of her *Logos and Life* quartet,¹ which discusses the internal dynamic of the Logos of life as a process of ontopoiesis, brought my mind to Leonardo da Vinci's brainstorm drawings (British Museum, Figure 1) for his revolutionary compositions of the Madonna and Child with St. Anne (the cartoon at the London National Gallery and the painting at the Louvre).²

The snare of lines in his preparatory drawings visualized Professor Tymieniecka's evocation of the emergence of the logos of life, which comes neither in a linear nor logical nor a commonsensical sequence "but in all its generic as well as functional operations, all the connective strings properly tied to a specific vibration, in a spontaneous effort that happens all at once."³ The perspective of each medium allows, if not an experience *sub species aeterni*,⁴ a more vibrant awareness of both and an example that understanding can be found through relationship, as in the fashioning rather than imagining a Mobius strip. It also calls for a leap into the *zeitgeist*, a territory of sense and non-sense very tempting to art historians.

The passage cited above is from Professor Tymieniecka's first book of her *Logos and Life* quartet, dedicated to the creative experience and the critique of reason. It was published in 1988, a critical point in the history of science for it is the time of the string theorists' attempt to unify two great incongruous fundamental theories: quantum mechanics and general relativity. By the early nineties the then many string theories were finally unified, to produce one of the most beautiful and elaborate physical theories ever invented. The diagram in Figure 2 from Wikipedia shows the underlying principle that underlying all "matter" are not points as we earlier imagined, but looping, vibrating strings of energy. Such a model unifies the static and dynamic theories of everything that have characterized Western philosophy from the time of the Presocratics.

The theory was the physicists' attempt to account for the flexibility and transformability evident in the cosmos as we know it. According to Brian Green, if we examine the particles that were thought to be elementary, we would find them not to



Figure 1. Leonardo da Vinci, *Sketches for Virgin and Child with St. John and St. Anne*, Chalk, pen and ink, stylus lines, on paper, London, British Museum. The full sheet contains small sketches that indicates some of Leonardo's varied thoughts of the composition possibilities. On the verso is his tracing of the composition from the stylus tracings

be points has been imagined but tiny loops, fields of energy, “vibrating and oscillating filaments, physicists call ‘strings.’”⁵ I can only claim to appreciate string theory as Brian Green has elegantly described it. My enthusiasm is for its aesthetic, just as I use Professor Tymieniecka’s aesthetics to better appreciate works of art.⁶ The ultimate beauties of both systems, the mathematics of string theory and the broad scope of Professor Tymieniecka’s philosophy, are for keener minds than mine.

Nevertheless—it’s always nevertheless that allows a speaker to discuss matters for which he is not well qualified—I find interesting analogies between the two who both allow wonder and imagination back into the world. Not only are the dangling, looping strings vibrating, but so are the multidimensional membranes (discovered in the nineties: called p-branes). And the dimensions number 10 or 11.⁷ Professor Tymieniecka’s explanations fall short here, for she only organizes her arguments into three “membranes” as it were. She explains her method in the opening of Book I of *Logos and Life*. She wrote, she says, a three-paneled work, a triptych like Hieronymous Bosch’s famed *Garden of Earthly Delights* (Figure 3), not merely a continuous monolayered text. And she explains why; I will stitch a few statements together here for the sake of brevity:

Why, instead of following the usual way of composing a learned work, did I choose to make a presentation with no forcible direct continuity of rational argument [a single plane to make a point],

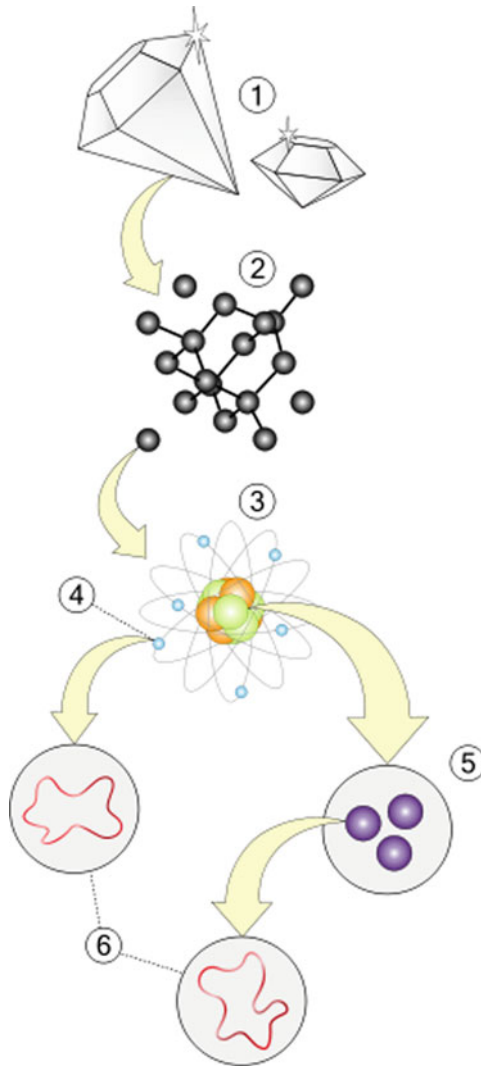


Figure 2. String theory diagram from Wikipedia: Levels of physical reality of matter: (1) Macroscopic level: matter (*diamond*); (2) Molecular level; (3) Atomic level of photons, neutrons, electrons; (4) Subatomic level: electrons; (5) Subatomic level: quarks; (6) String level

... but rather in the guise of a **trptych**? Their unity is not that of a continuing argument, but that of numerous significant threads, which ... maintain interconnections among various issues, various analytic complexes, and various dimensions which are projected by the great themes in question. In this interconnectedness resides that with which we aim to reveal: the workings of the creative condition of man (*LL1*, 8).

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka sought a phenomenological recognition of all types of experience “without any forced connectedness or dubious speculative nets of unity.”



Figure 3. Hieronymus Bosch, *Garden of Earthly Delights*, triptych opened. 1504-03. Madrid, Museo del Prado. My argument about the meaning of the form of the triptych does not depend of the interpretations of the iconography. All interpretations depend on the synergy of the parts

She emphasized that what may seem to be discrete, discontinuous and disordered from a single point, might not be so if viewed from multiple viewpoints: “Its order may not be visible from any single dimension” are her exact words. She therefore used the model of a man-devised and man-made object, as an analogy to her method.

The point of a triptych is that no part is complete individually. The whole can only be understood in terms of each part, the interaction of the parts with each other and with the whole, both inside and outside. The usual planar method of argument is not sufficient for the reality Tymieniecka describes. Her method is indeed her message.

Tymieniecka’s aim, unlike that of the cognitive approaches, is to penetrate the “infinitely complex and differentiated web”—but think of this web as having n dimensions—a shadowy network of significant links that relate the poetic, the intellectual and the intuitive at the very least. Her terms are those of the experience of art: “the symphony of life” and the human creative endeavor. Only such a complexity can allude to life as lived. That these realities in their uniqueness cannot be verified by repetition, as string theory cannot be verified experimentally, is part of the charm.

In focusing her work on man’s self-interpretation in existence she does not pin the metaphoric butterfly into a case in order to examine and describe it but rather she chooses to “film” it in the multiple dimensions of its existence. Her multidimensional camera is creativity. This way she hopes to find the true pattern of reality-in-becoming. Her language is all about encompassing, orchestration, dynamism, prompting, propulsion, passional strivings, abysmal depths, surgings. She warns that dealing with creative ciphering is a tortuous process. That our meandering course of understanding is chaotic merely demonstrates that the single lens of reason is not a sufficient tool for understanding the Logos of life. Leonardo da

Vinci had begun on such a path when he invented the exploded view of machines and anatomies, views in which the relationship between the various layers and the numerous directions of organization were revealed. Tymieniecka—as Laurence Kimmel characterized so well—does not “aspire to a god’s eye view of reality [as the closed Bosch triptych, Figure 4, shows], but develops a view from within; it takes the course of an immersion into the creative mix that constitutes the total experience of existence—the cognitive, emotive, and volitional activities of human mind and culture . . . she searches out the web of relations that together form the living tissue of a changing world.”⁸

Tymieniecka’s actions follow her thought and her writings, for she has established the World Phenomenology Institute which welcomes the insights of other scholars, who more and more, offer varied insights into the issues she has raised, and often provide case studies of the problems she has raised. As has been said of string

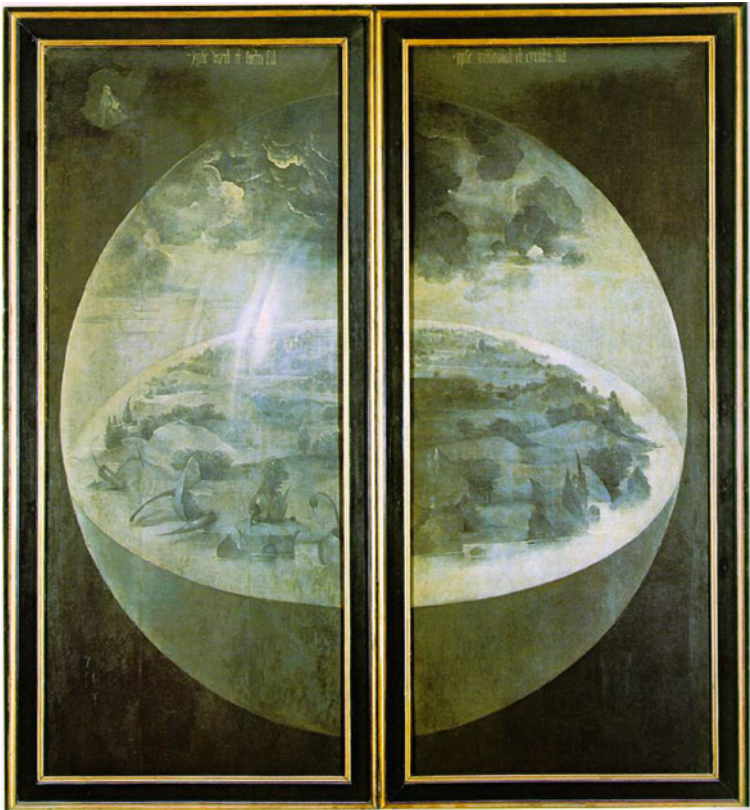


Figure 4. Bosch, *Garden of Earthly Delights*, triptych closed

theory, far from being a collection of chaotic experimental facts, these are the manifestations of one feature: the resonant patterns of vibration—the music rises from the notes the loops of string can play.

We strive who study the arts are in the challenging position of reckoning with the Pandora's box that Professor Tymieniecka has opened (*L&LI*, 11). Or perhaps it is the other way around, we present her with escapees of the tradition of rationalist aesthetics, and see if she can find a place for them in her orchestration.

I plan to continue this sort of exploration into parallels between the New Physics and Tymieniecka's approach for it seems to me that her philosophy has more in common with that of the twentieth-century scientists—not its technicians—than is realized. These men were astounded by the wonders of the universe, wonders that Newtonian science could not even imagine. And so let me give Niels Bohr the last word: "Those who were not shocked when they first came across quantum theory cannot possibly have understood it."

I'm working on staying shocked.

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¹ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life: Impetus and Equipose in the Life-Strategies of Reason, Book 4*, Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer, 2000.

² Patricia Trutty-Coohill, "The Ontopoiesis of Leonardo da Vinci's Brainstorm Drawings" in *Analecta Husserliana* 92, 3–12.

³ Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, *Logos and Life, Book 1*, Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988. Hereafter *&LLI*, in text.

⁴ See Sibel Oktar's "The Place Where We See the World" in the current volume for a discussion of Wittgenstein on this subject. For a recent example of the method see my "Visualizing Tymieniecka's Approach to Originality," 275–294 in *Art Inspiring the Transmutations in Life, Analecta Husserliana CVI*, especially the comparison of a Tymieniecka text with an Georg Braque's analytical-cubist portrait *The Portuguese*, 277–279.

⁵ Brian Green, *The Elegant Universe, Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory*, Norton, 1999. It was visualized beautifully on NOVA, available in streaming video on <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/elegant/program.html>.

⁶ Telling of my own point of view is my initial "reading" of the motto of the "official string theory site" as "It's the 21st century: Time to feel your mind." I substituted "feel" for feed, probably because I had just absorbed Manjulika Ghosh's presentation! <http://superstringtheory.com/index.html>, consulted 11 August 2010.

⁷ For a demonstration see <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/elegant/resonance.html>.

⁸ Laurence Kimmel, "Logos: Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's Celebration of Life in Search of Wisdom" in *Thinking Through Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka's Logos and Life, Phenomenological Inquiry XXVII* (October 2003), 22–23.

UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD
AND THE COORDINATE SYSTEM ON THE BASIS
OF LIMIT DYNAMICAL EQUILIBRIUM

A B S T R A C T

Our conception is fundamentally different from the former one because we start from the fundamental relative equilibrium, as though we shield all the previous levels of the world, about which we know nothing. All existing processes are balanced by the appropriate “limiting boundary surface.” Beyond the unknown world remain the fundamental equilibrium quantities that are responses to that part of the world that is around us. The formula of the natural coordinate system is as follows. “One should identify two unequal parts in the real world. On the one hand, these dynamic equilibria are united in interrelated chains. The equilibria were created by the same laws at all levels of organization of the world. On the other hand, one could identify all the other non-equilibrium processes and phenomena”. Any natural formation interactions with the dynamic equilibria are based on the fact that all natural formations tend to limit the fundamental equilibrium that is unreachable. In the article we consider the ontological levels of the world, which are comparable to “vacuum”, “inertial systems”, “thermodynamic equilibria”, “spirituality”, equilibrium parameters of which are well identified. “A man of networks” – is the nearest stage of human and mankind evolution, this is the only way for the mankind to maintain its real existence.

1. The deepest idea realized by mankind during its existence – is the idea of God. However, the very term “God” as a designation for “the great mystery of the world” takes all the complexity of the problem in the interpretation of choice and the specific details of interpretation. In the modern globalized world the philosophical understanding of this idea is becoming increasingly important. The religious interpretations of “God”, because of their dogmatism, are one-sided and difficult to fit into the ongoing social and cultural processes, as well as their respective scientific and philosophical representation. Currently, there is a need for synthetic concepts representations of “God”, able to absorb focused on the universal principles of the universe – the ideas of Plato, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, personalism, existentialism, world unity, cosmism and others nearest to them by the spirit of philosophical and religious systems. The bases for this synthesis are the planetary civilization shells, formed in the present and the associated with them web network: cultural, social, economic, etc.

The problems associated with analyzing the idea of “God” and correlates with the universal world harmony can be investigated only by relying on some ontological

layers-bases. Some of the most important philosophical concepts are based on the fact that a person has to deal with, at least three worlds: objective, subjective, and transcendent. The simultaneous involvement of all these worlds in study of the problem can only confuse the initial concepts and approaches used. Attempts to highlight the above mentioned fundamental ontological layers of the world have taken over all periods in philosophy, science, religion, literature. The clear example is the four layers of N. Hartmann: inorganic, organic, psychological, spiritual. Various models of the hierarchy of nature and their corresponding levels of structural organization are emphasized in certain sciences, specifically in physics, chemistry and biology. Exceptionally clear layers being represented in literature (“The Divine Comedy” Dante Alighieri, “Rose of the world” Leonid Andreev).

However, our conception is fundamentally different from the former one because we start from the fundamental relative equilibrium, as though we shield all the previous levels of the world, about which we know nothing. All existing processes are balanced by the appropriate “limiting boundary surface.” Beyond the unknown world remain the fundamental equilibrium quantities that are responses to that part of the world that is around us. As a frame of reference of self-organizing nature, which develops “turn by turn” – from one equilibrium state to another one, relative equilibrium are most natural. Exploring nature, society, consciousness, we often use the fundamental ideas and pushing away the fundamental equilibria, from “Silence of the universe”. In science they are represented in the form of inertial systems of Galileo-Newton, thermodynamics’ quasi-static processes. In religions they are the basic dogmas, such as the commandments of the New Testament. But the interest in science, philosophy, and art far more often had been focused on the active principle, more accessible and comprehensible in its manifestations. For instance, historical studies devoted to revolutions, wars, their leaders, whereas the underlying processes that shaped the course of history were determined by completely different reasons.

The fundamental dynamic equilibria associated with numerous private dynamic equilibria are forming their extensive network built on the same principles. The stability of these equilibria at all levels of nature, society, and mankind are defined by their connection with the three limits: (1) identificational, (2) communicational (network) and (3) full lifetime of the natural system – all three of which are unattainable for each individual system. As a result, a natural coordinate system of the world is being created based on these limiting relative equilibria. The system perfectly correlates with the basic, fundamental natural sciences and philosophical systems, dogmas and symbols of faith of the world religions.

2. The formula of the natural coordinate system is as follows. “One should identify two unequal parts in the real world. On the one hand, these dynamic equilibria are united in interrelated chains. The equilibria were created by the same laws at all levels of organization of the world. One could identify all the other non-equilibrium processes and phenomena on the other hand”.¹ At every level of the world organization, these chains combine the fundamental equilibria with their other types: relative, limited, metastable, etc. These links are caused by the common origin of interactions between different natural processes, the likeness of their structures at all levels of the world. The very specific dynamic equilibrium is created by that part of

the energy that can be balanced in these specific natural systems, resulting in “cell dynamic equilibrium” common to all natural processes and coordinate system that are formed by a similar algorithm for all structural levels of the world. “The limiting boundary surface” is composed of many such equilibrium cells. The remaining unknown to us hidden processes form the surface of the identification limit of these cells, and their mutual balance within this surface – a communicational network limits.

Any natural formation interactions with the dynamic equilibria are based on the fact that all natural formations tend to limit the fundamental equilibrium that is unreachable. Any natural system of inorganic (nonliving), organic (living), and spiritual are approaching its identity. Elementary particles are linked into chemical elements, gas nebulae are transformed into galaxies, stars, and planetary systems. All spheres of living exist in the form of individual organisms, species, and populations with significant biotic potential. On the other hand, any natural formation seeks to find a balance with its environment, taking part in the formation of communicational network. A person cannot to communicate – it is their natural state. Parameters of the individual are determined by the flow of information, which is exchanged by all levels of organic (living). The essence of personality is being exchanged through a system of relations of dialogue, and cultures – through dialogues and relationships at appropriate levels. Communication equilibrium of the system makes it capable to interact with all spheres of existence: from the world of organic (nonliving) nature to the realm of the spiritual. Another important limit is achieved by balancing the system with a neighboring structural level of world organization, from viewpoint of which one can see its development as a whole. It determine by limit of the full lifetime of the system. All the specific identification and communication limits, as well as limit of lifetime, remain unattainable while looking from within the system, due to their opposing tendencies, providing a result of a consensus (an intermediate dynamic equilibrium or set of them).²

Thus, any phenomenon, process, thing, or structure may have a “cells interaction” with the coordinate system of nature, which themselves are elements of the system. All natural phenomena, processes, and structures can have a stable relationship with the coordinate system due to the nature of these equilibrium cells. On the one hand, they thereby participate in its formation, on the other hand – can be investigated in the same coordinate system. The coordinate system forms its basic scientific terms: the “related substances”, “bound energy”, “related information”, emphasizing the passive part of nature: a set of some limits (attractors), which provides the process of self-organization for the rest of nature. This coordinate system is discovered directly and available to everyone.

A person’s task is to take part in the formation of the natural coordinate system, and to ensure its sustainability, because only a person is able to develop the spiritual dimensions of this coordinate system. In the history of science, philosophy, and culture, trends of “development” and “striving for balance” were succeeded by each other. The early twentieth century was dominated by interest in the organization, dynamic equilibria; the end of the century and the present is prevailed by the interest in deterministic chaos, complexity, network equilibrium.

3. Consider the ontological levels of the world, which are comparable to “vacuum”, “inertial systems”, “thermodynamic equilibria”, “spirituality”, equilibrium parameters of which are well identified. “The limiting boundary surface” that we matched with vacuum (the basic state of quantum fields with minimal energy, zero momentum, angular momentum, electric charge and other quantum numbers) “closes” all the unfamiliar parts of the world by providing the equilibrium stable existence. The concept of “vacuum” is a fundamental in the sense that its properties determine the properties of all the major states. In some cases, such as spontaneous symmetry breaking, the vacuum state is not the only degenerate – there is a continuous spectrum of states differing from each other by the number of so-called “Goldstone bosons”.³ Bosons with zero mass and zero spin as the main parameters characterizing the vacuum cause the appearance of the quantum field, which modern science calls the most fundamental and universal form of matter, the foundation of all its concrete manifestations. All elementary particles are the quanta of certain physical fields, which continuously interact with each other (emit and destroy themselves). Thus, the vacuum can be regarded as the simplest system of reference (the limit of the fundamental equilibrium) for the world was created from elementary particles. In other words, the basic parameters characterizing the vacuum are bosons with zero mass and zero spin, i.e. above this frontier zero mass particles appear, causing the emergence of quantum field.

The next level deals with a steady substance and long-range physical interactions, and here, “the limiting boundary surface” separates the mechanisms that determine the existence of the most versatile of the physical interactions (gravitational, as well as the associated electromagnetic) from their phenomenological manifestations in many macroscopic processes. Parameters of the reference system for the remainder of this “boundary surface” of the world are the “inertia” and its measure – “mass”. This allows forming a representation of the inertial systems as a basis for all other more complex frames of reference in that part of the world. The structure of the mass is extremely complex, which at first suggested in classical mechanics, and then similarly introduced in general relativity theory and quantum mechanics, thus ensuring its conformity with existing experimental facts and data.

Another “limiting boundary surface” separates complex macro objects, each consisting of a huge number of particles (of the order of Avogadro’s number $N_A = 6.02 \times 10^{23}$), from the simplest parameters characterizing this new equilibrium. In this case temperature characterizes the thermal equilibrium, and entropy determines quality used by this energy. More sophisticated equilibria – thermodynamics are formed based on sets of thermal equilibria. The next stage of equilibrium concept development is related to the concepts of “dynamic chaos” on the basis of which the theory of dynamic equilibrium was originated in open non-equilibrium systems. The next stage equilibrium theory development leads to the formation of complex self-organizing systems, molecular circuits, pre-structured “before life” and “life”.

The next “limiting boundary surface” is connected with spirituality, which is a complementary balance among all the subsystems of “I” and, above all, the four main ones: body, mind, subconscious, super-conscious. The spiritual man must

have all these subsystems in harmony: his body and mind must be healthy, his subconscious – a well-organized and controlled by consciousness, interaction with super-consciousness (cultural codes, religion, ideology, ethnic group traditions) – humanistic. If these subsystems are in equilibrium with each other, then everything else in a person's mind and subconscious are closed by the "limiting boundary", so that the basic parameters of spirituality remain: the freedom of will and cultural-secular asceticism which is a bound state of intellectual, social, and individual manifestations of personality. Such asceticism is capable of forming the foundation of universal synthetic culture, so that all the unique and specific in different nations will have to supplement.

4. The coordinate system that connects all limiting dynamic equilibria of the world into a single entity; and it is in line with the concepts of the Absolute, the Universe, and God according to its ontological significance. During the New Age, the majority of these concepts have been thoroughly transformed, so that such a coordinate system may well occupy the leading place in this series in terms of mutually contemporary multilevel knowledge, by absorbing the existing universal ideas and the corresponding concepts.

The coordinate system is characterized by spatial location, time, structure, but no localization or no spatial limitations exist for it, that is present in every part of the Universe, at all levels of its structural organization. Time is continuously transformed from one form to another – the development process started during one type of time and then continued during the other. Since the coordinate system interacts with all the possible temporary structures and is pure existence that has no reason and is the origin of it. It interacts with various kinds of beings, enabling them, according to its "pure being", which contains the "grain" of any particular being. Locating sustainable relationship with the coordinate system begins with the ability to listen to silence in oneself, finding a fundamental mood to start the process of learning and investigation, touching the various types of "emptiness" – that is the way the initial cells of the coordinate system are formed, through which a person can establish a stable relationship with the system. The coordinate system is also approaching a person due to its high self-organization. The coordinate system is the ideal structure of all possible limit states of "fundamental emptiness." It cannot blend in with natural systems, but natural equilibrium processes sometimes interact, with it occasionally or at regular intervals due to the rhythms of the natural coordinate system.

Due to the coordinate system in question, a new epistemology is formed, which eliminates extreme opposition between scientific and non-scientific knowledge and thinking. All these mental and spiritual patterns that go beyond current knowledge, but can stably interact with the system of coordinates, can be considered under this new epistemology. Significant opportunities for dialogue and inter human communication are established. Since the most accurate and profound form of dialogue is not a communication between individuals, but a two-stage dialogue: a person – "coordinate system" and "coordinate system" – the other person. Value-oriented cognitive installation is focused on a stable relationship with the coordinate system,

on the allocation of the passive part of nature, on the sets of some limits (attractors) with the help of which processes of self-organization are run at all nature's levels. This relationship is a prerequisite for the further development of man and mankind, and only in this case, humanity will not destroy the biosphere, atmosphere, but can develop harmoniously, optimally and practically indefinitely.

The coordinate system exists based on the interaction with the open systems, which have a tendency to self-organization, self-development and this openness allows them to be interconnected with the system. Interaction with the coordinate system of nature on the basis of the limiting dynamic equilibria involves the use of a pluralistic methodology, as well as some finished tools from special scientific disciplines (hydrodynamics, thermodynamics, quantum mechanics, statistical physics, evolution concepts, systems theory, synergetics, cybernetics, and ecology). In addition, the ultimate search of coordinate system and the maintenance of stable relationships with it independently form a "coordinate method" of philosophical research, which has an exceptionally broad versatility and whose possibilities are practically unlimited. This method has universal flexibility to interact with any natural phenomena and process. There are universal criteria and a unified methodology investigation for all these processes.

5. The system of interconnected dynamic equilibrium may be reached by developing sensory artistic representation using abstract and theoretical models, as well as creating various forms of synthesis in general representations of nature, society, man, consciousness, which can be regarded as the most complete picture of the life world, the genotype of social life, basic cultural and genetic code.

Cultural universals have considerable heuristic potential for forming invariants for further allowed development of mankind and, moreover, they are much more accessible to people who do not have special theoretical training, compared to the philosophical categories, universals, and general scientific concepts. This person does not need to learn how to treat a system of coordinates. The most important thing is to know and feel that such a coordinate system exists, and then it will find the individual, adjusts its rhythms, and will maintain a stable relationship with him, by opening up more and more to them.

For each individual it is most natural to interact with at least three levels of coordinate system: personal, relevant to their ethnic group culture and planetary one. A person becomes multilayered, enclosing equilibrium cells of all these levels. His state may be called person-planetary. A sustainable relationship between a mankind and these levels of the natural coordinate system is a prerequisite for their further development – a guarantee that mankind won't destroy the environment, but the mankind can develop harmoniously, optimally and practically indefinitely.

The coordinate system on the basis of limiting the dynamic equilibrium can effectively interact with different cultures in a globalizing world, to develop methodological approaches to education, to carry out the synthesis of the sciences and humanities, to solve complex contemporary problems. Culture in the XXI century will occupy a leading position among all other areas of the human spirit and interact with it will occur over the historically developing natural systems. Self-organization,

openness and active interaction with the environment are its main characteristics. These systems transform in “human-sized complexes” in which people actively promote the convergence of the sciences and humanities, suggesting complementarities in the influence of poetry and science, intuition and logic, the Western and Eastern types of thinking, rational and irrational methods of research, scientific and non-scientific approaches, cognitive and axiological criteria of knowledge.

In the global today's world, all cultures are exposed to two major trends. On the one hand they should identify themselves, that is, to clearly identify its boundaries, characteristics, and be transparent to the representatives of other cultures as much as possible to determine. The problem here is that many cultures are still not fully identified, are now in the middle of their development. On the other hand, they should promote the integration of mankind. It is no accident that the elimination of economic, political, national borders is now combined with the increasing cultural isolation (the paradox of cultural diversification). As part of the approach all cultures in the present conditions should be in a state of stable synchronic and diachronic fluctuations. In the first case this occurs between the nuclei of identity traditional cultures and emerging invariants of human world culture. In the second case this occurs among the best examples of the cultural world heritage and the relevant guidelines of the stage of the informational society. In the result of this process forming a specific dynamic equilibrium can be interaction between traditional cultures and information subsystems of the modern world (economic, financial, technological and so on). It is especially important because in the history of mankind the majority numbers of cultures were traditional and that among them there were two great mutations: the ancient and Christian culture. In all the above interactions can be distinguished limit the dynamic equilibrium and thus connect them with the natural coordinate system for all levels of emerging cultural super-system. Every nation is able to make a unique contribution to the formation of the natural coordinate system and the more such contributions, the more stable it will be the coordinate system. Such development has no alternative for mankind now.

Culture adequate to the needs of modern person should be networked, and it must include in this system traditional cultures as elements. Every modern individual should actively interact with multiple cultures, contributing to their closure in a single cycle (material, energy, information). The diversity provides for stability in nature; humanitarian and social spheres are no exception, and as the more cultures there will be on the planet the better for mankind. Of course, they all must be tolerant, humanistic-oriented and unique. All cultures must strive to identify their own worldly asceticism, which can become a key element in establishing a dialogue between cultures, forming a planetary reality, gradually transformed into planetary existence. Asceticism is a bound state of spirituality in the context of its ethnic and individual expressions that can be the foundation of synthetic human culture. The superstructure above this asceticism base joined all the unique and specific for different people.

Sustainable complementarily interaction between cultures associated with the formation of limiting their bases – the basic cells, a kind of cultural monads, and the totality of which forms a micro level of planetary culture. Such monads can

be combined into modules (patterns of meso level), which is well correlated with phenomena of certain ages, artistic styles, trends. Also, the formation of cultural codes is convenient considered in the sphere of the concrete level. Fundamental cells will generate the code at the micro level, modules of the cell – at the meso level, the planetary envelopes and the network – at the macro level, based on the semi-otic space – semi-sphere. All of the above cells (monads) keep its natural integrity, determined by the rhythm and coherence of spatial, temporal and spatial-temporal processes closed.

The education system connected with the natural coordinate system should be based on two basic principles: (1) self-identification of the individual and (2) the principle “to be near”. Only under conditions for self-organization of the individual this first principle will be realized and personal formation can be achieved. The second principle is reduced to the activity of a pupil, while mentor add to this processes only the catalytic influence. They must send the pupil: correct, amplify, recommend the optimal literatures, and take part in analyzing the results, etc. Education should be continuous and consist of closed units (an average of 2–3 years each), within each of them the complete holistic world-outlook is formed. It is based on a systematic, structural knowledge, as well as on criteria to distinguish between the true, original information, the false information, incomplete and secondary knowledge that can destroy the natural system of coordinates. The main task of teachers within each of the above-mentioned steps (units) in the development of the educational process is to ensure interaction between students and the world coordinate system, which is possible at any age and for any volume of information. The process of this interaction is unique, created for each individual its own special method and is the most effective way of educating the individual.

6. We will never completely know the natural coordinate system, which always stays with us and at the same time is slipping away from us. From time to time it appears before us, bewitching our feelings and mind, directing the development of modern civilization. It's a kind of pure “gift”, which nature has prepared for a person to carry out a special and unique function in the world around us. Only relying on the natural system of coordinates a synthesis of mutually complementary interactions will be provided in the fields of non-organic and organic nature, soul and spirit; and consensus among all the civilizations of modern humanity will be established, as well as among social, political, cultural processes that guide their development.

In the next few decades mankind must come in universal planetary sphere from system of interconnected networks of shells (social, scientific, technical, economic, financial, etc.), based on the limit culture structures. These networks will overlap, complement and develop each other by many ways, forming a planetary being, and coordinate system for themselves. The planetary being will be forming be self-organization and aimed to unit a natural and spiritual, material and ideal, real and virtual.⁴

Emerging planetary networks would be consistent with a new type of equilibrium – the balanced Wide-Web, formed on the basis of stochastic processes (metabolic processes of various types). Equilibrium-web requires many layers,

depth, nexus of all civilization processes, because the network of interactions is more important than their sources, so that basic information resources, spirituality contained in the network of interactions forming a balance. Equilibrium-Wide-Web provides complementarily complexity and simplicity, the sciences and humanities, despite the fact that science works with a one number of limiting the basis of culture, and humanities – with other. The conceptual schemes of these series are different from each other. Equilibrium-Wide Web facilitates the identification of stable correlation between these series and the limiting cultural bases. The universal planetary cultural being and ensured formation its concept can be realized by these complementary relations.

At the present time it is necessary to accelerate the development of psychic and spiritual spheres of the individual through the ontological catalytic methods of education, involving a permanent combination of multiple views (from two to five) on the same concepts and phenomena, especially the combination of external and internal, synchronic and diachronic views. This makes it possible to combine different scales of research, the points of view, and the degree of abstraction. This provide with most fully identify any concept, to link it with the other in a continuous flow of knowledge. Only when every element of knowledge will be identified on the one hand, and on the other – is included in the system of knowledge of a higher structural level, we can talk about the greatest possible speed and quality of education. Increase or decrease this rate on optimal lead to significant irregularities and distortions in the formation, as a system of knowledge and sustainability of the person.

New mankind assimilation in the networks of culture flows consciously and voluntarily, but this is the only way for the mankind to maintain its real existence and is largely determined by self-organization of the world and all its ontological spheres (no-organic, organic, mental, and spiritual). “A man of networks” – is the nearest stage of human and mankind evolution.

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N O T E S

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THE BIOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE OF NATURAL
SCIENCES AND THE LOGOS OF LIFE OF
NATURAL PHILOSOPHY: A COMPARISON AND
THE PERSPECTIVES OF UNIFYING THE
SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

ABSTRACT

Acknowledging that Nature is one unified whole, we expect that physics and biology are intimately related. Keeping in mind that physics became an exact science with which we are already familiar with, while, apparently, we do not have at present a similar knowledge about biology, we consider how can we make useful the clarity of physics to shed light to biology. The next question will be what are the most basic categories of physics and biology. If we do not want to cut laws of Nature into different parts, we obtain a constraint, and the remaining part of physics will be the input data to the equations of physics. In these terms, our question will be: if we keep biological laws intact, as indivisible units, what remains in case of biology? This approach, just because it is more fundamental, has significant consequences for philosophy, and obviously offers a new conceptual framework considering the relation between the ontopoietic principle of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka and the biological principle. The quintessence of science, namely, the first essentially complete scientific world picture is presented in a detailed form.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of science is to understand, explain and predict the world of observable phenomena occurring in Nature; in its widest sense, to understand Man, Life and Nature in their full extension, depth and meaning, including the interrelations between Man, Life and the Universe.

In order to obtain well-founded, reliable knowledge, science requires a tool which gives a compact and transparent picture about the essence of our present knowledge, indicates which questions are interesting to consider and how to obtain well-founded knowledge. Such a tool is called as the “scientific world picture”.¹ By the term “scientific world picture” we mean the *summarizing essence of all our scientific knowledge about the Universe in a compact, transparent, easy-to-use manner*, in a form which is able to yield ways of explanation and obtaining scientific knowledge. The scientific world picture is not only a map of the realm of Nature, enlisting what can be found there, but also a tool: (a) by which we can orientate ourselves

about the present state of our knowledge, (b) which is able to tell us what are the important questions and (c) which indicates how they might be answered. Certainly, among the ingredients of the scientific world picture must be: (a) logic, (b) the theory and methodology of explanation, and (c) philosophy, answering such questions as “what is essence?” and “what is well-founded, reliable knowledge?” and “what is the scientific world picture”? Indeed, the scientific world picture must be in an important, explanatory sense “ultimate”, because it cannot be based on something more simple or basic, since if it would, this latter one should serve as a better one. From our definition it is clear that such an inevitable tool of scientific research can be obtained only in an iterative process.² The scientific world picture can be regarded as the quintessence of science: the most perfect, simple, and elegant picture; the pure and concentrated essence of science.

The construction of a scientific world picture requires not only a deep understanding of Nature (in the widest sense), but also of science, and, especially, of scientific explanation. Nature is extraordinarily rich not only in the variety of phenomena, but also in its depth and meaning. Ultimately, Nature is one, it is in itself inseparable, we have to accept it as it is. Therefore, at its deepest level, which we call “core”, Nature must be easily understandable, and so, the construction of a scientific world picture is possible, which is in itself an achievement. The recognition of the core of Nature makes it possible that through the scientific world picture we are able to see the picture of the core. The extraordinarily rich and deep nature of the Universe indicates that exploring its reality requires an extraordinary amount of attention, thoroughness, persistence, and devotion. We have always to keep in mind that the last word is not for us, picture builders, but for Nature, as it is.³

Of course, such a usage of the term “scientific world picture” requires that it has to represent an essentially complete, self-consistent and unified system of theoretically conceivable and empirically testable, scientific framework of the Universe.⁴ From here on, by the term “fundamental” we mean the ultimate explanatory level in the system of explanations; by the term “general” we mean the widest possible scope of a given field of knowledge at a given level. The fact that Nature at its phenomenal level shows a breath-taking width and variety, while at its core a similarly breath-taking simplicity and conceptual compactness, indicates that Nature has an “inverted cone” explanatory structure, namely, all the innumerable and diverse phenomena can be explained by a minimum number of deep concepts.

If we will be able to find the quintessence of science, the essentially complete scientific world picture, then we may become able to envisage Nature in a unified and scientific manner, and so it will become possible to draw the outlines of a new, Universal Natural Science. Now we can introduce the term Universal Natural Philosophy contemplating the fundamental level of that new science.

We arrived to the stage where we have to consider what do we mean on the terms “essential” (and, later on, “complete”). The question “what is essential?” is a key question of the scientific world picture, because it is absolutely basic to build a summarizing picture about the world. The difficulty is that on its surface, Nature shows an unlimited variety. As we indicated above, simultaneously, at its core, Nature is one, undivided. It seems that it is the core what we must regard as the essence. In

order to obtain a more concrete understanding of “essential”, let us consider now how physics, the quintessential exact science makes this core of Nature explicit.

In physics, the “surface” of the realm of physics corresponds to observable phenomena, and “core” corresponds to physical laws. Starting with physical laws, the remaining part of Nature in physics is: data input that must be determined in advance; the input data give all necessary information about the physical system in its initial state. Input data can be obtained from observations of physical phenomena. Considering that phenomena occur occasionally, accidentally, while the physical laws are always the same; and, even more importantly, that one physical law can explain and predict an innumerable large number of phenomena, we can realize that the explanatory power (defined as the ratio of the number of explanandum to that of the explanant) of physical laws is practically infinite. The knowledge of one physical law is more valuable than the knowledge of an innumerable large number of occasional phenomena that are explained by the law. On that basis, we define “essential” from the angle of explanation, by the following meaning:

A definition of essential: One can regard as ‘essential’ a thing if and only if it has a (practically) infinite explanatory power in a scientific theory.

The key importance of the concept “essential” is illustrated by the fact that it directs our attention to those laws of physics which have the highest explanatory power.

As a first consequence of our result, we are led to a new question: which physical law has the highest explanatory power? Generally it is not acknowledged that all the fundamental physical laws may be derived from one single principle, the least action principle (e.g. Heron of Alexandria; Fermat; Maupertuis; Euler; Hamilton; Feynman 1942, 1994; Taylor 2010). The least action principle is the principle that determines the trajectory of a physical object between a given initial and final state. The least action principle turns out to be universally applicable in physics. All physical theories established since Newton can be derived from it. The action formulation is also elegantly concise. “The reader should understand that the entire physical world is described by one single action” (Zee 1986, 109). Therefore, we can introduce a specific meaning to the term “first principle”.⁵

Definition of first principle: A fundamental law can be regarded as a “first principle” if and only if all of the fundamental laws of the given branch of science can be derived from it.

Due to our definition of “essential”, we were able to recognize that in all physics, the most essential physical law is the first principle of physics. This recognition can make physics extremely transparent for scientists and philosophers, and makes it ideally suited as a pillar of the scientific world picture. Moreover, the insight given by physics, namely, that the world can be divided into three levels of reality, (a) the level of phenomena, (b) laws and (c) first principles, is ideally suited to the purpose to construct an essentially complete scientific world picture, because the

number of first principles must be small. If all physics can be derived from the physical principle (a shorter expression for the first principle of physics), then all what remains in order to obtain the essentially complete scientific world picture is to find the first principles of fundamental natural sciences. Regarding that physics considers the realm of “inanimate” world, we consider that the second fundamental natural science is biology.⁶

At present, it seems that nobody knows the equivalent in biology of Newton’s laws. In order to obtain a scientific world picture, we have to generalize our present picture about biology, and use the term “biology” in a new sense, including not only the presently popular form of it, but the Bauertian “theoretical biology”, which gives the most general laws of living organisms. This use of the term “biology” will give it a status that is similar to that of physics. Theoretical physics worked out its fundamental laws and first principle, which is the least action principle (Taylor 2003; Moore 2004). The Bauertian theoretical biology already worked out its first principle, which is known as the Bauer-principle (Bauer 1967) which is shown to be equivalent to the greatest action principle (Grandpierre 2007). The universal law of biology, the Bauer principle tells that: “A system is living if and only if it invests work from the budget of its free energy initiated by itself against the equilibrium which should occur according to the physical and physico-chemical laws given the initial conditions of the system” (Bauer 1967, 51). We can re-formulate it in other words: living systems manifest continuously maximal mobilization of their free energy against inertness. The Bauertian theoretical biology concentrates on the fundamental law of biology and, because of that, it underlies all specific sub-branches of biology that are intensively investigated today.

The next question arises: Are there any other fundamental natural sciences, besides physics and biology? As I indicated in the Introduction, the deepest questions of existence are threefold, questioning the Universe, life, and self-consciousness. From that it follows that the third fundamental natural science should be the study of self-consciousness.⁷ If we regard that psychology is the science of human psyche, and that the most characteristic property of human psyche is self-consciousness, we are led to the idea that the science of self-consciousness will be psychology. Of course, this interpretation present psychology as a science from a new angle, indicating a new direction for the future development of psychology, in which it can find its first principle also in a mathematical form. If the above three are the three fundamental questions, than these three must be the three fundamental sciences. This is an important point, because we wanted to outline the basis of an exact and essentially complete scientific world picture. If the ultimate first principles are those of physics, biology and psychology, then these first principles can be regarded as “ontological principles”—as such they have a special significance for philosophy which is the study of the most general aspects of reality.

This new scientific world picture, as a side-effect, unites the four different views of metaphysics.⁸ Now we can conceive the idea of a new, universal natural philosophy studying the most fundamental aspects of the universal natural science.

AN IMPORTANT OBJECTION AGAINST RECOGNIZING
THE FUNDAMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
PHYSICAL PRINCIPLE

Actually, the principle of least action currently attracts little attention among philosophers (Stöltzner 2003), despite the fact that it underlies everything in the realm of physics. I think this is because the role that the principle of least action has been played in physics and philosophy is still highly controversial. On the one hand, the principle reflects a so-called “apparent” economy or teleology, which most physicists presume to be alien to their branch of science. Yet, as I indicated, we must be aware of the fact that the last word belongs always to Nature. Actually, teleology is defined in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as “explanation by reference to some purpose or end”. Definitely, the least action principle is based on a relation between some initial and final state; therefore, reference to some end—i.e. to a subsequent physical state—is already explicit. Therefore, when we explain with the least action principle all physical phenomena, the explanation always refers to a final state, and so it is inevitably teleological, because that is what teleology is. It is another point that physical teleology is different from biological or human teleology, which admits purposeful behavior, too. In biological and human teleology there is an evidence of motivation that is obscured in physical teleology and replaced by an apparent mechanical teleology. Central to this controversy is the attempt to avoid any questions around the concept that Nature might use means to an end.

We illustrate the resistance against acknowledging the significance of the action principle by a quotation from James Woodward (2010): “For example, the mere fact that we can describe both the behavior of a system of gravitating masses and the operation of an electric circuit by means of Lagrange’s equations does not mean that we have achieved a common explanation of the behavior of both or that we have ‘unified’ gravitation and electricity in any physically interesting sense.” In contrast, we note that the physical principle is a relation between fundamental physical quantities. Physical laws express relations between observable physical quantities, while mathematical laws express a relation between mathematical quantities. Physical laws therefore can be tested by empirical observations, which is not the case for mathematical laws. If the observationally confirmed relation has a lawful character, it has an importance in a physically interesting sense. If the observationally confirmed physical relation expresses a law serving as the basis from which all the fundamental physical laws can be derived, it has a primary significance for physics as well as for the philosophy of science. One of the two basic requirements of a law of physics is that it has to be mathematically formulated. The other is that it refers to entities existing in Nature. Physical reality is based on two pillars: one is observational testability, and the other is its spatio-temporally detailed character that can be described by mathematically formulated physical laws.

As Carl Hempel (1966, 71–72) formulated: “Newton’s theory includes specific assumptions, expressed in the law of gravitation and the laws of motion, which determine (a) what gravitational forces each of a set of physical bodies of given masses and positions will exert upon the others, and (b) what changes in their

velocities and, consequently, in their locations will be brought about by these forces. It is this characteristic that gives the theory its power to explain previously observed uniformities and also to yield predictions and retrodictions.” These two pillars appear in the practice of the physicists in the form of input data (a necessary minimum set of physical parameters of the initial state) for the equations of physics, and, on the other hand, in the form of the equations of physics. Moreover, Hempel adds: “A good theory will deepen as well as broaden that understanding. First, such a theory offers a systematically unified account of diverse phenomena.” (*ibid.*, p. 75). On that firm basis, we can draw the conjecture that the unification offered by the least action principle, since it is not only observationally testable, but is also fitting all observations, and is mathematically formulated in spatio-temporal details, therefore, in contrast to Woodward’s opinion, has a primary importance for natural science and for the philosophy of natural science as well.

Yet the point raised by Woodward remains: we have to find the physical importance of the mathematical unification expressed by the Lagrange equations. First we point out that the unification by the Euler-Lagrange equations does not extend merely to gravitation and electricity, but also to mechanics, thermodynamics, and quantum physics, actually, to all the fundamental equations of physics. Second, the Euler-Lagrange equations represent only an intermediary step between the integral form of the least action principle and its applications. The real power of the action principle relies in its integral form. The Euler-Lagrange equations in general contain the Lagrange function; its application in gravitation, electricity or any branches of physics requires the specification of the interactions present in the given type of physical process that the physicist considers. Woodward is right in pointing out that the specific form of the Lagrange function has an important physical meaning, but lacks scientific basis when, implicitly, claiming that there is no physics beyond the special forms of physical interactions. The Euler-Lagrange equations in their general, unspecified form still express that all the fundamental laws of physics are equations of change that can be described by second order differential equations. We point out that, for instance, the integral form of the action principle represents an additional, physically important meaning, expressing the very economical aspect of the least action principle. Indeed, this integral aspect explains the “sum over all possible paths”, which is so important at Feynman’s path integral interpretation of the action principle (Feynman 1942; Feynman and Hibbs 1965). Actually, the “summing up” of quantum probability amplitudes is the result of the integral operation, represented by the integral form of the action principle. All types of interactions are based on that concrete physical “mechanism” indicated by Feynman: all quanta, independently from the type of interaction, acts through summing up all possible paths. This summing up seems to be mechanical, yet we point out that it requires explanation. It is a strange ability from a quantum, regarded as being absolutely inanimate, to behave mathematically, sum up anything, and solve mathematical equations in order to reach one point from another. How do they “perceive”, how do they behave “as if” they “know” that they have to sum up anything, and how are they able to do that according to the least action principle?

By our opinion, these fundamental problems transcend beyond the superficial, mechanical framework of present-day physics. Anyhow, this concrete physical “mechanism”, quantum exploration through the spontaneous emission of virtual particles to all possible paths, and their summing up, attaches a concrete physical meaning to the least action principle and to the unification it suggests, even implies.

THE ESSENTIALLY COMPLETE PICTURE OF THE
STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSE

Regarding Nature from these deepest aspects of physics the universal natural philosophy considers that physical reality consists from three basic ingredients: (a) concrete “things”, represented by the input data, and, (b) at a deeper level of reality, from physical laws, represented by the fundamental equations of physics, and, (c) at the fundamental level of physical reality, the least action principle. Therefore, the first significant achievement of the universal natural philosophy is that it succeeded to obtain the first essentially complete scientific world picture, which is the following.

The Universe has a primary fundamental hierarchy: a three-leveled structure of the Universe, apparently, not recognized until now. The three levels of reality are: (a) phenomena, (b) laws of Nature, and (c) first principles of Nature. The secondary fundamental structure of the Universe is its division into (a) physics, (b) biology and (c) psychology, which are all interrelated. This secondary fundamental structure is categorized by the character of the observable behavior, or, equivalently, by the first principles, or by the ultimate constitutive elements: (a) atom, (b) feeling, (c) thought, or (a) matter, (b) life, and (c) self-consciousness. Since there are no more first principles, the picture is essentially complete.

One last question is: is it possible to go beyond the first principles, and find a still deeper principle, the very first principle of the Universe? We think the correct answer is yes. The physical principle can be regarded as the special case of the biological principle in case when the freedom of selection of the endpoint shrinks to zero. Moreover, regarding that the relation between consciousness in general and self-consciousness is the relation between the general and the special case, self-consciousness is the special case of consciousness, and, therefore, the psychological principle is another special case of the biological principle. This means that the three principle is united in one, in the biological principle: we have a Trinity, in which the middle of the horizontally conceived triad is also the vertical element, the ultimately unifying principle, the principle of the One, which is, strangely, again the biological principle. Therefore, the picture is indeed essentially complete, no essential element is left out from it. We found two Triads: phenomena, laws, and first principles, versus physics, biology and psychology.

From this overall picture about the architecture of the Universe the present scientific world picture accepts only the physical realm. The main reason for it is that at present physics is the only exact natural science. We think that the first big question

of the 21st century is how to make biology into a science similarly exact to physics. Our answer is outlined below.

BIOLOGY, THE SCIENCE OF THE 21ST CENTURY,
IN A NEW LIGHT

“In the 21st century more and more biological data are accumulated. In the absence of a general theoretical biology, there is an increasing frustration between millions of biologists” (Brent and Bruck 2006, 416). Recently, following the groundbreaking work of Ervin Bauer (1967), who was the first to discover the biological principle and to work out the scientific basis of exact theoretical biology, we developed theoretical biology in the approach requiring it to be as close to theoretical physics as possible. We recognized that the minimal extension of physics into biology is possible by generalizing the least action principle, allowing the selection of the endpoint of its integral in accordance with the greatest action principle (Grandpierre 2007).⁹ The difference between biological and physical behavior can be illustrated with the example of a fallen bird from the Pisa tower. If the bird is dead, its trajectory will be similar to that of all physical objects: a straight line vertical to the ground; the dead bird follows the law of free fall. Yet if the bird is living, its trajectory will be characteristically different. In the simplest case, when there are no any disturbing circumstances like a hawk around, the bird will follow a trajectory that allows it to regain its height above the ground within a suitably short time with the minimum effort.

This approach will ensure that the generalized physical principle becomes suitable to grasp the teleology so eminent in biology.¹⁰ Indeed, teleology is the most characteristic aspect of biological functions and biological behavior. While in physics falling bodies as well as light travels on the shortest routes between their initial and end states, living organisms select the endpoint of their activities according to the greatest action principle. Action is a basic quantity having a dimension energy*time, integrated for the given process between the final and initial states. Illustrating the greatest action principle we note that all living organisms tend to live as long as possible (maximizing the second term in the product energy*time, and, in the meantime, to increase their vitality of quality of life (which, in a physical language, can be measured in terms of their free energy, therefore, maximizing the first term of the product energy*time, and so, maximizing the product yielding the action in the period of their lifetime.¹¹ This example illustrates that living organisms, since behaving on the basis of the greatest action principle, cannot be governed by the least action principle. Indeed, since the greatest action principle of biology is an extension of the least action principle, it cannot be reduced into the physical principle; biology must be an autonomous science. Biological entities make use of the least action principle as a means to biological ends. Therefore, it is the primary task of science and philosophy to realize the importance of the Bauerian theoretical biology, and work out theoretical biology according to its actual weight in the new, essentially complete scientific world picture.

ABOUT THE RELATION BETWEEN BIOLOGY
AND PHYSICS

Now if biology is not reducible to physics, then how can we conceive the fact that physical laws apply to all living organisms? How is it possible that the gross behavior of living organisms occurs accordingly to a different, biological principle, if physical laws apply to them? The paradox can be avoided if we allow that the initial conditions, which are the input data in physics, in case of biology have a further “degree of freedom”: they can vary in time in a suitable manner to result in biological behavior when as input data are attached to the physical laws.

The situation is the following. Biological behavior can be described, equivalently, in two different languages. One is in the language of biology. It tells that biological behavior is governed by the biological principle. The other is in the language of physics. It tells that the observed biological behavior is the result of physical laws, admitting that the input data of the physical laws is variable in such way that it results in the observed biological behavior. The only question that remains in this second case: what causes the input data to vary in a way that is unpredictable on the basis of physical laws? We are led to the fundamental problem of control theory: to govern a cybernetic system’s input in a suitable way to produce a given or prescribed output. Control theory considers problems like how to construct a rocket in order to make it able to follow an airplane governed by a human. In order to achieve that feat, control theory works with an additional free variable with values that correspond to the decisions of the agent. Certainly, if we allow that the input data are continuously injected into the equations of physics in a suitable manner to result in the prescribed biological behavior (for example, when you are thirsty and go for drink, you navigate yourself using many feedback processes), biology arises as the control theory of physics.

We found that we are living in a living Universe, which we distinguish from the physical universe with the capital letter. Yet, at the same time, it seems that life, as we know it, is rare or unique. Yet life should not be protein-based, since plasma life forms are also possible (Grandpierre 2008a, b). Indeed, if we look after life forms with the help of the exact criteria of life given by Bauer (above), then it is possible to see that even apparently inanimate matter can carry hidden, transient life forms on extremely long or short time scales. Indeed, absolutely sterile inanimateness seems to be a mere abstraction from the actual reality present in Nature. The Universe can be full with an extreme variety of cosmic life forms (Grandpierre 2008a). If so, life can be literally more widespread than exactly inanimate matter.

In this way, surprisingly, one can recognize that the three first principles we found plays a similar role to the ancient Chaldean first principles of (material) existence, life (or power) and Act (Majercik 2001); the primordial first principle Ilu (the One or the Good), unites three first principles, his three first manifestations: Anu (time, the universe, or matter), Hea (reason and life) and Bel (the creator, the governor of the organized universe; Lenormant 1999, 114). Moreover, the first principles of matter, life and self-consciousness were also recognized in ancient China (e.g., the jing, the material principle, chi, the life principle, and shen, the principle of spirit;

see e.g. Beinfeld and Korngold 1991). In ancient Hindu philosophy, a similar trinity is known under the term “three gunas” (the *sattva*, the quality of spirit; the *rajas*, the quality of life, and *tamas*, the quality of matter; Bhagavad Gita, Chap. 7, verses 12–14).

BIOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE, LOGIC AND LOGOS OF LIFE

My point is that the universal natural philosophy promises clearer understanding of the nature of logic, logos, and the “logos of life”, proposed by Tymieniecka. Logic is frequently equated with Aristotelian logic: the laws of logic are applied to the premise in order to obtain the logical conclusion. We point out that this approach shows a remarkable similarity to the approach of physics, in which the equations of physics are applied to input data. Machines work in a similar manner. We insert a coin, and the result comes out at the output; push a button, and the Mars bar appears. Machines are working mechanically, step-by step, linearly in an immutable order. On that basis, we can classify Aristotelian logic as mechanical. Now if biology is the control theory of physics, generalizing the input data, and injecting further input into the equations of physics during the process, than the following interesting idea surfaces: is it possible to generalize mechanical logic in the same sense which makes biology the control theory of physics? We think that the answer is: yes, and the generalized form of mechanical logic is nothing else but the logos of the ancient Greeks.

In order to proceed, we have to prepare the stage, at first we have to consider the following questions: What is the difference between mathematical and physical laws? “What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe?” (Hawking 1988, 174) We consider here that the essential difference between mathematical and physical laws is that mathematical laws represent lawful relations between abstract, mathematical properties, while physical laws represent lawful relations between observable, physical properties. The relation between the equations of physics and the physical laws is that the former exist in our mind, while the latter in Nature. In other words, the difference between physical equations and laws is that of map and territory.

All empirical sciences are built on the concept of “fact”. Facts, in contrast of non-facts, are manifestations of some existent entities. Therefore, it is necessary to discern correctly “facts” from things that are not facts. There are some universal criteria for that, like the criteria of consistency. When we consider whether a thing is a fact or not, we know a priori that a fact cannot contradict to the existence of other facts. Another criterion is systematic and universal confirmation or validation by observations as well as by theoretical knowledge. In order to illustrate the importance of theoretical knowledge in evaluating what counts as “fact” and what not, we note that e.g. the life principle is not yet accepted in science. The reason to reject it is not its immaterial nature, since all laws of Nature are immaterial. Yet, as Hempel (1966, 72) pointed out, the assumptions made by a scientific theory about underlying processes must be definite enough to permit the derivation of specific

implications concerning the phenomena that the theory is to explain. The doctrine about the life principle (Hempel, apparently, does not know Bauer's work; he refers to the ancient idea of "entelechy") fails on this account. It does not indicate under what circumstances the life principle will go into action and, specifically, in what way it will direct biological processes. This inadequacy of the life principle doctrine does not stem from the circumstance that the life principle is conceived as nonmaterial agency which cannot be seen or felt. This becomes clear when we contrast it with the explanation of the regularities of planetary and lunar motions by means of the Newtonian theory. Both accounts invoke nonmaterial agencies: one of them vital "forces", the other, gravitational ones. But Newton's theory includes specific assumptions, expressed in the law of gravitation and the laws of motion, which determine (a) what gravitational forces each of a set of physical bodies of given masses and positions will exert upon the others, and (b) what changes in their velocities and, consequently, in their locations will be brought about by these forces. It is this characteristic that gives the theory its power to explain previously observed uniformities and also to yield predictions and retrodictions. Thus, the theory was used by Halley to predict that a comet he had observed in 1682 would return in 1759, and to identify it retrodictively (Hempel 1966, 72). On that basis, we can deduce that gravity has a factual existence, its existence is a fact.

I point out that if theoretical biology can be formulated also in a mathematical form, and if it will be confirmed by all available empirical evidences, and capable of predicting yet unexplained phenomena, then, if applying the same kind of considerations as accepted in the case of theoretical physics, theoretical biology has to become an established science. This means that although we all experience the evidently observable facts that the behavior of living organisms is fundamentally different from that of physical objects, at present science does not accept the life principle just because it seems for most scientists and philosophers, including Hempel, that we do not know it in such an exact and empirically testable mathematical form as we know the laws of physics. I point out that the role of our—frequently incomplete—theoretical knowledge is many times decisive in our judgments about what we count as "fact" and what not. It is clear that Hempel did not know the work of Ervin Bauer, because for the Bauer-principle of life all the criteria he presented fulfils. It is clear that such a life principle should be accepted in science since it is not only known in a mathematical and testable form, but is consistent with all observations. In that case, the existence of the life principle must be regarded as a fact.

LOGIC IS THE BASIS AND PARTNER OF LAWS OF NATURE

From this point onward I want to regard logic in a wider sense, including not just only human logic. I mean that human logic is only an aspect of "natural logic" that belongs to the core of Nature. Natural logic acts on natural processes. Similarly to our human logic, which determines the right inferences, natural logic determines

what will occur in Nature. Now because we defined Nature as the self-consistent system of relations with observable phenomena, therefore natural logic must contain the rules by which the future events can be realized and built up into the self-consistent body of Nature. Among others, natural logic has two basic functions: it generates the possibilities and it selects from these possibilities the ones that are consistent with the whole body of Nature and the given situation in a way that its realization can be regarded as optimal on the basis of the first principles. Therefore, natural logic is in the following intimate relation with physical laws: it generates the possibilities of the world process, and selects from them the ones that can be realized by the physical laws, and so the function of physical laws is to realize them, i.e. attach the suitable physical properties to these possibilities selected by natural logic. The consequence of that is that physical laws cannot function separately from natural logic. Natural logic is the basis and a partner of physical laws. That part of natural logic, which generates the physical possibilities, will be termed as physical logic.

It becomes clear that it is natural logic that prepares the ground for establishing the relations (like physical laws) between such specific entities as the physical properties. Or, to put it differently, natural logic belongs to the physical laws. Regarding that human logic is suitable to reveal the conditions of truth, and put severe constraints on what can be realized and what not, assuming a parallelism between human and natural logic we can conceive natural logic as a basis and partner of the laws of Nature working out the conditions of realization of natural processes. We can conceive "physical logic" as working out the preconditions of realization of physical processes. In other words, "physical logic" (i.e. the logical aspect of the inseparable logic-physical law organic unit) can be regarded as the very basis of physical reality.

MECHANICAL LOGIC AND BIOLOGICAL LOGIC

In general, one can distinguish three versions of logic that correspond to the three fundamental natural sciences: the physical, the biological and the psychological. Since biological logic acts in Nature, it can act within our organisms, as we are members of the biological species *Homo Sapiens*, a part of Nature; therefore, biological logic can be present within us and shape our internal mental processes, so it can work in the process of our thinking. In this way, it can modify, if it is necessary, continuously the input conditions of mechanical logic, in co-operation with the biological principle. Moreover, the co-operation of natural logic and the laws of Nature that is responsible for the generation of *Homo Sapiens*, including self-consciousness, that is, psychological logic and the psychological principle, is responsible for the generation of human logic as a phenomenon of Nature, as a phenomenon of self-consciousness. Therefore, physical, biological and psychological logic acting in Nature can be regarded as the physical-biological-psychological basis of our human logic. Our result is that human logic is driven not only by the

autonomous part of self-consciousness, but also by a natural “force”: by natural logic and the laws of Nature.

We note that the riddle of creativity presents a paradox at the level of mechanical logic, since mechanical logic is programmable into a software of a computer, it represents only the surface of our knowledge. Actually, since self-consciousness is ultimately a natural phenomenon, there is a parallelism between natural and human logic. Therefore, in many cases it is not necessary to distinguish them when speaking about “logic”, at least in cases when what we say can refer to both context, the natural and the human as well. From now onwards, when we do not indicate about which logic are we speaking, the sentence can refer to both cases, either to the natural or to the human logic, or both.

Since mechanical logic works mechanically, it does not have a room for creativity. Although mechanical logic, like software programs, represents algorithmic complexity (Grandpierre 2008a), and so it is suitable to solve physical problems, it is not deep enough in order to account about creativity. We can realize that creativity must correspond to a deeper level of reality. Since the principle of creativity must be also consistent with the laws of logic, therefore this “creativity principle” represents the logic of reality in a fuller sense than the physical laws and mechanical logic. Therefore, it is useful to distinguish this more general creativity principle of logic from the usual term denoted by “logic” (which refers usually to mechanical logic).

We think that the most suitable term for this deeper creative logical principle is “logos”. Since we can regard that such creative principles like logos exist at a deeper level of reality than laws, we can regard that logos is the creative source of logic. Now since logos can be regarded as universally valid, it can be conceived as the basis and partner of the laws of Nature; therefore, we propose to consider it as the common basis and partner of the physical, biological and psychological laws.

Actually, the self-renewing logic that can recharge its input in the process is not mechanical; it can be conceived that self-renewing logic stands in a similar relation to mechanical logic as biology with physics. The creativity principle is what governs the renewal of logic within the continuously changing inner and outer conditions. The deepest level of logic can be conceived as being the creative logic.

We can consider that logos, in a narrow sense, can be identified with creative logic, or, in a wider sense, we can select the option to regard logos as logic in its dynamic, vital, organic fullness, the organic unit of creative, self-renewing and mechanical logic. We will refer to the former with the term “creative logos”, and to the latter simply as “logos”. Therefore, we propose to regard logos as extending from the creative, principal level of reality, through the level of laws of Nature, until the phenomenal level. At the level of laws logos has three versions: physical (or mechanical, formal), biological and psychological (or self-conscious) logos. At the phenomenal level logos is not creative and is not problem-solving, but simply perceptive, self-consistently and consistently with all the deeper levels of logos (we can refer to this kind of phenomenal logos with the term perceptive logos).

ANIMATING PRINCIPLE

The origin of the animating principle goes back to prehistoric animism, frequently regarded as the first religion or wisdom of mankind (Kirk, Raven and Schofield 1983, 154). Heraclitus (ca. 535–475 B.C.) considered that “the Logos is a component of all existing thing, yet has a single collective being: it is a component of order or structure or arrangement, not the whole of an object’s structure or shape but that part of it which connects it with everything else. Since there is one common rule or law which underlies the behavior (ginestai) of all things, then men are subject to this law and, if they want to live effectively, must follow it” (Kirk 1975, 58). This ancient idea fits well to our proposal about the existence of natural logic. It became a familiar saying, frequently attributed to Einstein: “The most incomprehensible thing about the world is that it is comprehensible.” The solution of this problem is not complicated: the world is comprehensible because we are a part of Nature, and so the universal laws of Nature are present also in our organism.

Recently, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (2010/11) developed a remarkable system of idea about the “ontopoietic principle”, which is also called as the “logos of life” (Tymieniecka 2009). The first naming seems to indicate an ontological principle characterized by its creativity (poiesis). The latter term indicates the twofold character of the “logos of life”, being reasonfule and playing the role of the life principle. She claims that the root of the logos is in its creative imaginative metamorphosis (Tymieniecka 2010/11, p. 12). This fits our view to regard logos as including its deepest level ingredient, the creative principle, yet including something more as well, namely, in our picture it includes physical, biological, psychological, mechanical and perceptual logic. She considers that the living agent’s experience advances along the steps of the logos following its constructive devices from one step to the next, timing their deployment according to its constructive completion, that these processes reach the point of tying the knot in a synthesizing objectifying act of the logos. (ibid., 18). Another remarkable and detailed agreement between our results corresponds to the question what is the relation of human logic, natural logic and the ontological principles. Tymieniecka points out that “The cognitive/conscious constitution of objectivity is convertible with the natural functional root of existential generation. In fact, these movements are inseparable, even if in abstraction they are distinct.” (ibid., 19–20) We find here again a surprisingly detailed agreement with our picture. Tymieniecka speaks about the natural functional root of existential generation, which in our terms is natural logic, or natural logos. She found that the cognitive/conscious constitution of objectivity is convertible with this natural entity. This is interpreted in our framework as the psychological (self-conscious) aspect of the natural logic acting in Nature is convertible with the joint working of the natural logic, co-operating with the first principles of Nature, with the ontological principles of physics, biology and psychology. This means that Tymieniecka found that the logos and laws of Nature are acting in co-operation. As we found, logos is the basis and partner of the laws of Nature.

Tymieniecka (2010/11, 23–24) writes: “the logos of life in its intrinsic metamorphosis during the evolutionary course of the individualizing genesis of beingness

unfolds numerous modalities that reach realms beyond those geared to survival and which culminate in the full-fledged unfolding of the human creative virtualities.” This translates in our picture into the indication that the first principle of biology acts on the same manner as the least action principle of physics, by virtual particles that are suitable to map instantaneously the whole of the Universe (because they exist not in the usual 3+1 dimensional space-time, but in the infinite dimensional Hilbert space, see Grandpierre 2007), securing a kind of instantaneous “primary perception” (Grandpierre 1997). Tymieniecka adds that “Having reached beyond the existential/evolutionary parameters of vitally significant (survival-oriented) horizons to the spheres of communal/societal life, the creative logos now throws up spiritual and, lastly, sacral horizons of experience that actually surpass the now narrow confines of the existential horizon.” All these findings of Tymieniecka nicely fits with our indications telling that the biological principle is the “greatest action principle” (in terms of physical properties) and the “greatest happiness principle” (Grandpierre 2010/11), in terms of biological properties. From our formulation of the greatest happiness principle (Grandpierre 2007, 2011) it is clear that the greatest happiness principle has an integral character, summing up happiness for our lifetime, therefore it has two basic ingredients, one is lifetime, the other is life’s quality or happiness. This latter factor is the one that point out beyond survival, towards communal/societal life, throwing up spiritual and sacral horizons.

In summarizing our comparison of the biological principle and Tymieniecka’s logos of life, we found that both have a twofold nature, conceived as consisting from two basic constituents, (a) logos, having a metaphysical status, preparing the conditions for the activity of the first principles of Nature, being the basis for the actions of laws of Nature, and (b) the first principle of life or the “natural law” aspect of the “logos of life”, having an ontological status and belonging to the natural sciences. Both our results and of Tymieniecka’s indicate that these two factors, logos and the ontological principle, are in actual reality inseparable, they are partners of each other, co-operate in their activity. In other words, we can say that the biological principle has a basic logical or logicoic character, or that the “logos of life” can be identified with the biological principle.

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NOTES

¹ I prefer to use the term scientific “world picture” instead of “world view” because I want to arrive to a picture that we can agree on, even when using different views. I regard worldview as the world picture plus the factors arising from our personal angle.

- ² In a process that repeats itself in a loop-like manner until it distils to the most concentrated and clear form.
- ³ The picture is always less detailed than Nature itself.
- ⁴ At some point, astronomy must come into the picture. Since the basis of the world picture is the Universe, it must give a scientific picture about the world in its entirety, therefore you cannot omit astronomy.
- ⁵ The fundamental laws in physics, namely, that of classical mechanics, electromagnetism, thermodynamics, theory of gravitation, and quantum physics, including quantum field theories and string theory. In classical mechanics, the Euler-Lagrange equations, in electromagnetism, the Maxwell equations, the second law of thermodynamics, the Schrödinger-equation of quantum mechanics etc.
- ⁶ At present, biology, the science of life, is widely conceived in a restricted manner.
- ⁷ The question of self-consciousness can only be dealt with after the question of biology, which we are discussing in this chapter, is solved.
- ⁸ According to Encyclopedia Britannica, these four views present metaphysics as: (1) an inquiry into what exists, or what really exists; (2) the science of reality, as opposed to appearance; (3) the study of the world as a whole; (4) a theory of first principles.
- ⁹ The integral refers to a sum total between the initial and final states. In the following example the sum total is of the quantity of "action", which arises if you add up all the energy invested in each of the time intervals of the flight, multiplied with the length of each corresponding individual time interval.
- ¹⁰ Biological teleology is a teleology of consciousness, so it can be different from human teleology which can be a self-conscious teleology, too. We do not have to underestimate consciousness, which in many cases can be much more efficient than the self-consciously controlled and narrowed self-consciousness.
- ¹¹ The first thing we as humans would automatically opt for is to prolong our lives; but we do also take the quality of that life into consideration. Quantity (length) is then also a function of quality (happiness, energy, vitality).

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Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, President; Thomas Ryba, Vice-President

The 60th International Congress of Phenomenology

Place: Hosted by the University of Bergen, Norway

Dates: August 10–13, 2010

P R O G R A M

**Topic: LOGOS AND LIFE PHENOMENOLOGY/ONTOPOIESIS REVIVING
ANTIQUITY**

Place: The Congress begins with an opening reception on the afternoon of Tuesday, August 10th 16:00 – 18:00 to be held in the Reception Hall at Jusbygget (The Law Faculty Building) address: Magnus Lagabøtespllass 1.

Dates: The scholarly sessions will take place on August 11, 12 and 13, 2010. All of the scholarly sessions will be held at Jusbygget (The Law Faculty Building) address: Magnus Lagabøtespllass 1.

Scientific Committee:

ARGENTINA: Anibal Pedro Luis Fornari

ITALY: Daniela Verducci

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UNITED STATES: Kathleen Haney, Thomas Ryba, Robert Sweeney, Patricia Trutty-Coohill, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, President

Place: Hosted by University of Bergen, Norway, Department of Philosophy

Local Organization Committee: Ane Faugstad Aaro, Anne Granberg, Egil H. Olsvik, Johannes Servan

Chaired by: Konrad Rokstad

Program Presided by: Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, World Phenomenology Institute

P R O G R A M

Wednesday, August 11, 2010

9:00 – 9:30, Jusbygget (The Law Faculty Building), address: Magnus Lagabøtesplass 1, Auditorium 3

Registration

Wednesday, August 11

10:00 – 13:30, Jusbygget, Auditorium 3

INAUGURAL LECTURE

Chaired by: Vigdis Songe-Møller, University of Bergen, Norway

FROM HERACLITUS TO THE ONTOPOIETIC LOGOS AND THE ALL

Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, World Phenomenology Institute, United States

PLENARY SESSION I

Chaired by: Patricia Trutty-Coohill, Sienna College, United States

WAS PLATO A PLATONIST?

Konrad Rokstad, University of Bergen, Norway

THE LIFE OF BEING, FOUND AGAIN. WITH THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE OF ANNA-TERESA TYMIENIECKA.

Daniela Verducci, Università degli Studi di Macerata, Italy

THREE CRITIQUES OF REASON PROJECTS WITH REFERENCE TO ANTIQUITY: I. KANT AND THE PLATONIC IDEAS, E. HUSSERL AND THE MNEMOSINEAN ENTICEMENT, A-T. TYMIENIECKA AND THE DYONISIAN LOGOS

Ella Buceniece, University of Latvia

THE 'MODERN' CONCEPT OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE REVIVAL OF ANTIQUITY

Oliver W. Holmes, Wesleyan University, United States

13:30 – 14:30

Lunch

WORKING SESSIONS

Wednesday, August 11

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 1 (Room 404)

SESSION I: LOGOS AND LIFE

Chaired by: Thomas Ryba, Purdue University, United States

THE EXISTENTIALISTIC SUBJECT OF TODAY

Simen Oyen, University of Bergen, Norway

RE-TURING TO THE REAL: PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROPRIATIONS OF PLATO'S
'IDEAS' AND THE ALLEGORY OF THE CAVE

Robert Switzer, The American University in Cairo, Egypt

LIVING LIFE AND MAKING LIFE

Andreas Brenner, Universitat Basel, Switzerland

MAN'S WORLD AND LOGOS AS FEELING

Manjulika Ghosh, University of North Bengal, India

THE FEAST OF REASON (PLATO) OR THE REASON OF LIFE (S. KIERKEGARRD AND
A-T. TYMIENIECKA)?

Velga Vevere, University of Latvia

GIBT ES EIN MATERIALES APRIORI?" MIT SCHLICKS KRITIK AN DER
PHANOMENOLOGIE UBER DAS VERHALTNIS ZWISCHEN SPRACHE UND VERNUNFT
NACHZUDENKEN ANFANGEN

Wei Zhang, Sun Yat-sen University, China

Wednesday, August 11

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 3 (Room 412)

SESSION II: LOGOS AND EDUCATION

Chaired by: Witold Plotka, University of Gdansk, Poland

THE IDEA OF PAIDEIA IN THE CONTEXT OF ONTOPOIESIS OF LIFE

Rimma Kurenkova, Evgeny Plekhanov, Elena Rogacheva, Vladimir Pedagogical Institute, Russia

ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Semiha Akinci, Anadolu University, Turkey

HUMAN SPIRITUALITY IN THE FACE OF CONTEMPORARY DILEMMAS OF THE
AXIOLOGY OF LIFE

Zofia Fraczek, University of Rzeszow, Poland

THE ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND OPTIMISTS AND PESSIMISTS

Ayse Sibel Turkum, Anadolu University, Turkey

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF JOHN DEWEY'S PEDAGOGY: LESSONS FOR
TOMORROW

Elena Rogacheva, Vladimir Pedagogical Institute, Russia

THINKING CONDITIONED BY LANGUAGE AND TRADITION

Mara Stafecka, United States

HOW TO CONDUCT LIFE (ARETE AND PHRONESIS)

J. C. Couceiro-Bueno, Univ. de la Coruna, Campus Elvina s/n, Spain

Wednesday, August 11

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 4 (Room 413)

SESSION III: HUSSERL IN THE CONTEXT OF TRADITION

Chaired by: Clara Mandolini, Università degli studi di Macerata, Italy

OBSCURITIES ON THE IDEALISTIC SIDE?? - PLATONIC MISCONCEPTIONS IN HUSSERL

Egil H. Olsvik, University of Bergen, Norway

THE REASON OF THE CRISIS. HUSSERL'S RE-EXAMINATION OF THE CONCEPT OF RATIONALITY

Witold Plotka, University of Gdansk, Poland

LOGOS AS SIGNIFIER: HUSSERL IN THE CONTEXT OF TRADITION

Koushik Joardar, University of North Bengal, India

THE AXIOLOGY OF ONTOPOIESIS AND ITS RATIONALITY

Susi Ferrarello, University of Rome, La Sapienza, Italy

ANTIQUITY AS A MEANING-AUTOMATON: A CULTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Tonu Viik, Tallinn University, Estonia

THE RECOVERY OF THE SELF. PLOTINUS ON LOGOS AND SELF-COGNITION

Magdalena Plotka, Department of the History of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, Warsaw, Poland

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CATEGORY OF THE <<NOW>> AND THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF TIME IN HUSSERLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY

Cezary J. Olbromski, University Marii Curie-Sklodowskiej, Poland

Wednesday, August 11

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 5 (Room 414)

SESSION IV: COGNITION, CREATIVITY, EMBODIMENT

Chaired by: Egil H. Olsvik, University of Bergen, Norway

HUMAN MANIFESTATION OF THE LOGOS OF LIFE: CREATIVITY, SPEECH, THINKING
Zaiga Ikere, Daugavpils University, Latvia

POUND, PROPERTIUS AND LOGOPOEIA
Lars Morten Gram, University of Bergen, Norway

ANTIQUITIES OF THE BODY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CULTURAL
DISCOURSE ON EMBODIMENT BEHIND MODERNITY
Mary Jeanne Larrabee, DePaul University, United States

PHENOMENOLOGY: CREATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE
Klymet Selvi, Anadolu University, Turkey

PERSPICUOUS REPRESENTATION
Aydan Turanli, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey

ORIGIN AND FEATURES OF PHYSICAL CREATIONS IN AN ONTOPOIETIC
PERSPECTIVE
Mina Sehdev, Macerata, Italy

Wednesday, August 11

Location to be Announced

SESSION V: NATURE, WORLD, ORDER

Chaired by: Ane Faugstad Aaro, University of Bergen, Norway

NATURE AND ARTIFICE IN MANIFESTING/CONSTITUTING THE BEING
Francesco Totaro, Università degli studi di Macerata, Italy

SEMIOTICS OF BEING AND UEXKULLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY
Morten Tonnessen, University of Tartu, Estonia

THE BEGINNING OF THE CONTINUOUS MOVEMENT IN DESCARTES' FIRST WORKS
Daria Carloni, Italy

MOVEMENT AND RHYTHM AS PART OF THE FOUNDATIONAL DYNAMIC PRINCIPLE
OF LIFE (FROM PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY TO PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE)
Majja Kule, University of Latvia

LINES OF REVISITING AND REINTEGRATION ABOUT THE ANCIENT SENSE OF
CONTINUITY BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE BY THE CONTEMPORARY
CONSTRUCTIVISM.
Catia Giaconi, Università degli Studi di Macerata, Italy

Thursday, August 12, 2010

9:00 – 13:30, Jusbygget (The Law Faculty Building), address: Magnus Lagabøtespllass 1, Auditorium 3

PLENARY SESSION II

Chaired by: Halil Turan, Orta Dogu Teknik Universitesi, Turkey

THE CRITICAL CONSENT OF LOGOS TO LIFE – PAUL RICOEUR REVIVING ANTIQUITY –

Anibal Fornari, Universidad Catolica de Santa Fe, Argentina

LOGOS AND LIFE, PHENOMENOLOGY/ONTOPOIESIS REVIVING ANTIQUITY AND PHILOSOPHY IN ITS ORIGINATING SENSE

Erkut Sezgin, Istanbul Kultur University, Turkey

‘SOPHIA’ AS ‘TELOS’ IN THE ‘ONTOPOIETIC PERSPECTIVE’

Carmen Cozma, University “Al.I.Cuza”, Romania

GIVENNESS AFTER LEVINAS, MARION, AND TYMIENIECKA; LEVINAS: CONSTITUTION, GIVENNESS AND TRANSCENDENCE

Thomas Ryba, Purdue University, United States

THE WORLD IN THE HEART: ANTIQUITY AND TYMIENIECKA’S ONTOPOIETIC LOGOS

Olga Louchakova, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, United States

Thursday, August 12

14:30

SIGHTSEEING

Friday, August 13, 2010

9:00 – 13:30, Jusbygget (The Law Faculty Building), address: Magnus Lagabøtes plass 1, Auditorium 3

PLENARY SESSION III: UNIVERSAL ORDER, NATURE, REASON

Chaired by: Konrad Rokstad, University of Bergen, Norway

THE PLACE: WHERE WE SEE THE WORLD AS A LIMITED WHOLE,
Sibel Oktar, Ozyegin University, Turkey

POWERFUL FORCE BETWEEN VIRTUALITY AND ENACTMENT
Clara Mandolini, Università degli studi di Macerata, Italy

VISUALIZING ANNA-TERESA TYMIENIECKA'S APPROACH WITH STRING THEORY
Patricia Trutty-Coo Hill, Siena College, United States

THE BIOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND THE LOGOS OF LIFE OF
NATURAL PHILOSOPHY: A COMPARISON AND THE PERSPECTIVES OF UNIFYING THE
SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE
Attila Grandpierre, Konkoly Observatory, Hungary

UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD AND THE COORDINATE SYSTEM ON THE
BASIS OF LIMIT DYNAMICAL EQUILIBRIUM
Nikolay Kozhevnikov, Yakut State University, Russia

Friday, August 13

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 1 (Room 404)

SESSION VI: LOGOS AND ILLUMINATION

Chaired by: Simen Oyen, University of Bergen, Norway

WHAT WAS A CLASSIC UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE 20th CENTURY?
Tansu Acik, University of Ankara, Turkey

PLATO'S CONCEPT OF TIME IN THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF
EDMUND HUSSERL AND ANNA-TERESA TYMIENIECKA
Maria Bielawka, Poland

EDITH STEIN AND THE SEMANTICS OF *LOGOS*: THE TRANSPOSITION IN
ONTOPOIETICAL TERMS OF ARISTOTLE'S LOGIC CONCEPTION WITHIN *FINITE
AND ETERNAL BEING*
Maria-Chiara Teloni, Macerata University, Italy

THE EFFECT OF ILLUMINATION ON THE WAY BACK FROM ARISTOTLE TO PLATO
Salahaddin Khalilov, Azerbaijan Universiteti

THE RETURN TO PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS
Konul Bunyadzade, East West Research Center, Azerbaijan

LOGOS AND HUMOR IN ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY. A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
APPROACH
Anna Malecka, AGH - University of Science and Technology in Krakow, Poland

Friday, August 13

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 3 (Room 412)

SESSION VII: INTERSUBJECTIVITY, FREEDOM, JUSTICE

Chaired by: Anne Granberg, University of Bergen, Norway

MAKING HISTORY OUR OWN – APPROPRIATION AND TRANSGRESSION OF THE INTENTIONAL HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Johannes Servan, University of Bergen, Norway

SWINGING NOTIONS AND VITALITY OF UNIVERSAL MORAL VALUES IN THE POST-MODERN WORLD: CREATIVITY OF THE LOGOS OF LIFE

Jan Szmyd, University of Krakow, Poland

GOODNESS OF GOOD AS LIFE. A REREADING OF LEVINAS'S USE OF NEOPLATONISM

Sergio Labate, Università degli Studi di Macerata, Italy

THE WORLDLY ETHICS OF HUSSERL AND PATOCKA

Michael Gubser, James Madison University, United States

THE QUESTION OF THE SUBJECT: JAN PATOCKA'S PHENOMENOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION

Saulius Geniusas, James Madison University, United States

ONTOPOIESIS AND NARRATIVE ETHICS: AN ACUTUALIZATION OF ARISTOTLE'S ACCOUNT OF IMAGINATION

Silvia Pierosara, University of Macerata, Italy

Friday, August 13

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 4 (Room 413)

SESSION VIII: CREATIVITY AND THE ONTOPOIETIC LOGOS

Chaired by: Johannes Servan, University of Bergen, Norway

BLANCHOT'S INAUGURAL POETICS: VISIBILITY AND THE INFINITE CONVERSATION

William D. Melaney, The American University in Cairo, Egypt

LOVE OF LIFE, TRAGEDY AND SOME CHARACTERS IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Halil Turan, Orta Dogu Teknik Universitesi, Turkey

THE IDEAL AND THE REAL: BRIDGING THE GAP

Brian Grassom, Gray's School of Art, United Kingdom

HISTORICITY, NARRATIVE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MONSTROSITY IN JOHN GARDNER'S "GRENDL"

Firat Karadas, Mustafa Kemal Universitesi, Turkey

THE POWER OF DANCE/MOVEMENT AS A MEANS OF EXPRESSION

Ali Ozturk, Andolu University, Turkey

Friday, August 13

14:30 – 18:45, Jusbygget, Seminarrom 5 (Room 414)

SESSION IX: SEEKING THE LOGOS IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

Chaired by: Zaiga Ikere, Daugavpils University, Latvia

RABINDRANTAH TAGORE AND HIS RELIGION OF POET

Grzegorz Okraszewski, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Poland

TATTVAM ASI” - THE RELATION BETWEEN SELF AND THE UNIVERSE IN ADVAITA VEDANTA SYSTEM (ESPECIALLY IN SANKARA’S PHILOSOPHY)

Kinga Kleczek-Semerjak, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Poland

THE CONCEPT OF THE ‘COMPLETED MIND’ (CHENG XIN) IN PHILOSOPHY OF ZHUANGZI

Ada Augustyniak, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Poland

SELF SUSTAINED BY THE OTHER AS AN AUTHENTIC MODE OF EXISTENCE: THE THOUGHT OF SHIRAN

Robert Szuksztul, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Poland

“THEOSIS” AND LIFE IN NICOLAI BERDYAEV’S PHILOSOPHY

Katarzyna Stark, Poland

A SELF-CREATING AS THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE UNIVERSE - SOME REMARKS ON VEDIC COSMOGENIC HYMNS AND UPANISHADIC CONCEPTIONS OF ATMAN

Malgorzata Ruchel, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Poland

THE PROJECT OF LIFE IN BUDDHISM AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Remigiusz Krol, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Poland

THE WORLD(S) IN THE WORD(S): ZOROASTER’S ORAL POETRY AS AN ICONIC MEDIUM OF REVELATORY REALIZATION

Martin Schwartz, University of California, Berkeley, United States

Friday, August 13

19:00, Jusbygget, Auditorium 3

CLOSING SESSION

Presided by: Thomas Ryba, Purdue University, United States
Carmen Cozma, University “A.I. Cuza”, Romania
Erkut Sezgin, Istanbul Kultur University, Turkey