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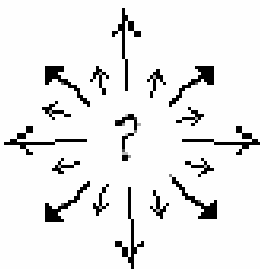
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# **I. SOME REFLECTIONS ON MODERN PHILOSOPHY**

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## **Freedom after Kant**

Tom Rockmore (Duquesne University)

This is a paper about the problem of freedom after Kant. In Kant, this problem occurs for the most part in two distinct ways. In his theory of morality, with respect to the freedom of the subject to choose and to act autonomously, hence selflessly, according to the principles of reason; second, in life in the city through a theory of the political context that will lead to freedom. Several hundred years after Kant, the idea of moral freedom, as he understands it, has lost its edge. Yet the idea of political freedom is, I believe, still as central now as in Kant's time. This paper will examine Kant's idea of political freedom, mainly through his view of what he calls perpetual peace. I will argue that the problem has lost none of its urgency but that his proposed solution no longer seems interesting. I will further suggest that in an age of economic globalization even the problem itself has basically changed in a way that calls not for a better form of the Kantian approach but for another, different way to analyze this theme.

I will begin with a few comments on Kant's moral theory and then turn to his view of perpetual peace as his central view of political freedom. I will be suggesting that his theory is basically unclear. It is not clear if he favors a federalist or a non-federalist approach, each of which has its difficulties, or some combination of both. I will further point to several difficulties in Kant's approach. First, there is the very idea of a transcendental analysis. A second, related theme is Kant's assumption that there is a single solution good for all times and places. Lastly, there is the change in society in our increasingly globalized world, which implies that a solution that fails to consider the economic dimension of the modern world would itself be part of the problem.

## **On the Kantian approach to morality**

Kant is an outstanding example of a philosopher committed to treating all philosophical themes on the *a priori* plane; that is, prior to and independent of experience, hence without regard either to the prevailing situation or to later changes. Kant's influence has remained strong over the centuries but its appeal differs according to the domain. His approach arguably still remains up to date in epistemology, which is still largely focused on Kantian themes discussed in terms of Kantian distinctions and often in Kantian vocabulary. This is less clear in the practical realms as concerns questions of morality and related themes.

Kant believes he has forever resolved questions of what one ought to do. However, one is struck by the lack of interest in Kant's wake in an *a priori* strategy for morality or even by a moral strategy at all. In Kant's wake, the discussion about what one ought to do has fragmented into an increasing number of disparate approaches that often reflect different conceptions of what the realm of morality encompasses and different conceptions of its relation to the world in which we live.

On the moral plane, the evolution of society takes us ever further from the Kantian model. Kant, who believes he has definitively resolved the moral problem, denies he is thinking only in the perspective of his own time. Yet the Kantian model, including its moral dimension, naturally reflects the mores, the inclinations, the problems and the concerns of his historical moment. The social changes occurring since Kant have not reinforced but on the contrary only weakened his absolutist conception of morality. There is still interest in legitimizing the principles utilized to justify the most varied kinds of action. Yet probably no one, except for a few Kant scholars, dreams of formulating a transcendental deduction. What remains of Kantian morality is a philosophical approach, a strategy for morality leading to a result that, except for a few exceptions, no longer appears very interesting, and which is neither acceptable nor accepted according to current standards and norms. For since we no longer favor a deontological approach, we tend to emphasize results more than inflexible principles.

Kantian morality derives from his application of his epistemological theory to the practical domain. Kant's epistemological theory depends on treating the subject as a mere epistemological principle underlying an ab-

stract analysis of the possibility of knowledge. This conception of the subject, which is formulated to avoid what later comes to be called psychologism, is wholly different from a finite human being.

The development of the debate after Kant immediately substitutes a richer conception of the subject increasingly approaching finite human being, which is already central in British empiricism, for instance in Hume. Fichte plays a key role in this process. The Fichtean subject seems to me on the contrary more acceptable. Fichte emphasizes that the subject has an innate tendency that leads to the progressive realization of rationality through human activity in a social context.

Fichte sees freedom as arising through the striving of one or more individuals to go beyond the limits represented by their surroundings in realizing themselves in a social context. In this way he partially responds to Kant, who has a more complex, arguably less satisfactory understanding of human freedom. Kant regards freedom as a precondition for morality since the moral subject must be free to choose the principle governing the particular action. He further regards freedom not as a precondition but as a result attained in a political context. He describes his theory of political freedom in his account of perpetual peace.

### **Kant on freedom through perpetual peace**

The present century, which is still in its beginning stages, gives every impression of being as filled with wars of all kinds as its predecessor. Kant's time was very different from ours. A number of Kant's contemporaries and near contemporaries, including Rousseau, believed in what the latter called the project of perpetual peace. In his account of this idea, Rousseau was reacting to the view of Charles-Irénée Castel, better known as the Abbé de Saint-Pierre. In criticizing Louis XIV at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Saint-Pierre proposed a theory of constitutional reform of the monarchy.

Saint-Pierre limited his initial project of universal peace to Europe only. Hobbes suggests unity within a state in order to protect individuals. Saint-Pierre suggests unity between states. In choosing federation over community, he makes a choice between two possibilities that later has seemed difficult to carry out. The distinction between federation and community presents two possibilities before which Kant, who is apparently un-

able to choose, hesitates. This choice continues to define the problem of how sovereign countries are to come together to make peace.

Kant's theory of perpetual peace, which is not contained in any single text, emerges in a series of writings from his mature period. These include his "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose" (1784) prior to the Revolution, and then during the Revolution in "Doctrine of Right" (1790). He returns to this theme immediately after the Revolution in "On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice" (1793). He again treats this problem in the wake of the Revolution in "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch". And, in nearing the end of his philosophical career, he once again studies the problem of peace in "The Metaphysical First Principles of the Doctrine of Right" (*Metaphysik der Sitten: Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Rechtslehre*, (1797). In the "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View" (1784), Kant suggests that human history tends toward a hidden goal, unknown to individuals, but contained in nature that either leads toward the goal of perpetual peace or, if it does not, can usefully be regarded as if it is doing so. His assumption, which implicitly appeals to the ideal of social progress, consists in the idea that rational beings enter into a society in which all antagonism is later overcome through "a perfectly just civil [*sic*] constitution."<sup>1</sup> This further requires relations among states,<sup>2</sup> whose "friction" is overcome through what Kant, anticipating developments in the twentieth century, calls a league of nations. According to Kant, if we can undertake a rational form of politics in arriving at a no less rational relation among nations, then and only then can we expect to realize nature's secret plan through peace, "a universal cosmopolitan condition".<sup>3</sup> Not surprisingly, since Kant's analysis is a priori, his concept of a league of nations remains vague. Kant continues to wrestle with this problem in other writings. Later, in his *Anthropology* (*Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, 1798), where he describes a cosmopolitan society as a regulative but not a constitu-

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<sup>1</sup> See the Fifth Thesis in Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View" in *Kant: Political Writings*, edited by H. S. Reiss, translated by H. B. Nisbet (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 45-46.

<sup>2</sup> Seventh thesis, *ibid.*, pp. 47-49.

<sup>3</sup> Eighth thesis, *ibid.*, pp. 50-51.



tive idea, he suggests one can only tend toward but not fully realize it.<sup>4</sup>

**The (social) contract as the foundation of the state:  
“Theory and Practice”**

Kant’s overall argument about perpetual peace and many of the main points he later develops are arguably anticipated in his initial, brief treatment of the problem. In subsequent texts, Kant works out other aspects of his approach, pointing to and leading away from the later article “Perpetual Peace”. In his discussion of history, Kant’s central insight is that a just state can be guaranteed (though perhaps not happiness) through a rational and hence perfectly just civic constitution. By “constitution” he understands a juridical form of the social contract that, for Rousseau, supposedly incarnates the general will. Any constitution is by definition a kind of contract. In “Theory and Practice” Kant focuses on the just civic constitution, his term for the more commonly used social contract, which was left vague in the account of history. This new discussion is important in three ways: for an understanding, as the title suggests, of the relation of theory to practice, more precisely the link between Kant’s a priori approach and experience; for an understanding of Kant’s initial reaction to the French Revolution; and for his continuing effort to understand the conditions of perpetual peace. I will concentrate here on the idea of a contract.

In his remarks on the concept of a (social) contract, Kant addresses a concept already developed by Grotius, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and others. Kant’s view of a contract is meant at a minimum to navigate between the views of Hobbes, for which the state of perpetual war impels individuals to enter into society to seek peace; Locke, who claims that one explicitly or tacitly consents in entering into society;<sup>5</sup> and Rousseau, who notes that in society we are not free, hence not at peace.

Kant sketches his view of the social contract in the second section of his essay on “Theory and Practice” and explicitly criticizes Hobbes. In *De*

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<sup>4</sup> See Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, translated by V. L. Dowdell, revised and edited by H. H. Rudnick, with an introduction by F. P. Van De Pitte (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), p. 249.

<sup>5</sup> Second Treatise, in John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, with introduction, and notes by Peter Laslett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 392-393.

*Cive*, where Hobbes provides a more compact, earlier form of the argument which he later developed in the *Leviathan*, he is usually said to derive natural law from reason and biblical doctrine, the social contract from natural law, forms of government, the duties of the sovereign or absolute monarch, and citizen from the social contract.

Abandoning earlier terminology of a just civic constitution, Kant now says that society is formed by a contract. Unlike other contracts, a society (*pactum sociale*) is formed by a constitution (*constitution civilis*). Social contracts unite individuals in ends they in fact share as distinguished from an end they ought to share. The latter is found only in a society that is also a civil state, or commonwealth. Such a state instantiates relations among individuals according to the highest end, namely the right of each to what is due to that person and protection against attack by others as secured through law.

The civil state, as distinguished from a lawful state, is based on three principles. First, since the aim is reason, not happiness, no one can compel anyone to be happy. Second, all individuals have equal and inalienable legal rights, which can be forfeited only through criminal behavior, and all hereditary privilege is excluded. The basic law can come only from the people's will [*Volkswillen*], his translation of Rousseau's *volonté générale*. Kant qualifies this claim in noting that an entire people cannot be expected to reach unanimity. It follows that a contract need not and in fact cannot exist, since it is only, in Kantian terminology, an idea of reason, which guides the legislator who must act as if every citizen had consented to the law.

Since all law is inherently rational, Kant claims, with an eye to the French Revolution, once a contract is established, it cannot be abrogated, for instance, to seek happiness in some other way, since the result would be mere anarchy. The only legitimate case would be if the general will actually existed, which is counterfactual. He specifically disagrees here with Hobbes' contention that the sovereign has no contractual obligations toward the people. Yet, unlike Hobbes, Kant also thinks that, other than coercion, the people do have inalienable rights against the head of state, for instance the right to publicize their disagreement if the ruler makes a mistake. The difference is important. Unlike Hobbes, who bases the emergence from the

state of nature into society on the practical desire for protection from violence, Kant insists on a priori reason as furnishing principles of association endowed with binding force on all individuals. In effect, for mere force, which is not binding, he substitutes reason, which is necessary, hence always binding. Indeed, in Kant's opinion, the resort to force simply undoes the legality of a constitution.

Kant treats the constitution of the state as a contract, which if it is rational, guarantees at least peace, as distinguished from happiness. The contract founds the state and, by extension, the relation between states. Of specific interest here is that Kant thinks that by definition any rational state must incarnate the general will, hence unanimity among the citizens, though, since this is impossible, any state must depend on a majority, hence can never be rational. This gives a counterfactual ring to Kant's claim that a state must incarnate reason, since, on his own admission, none can, or at least none can in the way that he insists on. Hence, one can infer on Kantian grounds that his theory of the rational state necessarily fails the test of practice, which he "officially" examines in this text.

### **Kant's "Doctrine of Right" (1790) and the theme of peace**

In the Doctrine of Right, which precedes Perpetual Peace, Kant provides a highly systematic analysis that is interesting in itself and partially relevant to themes he later works out under the latter heading. Kant is very clear here in indicating that "right" has two presuppositions: acting freely according to a universal law, and acting in a way consistent with the freedom of others.<sup>6</sup> Though Kant goes on to develop his view much further, the consequence that morality requires an international federation already follows from this initial principle. To put the point differently, for Kant the private morality of the individual leads ultimately to universal international law that is binding on all states understood to be freely associated within a federation.

Kant's treatise is very interesting and often very detailed. In passing, he discusses many topics, including his famous definition of marriage as entailing the exclusive use of each other's sexual organs (§27), the nature of

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<sup>6</sup> See Doctrine of Right and Universal Principle of Right in *Kant: Political Writings*, pp. 133-134

money (§31), and what a book is (§31). He takes up the theme of perpetual peace in three places in this text. In §53, where he discusses the rights of nations, he distinguishes the right to go to war, right during war, and right after war. As concerns the latter, he remarks that its aim lies in leaving war behind through a common constitution establishing perpetual peace.<sup>7</sup> This passage is noteworthy in pointing out that for Kant the aim of war is to establish perpetual peace, not merely peace, or to right some alleged wrong. More interesting is Kant's effort to link peace to a common constitution, a document in principle concerning all parties, that is, all those parties which having left the state of nature behind fall within the state.

Kant amplifies this idea in §61: Perpetual Peace and a Permanent Congress of Nations. Kant, who uses the term "state" in different ways, here applies the distinction between the state of nature and the nation to the relation between different states. Just as peace is lacking in the state of nature, so the realization of, or approximation to, perpetual peace requires a "union of states" or again "a permanent congress of nations" as illustrated in the Assembly of the States-General at The Hague in the first half of the eighteenth century. This Assembly is the parliament of the Netherlands, which grew out of an initial meeting in Bruges in 1464. Starting in 1593, until 1795 regular meetings were held in Brussels in which each of the seven provinces had a single vote. In his discussion, Kant here adopts the US as his preferred model on the grounds that, unlike the transient relations among the European states, it cannot be dissolved. With that in mind, he remarks that the fact that the various European states appeared to be a single federated state masks the reality of the situation that the rights, or sovereignty, of the individual nations have disappeared. According to Kant, it is possible to establish the public or international right of nations, or as Kant also says, cosmo-political law, only through a civil process as opposed to war. Kant's point is (as he later indicates in Perpetual Peace) that since international law is like morality, once one decides for it, thereby creating cosmo-political right (*jus cosmopoliticum*), to back out would be to go against reason. Hence, one cannot later turn back or, as noted above, revolt.

Yet this model is badly chosen for at least two reasons. First, as it later

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<sup>7</sup> Doctrine of Right, §53 in *Kant: Political Writings*, pp. 164-165.

turned out, the form of federation represented by the United States can indeed be dissolved. The American Civil War was successfully fought to keep this from happening, but it could very well have turned out differently. In any case, the American model did not survive because it could not be dissolved on rational grounds, but because force prevailed against force. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the American model violates Kant's condition, which will be specified in his text on Perpetual Peace that the different parts of the federation do not in any way cede but rather preserve their sovereignty, hence their autonomy, within the larger entity. In a federal system, which prevails in the US, though states do have rights, which they can as needed assert against the federal government, they explicitly do not retain sovereignty. Hence the United States is not a federation, but rather a super-state according to the criterion of sovereignty.

In the conclusion, Kant entertains the question of whether perpetual peace, as he understands it, is a real possibility. His answer is that one has at least a duty to bring it about as long as one cannot prove it to be impossible. Since, from a moral perspective, there must not be war, we must, according to Kant, act as if perpetual peace could be realized. Kant is clear, if not about the real possibility of perpetual peace, at least that it is mandated by reason as the goal of what he calls the science of right, that is politics in general. He ends by stating that the idea may be realized in a series of stages as "continually approaching the supreme political good - perpetual peace."<sup>8</sup>

Kant's gradualism is obviously problematic in two ways. One is that, as the highest political good, on Kant's model perpetual peace is something to which we can indeed approximate but, for this reason, never finally reach. Any form of peace we might attain on the way to this ultimate goal must fall short of the final goal. Indeed, this seems to be the unfortunate result of human experience. Since perpetual peace is the goal of the political process, by indicating it can only be reached at the end of an infinite process, Kant is in effect conceding it can never be attained, so that perpetual peace is not possible but impossible. Hence, Kant's argument in favor of perpetual peace as possible does not support, but rather counts against, the very goal for which it is formulated.

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<sup>8</sup> "Doctrine of Right" in *Kant: Political Writings*, p. 175.

## Kant on concepts of federation, world state, and “Perpetual Peace”

In “Universal History” Kant calls for a federation of states. In “Theory and Practice” he examines the concept of a contract but not the concept of a federation. Kant’s approach to peace arguably comes to a peak in an important text in which he discusses “Perpetual Peace” in detail.

Though Kant insists on and is a consummate practitioner of the systematic approach to philosophy, this text is highly unsystematic, difficult to construe, and arguably inconsistent. The inconsistency cannot be attributed to a simple slip or inattention. It can be attributed to Kant’s inability, here as elsewhere, to choose between competing alternatives, in a word simply to make up his mind about which he recommends as well as which he excludes. A federation is composed of independent nation states, which conserve their sovereignty. A world government presupposes a world state whose members cede national sovereignty in whole or at least in part. In his essay, Kant argues strongly, but inconsistently, in favor of a federation among nation states as well as a world state, incompatible alternatives, which leads to difficulties in determining the outlines of and to assessing his position.<sup>9</sup>

This complex essay, which represents Kant’s most detailed effort to solve the problem of peace, is divided into preliminary articles and definitive articles for perpetual peace among the states, and is further accompanied by two supplements and two appendices. In the first section, where he discusses the preliminary articles, he makes a number of comments about what he calls independently existing, hence, free and sovereign state. He further describes the principle of non-interference in stating that no state should interfere with either the constitution or the government of another

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<sup>9</sup> According to Pauline Kleingeld, the standard view of Kant’s position on international relations is that he advocates a voluntary league of states and rejects the ideal of a world federation of states, which is stronger, as dangerous, unrealistic, and conceptually incoherent. She claims that the dispute between Rawls and Habermas about whether Kant should defend a voluntary association of states is premised on this interpretation. She defends a third view, namely that he in fact holds a third position that combines the defense of a voluntary league with an argument for the ideal of a world federation with coercive powers. See “Approaching Perpetual Peace: Kant’s Defense of a league of States and his Ideal of a World Federation” in *European Journal of Philosophy* vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 304–325.

state. These points presuppose his commitment to a sovereign nation state as it existed in his time. This commitment is strengthened in the second section, where he takes up the Definitive Articles of a Perpetual Peace between States. Such a peace presupposes the existence of sovereign nation states. He immediately notes that, since a state of peace is constantly threatened by war, it must be “formally instituted”<sup>10</sup> or guaranteed in some way.

The first and most of the second definitive articles of a perpetual peace are devoted to expounding a federative solution to the problem of guaranteeing peace. The First Definitive Article of a Perpetual Peace is entitled “The Civil Constitution of Every State Shall be Republican” and for Kant, a republic is based on three principles: freedom for all citizens, a single common legislation, and legal equality. A republic is by definition a sovereign state. Kant, who bases his concept of a republic on a constitution derived from a so-called original contract, notes the need to inquire if it can lead to perpetual peace.

In his remarks on the Second Definitive Article of a Perpetual Peace (“The Right of Nations shall be based on a Federation of Free States”) Kant extends his view of a federation of free states as the single way to guarantee perpetual peace. Kant here argues that nations, which can be judged like individuals, should seek protection by entering into a federation of peoples. A federation is composed of separate states, which is distinct from an international state. The latter, in which the states are welded together and ordered according to inferior and superior, contradicts, as Kant points out, his original assumption.<sup>11</sup> Unlike a mere peace treaty, which ends a particular war, a pacific federation based on wide agreement among nations, aims to end all wars. Kant justifies this approach since federalism, as he understands it, will extend to all states, hence lead to perpetual peace. His argument seems to be two-fold: a federation will inevitably spread to encompass all states; and the reality of this federation, which is secured by international law binding on all nations, will permanently prevent war. Yet since no federation has ever existed which permanently prevented war, and there is currently no reason to believe one will ever come into being; this argument seems problematic.

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<sup>10</sup> Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch, in *Kant: Political Writings*, p. 98.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

Kant's second argument in favor of a federation as the necessary element toward bringing about perpetual peace consists in the idea that international right cannot meaningfully be interpreted as a right to enter into war. This line of argument presupposes that war is not and cannot ever be a rational solution. Yet there is obvious disagreement on this point. An instance is provided by the second phase of the Kosovo War or Kosovo Conflict featuring war between Yugoslavia and NATO from March 24 to June 10, 1999. NATO nations claimed that war was justified to intervene against the ethnic cleansing being carried out by Yugoslavia in Kosovo.

There is a third argument in the "First Supplement: On the Guarantee of a Perpetual Peace": Kant here appeals to the very idea of international right that, he says, "presupposes the separate existence of many independent adjoining states."<sup>12</sup> This argument is important in rejecting out of hand the possibility of international right as incompatible with a world government, or global state.

Kant, who has so far argued in favor of a federation among nation states, which is not an international state, now abruptly changes his strategy. In the final part of the Second Definitive Article and throughout the Third Definitive Article, Kant makes the argument that only an international state can guarantee perpetual peace.

According to Kant, the only way for states to emerge from warfare is to form an international state, which will spread to encompass all the countries. He sensibly notes that since countries are not in favor of this idea, it cannot be realized. Hence, the best we can do is to erect a rampart against violence through a federation. The importance of this idea is not that Kant thinks it can be realized - he thinks it cannot be realized - but rather that he thinks a federation, which is at most only likely to prevent war, is an insufficient guarantee of perpetual peace.

Kant "officially" devotes the Third Definitive Article of a Perpetual Peace to showing that the "Cosmopolitan right shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality."<sup>13</sup> With respect to the goal of perpetual peace, this article is important for the unsupported inference Kant makes, after an analysis of universal

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>13</sup> See Perpetual Peace, in *Kant: Political Writings*, pp. 105-108.



hospitality, from hospitality to universal rights, hence to world government and a world state. The argument seems to be the existence of hospitality in all corners of the globe points to a universal human community as the source of the so-called universal rights of humanity. In this context, he states the idea of a cosmopolitan right is “not fantastic and overstrained, but rather, as he adds, “a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a universal right of humanity.”<sup>14</sup>

This argument seems doubly defective. First, it is obvious that, though perhaps there ought to be such a code, it has never and does not presently exist. Hence, one cannot infer that in this way we are making progress toward perpetual peace. Indeed, if, as Kant claims, this is a necessary prerequisite, then one must concede that, since it has not so far been met, real peace is not so far even a practical possibility. Second, this argument conflicts with the counterargument that, by definition, international, or cosmopolitan, right is compatible with a federation only, hence incompatible with a world government or world state.

In the two supplements, or appendices, he discusses the relation between morality, which is practical, and politics, which is theoretical. He claims that perpetual peace is guaranteed by nature itself, that is, by the workings of an unknown Providence.<sup>15</sup> Yet there is simply no evidence for this inference. Kant, who interprets Providence as morality, further holds morality and politics do not and cannot conflict, and further holds that no one can be obliged to do what that individual cannot do. The former claim seems unlikely. Since all forms of politics are always based on morality of some kind, though not necessarily the kind one happens to favor, there is always a tension between forms of politics and forms of morality. The latter claim is a version of a claim that Kant makes earlier, for instance in the *Groundwork*, in suggesting that ought implies can. Yet it does not follow that, if there ought to be perpetual peace, it must or will occur.

The final argument Kant advances in favor of perpetual peace is based on his concept of international law, which is clearly presupposed by his idea of a league of nations. In Kant’s view, a league of nations is bound together

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

by international law to which the nations willingly submit and which protects them all against the aggression of any state against any other state. With this in mind, Kant suggests that we have a duty to create public law that is a juridical relation between the states. To do so, he thinks, proves that we can steadily approach the goal of perpetual peace. Yet, though Kant assumes international law will be effective, it does not follow that it will suffice or even contribute importantly to maintaining the peace between the states. This would only follow if it were rigorously obeyed in all situations, which has not been the case so far in human history. In practice, strong states follow the rules of international organizations when they find it of interest to do so, but flout the rules when that seems advantageous.

Perpetual peace is intended to endure timelessly, within historical time. According to Kant, life on earth is worth living if and only if it is possible to make progress toward the final goal of rational existence. Kant, who talks of the duty to create a state based on public law, says that the process continues without end, hence to infinity. This in turn suggests that it can in fact never be realized, which corresponds to the results of experience. The impressive series of international organizations created since the end of the Second World War, including the United Nations and the World Court, represent progress. But, as practice demonstrates, they are insufficient to guarantee world peace, or even peace. And there is at present no reason to think that, despite the best efforts of well meaning individuals, they will in the short run or even in the long run lead to either goal. And since a process of infinite duration can never be accomplished, it would seem that Kant's dream of universal peace runs ashore on the shoals of reality.

### **On Kant's federalist and supra-nationalist models**

The difficulties in interpreting Kant's position are probably insuperable. It has been claimed by various observers that he defends a view of federation, of a supranational state, and of both at the same time. Since interpretation is in principle endless, it seems unlikely that his texts can ever be definitively interpreted in a way that simply vanquishes the possibility of different ways of understanding his view. The federalist and the supranational models of his approach to peace are different, incompatible, and linked to well known difficulties that seem never to have been entirely resolved in practice. A country like

France operates on a highly centralized, supranational model in which the various regions and their natural interests are dominated (even “submerged”) by overriding national concerns. The United States is a country constructed on a federalist model in which the central government tends to overshadow the rights of the states. This difficulty, which was already obvious during the ratification of the Constitution of the United States, and which was only seemingly solved through the idea that ultimate power resides neither in the federal government nor the states but with the people, suggested by James Wilson of Pennsylvania.<sup>16</sup> It leads to periodic calls to strengthen states’ rights in decentralizing and weakening the powers attributed to the federal government. The present Bush administration in principal stands for weakening the federal government that it is on the contrary in the process of strengthening under the pretext of the so-called war on terror. Other interpretations of the Kantian position, for instance, as a third position combining the defense of a voluntary federation with coercive powers, are possible as well.<sup>17</sup>

It seems reasonable to compare Kant’s a priori analysis of perpetual peace to the historical record. All forms of federation are not equally useful. The concept of a league of nations Kant adumbrates in “Perpetual Peace” suggests this is not simply one way but the only way to avoid fratricidal conflict between countries. Kant has in mind a federation in which each member state retains full sovereignty. He rejects a form of federation in which member states reduce or abandon sovereignty. The historical record suggests that federations in which member states at least reduce sovereignty are more likely to be successful according to a whole range of criteria than those in which sovereignty is retained in unchanged form.

Certainly countries such as Switzerland and the US, whose constituent parts abandon or at least curtail effective sovereignty have been comparatively more successful at calming tensions than countries such as Belgium and Canada, where tensions, which have never been overcome, continue to fester, or such obviously unsuccessful cases as Yugoslavia or the Soviet Union, which

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<sup>16</sup> See, on Wilson’s importance, Akhil Reed Amar, *America’s Constitution: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 2006).

<sup>17</sup> See Pauline Kleingold, “Approaching Perpetual Peace: Kant’s Defense of a League of States and his Ideal of a World Federation” in *European Journal of Philosophy*, 2004, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 304-325.

ended in disintegration. Iraq, which was formed through a British mandate from the League of Nations at the end of World War I, is an interesting case. One could argue that it could only be held together by a dictatorship and that the attempt to introduce a Western form of democracy inevitably exposes divisions among its peoples that will in time almost certainly lead to its disintegration into fragments separated by such factors as religion, language, and tradition.

Member organizations specifically formed to create peaceful conditions have often fallen short of the mark. The League of Nations and the United Nations can be understood as twentieth century interpretations of Kant's idea of fostering universal peace through a federation of independent states, which retain their sovereignty. Kant seems to have at least distantly influenced Woodrow Wilson's call, in his famous Fourteen Points speech delivered to a joint session of Congress (8 January 1918) at the end of the First World War, for a league of nations.<sup>18</sup> Wilson's fourteenth and last point calls for "a general association of nations" which later became the League of Nations. The League, which began its work in 1920, was intended to promote international cooperation in order to bring about peace and security. Its goals included collective security, disarmament, settling international disputes through diplomacy and the improvement of international welfare. But it was unable to prevent the military aggression that led to the Second World War. The League, which ceased functioning during the War, was dissolved in 1946 and was replaced after World War II by the United Nations. The UN, in effect constitutes a further effort to "solve" the same problem, was specifically founded to make future war impossible through a system of collective security.

The record of the UN on issues of security over more than half a century is at best very mixed. Much of the work of the UN relates to missions of peace and security. According to the Human Security Report, drawn up by the Human Security Centre at the University of British Columbia, a dramatic decline in wars, genocides and human rights abuses during the past decade can best be understood as due to UN activities undertaken after the end of the Cold War.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> See James Lee Ray, *Democracy and international Conflict* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> See *Human Security Report 2005: War and Peace in the 21st Century* (Human Security Centre, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

These activities include peacemaking and peace building missions, economic sanctions, peacekeeping operations, and so on, undertaken after the end of the Cold War. These successes can be compared to numerous important failures, such as the inability to prevent genocide in Rwanda in 1994, the inability to intervene effectively in the Second Congo War (1998-2002), the inability to intervene in the Srebrenica massacre in 1995, a manifest failure to feed the starving population in Somalia, an inability to stop the US led invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the failure to intervene effectively in Darfur.

The ability of these and other international organizations to function effectively depends on members nations ceding at least part of their sovereignty, for instance in agreeing to the jurisdiction of such an organization and in following its recommendations. The unwillingness of various countries to agree on either count hampers efforts to respond to international crises and to avoid war. An obvious recent example is the decision of the US and its allies to ignore strong reservations among the majority of member nations in going to war in Iraq. Another example is attitude of the different countries to the International Court of Justice, also called the World Court or ICJ, as distinguished from the International Criminal Court. Decisions of the IC, which are theoretically binding on all member nations, cannot be enforced in practice against members of the Security Council, who can merely veto them. There are further difficulties with respecting the jurisdiction of the ICJ. The US, which withdrew from compulsory jurisdiction in 1986, accepts the court's jurisdiction on a case-to-case basis, that is, when it is so inclined. When Nicaragua brought suit against the US, which accepted the jurisdiction of the ICJ when it was created in 1946, the US declined the decision to cease and desist in using force against another member nation. The result is to impede, perhaps even prevent, the effective peacemaking function of this international body.

### **Perpetual peace and the nation state today**

Kant's effort to secure perpetual peace is not less but more important now than in his time in a world which at least in principle can at any moment be destroyed by weapons of mass destruction powerful beyond anything the world has ever known. In "Perpetual Peace" he seeks to understand the possibility of a permanent alteration of the modern world as he knew it to bring about permanent peace. He has in mind a definitive solution

for Rousseau's problem: can we leave the state of nature in a way that is not worse but better, in fact, infinitely better than the alternative, in entering into society in which the threat of war between individuals and, by extension, between nation states, has been permanently superseded?

Kant bases his approach to what we now call foreign policy on a world governed along wholly rational lines. Two centuries later Kant is still an inspiration to thinkers contemplating the concept of a rational state. Yet the very idea of institutionalized reason that inspired him seems increasingly less attractive, and certainly less capable of uniting those who would need to accept it with an eye toward realizing the political program it inspires. In our time as in Kant's, the idea of a politics based on reason alone is threatened by the reality of politics, which is increasingly based on the naked extension of modern industrial capitalism throughout the world. Economic globalization, which obeys a different kind of reason, presents obstacles to peace, hence to perpetual peace, which has never seemed greater. It is not too much to say, to use Husserlian terminology, that if not already in Kant's time, in our time Kant's rationalist dream of an international federating leading seamlessly to perpetual peace is dreamed out. Rather than perpetual peace, in the thrall of the self-developing forces of liberal economy we are more likely to have periods of peace interspersed with periods of war. With the ensuing scarcity of resources, one scenario among many is the increasing likelihood in the near future of energy wars.

Kant's *a priori* argument for perpetual peace is limited by an *a posteriori* claim. It relies on the existence of nation states able to enter into a federation in order to guarantee perpetual peace. His argument, which was formulated during the period of the nation state, would not have applied prior to the emergence of the nation state, and will no longer apply once the nation state ceases to exist.

The period of the nation state, which invited the construction of theories based on that contingent fact of absolute sovereignty, is arguably now drawing to a close. The moment of the nation state as Kant knew it, which was characterized by sovereignty in its relation to other, similar states, either already has or is now giving way to a new moment in which sovereignty will either be curtailed for most nations, and in which one or more, at most a very few states, will operate outside the boundaries of a relation of equals

within an international federation.

It seems increasingly obvious that the case for peace cannot merely be made through the maintenance of sovereignty of individual states in an international federation.

One difficulty comes from the tendency, which Kant clearly foresaw for the nation states to enter into federations requiring at least some diminution of sovereignty. The EEC, ASEAN, NATO, and so on are a small sample of international organizations in which member states act in a corporate as opposed to an individual manner.

Another difficulty is linked to the present situation in which there is no more than a single superpower, which is not a nation state in any ordinary sense, and which “overshadows” even the largest international organizations. The nation state became an effective force as the Holy Roman Empire was declining. After the Peace of Westphalia (1648), the Empire, which lost any real power, was no longer anything more than a mere conglomeration of states. It was formally dissolved after the defeat by Napoleon’s army, in 1806. It is arguable that as the world’s only remaining superpower, the UST, has now superseded the status of a nation state in the direction of empire.

Though Kant is at least in principal correct that a federation of nation states founded on a constitution is a condition of perpetual peace, even of peace, the view of the nation state on which he himself relies appears to undercut any reasonable prospect of reaching that goal. Kant’s solution in “Perpetual Peace” and other writings is linked to a view of the nation as it existed in his time but which is increasingly outmoded in our historical moment. Though perhaps possible in theory, it is not clear that perpetual peace was ever possible in practice, that is, really possible, even in the period in which the nation state flourished. And in an epoch in which the nation state is arguably increasingly losing its central position, one cannot be more optimistic but only less optimistic about the real chances for perpetual peace along the lines sketched out by Kant more than two centuries ago.

In closing, I would like to identify two related difficulties in Kant’s approach to moral and political freedom in an age of economic globalization. First, it seems too late to approach real problems from a transcendental perspective. This approach presupposes there is one and only one possible “solution” that has been correctly identified. Yet there are different “solu-

tions” that depend for their force on varying perspectives. The assumption that there cannot be more than a single possible solution that has never been demonstrated in any cognitive branch is simply false on the moral and political planes, which reflect incompatible views of the human good. Since our views of how one should act and how to organize the social context depend on prior assumptions about the nature of human being and the good life, I see no prospect of bringing the debate to an end, no prospect of arriving at a single “rational” solution.

The second point concerns the relation of a meaningful view of human freedom to the social context. It is a deep mistake to believe one can anticipate all the relevant aspects of human freedom through an a priori analysis. Freedom, which is social, can only be understood through attention to the context in which it occurs. The social context has changed enormously since Kant’s time. In a recent work, Will Kymlicka has suggested that we need to take a global approach to ethics. The idea that as economic globalization increases, ethics must also become globalized<sup>20</sup> presupposes economic globalization, hence the increasing spread of free-enterprise liberal capitalism.

While Kant was writing, the Industrial Revolution was emerging in England. Since the end of the eighteenth century, the modern world has been increasingly dominated by capitalism, which has both useful and harmful features, but cannot be overlooked as a social force. Hence a further difficulty in Kant’s account of human freedom is its failure to anticipate the very real need to understand human freedom in the light of the reality of economic globalization, which today constitutes the dominant form of Rousseau’s problem. I conclude by noting that after Kant, for us and in the foreseeable future, freedom must be understood in relation to economic globalization.

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<sup>20</sup> See Will Kymlicka, “The Globalization of Ethics,” in W. Sullivan and W. Kymlicka, eds, *The Globalization of Ethics: Religious and Secular Perspectives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp.1-16.



# The Second Person: Fichte's Contribution<sup>1</sup>

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It should not come as a surprise that Johann Gottlieb Fichte, the famous and infamous philosopher of the I (*Ich*), is at once the philosopher of the You (*Du*) - in fact, he is the first philosopher to have accorded serious, systematic attention to the second person. Most of Fichte's philosophical work could even be described as a sustained reflection on the complex interrelations between the various perspectives on ourselves that find their linguistic expression in the grammatical distinction between the first, second, and third person. Yet the proper appreciation of the precise contribution that Fichte made to our understanding of the second person, as well as to its relation to the first and third person, has been hampered by a persistent twofold misunderstanding. Fichte's transcendental theory of the I as the principle and ground of all knowledge and its objects - a project inspired by Kant's transcendental philosophy and developed by Fichte under the programmatic title *Wissenschaftslehre* (literally, "Doctrine of Science")<sup>2</sup> - has been mistaken for a psychological theory about the cosmological import of the individual self. And Fichte's transcendental theory of the You as the I's original counterpart has been mistaken for a social ontology involving the equi-primordially of I and You and their interaction on equal terms.

As a result of this twofold misapprehension Fichte's integrated ac-

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<sup>1</sup> A German version of the following article appeared under the title, "Die zweite Person. Fichtes systematischer Beitrag" in *Transzendentalphilosophie und Person. Leiblichkeit - Interpersonalität - Anerkennung*, ed. Christoph Asmuth (Bielefeld: transcript-Verlag, 2007), pp. 125-145.

<sup>2</sup> Fichte coined the term "Wissenschaftslehre" for the first philosophy of the grounds and boundaries of knowledge of all kinds, including of what is known in any such knowledge. The term served him to replace the traditional appellation "philosophy" ("love for wisdom"), in contrast to which Fichte's neologism indicates the rescinding of philosophy's claim to convey wisdom and the stress on the striving after knowledge, in particular the meta- or proto-knowledge concerning the conditions of the possibility of any and all knowledge. See Günter Zöller, *Fichte's Transcendental Philosophy: The Original Duplicity of Intelligence and Will* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 11-24.

count of I and You typically has been split up into a highly speculative theory of the I's absolute self-positioning along with its counter-positioning of all else, and a comparatively commonsensical theory of I's original sociality. What is lost in this twofold one-sided reception is the ingenious intrinsic linkage set forth by Fichte between the primacy of the I over everyone and everything else and the concurrent and complementary, but by no means contradictory, primacy of the You over the I. A closer look at Fichte's interconnected treatment of I and You reveals that his theory of the I is less egoistic (in a theoretical, non-moral sense) than it might first appear to be, and that his account of the You is less altruistic (the word again taken in a theoretical, non-moral sense) than one might be led to believe.<sup>3</sup>

The following six sections address as many systematically different aspects of Fichte's treatment of the second person. They follow, approximately, the order of Fichte's own treatment of the topic in the elaboration of his philosophical system, from its foundational parts to its applied parts as well as its propaedeutical parts.<sup>4</sup> The focus is not on Fichte's supposed philosophical development in the sense of alleged doctrinal changes, but on the successive unfolding of his philosophical thought in a comprehensive, coherent and original

<sup>3</sup> The following analyses are intended to supplement, in a historically informed systematic regard, the classical and more recent ontological, phenomenological, hermeneutical and social-critical reflection on recognition and otherness. See Michael Theunissen, *Der Andere. Studien zur Sozialontologie der Gegenwart* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1965; 2nd edition 1977); Paul Ricœur, *Parcours de la Reconnaissance. Trois Etudes* (Paris: Galimard, 2005); Axel Honneth, *Kampf um Anerkennung. Zur moralischen Grammatik sozialer Konflikte* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2003; and *Verdinglichung. Eine anerkennungstheoretische Studie* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> In what follows, the publications and lectures by Fichte from the years 1794 through 1799 that are mainly drawn upon and in each instance indicated by their respective abbreviation are: "Review of *Aenesidemus*" / "Rezension des *Aenesidemus*" (Rez. Aenes.), *Foundation of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre/Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* (GWL), *Outline of the Peculiar Character of the Wissenschaftslehre .../ Grundsatz des Eigenthümlichen der Wissenschaftslehre ...* (GEWL), *New Presentation of the Wissenschaftslehre*, Second Introduction/*Neue Darstellung der Wissenschaftslehre*, *Zweite Einleitung* (NDWL 2. Einl.), *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo* (Halle transcript) *Nachschrift*/ *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo* (Hallesche Nachschrift) (WLnmH), *Foundation of Natural Right/Grundlage des Naturrechts* (GNR), *The System of Ethics/Das System der Sittenlehre* (SdS). All translations are by the author.

system. Due to the intrinsic systematic nature of Fichte's thought, any piecemeal reception of his treatment of a particular topic or problem in his work is prone to miss the organic relatedness of a given part or aspect of his system to the system as a whole and to fail to grasp the functional dependency of particular doctrines on their respective position in the entire system. Unfortunately this means that the analysis and discussion of Fichte's contribution to our philosophical understanding of the second person has to move away from the immediate thematic context of social philosophy and follow Fichte on the "thorny paths of speculation" already treaded by Kant<sup>5</sup> and explored further by his most authentic successor, Fichte.

### 1. I as Third Person

The complex, multilayered and highly speculative nature of the relation between I and You in Fichte becomes apparent already in the difficulty of linking the nominalized personal pronouns, "I" and "You" (*Ich, Du*), to the linguistic distinction between the three grammatical persons. As already indicated by their capitalization, the use of the terms "I" and "You" in Fichte is not pronominal but nominal and involves the grammatical third person as well as the definite article. Moreover, the term occurs practically always in the singular.

In the case of "the I" Fichte's treatment of the term as a noun rather than a pronoun reflects the I's peculiar status as the ultimate or absolute principle of knowledge of all kind. At first blush, Fichte's I - more specifically, what he terms the "absolute I" (*absolutes Ich*),<sup>6</sup> might seem like a latter-day successor to earlier philosophical conceptions of the absolute ground or principle to which everything else is subordinated, such as the *archai* of the pre-Socratics, the God of the medieval philosopher-theologians or Spinoza's *Deus sive natura*. In categorical terms, the absolute I then would have to be considered either as the one and only substance, in relation to which everything else is accident and inherent in the former, or, alternatively, as the absolute first cause, in relation to which everything else is consequent or successive.

Yet Fichte resists employing such traditional ontological titles, or rather,

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<sup>5</sup> See *Critique of Pure Reason*, B XLIII.

<sup>6</sup> GA I/2: 271 (GWL).

he seek to modify them in significant ways in view of what he takes to be the peculiar status of the absolute I. In particular, Fichte stresses that the I qua absolute I is not some objective entity distinct from us, or exceeding us, but the very core of our own existence as intelligent practical beings. Moreover, for Fichte, the absolute core or ground of ourselves must be thought as active in nature rather than static, and as self-active or as acting spontaneously at that. Finally, on Fichte's account, the activity of the absolute I must be thought of as in the first instance self-reverting and only indirectly and subsequently directed toward something else. The features attributed to the absolute ground or principle lead Fichte to a generic identification of this ground or principle with the form, medium or structure in and about us that is what thinks when we think, what wills when we will or, more generally speaking, that is the subject engaged in all our mental activity as the latter's underlying agent.

But Fichte's identification of the absolute I with the self as the agent of all one's mental activity is only a generic identification. There remain specific differences between the absolute I and the ordinary I. To begin with, unlike the ordinary I, the absolute I is not a specific I but an I in the generic sense of a structure or set of formal conditions. Most importantly, the absolute I, unlike the ordinary I, is not characterized by consciousness - neither by the reflective awareness of itself, or self-consciousness, nor by the consciousness of objects. To be sure, the absolute I cannot to be devoid of any and all features that pertain to the ordinary I. Otherwise there would be no reason and no justification for calling the absolute principle an "I" at all. There has to be at least a remnant and trace or a surrogate and equivalent of the self-consciousness characteristic of the ordinary self to be found in the absolute I.

This is where Fichte's peculiar terminology and conceptuality of "positing" (*setzen*) and "counter-positing" (*entgegensetzen*) comes in, as well as a number of other terms and concepts, such as "subject-object" (*Subjekt-Objekt*),<sup>7</sup> "(f)act" or "fact/act" (*Tathandlung*)<sup>8</sup> and "intellectual intuition"

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<sup>7</sup> GA I/2: 261 note (GWL).

<sup>8</sup> GA I/2: 255 (GWL). On the concept, "Tathandlung," which Fichte introduced as counter-concept to "Tatsache" (fact), and its prehistory see Paul Franks, "Freedom, *Tatsache* and *Tathandlung* in the Development of Fichte's Jena Wissenschaftslehre," in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 79 (1997), pp. 310-323.

(*intellektuelle Anschauung*).<sup>9</sup> All of these locutions and conceptions are designed to address, identify and characterize a hidden foundational layer of the ordinary self's constitution that is at once like and unlike its surface manifestation - sufficiently alike to be designated by the same term "I" and yet sufficiently different to warrant the removal of key ingredients of the ordinary self from the absolute I including, chiefly, personality and manifest self-consciousness. Thus the self-reverting activity that characterizes the absolute I, its absolutely or unconditionally "positing itself" (*sich selbst setzen*),<sup>10</sup> does not amount to full-blown self-consciousness but functions as the closest transcendental ancestor to this phenomenon. And, analogously, the equally absolute non-reverting activity of the absolute I - its unconditional "counter-positing of the Not-I" (*entgegensetzen des Nicht-Ich*)<sup>11</sup> - is not a case of object consciousness properly speaking, but still can be considered as the latter's proximate transcendental antecedent.

The same philosophical maneuver gives rise to Fichte's characterization of the absolute I as "subject-object",<sup>12</sup> a conceptual device which indicates that the absolute I itself precedes any differentiation into subject and object but also that it anticipates and grounds the latter distinction in an originary unity that is itself pre- or proto-differentiated. The same strategy underlies Fichte's characterization of the absolute I as "(f)act" or "intellectual intuition."<sup>13</sup> The presence of the absolute I is not a fact in that it does not and cannot occur in any possible experience. And yet the absolute I's nature as the unconditional, ungrounded ground of everything grounded implies a lack of grounding on its part that makes for a similarity to the contingency of a sheer fact. Finally, calling the absolute I's self-reverting as well as self-constitutive activity a case of "intellectual intuition" indicates the affinity between our ordinary immediate awareness of ourselves and of other

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<sup>9</sup> GA I/2: 48 (Rez. *Aenes.*); GA I/4: 216ff. (VNDWL 2. Einl.), GA IV/2:31, 37ff. (WLnm Halle). On Fichte's theory of intellectual intuition, see Jürgen Stolzenberg, *Fichtes Begriff der intellektuellen Anschauung. Die Entwicklung in den Wissenschaftslehren von 1793/94 bis 1801/02* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> See GA I/2: 255ff. (GWL).

<sup>11</sup> See GA I/2: 264ff. (GWL).

<sup>12</sup> See GA I/2 (GWL, § 1).

<sup>13</sup> See GA I/2 (Rez. *Aenes.*) and GA I/2 (GWL, § 1).

things through (sensible) intuition, while also stressing that the absolute I's immediacy to itself or self-immediacy is not based on the awareness of anything particular and hence is not empirical in nature.

Fichte's general procedure of designating the absolute I proleptically, by means of terms and concepts derived from phenomena that are in turn grounded in and by the absolute I, also holds for the very designation of the absolute ground as "I". In grammatical terms, the I of the absolute I is a noun rather than a pronoun and requires the third person. Yet the semantics of the philosophical concept "the I" point toward a different, more intimate and inward relation between the absolute principle and ourselves, as it might manifest itself in someone's sudden recognition "That is me" or perhaps "That is about me" when following Fichte's transcendental account of knowledge and realizing that the absolute I in question is not some third entity but something in and about himself. This affinity, however remote it may be, between ourselves and the absolute ground or principle of all knowledge - the generic identity of the two - is the chief reason for Fichte granting such prominence to the artificial and conflicted term ("the I") which at once invokes the grammatical first person and rescinds it.

In historical terms, the nominalization (and the capitalization this entails in the German language) of the I and its concomitant depersonalization in Fichte is prepared by Kant's account of the "I think" as the vehicle of the transcendental unity of apperception.<sup>14</sup> Yet in Kant the nominalization (and capitalization) of the I refers, in the first instance, to the entire phrase "I think", which in turn is to be completed by the object that is being thought, as in the phrase "I think: substance". Moreover, Kant characterizes the set phrase "I think" variously as a "judgment" (*Urteil*) and as a "proposition" (*Satz*)<sup>15</sup> and even as an "empirical proposition" (*empirischer Satz*) involving an "indeterminate empirical intuition" (*unbestimmte empirische Anschauung*) and as involving a feeling (*Gefühl*).<sup>16</sup> By

<sup>14</sup> See *Critique of Pure Reason*, B p. 131ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Critique of Pure Reason*, B p. 399/A p. 341.

<sup>16</sup> *Critique of Pure Reason*, B p. 422f. note; see also *Immanuel Kant's gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Prussian Academy of Sciences, Academy of Sciences of the GDR, Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Berlin Brandenburg Academy of Sciences (Berlin, subsequently Berlin/New York: Reimer, subsequently de Gruyter, 1900-) (henceforth "AA") nr. 4, p. 335 note (*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, § 48).

contrast, the solitary nominalized phrase “the I” is less prominent in Kant, both textually and doctrinally. At one point Kant seeks to combine the third-person status of the nominalized I and the first-person status of the pronominal I, when he refers, quite ungrammatically, to “the I, who I think” (*das Ich, der ich denke*).<sup>17</sup>

In a similar vein, Kant manifests hesitation about the grammatical status of the I as it occurs in the phrase “I think” when he refers to “this I or He or It [the thing] which thinks” (*dieses Ich, oder Er, oder Es (das Ding), welches denkt*).<sup>18</sup> The slippery slope of the transcendental subject from I through He to It laid out here is treaded further by Kant’s contemporary and early astute critic, G. Chr. Lichtenberg, who proposes to substitute the Kantian “I think” with the neutral phrase “it thinks” (*es denkt*), construed along the lines of the locution “it lightens” (*es blitzt*) and devoid of any reference to an agent or a personal agency.<sup>19</sup> From Fichte’s point of view, such depersonalization and neutralization of the transcendental subject looses sight of the fact that the absolute principle of knowledge is not an It but an I, or rather a super-I (*super ego*), as one might call it to indicate the supra-individual nature of absolute subjectivity.

## 2. You as Third Person

It is not only the first person pronoun “I” that undergoes a nominalization and a shift toward the grammatical status of the third person in Fichte. He also subjects the second person pronoun to nominalization, capitalization and the associated functions of the grammatical third person. Typically, though, the semantics of the second person is retained and nominal phrases such as “the You”, “a You”, or simply “You” refer exclusively to other persons or beings relevantly like the one referring to himself or herself in the grammatical first person.

Yet there is one noteworthy exception to this combination of the

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<sup>17</sup> *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 155.

<sup>18</sup> *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 404/A 346. See also Wilfried Sellars, “... this I or he or it (the thing) which thinks ...” in *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 44 (1970/71), pp. 5-31.

<sup>19</sup> See Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, *Schriften und Briefe*, ed. Wolfgang Promies. 4 vols. and a volume of commentary (Munich: Hanser, 1967-74), 2: 412 (K 76). See also Günter Zöllner, “Lichtenberg and Kant on the Subject of Thinking,” in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30 (1992), pp. 417-441.

grammatical third person and the semantical second person in Fichte's use of the term "You". The telling exception is to be found in the first published presentation of his *Wissenschaftslehre*, the *Foundation of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre* of 1794/95. At one point in this work Fichte resorts to juxtaposing "I" and "You" (*Ich, Du*) in a context that excludes a specific reference to another self or other selves and that includes a generic reference to everything other than the I. In the passage in question, Fichte operates with a minimal functional definition of the I and its formal opposite, the "Not-I" (*Nicht-Ich*), according to which the I under consideration is the "opposite" (*Gegenteil*) of the Not-I and vice versa. Moreover, Fichte maintains the reciprocity of I and Not-I, arguing that the I is what it is only in opposition to the Not-I, and that the Not-I is what it is only in opposition to the I.

The systematic background of the oppositional as well as egalitarian relation between I and Not-I in the passage under review is the account of the Not-I being nothing but the result of the I's own counterpositing (or opposing) of the Not-I and of the I's demoting itself in the process from the I as a universal absolute positor (of itself as well as all else) to the I as counterposited (by itself) to the Not-I. In order to render palpable the parity and the mutual dependence of the I and the Not-I so considered, Fichte resorts to the statement: "Where there is no You, there is no I; where there is no I, there is no You".<sup>20</sup> This singular replacement of the term "Not-I" with the term "You" is likely to have been inspired by the close association of the use of the grammatical second person (and its nominalized form) with a relationship of parity and reciprocity. To be sure, in the present case that parity and reciprocity does not entail personhood as in the ordinary use of the grammatical first and second person.

The grammatical and semantical tie with the ordinary use of the second person, or with Fichte's own sophisticated use of the nominalized second person in other contexts of his philosophy and in other works of his, therefore does not imply a narrowly personalist understanding of the You generically juxtaposed to the I in the passage under consideration. The complete identity of You and Not-I and the total lack of any specifically personal character in this particular usage of the term, "You," are clearly confirmed by Fichte's subsequent terminological

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<sup>20</sup> GA II/2: 337 (GWL).



move. He goes on to assign to the I, as juxtaposed to the Not-I or You, the designation, “subject” (*Subjekt*), and to the Not-I or You the correlative appellation, “object” (*Objekt*). Fichte stresses that the identification of the I with the subject and the Not-I with the object only holds insofar as the I and the Not-I are, or are considered as, correlative. The identification does not hold for the non-correlative sense of both the term “I” and the term “Not-I”; in the latter sense neither the I nor the Not-I are subject to the “exchange” (*Wechsel*) between I and Not-I and are, or are to be considered as, extrarelatational or absolute.<sup>21</sup> The “exchange” between I qua subject and Not-I qua object mentioned by Fichte is the relation of mutual limitation by which one is what the other is not and is not what the other is.

Fichte’s differentiation between the correlational I as well as Not-I (or a correlational sense of I and Not-I) and the extra-relational, absolute I as well as Not-I (or such a non-relational, absolute sense of I and Not-I) provides a further reason for his choice of the term “You” to designate the Not-I in its function as the I’s correlate. Like the term “object”, the term “You” has a built-in relational semantics, and unlike the relation implied by the designations “subject” and “object” - with their association of a directed, one-sided correlation - the terminology of “I” and “You” conveys the element of parity in the relation between the subject/I and the object/Not-I. To be sure, the identification of the Not-I with the You undertaken by Fichte in this specific context comes at the price of downplaying the distinction between the generic sense in which the You just is the I’s Not-I and the specific sense in which some Not-I - namely, another person or other persons - is more like the I than the Not-I. So it comes as no surprise that somewhat hasty and overzealous readers of Fichte have attempted to use, or rather misuse, Fichte’s statement, quoted above, about the correlativity of I and You as evidence of the fundamentally interpersonal or social nature of the I in Fichte.<sup>22</sup> Yet there is still a long way to go in Fichte’s systematic treatment

<sup>21</sup> See GA I/2: p. 355ff. (GWL).

<sup>22</sup> See Alexis Philonenko, *La liberté humaine dans la philosophie de Fichte* (Paris: Vrin, 1966. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1980). A piece of evidence for the use of “Du” instead of “es” in Fichte’s time is to be found in Jacobi. See *Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi’s Werke*, 6 vols. (Leipzig: Fleischer, 1812-1815), 2/1:211. See also Günter Zöller, “Das Element aller Gewissheit”: Jacobi, Kant und Fichte über den Glauben”, *Fichte-Studien* 14 (1998), pp. 21-41, here pp. 23f..

and presentation of the matter from the I and its generic counterdeposit, the Not-I, to the You as Other-I and to the suspension of the I's priority in the relation between I and You entailed by that move.

### 3. From I to Me

The first major step towards a specific perspective on the You - on the You not as other than the I but as another I - does not yet involve the You proper but the preliminary move from the I as the supra-individual, generic form of subjectivity to the I as a possibly self-conscious subject, which in turn opens up the perspective on a plurality of such subjects and their possible relations with each other. The basic requirement for any further determination of the I as well as the Not-I is the extension of the activity of the absolute I to include a further activity of positing.

At the most elementary level - that of the three fundamental principles of the *Wissenschaftslehre* - there are three kinds of activity of the absolute I, or three kinds of positing, to be distinguished, all of which occur unconditionally or absolutely. These are the absolute I absolutely positing itself, the absolute I absolutely positing the Not-I, and the absolute I absolutely positing the I and the Not-I posited by the absolute I as limiting each other.<sup>23</sup> The first kind of positing involves the I's self-reverting activity, the second kind of positing involves the I's self-distinction from everything else and the third kind of positing involves the formal relation of mutual exclusion and mutual requirement between I and Not-I. Fichte's terms for the three activities underlying the three absolute acts are thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The correlated basic forms of judgment are "thetic judgment", "antithetical judgment", and "synthetical judgment".<sup>24</sup> As the basic structural features of the I's absolute acts, these forms do not yet involve any specific, determined content but are only the three basic modes in which any content is to be processed by the I.

The basic thetical, antithetical, and synthetical unconditional activities of the absolute I thus distinguished all involve a self-reference, or a reverting onto itself, on the part the I: directly in the I's positing of itself, and indi-

<sup>23</sup> See GA I/2: pp. 255ff., 264ff. and 267ff. (GWL).

<sup>24</sup> GA I/2: pp. 274 and 276 (GWL).

rectly in its positing of the Not-I in opposition to itself and in its positing of the I and Not-I as limiting each other. Yet in none of these cases the I's self-reference is posited itself as such. In particular, the absolute self-positing of the I is a self-relation that is recognized or noticed, or even noticeable, only by the philosopher as the outside observer, better yet: the experimentator of the I.<sup>25</sup> It requires an additional act of attention on the part of the I to posit itself as positing itself.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, on Fichte's understanding, such an act of doubled self-reverting activity - of a second self-reverting activity self-reverting on a first one - is not an unconditional act, like the three basic modes of positing distinguished above, but a conditional act, the occurrence of which depends on further circumstances. Among those further circumstances must be counted the preliminary proto-social contact of the I yet to be discussed.

In terms of the threefold classification of the I's positional activities, the advance from the I's unreflected, single-positing self-positing to it possibly reflected, double-positing self-positing, or self-positing as self-positing, requires a synthesis. But unlike the unconditional synthetic act of the I's positing of I and Not-I in their relationship of mutual exclusion and requirement presented earlier, the original but conditional synthesis required for the coming about of an I that possibly possesses self-consciousness does not involve the opposition of a Not-I to the self-positing I. Rather the synthesis in question is a "synthesis of the I with itself" (*Synthesis des Ich mit sich selbst*) at the exclusion of the Not-I. In Fichte's own words:

"The one positing that in the act described posits itself, not in general but as I, am I ..."<sup>27</sup>

With this specifying identification, the step from the I to the Me has been taken.

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<sup>25</sup> On Fichte's experimental reconstruction of the absolute I, see Günter Zöller, "An Eye for an I: Fichte's Transcendental Experiment" in *Figuring the Self: Subject, Individual, and Others in Classical German Philosophy*, ed. David Klemm and Günter Zöller (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), pp. 73-95.

<sup>26</sup> GA I/2: 406, 409 (GWL). On Fichte's transition from the self-positing of the I to its self-positing as self-positing, see Günter Zöller, *Fichte's Transcendental Philosophy*, pp.43-54.

<sup>27</sup> GA I/4: 255 (VNDWL 2. Einl.).

#### 4. From I to You

The I synthesized with itself is no longer the impersonal core-I (“absolute I”) of the beginning of Fichte’s speculative “history of self-consciousness”.<sup>28</sup> But it is also not yet the targeted endpoint of this history, viz., full-blown contentually specific self-consciousness. To reach the latter stage still more is required at a principal level. All that is available so far is an I that is structurally prepared for the occurrence of self-consciousness. There are two further basic requirements to be fulfilled for the attainment of full-blown self-consciousness: the I has to be individualized and the individualized I has to be set into operation, i.e., it has to be made aware of its own existence and nature and brought to act in accordance with that nature. According to Fichte, the individuation requirement is satisfied by the I’s self-attribution of a body, while the I’s transcendental wake-up call is issued by another I that is already awake.<sup>29</sup>

Moreover, the two requirements are not to be thought of as occurring, and as being satisfied, successively. Like the entire diachronic account of the formation of the I, the formative stages so distinguished are not temporally distinct phases but so many moments of a complex interacting process of self-constitution that is extended in time only in the philosopher’s artificial reconstruction. For Fichte the actual coming about of the I takes place “at once” (*in einem Schlag*), as he puts it in drawing on a favorite metaphor of his from minting, in which coins are not made by piecing together the front side and the back of a coin. Rather both sides come about at once and through one and the same sudden strike.

<sup>28</sup> See GA I/2: 365. On the character of the *Wissenschaftslehre* as reconstructive narrative of the mind’s genesis, see Ulrich Claesges, *Geschichte des Selbstbewußtseins. Der Ursprung des spekulativen Problems in Fichtes Wissenschaftslehre von 1794-95* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974).

<sup>29</sup> See GA I/3: p. 361ff. (GNR). See also Günter Zöller, “Leib, Materie und gemeinsames Wollen als Anwendungsbedingungen des Rechts” in *Fichtes Grundlage des Naturrechts*, ed. Jean-Christophe Merle. Reihe Klassiker auslegen (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001), pp. 97-111, and “Fichte’s *Foundation of Natural Right* and the Mind-Body Problem” in *Rights, Bodies, and Recognition. New Essays on Fichte’s Foundations of Natural Right*, ed. Daniel E. Breazeale and Tom Rockmore (Aldershot, England und Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 90-106.

But before the interrelated further determinations of the I through its own body and through another I can take place, the conceptual space for the entrance of the You has to be prepared. Fichte himself speaks of the coming about of the “concept” (*Begriff*) of the I.<sup>30</sup> This preparatory step does not yet involve any mutual relation between the I and the You but only the minimal positing of the Not-I as You. The procedure is analogous to the previously discussed original positing of the I as Me. Again a synthesis is involved. This time, though, it is not a synthesis of the I with itself but a synthesis or “unification of the It and the I”.<sup>31</sup> The term “It” here serves to designate the generic, undifferentiated conception of the Not-I as all that is not I. At first blush it might seem an outright contradiction to unite the concept of the I with that of the Not-I. After all the two are defined in terms of each other - as one excluding the other. The notion that I and Not-I are synthesized represents a problem or task to be solved by the introduction - by the I’s invention, so to speak - of the You. Reconciling the mutually exclusive characters of I and Not-I requires the concept of a Not-I that is yet an I and hence the introduction of another I than the one considered so far in the I’s thetical, antithetical, and synthetical activities.

Moreover, on Fichte’s account, the synthesis resulting in the positing of the You takes place concurrently with that resulting in the Me previously described - of the I as I or the “Me-I”, as it might be called. According to Fichte, the one positing itself as I “in one and the same act” posits the You as I - with the further qualification that the You-as-I so posited (or the “You-I”) is here not considered as positing itself, as in the case of the Me-I, but as being posited by the Me-I. In Fichte’s own words: “... and that which, through the same act [the act positing the I as me], is being posited as I by me, and not by itself, is you.”<sup>32</sup>

In stressing that the You-I under consideration here is not posited by itself but by the Me-I, albeit as an I, Fichte is not denying that in another regard - in and of itself, so to speak - the You-I might be completely like the Me-I and might very well involve self-positing. Fichte’s point is rather that

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<sup>30</sup> GA I/4: 255 (VNDWL 2. Einl.).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

as far as the original conceptual constitution (“positing”) of the You from the perspective of the I qua Me is concerned, the You is an “It, or mere object” onto which the concept of the I is being “transferred” (*übertragen*).<sup>33</sup> Fichte himself indicates the structural identity of Me-I and You-I by bringing them both under the covering term, “I in general” (*Ich überhaupt*) and equates the latter with what he terms the “Not-object” (*Nicht-Objekt*).<sup>34</sup>

## 5. From You to Me and From Me to You

With the conceptual framework of the I’s original differentiation between Me-I, You-I and It in place, the step to a specific relation between Me and You can be taken. As previously indicated, this step involves two distinguishable but interrelated moves: the positing by the Me-I of the Me-I’s own body and the positing by the Me-I of the You-I as acting upon the Me-I. Fichte’s overall strategy in detailing the further specifics of Me and You, including those of their basic interrelation, is to inquire into the conditions of the possibility of contextually specific self-consciousness on the part of the Me-I. On Fichte’s analysis, the Me-I can only become aware of itself as such and of its states, if, in addition to the general features already outlined, further, more specific basic conditions are fulfilled. These further conditions involve the I’s engagement with the Not-I, in particular its practical engagement with the Not-I by means of effectuating, or seeking to effectuate, changes in the Not-I and its relation to the I. These further specifics of the Me-I as well as the You-I are to be derived as structural requirements for the I’s basic practicality.

As conditions of the very possibility of the Me-I’s self-consciousness, the Me-I’s and the You-I’s specific transcendental constitution is not obvious to the resultant I itself but only to the artificial philosophical construction of the I’s genesis. Fichte expresses the limited perspective of the Me-I on the I and on the I’s two manifestations as Me-I and You-I by means of the notion that the I “finds itself” and, more specifically, finds itself in a basic practical attitude, which he also terms “willing”.<sup>35</sup> Fichte’s choice of the

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> See GA I/5: p. 37ff. (SdS).

term “finding” to describe the mode of the I’s original self-discovery should not be taken to imply that the I’s practical nature is merely a matter of fact and beyond all explanation. Rather the phrase used by Fichte indicates how matters appear to the emerging ordinary I, or rather to its consciousness and self-consciousness. From the philosophical standpoint, the I does not so much find itself as practical, endowed with a body or such, but is structurally constrained or compelled to so consider itself, or to so “posit” itself, in Fichte’s preferred locution for the I’s clandestine self-constitution.

On Fichte’s view, the I’s original self-experience as a practical I, or as determining the Not-I, chiefly involves the positing of the Me-I in relation to the world of material objects in which and onto which it is to act. Fichte here presupposes the further determination of the Not-I as a world of material objects located in space and time.<sup>36</sup> More specifically, the I is constrained to posit itself as uniquely associated with a material object that is unlike any other material object. The object in question stands, in certain regards, under the immediate control of the Me-I. Any willing on the part of the Me-I is immediately carried out by a corresponding change in the material object with which the Me-I is intimately and exclusively associated. The object in question is the I’s own “body” (*Leib*) considered as the instrument for the I’s active presence in the world of objects.<sup>37</sup> Any other object that may be subject to the I’s practical engagement with the world is to be subject to the I’s activity mediately, viz., by means of a prior activity of the I’s own body.

But a major problem remains to be solved before the embodied I can be considered fully set up for its practical encounter with the world. For the latter requires that the Me-I will something particular, a specific goal or “end” (*Zweck*) to be realized by the Me-I’s bodily motion and the resultant impact on the world of objects. This in turn requires the cognition of objects in the world so that the Me-I can select among those objects and the parts or aspects thereof that it seeks to change through its willing and its willing’s immediate embodiment. But, as Fichte argues, for the Me-I there is no engagement with the world that would be prior to its originally practical, will-

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<sup>36</sup> GA I/3: 200ff., p. 206ff. (GEWL).

<sup>37</sup> See GA I/3: p. 361ff. (GNR).

based experience of the world. Any merely cognitive, strictly theoretical engagement with the world has to be based on the latter's prior practical disclosure. Only once such a practical engagement can be considered as having taken place, or has been posited in terms of the necessary conditions of its possibility, the Me-I may abstract from the practical aspects of the objects bound up with willing an end and executing a change and focus instead on the object as such and seek to achieve its theoretical determination or cognition.<sup>38</sup>

The reciprocal requirement of object-cognition for end-volition and of the willing of an end for the cognition of an object leaves the I caught in a "circle" (*Zirkel*) that, if it were to persist, would mean the I's failing to be able to function as either a practical or a theoretical I.<sup>39</sup> But rather than treating the circle as an objection to his own theory, Fichte integrates this apparent defect into the further development of his account. He reconceptualizes the discovery of the circle into the indication of the philosophical task to ascertain that determination of the I in which cognition and volition occur unseparately. That way, the I eludes the deficient circular relation between knowing and willing through recourse to their predisjunctive common foundation. According to Fichte, the dissolution of the circle and hence the progress towards a functioning I depends on the I's finding (or positing, from the philosopher's standpoint) a synthesis in which the otherwise separated halves of the circle - the cognition of an object and the volition of an end - are united. Fichte explains that the required solution has to involve an original synthesis of the two different functions of subjectivity such that the synthetic product is at once an object for cognition and an end for volition. More specifically, the synthetic unity required has to be such that the object to be cognized is nothing else than the original formation of the I's willing,

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<sup>38</sup> The systematic priority of the practical, volitional relation to the world over the theoretical, cognitive relation to it - hence of the priority of practice over theory - is one of the key aspects of Fichte's central doctrine of the "primacy of practical reason". See also Daniel E. Breazeale, "Die systematischen Funktionen des Praktischen bei Fichte und dessen systematische Vieldeutigkeit" in *Fichtes praktische Philosophie. Eine systematische Einführung*, ed. Hans Georg von Manz and Günter Zöller (Hildesheim: Olms, 2006), pp. 39-72.

<sup>39</sup> GA I/3: p. 340f. (GNR).



and the latter would involve no end outside of the I but only the original end of the very formation of the I's willing.<sup>40</sup>

In structural terms, Fichte describes the required original synthesis of cognition and volition in an original willing that is also an original cognizing (or an original cognizing that is also an original willing) as the "subject's being determined to self-determination".<sup>41</sup> The required element of cognition here lies in the I's taking cognizance of its prior determination. Yet that determination is unlike other determinations that the I might subsequently undergo in its encounter with objects. It is a minimal and formal determination of the I and strictly aimed at the I's own willing. Thus the required original synthesis of the I's cognition and volition consists in the I undergoing a determination the sole point of which is that the I undertake its own determination.

Fichte calls the peculiar original determination that the I undergoes and that is strictly limited to inducing the I's self-determination "solicitation" (*Aufforderung*), more specifically, "a mere solicitation of the subject to acting" (*bloße Aufforderung des Subjekts zum Handeln*).<sup>42</sup> In receiving and comprehending the solicitation as a solicitation, the I realizes that it is undergoing a determination that seeks to take itself back as much as possible by leaving any further determination of the I to the I's self-determination. The I is thereby brought to realize its potential for free, self-induced activity, as called for by the solicitation. But the I also realizes that the called-for activity of self-determination is not something given to it but something to be achieved by its own efforts. It is awakened by the solicitation to its incipient existence as free, self-determining agent. The I further realizes that the solicitation received cannot originate in some ordinary material object, which would never be able to bring about a determination that is a determination to self-determination. In undergoing the solicitation the I finds itself addressed as a potentially free, self-determined intelligent being by a being that has to be considered (posited as) itself intelligent and free, capable of cognition as well as volition. In other words, the solicitor behind the solicitation has to be

<sup>40</sup> See GA I/3: p. 342ff. (GNR) and GA IV/2: 129f. (WLnmH).

<sup>41</sup> GA I/3: p. 342 (in the original emphasis) (GNR).

<sup>42</sup> GA I/3: p. 342 (GNR).

thought of as a being like the Me-I, only more advanced in formation in that, in issuing the solicitation, the solicitor is already exercising the very intelligent and free behavior to which the solicited I is to be awakened by the solicitation.<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, the I undergoing the solicitation has to be thought of, and has think of itself, as so constituted that it is open for the special impact of the solicitation.<sup>44</sup> While the impact of the solicitation is different from simple physical force, it still needs to operate by material means in order to be able to reach the I to be solicited by way of its body. Accordingly, Fichte distinguishes between “free” and “unfree influence” exercised upon the I and the corresponding functions of receptivity or “sense” (*Sinn*).<sup>45</sup> In addition, the solicited I has to think of itself as capable of responding to the solicitation in kind, i. e., not by means of simple physical force but by addressing the solicitor in turn as a free intelligent being. The solicited I’s required ability to reciprocate the solicitor’s free influence entails that, in addition to possessing bodily means for bringing about physical change, the solicited I also be equipped with functions and means of communication or “higher organs” (*höhere Organe*).<sup>46</sup>

Finally, the Me-I has to think of itself as so constituted that the soliciting I is able to detect in it the potential for free and intelligent conduct and is thereby induced to issue the solicitation in the first place. For Fichte this requirement entails the presence of outward, bodily manifestations of the I’s potential as free and intelligent agent, in particular a formation of the body that indicates the latter’s susceptibility to infinitely varied ends, as they are prone to be set and pursued by a being that is not fixed to natural ends but destined to free and intelligent self-determination.<sup>47</sup> Fichte’s term for the solicitor’s cognitive act of grasping the capacity of the I to be solicited for freely intelligent agency is “recognition” (*Anerkennung*), which serves as an abbreviation for the more detailed statement that the being in question is

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<sup>43</sup> See GA I/3: p. 344ff. (GNR).

<sup>44</sup> GA I/3: p. 361ff.

<sup>45</sup> See GA I/3: p. 368ff. (GNR).

<sup>46</sup> See GA I/3: p. 367ff. (GNR).

<sup>47</sup> Siehe GA I/3: p. 379ff. (GNR).

recognized by the solicitor as a finite rational being.<sup>48</sup> Fichte also uses the term, “recognition,” for the conduct of the solicitor resulting from the original recognition, thereby giving the term its wider, specifically practical meaning that proved to be Fichte’s legacy to much of subsequent thinking about Me and You.

## 6. From Me and You to Us

In its function as the basic notion for replicated and repeated recognition between I and You, the term and concept of recognition, which Fichte had brought into practical philosophy from its antecedent use in merely logical and epistemological matters, became the influential starting point for further thinking about the sociality of the subject.<sup>49</sup> Yet it must be stressed that in its original function and significance, Fichte’s concept of recognition does not yet exhibit the wider marks of reciprocity and equiprimordiality that characterize the further usage of the term and that go back chiefly to Hegel.<sup>50</sup> In the first instance, “recognition” in Fichte designates the practical epistemic achievement, along with the corresponding voluntary decision, that leads to the treatment of the object of the solicitation as a subject or an I in its own right - or rather as at least capable of such practically rational subjectivity and also as destined to such conduct, but as not capable of it on its own and hence in need of a solicitation to self-determination. Accordingly, the original act of recognition in Fichte is one-sided and a one-time affair. Cast in empirical terms, those of social experience, recognition is an ontogenetically singular and phylogenetically universal process of education to the maturity of the independent use of reason.

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<sup>48</sup> See GA I/3: p. 351ff. (GNR).

<sup>49</sup> See Robert R Williams, *Recognition. Fichte and Hegel on the Other* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992) and *Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1998). For a more differentiated assessment, see Rüdiger Bubner, “Von der Aufforderung zur Anerkennung” in *Subjektivität und Metaphysik. Konrad Cramer zu Ehren an Anlaß seines 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Jürgen Stolzenberg (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), pp. 61-69.

<sup>50</sup> See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Wolfgang Boniessen and Reinhard Heede (Hamburg: Meiner, 1980) (= *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Rheinisch-westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 9), p. 109ff.

The step from the original and one-sided act of recognition to the subsequent continued and mutual recognition between the subject and the object of that original act of recognition and the further step to a plurality of free intelligent beings mutually recognizing each other depend, on Fichte's assessment, on the satisfaction of further conditions and are a contingent matter. In order to replicate the recognition received, the solicited I first has to subject itself to certain minimal standards of rationality, especially the principle to act in a manner that is consistent with the way in which it has been acted upon in the original act of recognition. This consistency is by no means guaranteed in beings like us, who are capable of acting rationally but often do not so act, statistically speaking, and who do not so act necessarily, modally speaking. A being that has been successfully solicited to self-determination might also conduct itself, as it were, ungratefully towards the very I that had so solicited it and - for whatever reason - not reciprocate the act of recognition.<sup>51</sup>

Given the basic contingency of mutual recognition and the risk of non-recognition taken by the recognizing solicitor, Fichte introduces two main devices for assuring the mutuality of recognition: law and morality. Law, which is based on contract and involves a political order, imposes external constraints on the conduct of one free intelligent being towards another such being. The recognition so imposed is not required on moral grounds but is based on the threat of punishment for deviant conduct. Moreover, the community established and maintained by law includes only a limited number of members, typically the citizens and residents of a political state. Fichte even considers lawbreakers to have removed themselves from their respective legal community and its protection or to be removed from it as part of their punishment.<sup>52</sup> As far as the relation between I and You is concerned, the juridical community is essentially a community involving the possessive pronouns of the grammatical first and second person. The law and its political basis, i.e., the state, are in essence institutions for establishing and protecting the distinction between mine and yours, or the assignment and guarantee of various forms of possession and entitlement. Accordingly, the recognition involved in the legal communality is external and a matter of appearance rather than of intention and belief.

<sup>51</sup> See GA I/3: p. 384ff. (Foundation of Natural Right).

<sup>52</sup> See GA I/3: p. 388 (GNR).

The second major form in which mutual recognition takes place is the ethical community. Unlike in the extensionally limited legal community of the state, membership in the moral order is universal and invisible. On Fichte's account, every free intelligent agent finds himself not only willing but internally constrained to willing what is morally correct. For Fichte the moral specificity of free intelligent activity is not a matter of free choice. Strictly considered, the self-determination that a practical rational agent discovers as his determination, or rather destination and vocation, excludes arbitrary choice and directs all conduct to the absolute norm of freedom for its own sake.<sup>53</sup> To be sure, neither the cognition of one's ethical calling nor the corresponding moral outlook on life and the associated moral conduct can be the object of forceful imposition and of threats or rewards. Such external means for assuring morality would contradict the latter's origin in free self-determination. Hence the ethical community is not a social reality like the state and its legal order but an invisible realm to which everyone belongs<sup>54</sup> and which Fichte - following Kant - terms a "church" (*Kirche*) in order to indicate the (possible) universality of its membership and the inward, attitudinal character of the association of its members.<sup>55</sup>

With its ideal maximal extension encompassing every free intelligent agent, the ethical community seems the perfect arena for the practice and preservation of mutual recognition. Yet a closer at Fichte's vision of the moral world reveals a feature that seems to run counter to a fundamental tenet underlying the relationship of recognition, viz., the social imperative of regarding and treating the other I as another I, i.e., as not only like me but also as different from me and as in that difference equal to me. Yet in Fichte's ideal picture of the ethical world everyone in it has the same final goal (freedom for its own sake) and therefore ultimately or ideally wills the same: "Due to the fact that one's entire individuality disappears and is anni-

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<sup>53</sup> See GA I/5: p. 132 (SdS). On Fichte's ethics as a theory of the formal and material conditions of the possibility of moral freedom, see Günter Zöller, "Konkrete Ethik. Universalität und Partikularität in Fichtes System der Sittenlehre" in *Ethikbegründungen zwischen Universalismus und Relativismus*, ed. Kristina Engelhard and Dietmar H. Heidemann (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 203-229.

<sup>54</sup> See GA I/213 (SdS).

<sup>55</sup> See GA I/5: 213ff (SdS). See also AA 6: p. 100ff. (*Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, Drittes Stück).

hilated, everyone turns into the pure presentation of the moral law in the world of sense - a truly pure I, through free choice and self-determination”.<sup>56</sup>

From the moral point of view, the individuality of the I - and of the You - is but a tool or an instrument to be employed in the universal ethical project of advancing and achieving the supreme reign of reason.<sup>57</sup> The goal served by this vehicle is not the freedom of the individual I, and not even that of the community of such I's and You's, but it is “reason in general” (*Vernunft überhaupt*) and its freedom from anything that is not reason. Accordingly, the focus of the mutual recognition in the ethical community is not the reciprocal relation between Me and You but the immersion of first- and second-person individuality in an all-encompassing “We” (*Wir*).<sup>58</sup>

Most revealing, though, for the supra-individual dimension of Fichte's radically social, not to say, socialist vision of ethics, is the circumstance that the ideal We of the ethical community is not the subsequent result of some prior association of any pre-existing I and You on the basis of their mutual relationship of recognition. Rather Fichte maintains the priority of the We as the pre-individual origin of individuality. The ethical We is to be conceived of as the undifferentiated but differentiable prior condition and basis (“mass”; *Masse*)<sup>59</sup> for the subsequent partitioning into individuals that interact as I and You amongst themselves but whose ultimate destination is the infinite reapproximation of the original state of their non-distinction from each other.<sup>60</sup> For Fichte,

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<sup>56</sup> GA I/5: p. 231 (SdS).

<sup>57</sup> See GA I/5: p. 198 (SdS). See also Fichte's revision of the Kantian doctrine that every human being is an end in itself, which is transposed from the level of individuals to that of a supra-individual totality (“properly speaking, God's viewpoint”; GA I/5: 230 [SdS]).

<sup>58</sup> GA I/5: p. 227 (SdS).

<sup>59</sup> On Fichte's recourse to the term “mass” to designate the pre-individual origin of individuality in the transition from indeterminacy/determinability to determinedness through (self-)determination, see GA IV/2: 240f., 248 (WLnmH).

<sup>60</sup> In Fichte's theory of the I the difference between the pre-individual “mass” of reason and the rational individual corresponds to the difference between the pure or absolute I and the individual I. See GA IV/2: p. 240f. (WLnmH) and GA I/4: 257 (VNDWL 2. Einl.). Considered in its entirety, Fichte's theory of the I encompasses a three-step process from pre-individual I-hood (absolute I) through the legally and ethically regu-

the ethical We is, originally and finally, not an interpersonal We but an absolute We or rather the Absolute considered as We.

In light of Fichte's earlier conception of the originary as well final identity of all Is in the pure I<sup>61</sup> and his later but related conception of a "comprehensive I" (*Gesamtich*)<sup>62</sup> as the prerequisite of all individual differentiation, the ethical We in Fichte, which is primarily a comprehensive We and not a plural We, can be seen as a reconceptualization, under a social guise (or rather a pre- or proto-social guise), of the pre-individual, absolute I with which the speculative journey from I to Me, from I to You, from Me to You and from You to Me began - and to which it is supposed to return after its extended course through the social world.

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lated plurality of I's (I as individual) to the unobtainable but unconditionally sought after post-individual total-I (idea of the I).

<sup>61</sup> See the anthropologically articulated conception of pure reason as the cognitive, volutive, and emotive unity of the human being with himself in the Jena Lectures on the Vocation of the Scholar from the year 1794 (GA I/3: p. 30f.).

<sup>62</sup> See *Johann Gottlieb Fichte's nachgelassene Schriften*, ed. Immanuel Hermann Fichte, 3 vols. (Bonn: Adolph-Marcus, 1834/35). Reprint as *Fichtes Werke*. 11 vols. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971), vols. 9-11, here vol. 9, p. 559 (*The Facts of Consciousness* [1813]).

## Vico's Deviation from Decartes' Logical Principles<sup>1</sup>

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Descartes' philosophical aspirations came in opposition to the skeptical mood common to the late Renaissance. Three centuries of Humanism and more than a century of Neo-Platonism brought to the Renaissance intellectual scene a whole constellation of marvelous ideas but they failed to resolve the crisis of Christianity still felt in Dante Aleghieri's (1265-1321) *De Monarchia* and *Divina Commedia*. The spirit of Renaissance philosophy contributed to the final dissatisfaction with the Roman Church, which found expression in the Protestant Reformation followed by a corresponding attempt of reformation on the Catholic side. One of the most prominent figures in the Catholic reformation was St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) whose spirit and ideas were embodied in the Jesuit Order he founded. Descartes, who had graduated from the prestigious Jesuit College of La Flèche, realized that the knowledge humanity had at hand and perhaps even the spiritual grounds of morality were in a disastrous state. He made a commitment to reform the principles of logic and knowledge as a whole (and even dared to hope he would be able to improve the moral doctrine) believing he could do so without going astray from Christian teaching. St. Loyola's attempt to discern a reliable criterion for distinguishing malign from benevolent spirits through spiritual exercises served Descartes as an example in his search for method and for his metaphysical meditations. Descartes' confidence in the power of reason equipped with the right method and in the freedom of the human will won him the title of the founder of philosophical Modernity.

Several decades after Descartes took up the fight against skepticism, an Italian thinker, Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), critically approached the Cartesian project of Modernity. While Descartes believed that the essence of

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<sup>1</sup> The first version of this paper was edited by my colleague from the Sofia University's English Department, Dr. Kalina Filipova.



a human being consists in applying reason properly and using free will according to its guidance in order to achieve the greatest success in science, mathematics, and philosophy, including logic, Vico insisted that human imagination and ingenuity ought to be directed towards the humanities and legal studies and should aim at practical results. This was the eighteenth century Humanistic reply to Descartes.

The purpose of the present essay will be to explain how the basic notions of Modern philosophy, forming Descartes' enthusiastic attitude towards knowledge and human relations, were altered in order to be critically implemented into Vico's much more sober position.

## **I. The basics of the Cartesian system**

There are several concepts on which Rene Descartes (1596-1650) founded his system. It is a commonplace to begin the exposition of his philosophy with the notion of universal doubt. However, doubt is only a consequence of something more fundamental and this is free will. Descartes describes free will as an ability to assent to or deny the truth of something, or abstain from judgment. When he speaks about doubting everything in the Universe, including his own existence and that of God, Descartes in fact exercises his free will by abstaining from judgment. This act of indifference leads to the first positive step - concluding that since doubt is there, it exists and therefore the one who doubts exists too. This is the first truth of the Cartesian system: "I doubt, therefore I exist" and since doubt is a form of thought, the general form of the same principle is "I think, therefore I exist."<sup>2</sup>

Now Descartes is ready to introduce the second pillar of his philosophy, the clear and distinct perception of mind. This is an intellectual act, which has nothing to do with the senses. "Clear" means that the object of our thinking can be understood just as well as an object of visual perception can be seen in daylight. "Distinct", on the other hand, refers to the absence of any sensible data from our mental vision. Whenever our mind encounters

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<sup>2</sup> Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, p. 127, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, p. 17, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), vols. I-II.

a clear and distinct perception or a clear and distinct idea, this is a secure sign that we have in front of us a truth. Descartes elevates clearness and distinctness to the status of a criterion of truth.

The next essential term in the Cartesian system is substance. Substance is the ultimate ground of everything existing. There are two substances in Descartes: material or extended substance (*res extensa*) and thinking substance or subject (*res cogitans*). Although immaterial, thinking substance is portrayed in quite a material way resembling a box. The only difference from a real box is that mental substance contains ideal items - that is, ideas. Descartes goes through the ideas kept in stock and identifies three types. First, there are innate ideas implanted in our mind by God. Among them are all truths of arithmetic and geometry, logical propositions such as "there is no mountain without a valley", the Cartesian principle "I think, therefore I exist", and the idea of God. They all are necessarily true. Secondly, there are representations of external objects. They seem to come from the world outside with the help of our senses. These ideas can be true or false. Finally, there are various fantastic images such as centaurs or chimeras. They are formed by the imagination in a random way combining some features noticed in the external objects. These images are always false.

As in St. Augustine's system, Descartes pays particular attention to time. Descartes rejects the belief in the current of time flowing smoothly from the future into the past through the present. Time for him consists of separate moments and a special effort is necessary to unite them. Accordingly, human life and cognition feature the same separate moments of time making the identity of human life and the consistency of cognition problematic.<sup>3</sup> The mode of the present has a privileged position in Descartes because it is the only mode that can be inspected clearly and distinctly by the pure mind. The past is shaped by memory and the future is invented by the imagination. Both past and future are doubtful modes of time since memory (including imagination) is linked with the senses. The present contemplated by the clear and distinct mental perception bears existence and truth. The Cartesian principle "I think, therefore I exist" exemplifies absolute existence and truth. However, neither existence nor truth belong to the past and future.

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<sup>3</sup> *Meditations on First Philosophy*, p. 33.

These two time modes need a guarantee in order to enjoy the same status as the present. Descartes finds such a guarantee in the existence of God. He proves divine existence by modifying two proofs known since the late-Middle Ages. Afterwards, he says that since God is a perfect being, He cannot lie. From this Descartes infers that everything one remembers in the past or imagines in the future as clear and distinct is true and certain. Thus, he obtains a means to supply the totality of knowledge with consistency, to weave coherently his own existence, and to be able to prove the existence of the external world.

After resolving the issue of time, Descartes undertakes the adventure of discovering the innermost secrets of nature and mathematics. He carries out this task through a well-ordered search or method. His method is meant to make a radical change in logic by transforming the logic of proof into a logic of discovery. The Cartesian method uses four steps or rules. Following them strictly will secure constant success in research. The first rule is to accept as true only what is clear and distinct. The second step requires dividing up each difficulty until the simplest problem is reached. The third rule advises that the links among the truths be followed in order to achieve the natural order or to create an artificial one if no natural order is available. Finally, the last rule reminds us always to do full enumerations of what we have already discovered.<sup>4</sup>

Method is the crown of the Cartesian system. Or at least, it has been believed to be so. There is however one last point beyond method. Free will appears on the philosophical stage again. It is expected to give consent to or deny what methodically arranged clear and distinct perception brings to mind. Free will is the final authority that lends to knowledge the status of truth and accomplishes the endeavor of logic. It is what makes possible the explanation of errors. Descartes reminds his readers about the Christian teaching of man as being created in God's image and likeness. In his interpretation this means that human free will is infinite like divine will. On the other hand, reason has a much narrower scope. That is why human free will is constantly tempted to make statements beyond the field of clear and distinct ideas. In such cases, being deprived of the counsels of reason, free will

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<sup>4</sup> *Discourse on Method*, p. 120

errs easily. The same is valid concerning sin: human nature is benevolent, according to Descartes, and men do not want sin. However, not paying enough attention to whether something is perceived clearly and distinctly as being good we often take evil for good and commit sin. Although man is created in God's image and likeness, there is considerable difference between divine and human will. Divine will acts out of indifference; it is absolutely autonomous and depends only on itself. Human free will, however, is not autonomous but depends upon clear and distinct ideas. The more human will depends on the leading role of reason, the freer it is.<sup>5</sup> Human will is infinite but not self-sufficient. It needs help all the time. Help is provided by God in the form of the finite natural light of reason allowing us to discern what is clear and distinct. Thus, humans, being created in God's image, are persons and are endowed with free will but their corrupted nature, which is the abandonment of the likeness of God, prevents them from always applying their will properly. Reason, in Descartes' opinion, alleviates human spiritual sickness and helps people to step towards the restoration of the likeness of God in them.<sup>6</sup>

## II. Vico's logic beyond reflection

Giambattista Vico is a late adherent of Italian Humanism. Nowadays he is often called the Owl of Minerva of Italian Humanism. Vico was a faithful Cartesian until his early forties. In all his writings he praises human choice and free will. There is, however, a crucial difference between Descartes' and Vico's notions of free will. Descartes always stresses that free will is a conscious activity. We are fully aware of what we accept, negate, or remain indifferent to. For Vico, conscious will is only a late product of human development. Human choice begins as unconscious conatus. This term was first employed in physics and refers to the mean between rest and motion or, more precisely, what is in charge of the transformation of rest into motion. The pattern for conatus is God, Who is in rest but creates every

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<sup>5</sup> *Meditations on First Philosophy*, p. 40

<sup>6</sup> Vladimir N. Losskiy, *Ocherk misticheskogo bogosloviya Vostochnoy Tserkvi* [An essay on mystical theology of the Eastern Church], (Moscow: Center "SEI", 1991), pp. 87-102

movement in the universe. Vico is not so much interested in the mechanical connotations of this term but rather in its logical, metaphysical, and moral significance. Metaphysical reality consists of divine ideas. This is a world different from our sensible world. Nevertheless, the sensible world has constant access to the metaphysical realm and receives its worth and meaning from there. Conatus is the vehicle of metaphysical meaning entering sensible reality through special openings called metaphysical points. Vico gives two instances of metaphysical points: the geometrical point and the number one. In Vico's opinion, both are human inventions. They did not exist in the world originally created by God. In this sense, they are figments. In spite of this, they possess enormous power to form the world of mathematics and its subsequent applications to nature. This power is manifested by the incredible ability of the geometrical point to multiply into lines, planes, and spatial figures although by definition it is indivisible. The same is true of the number one, which can become innumerable when it emerges as whole numbers and fractions although, like the geometrical point, it is indivisible. How is this possible? Vico answers that the strange potential of the geometrical point and of the number one is due to the metaphysical realm. They become metaphysical points allowing the metaphysical world of eternal immutable ideas to penetrate into our sensible reality. This invasion of the eternal into the changeable is carried out by conatus.

The most impressive feature of Vico's conception of conatus is that it is active not only in mathematics and science but also in the world of human affairs. In human history choices are very rarely made by reason alone. More often they are made out of necessity and the human desire for a better and easier life. Reason is usually mixed with passions and emotions in the social and political world. Being immersed in bodily passions is a sign of corrupted nature but unlike Descartes Vico does not claim that passions have to be avoided by all means. Passions serve the Providential role of improving human nature in the course of history. Despite original sin, humans have never been abandoned by God. Being alienated from the good, they remain directed to it by Providence. Using their passions and emotions the divine order heals their corrupted nature. Conatus acts individually in each person but it acquires the form of a social connection named by Vico *senso*

*comune* or common sense.<sup>7</sup> Vico gives a simple but unusual definition of common sense:

XI Human choice, by its nature most uncertain, is made certain and determined by the common sense of men with respect to human needs or utilities, which are the two sources of the natural law of the gentes.

XII Common sense is judgment without reflection, shared by an entire class, an entire people, or the entire human race.<sup>8</sup>

Common sense proceeds through metaphysical points in social guise. They are religion, marriage, and private property. Vico states that every society needs and respects these civil customs and when a nation begins to undermine them it acts self-destructively. Common sense heals vices and nourishes piety with the help of the virtues of prudence, temperance, and fortitude.<sup>9</sup> They are active in two out of three epochs in the cycle of human history. These are the epoch of gods, when people believed gods ruled on the earth and humans interpreted divine orders through taking auspices, and the epoch of heroes, when stern heroes or fathers of households reigned all over the world. This divine order was eroded in the third epoch, the time of humans when individual concerns prevailed over the common good. In this age, reason puts under doubt traditional customs and aims at liberating men from everything that has not undergone the examination of reason. Thus, the philosophical wisdom of clear and distinct perception takes the place of traditional prudence. Such a transformation does not mark a real liberation for humans. Instead, it indicates the advent of the second barbarism, this time not a barbarism of sense but a barbarism of reflection. Vico observes: "For the later [barbarism of sense] displayed a generous savagery, against which one could defend oneself or take flight or be on one's guard; but the former

<sup>7</sup> Mark Lilla, *G.B. Vico: The Making of an Anti-Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 156

<sup>8</sup> G.B. Vico, *Principj di scienza nuova*, in G.B. Vico *Opere*, Nicolini, Fausto, ed., (Milano e Napoli: Riccardo Ricciardi Editore, 1953), §§ 142-143 [English edition: *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1984]

<sup>9</sup> G.B. Vico, "Sinopsi del diritto universale" in: G.B. Vico, *Opere Giuridiche*, (Firenze: Sansoni editore, 1974), p. 5-6, 54

with the base savagery, under soft words and embraces plots against the life and fortune of friends and intimates.”<sup>10</sup>

Clear and distinct reflection cannot be a criterion of truth for Vico. He substitutes the Cartesian criterion with his famous dictum *verum factum* (truth is the made). The clarity and distinctness of one's self-awareness or the consciousness of one's own existence cannot play the role of a pattern of truth but can be only an example of certainty. Certain knowledge is not yet true knowledge. Veracity is achieved only when the causes that bring something into existence are discovered.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the true is not the ideal that nations pursue in history. The core of historical development is the striving for the certain. Certainty is achieved in history through establishing and sustaining the three basic social customs and the system of law grounded on them. Common sense is the criterion that directs people towards certainty. Vico believes the certain is a part of the true. The true in the course of human nations is ideal eternal history arranged for humankind by Providence. Ideal eternal history is the metaphysical pattern of the civil world requiring each nation to pass through the same stages of birth, development, maturity, decline, and disappearance. Vico's new scientist practices a new critical art or metaphysical narration through the heroism of mind<sup>12</sup> and this allows him to know what is true in history. Appealing to the heroism of mind, Vico reminds his contemporaries that heroes<sup>13</sup> have always been attracted by the sublime in what is divine, human, or natural. Through their deeds heroes have contributed significantly to the fulfillment of the Providential order in history. Vico urges his students and readers to imitate ancient heroes: “Undergo Herculean trials which, once passed, vindicate with perfect justice your divine descent from true Jove, Him the greatest and

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<sup>10</sup> Vico, *Principj di scienza nuova*, § 1106

<sup>11</sup> Vico, *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 45-47

<sup>12</sup> Donald Phillip Verene, *Giambattista Vico: Signs of the Metaphysical Imagination* (Toronto: Toronto Semiotics Circle, 1994), p. 29

<sup>13</sup> Mythical heroes in Vico's “poetic logic” supply examples of what he calls “universals of imagination” unlike the rational universals; that is, the concept of traditional logic. See Donald Phillip Verene, *Vico's Science of Imagination* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991)

best. Prove yourselves to be heroes by enriching the human race with further giant benefits.”<sup>14</sup>

This is the only way to avoid the barbarism of reflection and protect society from decay. Vico opposes the Cartesian conviction in the unlimited beneficial capacity of clear and distinct reason and the liberating potential of philosophy. He is not content with Descartes’ refutation of skepticism because it is impious. Heroism of mind is pious since it is not closed within philosophical reflection but goes on to study the world of common sense, the world of certainty or philology. It is not pure philosophy but philosophy which examines the historical heritage of nations that is capable of bringing truth. The truth that Vico discerns by this new critical art enables him to warn eighteenth-century Europe not to follow Rome’s road to self-destruction. Late Rome betrayed its republican common sense and the practical prudence embodied in Roman law and became committed to the rational wisdom of philosophy as well as to the pursuit of individual liberty. Vico suggests to Europeans that they use his new science not to enlighten their mind for the sake of enlightenment alone but to learn and restore the Providential order of history unfolding through the three civil institutions of religion, marriage, and private property<sup>15</sup> and not through Descartes’ four-step logic of discovery.

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<sup>14</sup> Vico, “On Heroic Mind,” in: *Vico and Contemporary Thought*, vol. 2, Giorgio Tagliacozzo, M. Mooney, and D. Verene, eds. (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1976), p. 244

<sup>15</sup> Lilla, *G.B. Vico: The Making of an Anti-Modern*, 233



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## II. PHILOSOPHERS FROM A DISTANCE

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### **Love and Violence: Notes on the Correspondence between Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger (1925-1975)**

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“However, the function of any action, as something different from the simple behavior, is to interrupt the automatic and expectable development” - says Hannah Arendt in the first part of her study *On Violence* (1969). Following Proudon she states: “The fertility of the unexpected exceeds far enough the foresight of the statesman”; that is, “The unexpected events could not be called contingent ... this trick permits to purify the theory, but by the cost of its further remoteness from reality.” In this sense, the letters between Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger, which reveal a relationship that lasted 50 years between one of the most influential women in the field of political thought and one of the most influential men in philosophy of 20th century, may be called unexpected but not contingent.

The love principle in this relation, which has been circulating for a long time in academic circles as gossip or rumor, seems to be the ground for the common attitude of two philosophers obviously different in their expression.<sup>1</sup> Later confessions of Hannah Arendt, especially her speech for the occasion of Heidegger’s 80th birthday, also offer enough grounds for arguments that situate them both in the same philosophical camp: one of the cultural-conservative defenders of tradition. This is very much independent of their different political positions - consequences of events in Germany after

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. E. Young-Bruehl, editor, *Hannah Arendt: for Love of the World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004); Elzbieta Ettinger, *Hannah Arendt - Martin Heidegger* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).

1933 and because of Arendt's Jewish origin. Like other German philosophers of Jewish origin who have studied under Heidegger, Arendt is susceptible to both complexes - of her origin and of her teacher. Her "Heideggerian complex" seems to be stronger than that of the origin. Nevertheless, we could not say about her what Marcuse said about Adorno: that he would have become a Nazi if he were not a Jew. In the same way, Arendt views the totalitarian power and the violence typical of it as not being entirely inconsistent with Heidegger's ideas about the confused way of philosophical and scientific thought after forgetting about Being. This suspected intimacy was confirmed by the letters edited by M. Ludz at the end of the 1990s documenting the passionate beginning, sudden interruption, and revival of their contact.<sup>2</sup>

In the style of the unforeseeable (a style which is not contingent), the present paper is written too. Its objective is not to show the relationship between two influential thinkers, but, most of all, to show through it two notions often excessively related: love and violence. They must be conceived with calm. As far as they express substantial human behavior, a neurotic attitude to love and violence easily leads to deformed behavior. Theorizing about them and conceiving them as pure phenomena, it is always good to keep in mind that they are excessive only in their pure efficacy. It is an illusion to think that the ideal comprehension of violence will overcome it and that the ideal comprehension of love will make it triumph.

Love and violence sometimes have a very special relationship. Thinking about violence as a political phenomenon is possible against the background of forgotten love. This does not mean to consider the notions on their indispensable contrasting background - the sentimentality of the notion of violence and the "monster-ization" of love, for example, but to consider their collaboration in the theoretical representation of human relations after the manner of Arendt. It seems that, in a remote but essential sense, when Arendt thinks about the kind of violence occurring at the end of the 20th century (further provoked by tumultuous student disturbances), she does it

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hrsg. U. Ludz, *Arendt/Heidegger, Briefe 1925 bis 1975 und andere Zeugnisse*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klosterman, 2002).

with the nostalgia of a woman remembering her first (and eternal) love and simultaneously forgetting her earlier concepts of violence. In this case, Martin Heidegger turns out to be the indispensable tempter and the love for him explains the moderateness of Arendt's conception of political violence as well as that of revenge, disdain, the banality of evil, etc. Today it is especially useful; it protects against the rhetoric of excessiveness and against violent acts by political, economic, educational, or other actors.

In a narrower sense, examining Arendt's conception of violence in her correspondence with Heidegger also means to interrupt something that otherwise would continue automatically: the traditional presentation of Arendt as a liberal, emancipated, and feminist political thinker sentimentally involved with freedom and rights. Her correspondence with Heidegger gives us the grounds to claim that her sentiments are somewhere else, and at the same time, that the roots of her understanding of violence could be found in other places as well.

Let's take for our beginning the very concept of violence as it is given by Arendt. In general, it appears in the validation of the difference between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, which concerns Arendt during her entire life. Particularly it is worked out in her study *On Violence*, where it is placed into a triple-polemic context: first, in relation to the immediate reason of the work, there was the student unrest in the end of the 1960s in the USA and Europe and their practical-political grounds; second, as the critique of the outlooks justifying violence of Sorell, Fanon and, in some extent, of Pareto in defending an impartial (and minimalist) concept of the role of violence in history. Methodically this concept is also placed in the trend, known from the time of Enlightenment, of separating the natural from the social sciences under the strict rule of not reducing to or deducing the last from the first. In this relation, polemics has its third dimension: it is directed against the modern (a tendency of the end of the 19th century and renewed at the end of the 20th century). It is based on the assumption that humans can be tested as animals and that from observations certain conclusions or inferences may be validly drawn about the human condition. This looks too extreme: "in order to understand that people are ready to fight for their country, we hardly need

to seek out instincts of group territorialism in ants, fishes, and monkeys... a single day spent in the ghettos of any big city is enough". By chance in the same way after 9/11, the studies of terrorism and causes leading to it were developed since pure political-social reasons of today have been reduced to religious-historical phenomena of the past.

In searching for the purity of the notion of violence in Arendt, undoubtedly, phenomenological limitations appear - except for one: the abstention of value reasoning. For even when she does not express this directly, everywhere she brings out the moral engagement of the social act, which is one reason for accepting violence as a necessary form of human activity. This follows from Arendt's understanding of "public happiness" (i.e. from the joy of acting together which is rediscovered in her opinion about the student protest movements; compare her *Thoughts about Politics and Revolution*, 1970). "When man takes part in public life, he opens for himself a dimension of human experience that otherwise remains closed for him and which, in some way, represents part of complete happiness" - especially when he is acting by moral motives. Acknowledging this is "a very old awkwardness" but she does not feel ashamed of it.

For one thing, we are here speaking in terms of violence in the political sphere. It normally appears as the most drastic manifestation of power or (being an exception like in Pasren d'Antrev) as softened violence and this view is common both for leftist and rightist theorists. It is followed by Max Weber's definition of the political state as "a dominion of people over people, based on means of legal violence, i.e. by such violence that is claimed to be legitimized"; violence completes the instrumental conception of power in general represented by Arendt in the explanation of such notions as "power" (a human capacity to act according the interests of a certain group) and "strength" as the personal dimension of force that refers to the general notion of energy derived from a natural or social object. The most imperceptible in this concept is authority as it leads to submissive acceptance of power by its subjects. Certainly this brings us to Max Weber's notion of charisma. Violence is a characteristic of all means for the intensification of the efficiency in defeating forces imposed on us which are deemed unnatu-

ral.

There still remains, of course, a doubt about the “legitimacy” of violence. It proceeds, perhaps, from its more general categorical context; more precisely, from the one of evil. This doubt is transferred as well to its academic discussion only within the framework of subjectivity or spontaneity - for example, as a manifestation of the ambition for self-creation or imposing power. In this sense, Arendt’s critique of the new leftists can be understood, and especially of Sartre, for their refutation of Marx’s objectivism and the interpretation of the excessive acts of behavior resulting from this high esteem for violence. For Arendt violence is a temporary manifestation of political power but *not* its nature. This is related as well to the methodical conviction that violence should not be interpreted as a natural reaction. The natural sciences are disposed to approving violence without provocation and attributing acts of violence of some species towards others to nature (undoubtedly due to the influence of the human experience). In these reductions to animal nature, Arendt detects the unconscious influence of old ideas of animal rationale as an illusion that the growth of rationality decreases violence, which is perceived as a manifestation of irrationality. For her, however, violence is neither animal nor irrational no matter how we understand these terms. It is not a phenomenon of rage either, except when it emerges in an entirely rational way.

Violence is also rational and justified, when it is a result of uncovered hypocrisy. This is another way that “engages” gets transformed into “enrages”. This kind of reasonable violence dramatically portrays injustice. William O’Brien, leader of the Irish peasant nationalists in the 19th century, summarizes this: “Violence is the only way for your demands for compromise to be seen” and in this dimension of sensibility violence is the necessary acceleration of history. It is clear that violence is connected to justice, he claims: “Under certain conditions violence is the only way to restore justice” in order to enter the existential dimension of Being where we can live without shame. There is the intersection between rationality and morality in the sense that in order to react rationally one must be also morally moved. Violence becomes irrational and pure evil only when it is directed to substi-

tutes, then violence challenges the conscience and overcomes contemplation and insists to reciprocate violence with violence. It is easy to understand Arendt's reproach to the Jewish communities, shown in *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* who, wanting to avoid violence, collaborated with the Nazis. In spite of that, in the presentation of this concept, nostalgia to the contemplative dimensions of being constantly appears.

In reflecting on the notion of violence, nostalgia for the social dimension of existence is tangible. This is stated in the clearest mode in Arendt's criticism of the radical student movements. This is not so much an attack against violence but the unmasking of incompatibility with the place from where it springs - the university. For Arendt, the university is an *apolitical* space which shows and keeps the social necessity of truth and contemplation; violence is their denial. The presence of violence on campus is a kind of distortion of experience. In such a way, the university turns out to be a very important institution whose violent change annihilates that experience which offers any opportunity to understand "complete happiness"; that is, to be excluded from any practical interest in enjoying *vita contemplativa*. For sure, this is a dogmatic presupposition, but it is continuously stressed by Arendt, in particular, in her thoughts on politics and revolution in her 1970 interview with Adalbert Rait. This is not a matter of senile conservatism but of an "apolitical" dimension of existence, which besides being analogical to the quest of truth, has an affinity with love. Love can be regarded as apolitical and incompatible with violence in the same way; besides the fact that love lacks and has no instrumental character. Of course, we are speaking about the traditional notion of love, which even in its erotic dimensions keeps its character of freedom and voluntary submission to the other.

This kind of background on which the notion of violence is rethought in Arendt is not so arbitrary as it could seem at first. Several fundamental elements in Arendt's correspondence with Heidegger suggest that the notion of violence, especially as she expressed it in her later years, owes much to the restored love towards that particular man in her life and mentor in her thinking. The notion of violence itself appears several times in their correspondence. It is used in that sense which has encouraged Arendt to think of

Heidegger even earlier on as of someone quite clumsy in politics. In this way, she justifies his links with Nazism and apparently derives evaluations from her own personal relationships. But it is not the matter of Arendt's love but Heidegger's role in forming Arendt's notion of violence. Love plays only a meditating role here. First of all, it is necessary to note that her study of violence coincides with the last stage of the correspondence between them. Ursula Ludz arranges these last letters under the title "Autumn" but they can be arranged under the title "Dialogical Self-Evaluations" too because they are written in the mode of correspondence and are shared evaluations of their fundamental ideas. I have in mind here the letters from between 1968 and 1972 which restored their interrupted correspondence in the 1950s due to personal reasons, in particular, due to the jealousy of Elfriede Petri-Heidegger. The first phase of this correspondence covers the period of 1925-1928 and ends abruptly in 1933 with a letter by Heidegger clarifying their relationship as well as his dedication to national socialism. From this phase only Heidegger's letters have remained preserved by Arendt.

But let's go back to the violence and its definition given by Arendt entirely in an instrumental sense. This definition apparently is influenced by those of Heidegger's works which Arendt read and edited in their English translations between 1967 and 1968. One was titled *Was heisst Denken?* (What is called thinking?) and *Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens* (The end of philosophy and the task of thinking). Here, *Seminar du Tore* can be added as well as Arendt's greeting address for Heidegger's 80th anniversary recorded on 25 September 1969 at the night studio of Bavarian Radio and broadcasted the next day. Arendt sends it to Heidegger with the inscription: "For September 26, in forty-five years, as then and for ever."<sup>3</sup> The same tendency is witnessed in many of Arendt's letters, in particular, the one of 17 March 1968; there, after evaluating the translation of "What is Called Thinking?", she considered the possible influence of Heidegger's ideas on students and the universities which have "to exit with dignity" politics and the violent dimensions common to the government. Moreover, a similar attitude is stated in her Christmas letter of 1969 where she

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<sup>3</sup> Hrsg. U. Ludz, *Arendt/Heidegger, Briefe 1925 bis 1975 und andere Zeugnisse*, p. 179.

mentions the saving role of thinking in opening “light apertures of being” (*Lichtung des Anwesens*) - this is existence that does not feature violence and spontaneity but thoughtful or rational and calm attitudes to the “outrages of technology” (*Unwesen des Gestells*).

In all these works, the main topic is the autonomy of thinking and the attempt to preserve the free character of human existence: thought thinking as well as avoiding the scheme “end-means” and the following instrumentalization of inter-human relations. Instrumentalization is expressed by efficacy of technology, which is a kind of embodiment of the will for power. However, it contradicts the essence of thinking and as Arendt writes “no one before Heidegger could see how this will opposes thinking and acts destructively”.<sup>4</sup> Here, since thinking is a real but very efficacious attempt, life is to be deviated into a certain direction through the technological application of will. This is the direction of *vita activa* whose final instrumental expression is violence, which ousts the end itself through the means. Thinking, on the other hand, namely because it has no other end but the truth of Being, cannot be substituted by any means. Its public image is the university; it is the place of interactions which do not have power in their natures (essences). A personal type of interaction which has no other end, besides itself, is love. As far as she is not interested in this intimate side of the violence issue, Arendt seldom speaks about love, probably not wanting to sentimentalize theory. But if the evidence that Arendt kept Heidegger’s letters in her bedside table is to be believed, it could be argued that besides this negative background in defining violence, there is another notion of violence in their correspondence, one that Arendt has repressed but that Heidegger shares in connection with their love. This is a notion of violence out of love. It is derived not from political power and the characteristics of human existence but from the characteristics of natural power justifying violent action for the sake of the natural hierarchy. Arendt’s emancipatory inclinations, like others before her, are legitimated mostly in the public sphere. Oversight of violence in the intimate sphere in a metaphorical sense makes the notion itself flawed. This is obvious in her definition of

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 191 (also: H. Arendt, “Martin Heidegger ist achtzig Jahre alt”, in *Merkur*, Oktober 1969).



power, which she means in her writings even when she speaks of “a powerful man” and “a powerful personality” as a metaphor of the general notion of power referring to a supra-individual category.

However, in the first letters of Heidegger to Arendt (letters of a politically naïve man to a young woman) the trivial notion of violence emerges, which seems to have a pre-political, natural origin. Furthermore, Heidegger illustrates it with the university as an example, which in Arendt’s late works becomes a symbolic place of truth. Still in his first letter to Arendt in 1925, Heidegger defines the faculty of scholarly thought as originally male: “the fertile lowliness of scholarly study that can be controlled only by the man and only when he experiences the load and impulse to be fertile.” As a background for this “male” faculty, which is unilateral, is female existence supplying thought with its general conditions: “cosiness of joy, cordiality, calm, esteem, and nobility”<sup>5</sup> - an expression of the eternal feminine “commitment”; through these definitions, which later will allow Adorno to ridicule existential philosophy in his *Jargon of Authenticity*,<sup>6</sup> the justification of violence is prepared. This is expressed in the radical sacrifice of love for the sake of scholarship and the lowliness demanded by the scholarly occupation: “it turns into cruelty and violence exactly towards the closest and beloved one... to cope with this load means to exist as a philosopher.”<sup>7</sup> This is not just ideology serving as an excuse for a declining relationship such as the one between Arendt and Heidegger at that time. It is most of all a non-instrumental notion of violence where the other in extreme proximity of the beloved is not a means or condition for the realization of an end anymore; it is beyond the visible ends of existence and being forgotten is spontaneously wounded. If he is truly fallen in love, he will be transforming this violence into self-violence.

This is the topic of one of Arendt’s first essays titled “The Shadow”<sup>8</sup> (1925) and dedicated to Heidegger in Koenigsberg. Here she describes the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, *Jargon der Eigentlichkeit*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1964).

<sup>7</sup> Hrsg. U. Ludz, *Arendt/Heidegger, Briefe 1925 bis 1975 und andere Zeugnisse*, p. 55.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 21-25.

self-rape (*Sich-selbst-Vergewaltigen*) as an extreme expression of the strive for power; in this case, namely the richness of existence including the joy of the other is submitted to the fear of his loss. The power here means keeping life in a shadow; it is a condition and means for de-subjectivization. The experience gained through this self-rape is an essential moment in thinking about violence. Therefore, violence is not an item of our public and political existence, but is a form of personal experience that makes its understanding possible. It is justified in the understanding that we can be forgotten for the sake of something else, which is important for the beloved. Realizing this we violently control our egotism and direct ourselves towards the non-intimate others, that is, towards society. But there is no love there.

## Self-Consciousness Behavior, and Speech

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I would like to focus on an issue that usually does not receive a lot of attention from phenomenologists: the attitude of phenomenologists towards their work, their writing, and the descriptions they produce. Description presupposes an author who not only carries it out but who might perhaps know more than he merely describes. For example, in his *Phenomenology* Hegel introduces statements like “für uns aber” (but for us). Husserl speaks of the famous “*unbeteiligter Zuschauer*” (the impartial spectator), the spectator who is not implied. The whole mystery consists of understanding what this “excess of knowing” means, where it comes from.

If we apply these considerations to the notion of intentionality, consequences are especially dangerous. As is well known, the first and unavoidable fact for all phenomenology is that consciousness is directed towards the other thing. That is true to such a degree that *Geworfenheit* (facticity) has been raised to the level of a constitutive element of human existence. But the description of a consciousness that rests in the other thing, with the whole spectrum of variations, is not enough to characterize its “life”; it should be supplemented with the recovery of the extraverted intentionality towards itself, even if such a recovery cannot be exhaustive. This is the moment of self-awareness, where consciousness knows it has known and, because of this, becomes richer. It is the circuit existing at the center of all interiority. However, when considered this way, self-awareness does not only call into question intentionality but the whole project of phenomenology itself. E. Fink was the first to underline the problem: how is phenomenology able to elevate intentional analysis to the supreme range of knowledge without falling into a tremendous contradiction? Phenomenology speaks from the interior of an intentional analysis. It states that there is a subjective-objective pole and that there is a plurality of intentions that refers to a unity. But, does this not mean abandoning that very intentionality and judging it from a superior point of view while insisting at the same time that

such superior viewpoint is impossible?<sup>1</sup> One could argue the existence of a kind of second-order intentionality that overcomes the first and makes it conscious. This entails, however, claiming a phenomenology of phenomenology, and in such a case one would end up in an infinite regress. Here we are confronted with conceptual limits and, as all limits, these are paradoxical and deceiving for thought. Indeed, if we have some notion of a frontier that is limiting us, it is because somehow we have already overcome it. Similar aporia are unavoidable if we remain under the dominance of visual and spatial metaphors. The understanding of consciousness as something that “goes outside” and then “returns inside” (in spatial metaphors), and the perception of its limits of knowledge as a barrier separating what is known from what is unknown (in visual metaphors), is as provocative as wishing to think of a limited space beyond which there is nothing. It presupposes that consciousness is an “eye” that takes a look at a “landscape”.

Heidegger’s conceptual turn is decisive for our analysis. Instead of speaking of consciousness, he speaks of *Erschlossenheit* (openness) and of *lumen naturale* (light). He subordinates theoretical knowledge to a more original understanding from which it derives. This original understanding is indiscernible from existence as openness. To the extent that this openness entails a certain degree of comprehension, Heidegger identifies human being with speech. This is not a representative kind of speech, but one that embraces the diverse modalities of consciousness. It is practical because it refers to being oriented; it is reflexive because it echoes in the subject and its capacities. All this presupposes that speech is always already an understanding or, rather, a *Vorverständnis*, pre-understanding, between the subject and the object. In its clearest formulation<sup>2</sup> it says that all understanding presupposes a pre-understanding, which is basically a self-understanding (*Selbstverständnis*).

The notion of behavior in Merleau-Ponty reinforces these conceptual achievements. The French author accentuates the identification of man to

<sup>1</sup> De Waelhens, *Phénoménologie et Vérité*, p. 30. The Belgian thinker explains Fink’s emphasis to underline the problem during their conversations.

<sup>2</sup> Bultmann’s definition of the hermeneutical circle, cf. *Glauben und Verstehen*, III, pp. 142-150.

speech as well as the fact that speech is not transparent - even for the speaker. The idea is that the established meaning of speech is not simply the meaning uttered but also expresses the dialectics between the established meaning and the uttered one. It should be added that the constitution of this behavior-speech can only take place by means of the speaker's own inventions within a language that "dominates" him. Consequently, this raises the question about the kind of subjectivity which is endorsed by the one who is speaking. One should postulate a tension between language and the speaking subject, in the center of which speech appears as mine.

All that was mentioned above places us outside of primitive phenomenology: consciousness should not be understood in visual and spatial terms, but rather as a behavior which presupposes some understanding and, because of that, speech.

A speech-act uttered at a similar level is speech as it articulates the relationships between the subject and the constituent modes of presence. (Such modes include corporeity, self-consciousness, language, others, the world and temporality.) These articulations are constitutive and basic in all human beings because all behavior can be reduced to their expression. In cases where this relationship breaks up, behavior cannot be meaningful. This articulation structures our world, organizes our behavior and the future development of self-consciousness. It is this kind of speech that a psychotherapist puts into practice during a therapy session; for example, by attempting to reconstruct the relationship of understanding with the fundamental ways of behavior that have been altered by some trauma. But this is, naturally, only possible by means of a deviation from ordinary conceptual language. The point is not that the patient learns to pretend being normal by means of repeating a sequence of words she does not understand. The point is rather that she learns to behave differently towards the constituent modes of the presence, that she restores them. In other words, that she understands herself again, in harmony with her form of being. It is about articulating the pre-understanding to all theoretical and conscious elaboration.

But all this is not satisfactorily described in the semantic-referential linguistic paradigm. This paradigm recognizes speech only as spoken by the Cartesian *cogito*; that is, speech which elaborates a history for others to confirm and return reinforced. This is a conscious speech, a speech of proposi-

tions, on which the human capacity of representing truth rests. According to this paradigm, all sentences with sense have the purpose of establishing a truth. Accordingly, a false statement also makes sense. But what happens to utterances that do not have the purpose of establishing the truth of a representation, such as orders, exclamations, desires or petitions? Certainly, such utterances make sense, but they do not seek to represent anything as true or false. They have a pragmatic, psychological and sociological meaning that is totally irrelevant, they say, for philosophy. Rather, they should be considered poetry, since their meanings cannot be grasped by logical calculations. But declaring that all the utterances not susceptible to being grasped by transitive logical analysis are irrelevant amounts to declaring irrelevant the very concepts of behavior and subjectivity. This is comprehensible because what one is looking for is the ideal of the pure representations of states of things and ascribing truth to propositions. Obviously, such a calculation-like language could be produced by a machine.<sup>3</sup> In Heideggarian terminology, it is an objective language (*Vorhandenes*) that is conscious neither of its origin nor of its own mode of being.

As an answer to these problems, a new linguistic paradigm opens up that abolishes the separation between referential semantics and pragmatics. Responsible for this is Austin's discovery of the illocutionary force of sentences or performatives. According to Austin, there are utterances which cannot be said to be true or false but, rather, successful or unsuccessful. Utterances such as "Maria, I take you for wife" or "I bet a thousand euros that..." are actions and do not describe or verify anything. In these cases the action of a marriage or a bet is carried out: something is done. On the other hand, descriptive utterances can be characterized as true or false because they do not carry out any action, but rather simply describe a situation. While in the former actions are carried out, in the latter theoretical-representative statements are made, the so-called locutionary acts.

In every speech act (that is to say, in every individual act of language) two elements are present: a propositional or representative one and a performative or active one. There is thus a "double structure of speech" (*die*

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<sup>3</sup> I have briefly shown Frege's ideas, cf. *Kleine Schriften*, 2<sup>a</sup> ed., pp. 344-360.

*Doppelstruktur der Rede*).<sup>4</sup> Within this structure one can distinguish (1) a propositional element which refers to states of things and which can be designated as *P* such as “it rains” or “there is a bull in the field” and (2) an illocutionary element that refers to the speaker’s subjective intentions such as “I affirm that *P*” or “I promise that *P*”.

This illocutionary element pre-structures the propositional one and is responsible for its potential force. Furthermore, a speaker and his listeners should understand each other not only in the “descriptive propositions” but also in the “performative elements”. It is a necessary condition for the intentions of the speaker to be successful. In other words, all those who speak raise pretensions of intelligibility that should be shared by others if what is said is to make sense. In Heideggarian terminology, this is an existential language (*Zuhandenes*), a language which accompanies us in all our representations and which is not susceptible to being distanced and objectified.

We have understood the intentionality of consciousness as behavior. With that we have abandoned spatial-visual metaphors. Then, we have understood behavior as speech, since all behavior shows some degree of understanding. It is not a representative objective speech, but rather this speech is illocutionary since it performs actions that might or might not succeed. We have called this capacity “the structuring force of speech”. To say the same vice versa: we should move from structuring speech to behavior, and from there to the intentionality of consciousness. This means that consciousness structures reality (illocutionary aspect) while being at the same time a testimony of its action (locutionary aspect). In fact, they are symmetrical statements. The problem is, however, that they cannot be demonstrated with the help of theoretical statements since we cannot appeal to an instance which is superior to them. To refute these statements is to presuppose them. Those who claim that consciousness does not structure reality and that it is not a testimony of its actions are caught up in a contradiction between what they affirm theoretically and what they perform through speech. In the same

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<sup>4</sup> Apel, *Transformation der Philosophie*, 2, pp. 400 and f. Kuhlmann, W., *Reflexive Letztbegründung. Untersuchungen zur Transzendentalpragmatik*, p. 26. Habermas, *Vorstudien und Ergänzungen zur Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, 3rd ed., pp. 404-409.

way, saying “I do not pretend to be understood” is a contradiction between the theoretical content of the utterance and the pragmatic and reflexive behavior of the speaker. Indeed, there is understanding, like there is behavior, action and self-reflection. These are the last and unavoidable instances for every meaningful attitude or speech.



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### III. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE IN A PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

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#### **Transversality and Public Philosophy in the Age of Globalization**

Hwa Yol Jung (Moravian College)

*Where there is no vision, the people perish.  
The scholars are the priests of that thought  
which establishes the foundation of the earth.*  
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

*True theory does not totalize, it multiplies.*  
(Gilles Deleuze)

#### **In the beginning**

Calvin O. Schrag once remarked that while practice without theory is blind, theory without practice is empty. This essay attempts to define, by way of transversality, the role of public philosophy in the globalizing world of multiculturalism in terms of practice. I was introduced to the Kyoto Forum's seminal project of public philosophy by its president Tae-Chang Kim when we met for the first time in Seoul, South Korea in June 2006. We had a stimulating and interesting dialogue on the transversal role of public philosophy in the context of East Asian politics and globalization. (See the July 20 issue of the "Public Intellectual," Kyoto Forum's bulletin, reported by Sung Tae Lee). This essay is intended to be a continuation of that Seoul dialogue and a contribution to Kyoto Forum's innovative and ambitious project.

What, then, is public philosophy? It is a philosophical discourse on “public issues” (*res publica* in Latin: things public). Customarily, the “public” is distinguished from the “private” that relates to matters personal in nature. However, the boundary between public and private overlaps and becomes blurred when the personal itself is sloganized as political. It also varies from one culture to another.

The public is usually something political or governmental that refers to activities of *homo politicus*. In her classic work *The Human Condition* (1958), Hanah Arendt makes this distinction between the public and the private. Following the tradition of Aristotle, she identifies the public with what is political.<sup>1</sup> Political action is action par excellence which is distinct from the “labor” of biological nature (*homo laborans*) on the one hand and the “work” of fabricating or manufacturing (*homo faber* or *homo oeconomicus*) on the other. It is true that the ascendancy of economic categories in John Locke’s liberalism and Karl Marx’s socialism in Western modernity downgrades political categories and subordinates them to economic ones. However, it is unrealistic today to identify the public with the political because by so doing it ignores the “publicness” of what is economic. Thus the Aristotelian way of defining the political solely as public at the expense of the economic, i.e., matters of the household (*oikos*) and activities sometimes assigned to slaves in ancient Greece is far short of demarcating legitimately

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<sup>1</sup> See particularly John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York: Henry Holt, 1927); Walter Lipmann, *Essays in the Public Philosophy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1955); Michael J. Sandel, *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality in Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005). Sandel comments that his essays “blur the line between political commentary and political philosophy. They constitute a venture in public philosophy in two senses: they find in the political and legal controversies of our day an occasion for philosophy and they represent an attempt to do philosophy in public - to bring moral and political philosophy to bear on contemporary public discourse. Many of these published essays “aimed at an audience beyond the academy” and thus appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, *New Republic*, *New York Times*, and the *New York Review of Books*. Speaking of an audience beyond the academy, a collection of essays edited by Jonathan Culler and Kevin Lamb, *Just Being Difficult?* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003) is concerned with the very question of the academic language of public philosophy. On the other hand, however, public philosophy should not “infantilize the public”, as Susan Sontag once put it.

what constitutes the public. It became outmoded in the beginning of Western modernity.

The question of citizenship, democratic or otherwise, is a public issue. It is a “re(s)publican” principle which pertains to an aggregate body of citizens as a “natural” whole. According to Aristotle, man is by nature a political animal. The American constitution was meant by the Founding Fathers to be a republic as opposed to a monarchical regime or democracy. The republican principle refers to that form of government which is ruled by the populace through equal representation. Public philosophy as a republican principle, in that world of multiculturalism which has increasingly been becoming globalized, must be predicated upon the minimum of three preconditions or prerequisites.<sup>2</sup>

(1) The public as an association of citizens has its allegiance to both the polis and the cosmopolis. The polis is a *fait accompli* and the cosmopolis is something generative in nature within our reach. In the world of multiculturalism, we are not one but many. Interestingly, according to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, “we” are neither “people” nor “masses” but a “multitude” and the idea of “people” for them reduces many to a single or unitary entity while “masses” is driven to uniformity or conformity.<sup>3</sup> Both “people” and “masses” fail to take into account difference or diversity and thus plurality. To conserve diversity in the idea of “we” the term multitude is preferred for describing a social reality which is nothing but a multiple web of relationships as well as a multiplicity of experiential realities. “Multitude” for its name’s sake, moreover, is a particularly fitting response to both the phenomenon of multiculturalism and the advent of globalization - or, better, “glocalization” for the simple reason that in globalization, the global without the local is empty and the local without the global is blind.

The basic grammar of multitude is inscribed in the notion that without distinction it is a faceless crowd. Writing *The Present Age* in the mid-nineteenth century, Søren Kierkegaard was prophetic in observing the age’s “apathy” and

<sup>2</sup> Jean Paul Sartre, *Between Existentialism and Marxism*, trans. John Mathews (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), pp. 229-285. He delivered three lectures in Tokyo and Kyoto in 1965 entitled “A Plea for Intellectuals” which touch some of the points I make in the following pages.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), p. xv.

“indolence” which lost “enthusiasm and sincerity in politics”.<sup>4</sup> In other words, Kierkegaard’s “present age” lost “the riches of inwardness” and was likened to “squandering money upon luxuries and dispensing with necessities” or “selling one’s breeches to buy a wig”. For him, it is not the distinct individual but the collective masses who are the enemies of the social. His voice was echoed loudly by Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger, José Ortega y Gasset, Gabriel Marcel, Nicolai Berdyaev, and Hannah Arendt in the twentieth century, which is the age of totalitarianism as the unprecedented political regime *sui generis*. The psychopathology of the faceless and atomized crowd is conducive to a mass movement as in Nazism. The American sociologist David Riesman (1950) characterized this phenomenon as “lonely crowd” whose “other-directed” rather than “inner-directed” disposition is susceptible to an instant mobilization. Heidegger, too, spoke of it as the phenomenon of *das Mann* or anonymous “they”.<sup>5</sup> *Das Mann* is *Dasein* without “resoluteness” (*Entschlossenheit*) or - to borrow the term from Jean Baudrillard - “hyperconformity” which is “the end of the social”.<sup>6</sup> In the ideology of the mass media, according to Baudrillard, “the masses are a stronger medium than all the media”.<sup>7</sup> “Mass(age) is the message” - a wordplay on Marshall McLuhan’s “the medium is the message”.

(2) Public philosophy is and must be eminently practical. For it there is no room for armchair or meta-philosophical meandering. It cannot be otherwise. In this respect, Stephen Toulmin’s essay “The Recovery of Practical Philosophy” deserves our attention.<sup>8</sup> It is most poignant in informing the nature and formation of public philosophy as practical philosophy. John Dewey, according to Toulmin, argued that “since the 1630s [the era of Cartesian epistemocracy] the philosophical debate has rested on too passive a view of the human mind and on

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<sup>4</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*, trans. Alexander Dru (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 39-40.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> Jean Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities, or, The End of the Social and Other Essays*, trans. Paul Foss, John Johnston, and Paul Patton (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Toulmin, “The Recovery of Practical Philosophy” *American Scholar* (Vol. 57, 1988), pp. 337-352.

inappropriate demands for geometrical certainty”.<sup>9</sup> Ludwig Wittgenstein in the 1940s also echoed Dewey in showing “how endemic confusions over the ‘grammar’ of language mislead us into vacuous speculations” which cauterize and “distract us from the important issues in life”. Since Descartes, philosophy turned its attention to “theory-minded” rather than “practice-oriented” ideas. What is “in” in philosophy consists of formal logic, general principles, abstract axioms, and the permanent; what is “out” are rhetoric, particular cases, concrete diversity, and the transitory. In other words, practical philosophy has indeed taken a back seat. Philosophy has opted what is poetic, unusual, and uncommon at the expense of what is prosaic, usual, and common.<sup>10</sup> Toulmin perceptively observes that “philosophers turned ethics into abstract theory, ignoring the concrete problems of moral practice. Modern philosophers have assumed that God and Freedom, Mind and Matter, Good and Justice, are governed by timeless, universal ‘principles’ and have regarded writers who focus on particular cases, or types of cases limited by specific conditions, as either under-philosophical or dishonest. So, seventeenth-century philosophy again limited its own scope, excluding the examination of ‘particular practical cases’ by definition”.<sup>11</sup>

Toulmin intimates that the recovery of practical philosophy is “a pendulum swing” or what Thomas S. Kuhn calls a paradigm shift. To be practical,

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 337.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 339-340.

<sup>11</sup> The eighteenth-century Neapolitan philosopher Giambattista Vico, who happened to be also anti-Cartesian, complained against the prevailing pedagogic methods of scientific epistemology of his own time. His complaint is very contemporary in its message and thus relevant to that moral education of public conduct which he broadly called the “science of politics” - see Giambattista Vico, *On the Study Methods of Our Time*, trans. Elio Giarurco (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965, p.33). He tells us that “the greatest drawback of our educational methods is that we pay an excessive amount of attention to the natural sciences and not enough to ethics. Our chief fault is that we disregard that part of ethics which treats of human character, of its dispositions, its passions, and of the manner of adjusting these factors to public life and eloquence. We neglect that discipline which deals with the differential feature of virtues and vices, with good and bad behavior-patterns, with the typical characteristic of the various ages of man, of the two sexes, of social and economic class, race and nation, and with the art of seemly conduct in life, the most difficult of all arts. As a consequence of this neglect, a noble and important branch of studies, i.e., the science of politics, lies almost abandoned and untended.”

public philosophy is aligned with the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis*, prudence, or experiential/common-sense knowledge which is joined with politics. Giambattista Vico's notion of *sensus communis* defines the practical nature of public philosophy; this is, according to him "judgment without reflection, shared by an entire class, an entire people, an entire nation, or the entire human race".<sup>12</sup> By the same token, he emphasizes the order of public institutions coming into being before the order of ideas: ideas that tailgate institutional realities are by necessity pragmatic. Vico is a practical-minded or juris/prudential philosopher who speaks of *jus gentium* or the law of the people.

For Hannah Arendt, too, judgment - unlike the contemplative life of the mind (*vita contemplativa*) is that form of practical wisdom necessary to public philosophy which requires a fitting or concrete response to "a particular situation in its particularity" on matters of humanity's *vita activa* (the life of action). As such, it is a gray zone of ambiguity between thinking and acting or theory and practice which has been a perennial and thorny issue in the history of theory in ethics and politics.<sup>13</sup> William James was straightforward and business-like (if not unrefined and unadorned) when he spoke of the "cash value" of philosophy or pragmatism. The dictum that "in the beginning was the Deed" characterizes the worldly wisdom of versatile Goethe who is the inventor of "world literature" (*Weltliteratur*) in the West and sings in *Faust* the song of "greenness" of life or deed against the "grayness" of theory. He is audacious enough to lash out at the venerable Delphic/Socratic dictum "Know thyself" as "a ruse of a cabal of priests" that seeks to draw us into "a false inner contemplation".<sup>14</sup> For worldly Goethe, to be alone is not to be: humans know themselves only insofar as they know the world - the world which they come to know only in themselves and themselves in it. The *cogito* exalts the thinking of an individual in solitude or isolation from the world, whereas the "I do" is an unconditional affirmation of being social. Thus Merleau-Ponty argues that sociality scandalizes the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum*.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Vico, *The New Science*, trans. Thomas Goddava Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 63, par. 142.

<sup>13</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

<sup>14</sup> See Richard Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), p. vii.

<sup>15</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, trans. R.C. McCleary (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

The Sino-Confucian tradition of philosophizing from Confucius to Mao Zedong has been manifestly this-worldly, practical, concrete, and particular rather than other-worldly, speculative, abstract, and general. It accentuates the utmost importance of politics cum ethics in philosophizing, i.e., the pragmatics of coexistence. The sinograph for “ruler” signifies the unifier of heaven, humanity, and earth. The *Analects of Confucius* is the standard-bearer of this pragmatic tradition which honors and sustains the importance of performance in human conduct; e.g., we mean what we say and we say what we mean. The Confucian notion of sincerity (that cardinal virtue which measures the depth of the Sinic moral soul) exemplifies the importance of pragmatics. It means literally “word-achieved”; what is so unusual about sincerity is the fact that it honors even the “nobility of failure”, not just of success.<sup>16</sup> In the *Analects*, Confucius iterates the noble virtue of sincerity: “without knowing the power of words, it is impossible to know men”; when the superior man “is heard to speak, his language is firm and decided”; “the wise err neither in regard to their men nor to their words”; “the virtuous will be sure to speak correctly, but those whose speech is good may not always be virtuous”; “the superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his action”; and friendship with “the glib-tongued” is injurious.

(3) To be efficacious, public philosophy needs to be a deconstructive critique. The grammar of deconstruction tells us that it is both destructive and constructive at the same time. It is, according to Heidegger, “a critical process in which the traditional concepts, which at first must necessarily be employed, are de-constructed down to the sources from which they were drawn”.<sup>17</sup> Foucault, who was influenced by Heidegger, links critique to the nexus of knowledge and power: “critique is the movement by which the subject gives himself the right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth”.<sup>18</sup> As the truth of power and the power of truth are inseparable, so are philosophy and politics in public philosophy. Public philosophy contains within itself the element of “critical re-

<sup>16</sup> Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975).

<sup>17</sup> Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), pp.22-23.

<sup>18</sup> Foucault, *The Politics of Truth*, ed. S. Lotringer and L. Hochroth (New York: Semiotext(e), 1997), p. 32.

sistance” - to borrow David Couzens Hoy’s term - to the existing power structure.<sup>19</sup> Critical resistance refutes all forms of cooptation which tends to absorb intellectuals/philosophers into power in being. A public philosopher is, in short, a heretic or heresiarch - a nonconformist, like Martin Luther in the West or Buddha in the East, who dissents from power in being and refuses to accept an established doctrine.

Let me call critical resistance “jesterly” as opposed to “priestly” by drawing insights from Leszek Kolakowski.<sup>20</sup> He is incontrovertible when he observes that throughout the ages there is an incurable antagonism between “a philosophy that perpetuates the absolute” and “a philosophy that questions accepted absolutes,” that is, there is the antagonism between the “priestly” and the “jesterly” which are the two most general forms of intellectual culture at any given period of time in history. Harvey Cox contends that the carnivalesque imagination is indispensable to the survival and periodic rejuvenation of human civilizations, including its political institutions. He contends, however, that when it becomes an instrument of ideology or a particular political program, it loses a critical edge of resistance and becomes shriveled into a caged bird or toothless tiger.<sup>21</sup>

Emerson, who is a consummate and unrivaled essayist whose pithy words and passages are often quoted and misquoted in the American intellectual circle, is called the first American “public intellectual”. It is his designation of “scholars” as “priests” with which I would disagree. “Priests” are authoritative and ceremonious guardians of the absolutes, while “jesters” are those vigilantes who distrust the absolutes and a stabilized system and intend to deconstruct it. The carnivalesque is the “jesterly” play of difference that aims at the creation of an alternative or “reversible world” order. As a form of transgression and subversion, it intends to transform a “real” world into a “possible” world. In the Bruegelian and Rebelaisian themes of Mikhail Bakhtin’s dialogical body politics, which contain a hidden critique of Stalin’s absolute and totalitarian politics based, rightly or wrongly, on the Hegelian and Marxian dialectic, to carnivalize

<sup>19</sup> David Couzens Hoy, *Critical Resistance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

<sup>20</sup> L. Kolakowski, *Toward a Marxist Humanism*, trans. Jane Ziekonko Peel (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

<sup>21</sup> Harvey Cox, *The Feast of Fools* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).



the world is to dialogize it: in them carnivalization and dialogization go hand in hand. As a protest against the monological “misrule” of (Soviet) officialdom, the carnivalesque model of life transgresses and transforms the canonical order of truth and the official order of reality. As Bakhtin writes forcefully with a literary flair: “[it] is the past millenia’s way of sensing the world as one great communal performance. This sense of the world, liberating one from fear, bringing one person maximally close to another (everything is drawn into the zone of free familiar contact), with its joy at change and its joyful relativity, is opposed to that one-sided and gloomy official seriousness which is dogmatic and hostile to evolution and change, which seeks to absolutize a given condition of existence or a given social order. From precisely that sort of seriousness did the carnival sense of the world liberate man. But there is not a grain of nihilism in it, nor a grain of empty frivolity or vulgar bohemian individualism.”<sup>22</sup> As it is exemplary of dis/sensus, the carnivalesque, which is the opposite of carnage, celebrates dialogue and community; it liberates a multitude and brings them together and invites them to participate in communal living. In this light, the scholar is a jester rather than a priest. He/she means to change the world by first changing the conception of it as foreplay. Bakhtin is quintessentially a public philosopher and his thought is exemplary of public philosophy.

### **The triptych of transversality, globalization, and public philosophy**

*It is probably true quite generally that in the history of human thinking the most fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where two different lines of thought meet.*  
(Werner Heisenberg)

It is worth speculating about the role of public philosophy in the brave new world of multiculturalism, which is being ushered into a rooted cosmopolis. Here I wish to put to work the practical wisdom of phenomenology which was initiated by Edmund Husserl and continued, modified, and extended by many others. As a philosophical movement, phenomenology is

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<sup>22</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. H. Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984), p. 160.

not a stagnant and fixed set of dogmas. Its vitality is revealed in its capacity to transform itself, and its radicality is measured by its readiness to explore everything that is both experienced and experienceable. For a very good reason, phenomenology is called a radical philosophy of experience or “radical empiricism” (William James’s term) which not only means to encounter the actually given or the real but also exercises the freedom of trying its luck on the high seas of the human intellect.<sup>23</sup> In short, it keeps its constant vigilance on history *à venir* or the future as history.<sup>24</sup>

The buzzword globalization is a new adventure in the civilizational history of humankind everywhere. It is a movement toward the creation of a new world. At the moment, globalization is really “glocalization” because it is still and in the foreseeable future rooted in the local/national/regional. It begins at home. As we are living in the midst of the world which is constituted by a plurality of the life-worlds, the neologism glocalization signifies the interdependence of the global and the local or the rootedness of the global in the local: the global without the local is abstract and the local without the global is myopic.<sup>25</sup> The end of globalization is neither to hold on to national/cultural identities nor to establish “one world” with “one government”. Rather, it fosters a non-polar middle path between the global and the local which shuns “faceless universalism” on the one hand and “ethno-centric chauvinism” on the other - to borrow the fitting expression of Cornel West.<sup>26</sup> Reiterating Diogenes’s old cosmopolitan ideal (i.e., “I am a citizen of the world”), Virginia Woolf declares that “my country is the whole world” - the mixed metaphor that erases the polarity between, and bolsters

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<sup>23</sup> See Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Experience of Freedom*, trans. B. McDonald (Stanford UP, 1993), p. 20.

<sup>24</sup> My own motto on the matter of the future as history is the paradoxical saying of a Zen *koan*: “When you get to the top of the mountain, keep climbing”. The speculation of the future as history is an exercise in imaginary variations.

<sup>25</sup> See Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton UP, 2005), pp. 213-272.

<sup>26</sup> Cornel West, “The New Cultural Politics of Difference” in *Out There*, edited by Russell Fergusson et al. (New York/Cambridge, MA: New Museum of Contemporary Art/MIT Press, 1990), pp. 19-36.

the interdependence of, “country” and “world”.<sup>27</sup> In this setting, public philosophy as practical philosophy is in need of relating and debating about momentous issues of the local/national and global/international at the same time.

In the context of globalization or the globalizing world, it is well to invoke Husserl (*The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*) for whom philosophers are “civil servants of humanity” (*Funktionäre der Menschheit*) of all humanity, without exception. His ideal matches Confucian humanism based on *ren* which, as an all-encompassing virtue in life-worldly practice, blankets the region of the globe called East Asia (China, Korea, and Japan). For, as the old saying goes, I am human and thus nothing human is foreign to me - that ideal which Kwame Anthony Appiah calls “the golden rule of cosmopolitanism”.<sup>28</sup> The sinophile Ezra Pound would call Confucian *ren* a poetics of cosmopolitanism. For those who disregard *ren* - the humane quality of being human - as too archaic to be relevant to today’s newly forming world of multiculturalism and global-

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<sup>27</sup> Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1938). See Kitaro Nishida, *Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*, trans. David A. Dilworth (1970) and Paul Ricoeur, *History and Truth*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (Northwestern UP, 1965), pp. 271-284, who discuss the question concerning “universal civilization” and “national cultures”. While Ricoeur writes from the standpoint of European cultures, Nishida speculates from the perspective of Asian cultures. Nishida (*ibid.*, p. 254) remarks: “Cultures may be said to be the realized contents of the historical world, which is individual-qua-universal and universal-qua-individual determination. Cultures, of course, are plural. They cannot be reduced to unity, for when they lose their specificity they cease to be cultures. But the process of development of a unique culture from the standpoint of unique culture cannot be a merely abstract advance in an individual direction. That would amount to the negation of culture. A true world culture will be formed only by various cultures preserving their own respective viewpoints, but simultaneously developing themselves through the mediation of the world. In that respect, first deeply considering the individual ground of each culture, we must clarify on what basis and in what relation to other cultures each individual culture stands. How do Eastern and Western cultures differ in their roots? Its strong points are at once its weak points. We can learn the path along which we should truly advance only as we both deeply fathom our own depths and attain to a profound understanding of other cultures.”

<sup>28</sup> Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (W. W. Norton, 2006), p. 111.

ization, what the late Russian dialogical philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin has to say is instructive: the past, distant or near, is never past. For him, the recycling of past meanings for today and tomorrow is open-ended and infinite. To use his own expression, it is “unfinalizable”. He is immensely profound when he writes: “There is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context (it extends into the boundless past and the boundless future). Even past meanings, that is, those born in the dialogue of past centuries, can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for all) - they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent, future development of the dialogue... Nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will have its homecoming festival.”<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Bakhtin’s dialogism which is infinitized but not totalized, transcends the facile ideological quarrel between “conservatism” (the preservation and conservation of past traditions at all cost) and “radicalism” (change for the future by abandoning the past altogether) because radical changes can be had or made by the use of the past or past meanings. The appropriation of the past for the future as well as for the present is a repetition which is never repetitive but a variant (with difference).<sup>30</sup>

The philosopher begins anew by inventing concepts to come to grips with the world always in transition. In today’s multicultural and globalizing world, public philosophy is in need of inventing new concepts to explore changing realities. I suggest that transversality is such a concept. It is conceived of as a practical response befitting for the exigency of our time, that is, for the transforming world of multiculturalism and globalization. In the mid-1930s, Husserl himself invoked the metaphor of the phoenix rising from the ashes. Transversality is proposed here as a new paradigm or sea change. Consonant with Husserl in spirit, Calvin O. Schrag declares that “the transversal logos replaces the universal logos as the lynch-pin for the

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<sup>29</sup> M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. Vern W. McGee and ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p. 170.

<sup>30</sup> Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954) engages in a critique of “historicism” which “terrorizes” nature. The “eternal return” is never repetitive, that is, he demythologizes the “myth of the eternal return”.

philosophy of the new millennium”.<sup>31</sup>

The image of the newly emerging face of transversality may be likened to the famous rustic wooden statue of Buddha at a Zen temple in Kyoto, whose face marks a new dawn of awakening (*satori*) or signals the beginning of a new regime of ontology, culture, politics, and ethics. From the crack in the middle of the old face of the Buddha’s statue, there emerges an interstitial, liminal face that signifies a new transfiguration and transvaluation of the existing world. The icon of the emerging new face symbolizes the arrival of Maitreya (the future “Awakened One”) or Middle Way - that enabling term of transversality which is destined to navigate the stormy waters of intercultural border crossings. We are warned not to take it as a middle point between two poles. Rather, it breaks through bipolarity (modernity and postmodernity, nature and society, mind and body, femininity and masculinity, Europe and non-Europe). What must be recognized as important here is the fact that transversality is the paradigmatic rendition of overcoming bipolarity itself.

To be true to the spirit of multiculturalism or of a plurality of diverse cultures, there cannot and must not be one hegemonic center. Unfortunately, there is a propensity in all cultures to inscribe “the universal in the singular”, not in the plural.<sup>32</sup> Transversality as a paradigm shifter challenges the assumed transparency of truth as universal and overcomes the limits of universality as the Eurocentric canon of truth in Western modernity: it should be spelled “trans(uni)versality”. Thus the end of transversality is to de-center Europe as the site of universal truth whose identitarian and unitarian motivation fails to take into account the changing world of multiculturalism and globalization. As Merleau-Ponty relates it forcefully, “There is not a philosophy which contains all philosophies; philosophy as a whole is at certain moments in each philosophy. To take up the celebrated phrase again, philosophy’s center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere.”<sup>33</sup> The Eurocentric conception of universality is ignorant of the geography of cultural differences: as the Martiniquan francophone

<sup>31</sup> Calvin O. Schrag, *Convergence Amidst Difference* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), p. 76.

<sup>32</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading*, trans. P. Brault and M. Nass (Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 73.

<sup>33</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, trans. R. McCleary (Northwestern UP, 1964), p. 128.

philosopher Edouard Glissant puts it succinctly: “Thinking about One is not thinking about All” (or Many) (*la pensée de l’Un ne soit pas pensée du Tout*).<sup>34</sup> The latter, in short, cannot be reduced to the former.

Merleau-Ponty deserves our special attention here in the context of multiculturalism and globalization because of his biting critique of Eurocentrism manifested in Hegel’s thought whose repetitious sound-bite has been aired not only in Europe but also elsewhere. Merleau-Ponty’s use of the suggestive term “lateral universal” across geography and history makes him unmistakably a consummate transversalist *avant la lettre*. His critique of Hegel’s Eurocentrism by way of the “lateral universal” intimates the possibility of forging a trans-European (and, I might add, trans-ethnocentric) philosophy. Moreover, the lateral universal as a new way of thinking may be likened to digging a hole in another place rather than digging the same hole (vertically or hierarchically) deeper and deeper with no exit in sight. By so doing, it facilitates lateral border-crossings by de-centering all the centers from one culture to another (intercultural/transcultural), from one species to another (interspecific/transspecific), from one discipline to another (interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary), from one sense to another (intersensorial/transsensorial) with a view of inventing the “new objects” of exploration and investigation.

For Hegel, philosophical truth as absolute and universal knowledge is certified by the Occidental seal of approval alone. For Merleau-Ponty’s transversal argument against Hegel’s Eurocentrism, on the other hand, all thought philosophical or otherwise is part of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*) as everyday historical and socio-cultural reality. All philosophies are anthropological types and none has any special privilege of or monopoly on truth. European thought is as much “ethno-philosophical” as Chinese thought. However, Hegel’s Eurocentric philosophy assumes that what is ethno-philosophical in the West is universalized, whereas what is ethno-philosophical in China (and India) remains ethno-philosophical. Merleau-Ponty strongly reacts to Hegel’s Eurocentrism: “If Western thought is what it claims to be, it must prove it by understanding *all* ‘life-worlds’.”<sup>35</sup> For

<sup>34</sup> Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. B. Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), p. 33.

<sup>35</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, p. 136; italics added.

Merleau-Ponty, the West invented an idea of truth itself and there is no one philosophy which contains all philosophies. Rather, philosophy's center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere. Thus truth is concentric/polycentric, that is, transversal or X-cultural.

### Identity, alterity, and responsible politics

*The secret of man is the secret of his responsibility.*

(Václav Havel)

*Man is not only schism, he is reconciliation at the same time (l'homme n'est seulement schisme, il est en meme temps réconciliation).*

(Henri Declève)

What I call “relational ontology” or Inter-being,<sup>36</sup> I submit, characterizes the distinction of East Asian thinking and doing. The human in sinography, for example, is spelled with two characters: *nin* and *gen*. *Nin* stands for the “human” which depicts “upright posture” pointing to moral rectitude and *gen* symbolizes “betweenness” or “in-betweenness”. Thus *ningen* signifies the idea that to be human is to be inter-human: to be alone is not to be. The human (*ningen*) is nothing but a web of relationships.<sup>37</sup> In his recent study, the American cultural psychologist Richard E. Nisbett shows convincingly, I think, that East Asians (the Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese), whose daily linguistic diet is wholly or partly sinographic, think and do qualitatively differently from their Western counterparts.<sup>38</sup> He confesses that he is no longer a “universalist” but a “pluralist”. His work is decisive empirical evidence that supports the veracity of East-Asian relational ontology or makes it credible.

<sup>36</sup> See Thich Nhat Hanh, *Interbeing: Fourteen Guidelines for Engaged Buddhism*, rev. ed. (Parallax Press, 1993).

<sup>37</sup> See Hwa Yol Jung, “Interbeing and Geophilosophy in the Cultural Topography of Watsuji Tetsuro's Thought,” in *Why Japan Matters!*, 2 vols., ed. J. Kess and H. Lansdowne. Victoria, BC, Canada: Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives, University of Victoria, vol. 2, 2005), pp. 691-702.

<sup>38</sup> Richard E. Nisbett, *The Geography of Thought* (New York: Free Press 2003).

Pluralism is a philosophy of difference: in it we make connections in the face of difference. To invoke Heidegger's wordplay, *Differenz* is indeed *Unter/schied*. Pluralism is a repository of differences: but for difference, there would be no plurality or multiplicity. Thus the politics of difference refutes and supersedes the politics of identity in the world of multiculturalism. In his book *On Toleration*, Michael Walzer rightly insists that difference makes toleration necessary, while toleration makes difference possible.<sup>39</sup> For the late French/Jewish phenomenologist Emmanuel Levinas, who is regarded by many as the most important moral philosopher of the twentieth century, ethics is "first philosophy" (*philosophie première* or *prima philosophia*). As such, it precedes both epistemology (Descartes) and ontology (Heidegger). "When I speak of first philosophy," Levinas emphasizes, "I am referring to a philosophy of dialogue that cannot not be an ethics".<sup>40</sup> For him, heteronomy alone is the site of responsibility if not ethics itself. By heteronomy, he means to favor the other in an asymmetrical relationship. The heteronomic ethics of responsibility is anchored in the primacy of the other (alterity) over the self (ipseity).<sup>41</sup> Altruism for its name sake, therefore, is exemplary of responsibility. The ethics of responsibility based on the other-centeredness ("heteronomy") is a radical shift from Anglo-American "rights talk" whose center is the self in everything we do and think. The former is "otherwise" than the latter. What "rights talk" is to Ptolemaic geocentrism, the heteronomic ethics of responsibility is to Copernican heliocentrism. Responsibility thusly defined is a Copernican reversal of social and ethical thought which began with the nineteenth-century German philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach who discovered "Thou" at the center of human dialogue for the future of philosophy.

<sup>39</sup> Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1997), p. xii.

<sup>40</sup> E. Levinas, *Alterity and Transcendence*, trans. M. Smith (New York: Columbia UP, 1999), p. 97.

<sup>41</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, edited and translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981, pp. 280-282) also writes: "every word is directed toward an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that anticipates... Primary belongs to the response, as the activating principle: it creates the ground for understanding, it prepares the ground for an active and engaged understanding. Understanding comes to fruition only in the response. Understanding and response are dialectically merged and mutually condition each other; one is impossible without the other." In essence, Bakhtin's dialogism is a celebration of alterity.



Violence is without doubt an utter failure of human dialogue, of communication. It eschews responsibility: it is intrinsically an irresponsible act because it intends to efface, harm, or kill an Other. As a freshman in college in 1954, I was introduced to Alfred North Whitehead's inspiring work *Adventures of Ideas* (1954) which left an indelible impression on me. It taught me an unforgettable lesson on the endearing idea that human civilization, human civility is the victory of persuasion over force. As a measured failure of persuasion, violence takes a heavy toll on humans and nonhumans alike in abolishing differences.<sup>42</sup> The breach of civility is predicated upon one's epistemological infallibility and moral non-culpability, which is a deadly mix: I can never err and do nothing wrong. J. Glenn Gray's *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* is a deeply phenomenological study of *homo furens* (warriors). Among the issues that Gray observes such as the appeals of battle, camaraderie, death, guilty, and even a delight of "fearful beauty" in destruction, there stands out the "abstract" image of the enemy that anaesthetizes the human fighter. It is the monstrous - totally dehumanized - image of the enemy who is at best "subhuman". To repeat: violence is an irresponsible act because it intends to eradicate the other's differences.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Reading Jonathan Glover, *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000) gives us the definite impression that the twentieth century is littered with all kinds of violence (e.g., two world wars and the Holocaust). Thus it may be called a century of moral laxity. In his phenomenological analysis of war, Glenn J. Gray in *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959, p.237) contends rightly, I think, that "What is missing so often in modern men is a basic piety, the recognition of dependence on the natural realm. And they feel the need of this piety without possessing it. There is no dearth of religions in our time, and they fulfill certain needs, but there is a general absence of religious passion for belonging to an order infinitely transcending the human. Separated from close association with nature and intimacy with her ways, we find it difficult to do homage to nature's god." Ezraim Kohák in *The Embers and the Stars* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984, p. 13) also observes that "It was more with a sense of relief than of regret that the West welcomed the new gospel, proclaimed on the authority of science, that humans are not human after all. The generic naturalism of the Western philosophical tradition broke down, I would submit, because the Western conception and effective experience of nature broke down first. To recover the moral sense of our humanity, we would need to recover first the moral sense of nature."

<sup>43</sup> J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959).

I would be remiss if I fail to bring Václav Havel into my discussion here. He is a playwright who turned into a statesman of extraordinary courage, sagacity, and moral tenacity in coping with the political exigency of his time: he is truly a public philosopher-statesman of our time. He has been the most prominent voice of post-Communist Eastern Europe. Havel was deeply influenced by Jan Patočka who was a student of phenomenology, an admirer of Masaryk's democratic humanism and Comenius's pansophic humanism, and an active political dissident who died in 1977 during a police interrogation. From the side of conservatives, Havel represents the death of communism as a totalitarian political system and the "end" of ideology and history as the transparent triumph of American liberalism. From the side of political radicalism, he is a champion of the powerless. He is, in short, a statesman for all seasons.

Havel is above all a Levinasian. He closely read Levinas during his prison years in Czechoslovakia. Following Levinas, he considered responsibility as the innermost secret of moral humanity. Havel's is an ethics of responsibility as "first politics" because for him freedom and responsibility are interlocked. Freedom is a requisite element of responsibility. The former, however, is not independent from the latter. Responsibility is more inclusive than freedom because humans can be free without being responsible but they cannot be responsible without being free. In the words of Levinas, "the presence of the Other, a privileged heteronomy, does not clash with freedom but invests it".<sup>44</sup>

Havel's signature idea of "living in truth" marks the heart of his conception of morality. He may also be likened to Bakhtin's dialogist who transgresses and subverts the canonical or "priestly" order of truth and the monological "misrule" of hierarchized officialdom. Havel's "dissident" is first and foremost Camus's rebel who is a critic of Marxism as the dialectical metaphysics and eschatological politics of revolutionary violence. For the rebel is one who justifies the existentialist thesis that the human is the only creature who refuses to be what he or she is. People protest against death as well as tyranny, brutality, terror, and servitude. Havel's dissident is a true rebel who senses and cultivates his allegiance to human solidarity with no intention of obliterating the other. He is able to say that I rebel,

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<sup>44</sup> Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. A. Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), p. 88.

therefore we exist. In an interview published as “The Politics of Hope” Havel also talked about the role of an intellectual as a perpetually “irritant” rebel (or gadfly) who is self-consciously capable of detaching himself from the established order of any kind and who is vigilant to and suspicious of belonging to the “winning side”. Writing about Masaryk and Patočka, Havel shows that, to borrow the eloquent language of Roger Scruton, “the individual soul is the foundation of social order and ... the care of the soul and the care of the polis are two aspects of a single concern”.<sup>45</sup>

For Havel, in conclusion, morals are the basic stuff of all politics. Thus, politics is never a tetragrammaton (or four-letter word) precisely because it is deeply rooted in and inseparable from the moral makeup of humanity. Here Havel follows Levinas for whom not only is ethics “first philosophy” but also politics without ethics “bears a tyranny within itself”. Havel speaks of politics as “morality in practice,” “practical morality,” and even “the art of the impossible” against Machiavelli’s immoral politics as the “art of the possible”.<sup>46</sup> For Havel, Machiavellian politics promotes “living in untruth,” that is, in manipulation, image-making, deception, and above all violence. In the end, the heteronomic ethics of responsibility is for Havel the postmodern alternative to Realpolitik as the modern “art of the possible”. He is determined to make politics as the “art of the impossible” possible.<sup>47</sup>

The politics of reconciliation and peace is and should be a genre of the

<sup>45</sup> Roger Scruton, *The Philosopher on Dover Beach* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), p. 88.

<sup>46</sup> V. Havel, *The Art of the Impossible: Politics as Morality in Practice*, trans. Paul Wilson and Others (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997).

<sup>47</sup> Václav Havel, *Living in Truth* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987, p. 155). Here he writes: “I favour politics as practical morality, as service to the truth, as essentially human and humanly measured care for our fellow humans”. His conscience extends to the realm of nature when he writes: “I used to walk to school in a nearby village along a cart track through the fields and, on the way, see on the horizon a huge smokestack of some hurriedly built factory, in all likelihood in the service of war. It spewed dense brown smoke and scattered it across the sky. Each time I saw it, I had an intense sense of something profoundly wrong, of humans soiling the heavens. I have no idea whether there was something like a science of ecology in those days; if there was, I certainly knew nothing of it. Still that ‘soiling the heavens’ offended me spontaneously... If a medieval man were to see something like that suddenly in the horizon - say, while out hunting - he would probably think it the work of the Devil and would fall on his knees and pray that he and his kin be saved” (ibid., p. 136).

politics of responsibility. As “talking to death” is preferred to “fighting to death,” dialogue is a precondition that aids reconciliation and peace. The Latin American philosopher Enrique Dussel,<sup>48</sup> who is a staunch critic of Eurocentrism, calls for “global dialogue as one of the initial and central tasks of the twenty-first century”. Dialogue is a genuine ex/change and possible resolution of differences involving a balanced circulation of the yang of “talking” and the yin of “listening”. The dialogical philosopher Martin Buber for whom Daoism, not Confucianism, is the soul of Sinism, once registered the complaint that what is wrong with the world today is the poverty of “listening”. Dialogue requires listening as much as talking because without listening dialogue ends up with a series of monologues.

In recent years, the issue of reconciliation has become a weighty and outstanding issue since the South African Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, chaired by the Nobel Peace laureate Bishop Desmond Tutu, was submitted to President Nelson Mandela in October, 1998. As the future of post-apartheid South Africa hanged in the balance, Tutu pleaded for racial, political, and juridical reconciliation.<sup>49</sup> Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor and also a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986, has been a strong voice of reconciliation. The mission of Jews, he emphasizes, is “never to make the world Jewish but, rather, to make it more human”.<sup>50</sup> The Nazi Holocaust was tagged as “crimes against humanity” (*hostis generis humani*), an unprecedented concept in the history of humankind under which the Eichmann trial was carried out by the Israeli Supreme Court in Jerusalem.<sup>51</sup>

In East Asia, too, there is a thorny question of reconciliation between Japan, China, and Korea whose irresolution hinders its intra-regional relationships. It is the question of reparation and/or issuing a public apology by the Japanese government acknowledging, for example, the massacre of hun-

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<sup>48</sup> Enrique Dussel, “Philosophy in Latin America in the Twentieth Century: Problems and Currents” in *Latin American Philosophy*, ed. Eduardo Medieta, Vol. 34 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003) pp. 11-53.

<sup>49</sup> Bishop Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999).

<sup>50</sup> Elie Wiesel, *A Jew Today*, trans. Marion Wiesel (New York: Random House, 1978), p. 13.

<sup>51</sup> See H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, rev. and enl. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1963).

dred thousands of civilians in Nanking and the “slavery” of Korean and Chinese “comfort women” during the Second World War. Recently the new Democratic Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi from California even introduced a non-binding resolution that would call for the Japanese government to acknowledge and issue a public apology for the wrong-doings concerning “comfort women” against which it reportedly lobbied. A *New York Times* editorial urged the Japanese government not to deny the established fact of “Japanese Army sex slaves” but to issue “a frank apology and provide generous official compensation to the surviving victims” and concluded that “the first step toward overcoming a shameful past is acknowledging it”. The *New York Times* reported that Prime Minister Abe said that Japan would not apologize even if the House passed the resolution. The obduracy of the Japanese government to issue a public apology not only creates tensions in intra-regional relationships but also cannot not be interpreted as an act of irresponsibility.

During Japan’s occupation of Korea (and Taiwan) including its assimilation policy fully being implemented during my elementary school days, there had been the incarceration, torture, and death of many Koreans. The Jung clan was forced to adopt at an emergency meeting the Japanese surname Umiyama in two kanji by giving up the traditional Korean way of spelling Jung with one kanji. In the true spirit of the Confucian “rectification of names” however my clan wished to retain after a long deliberation a trace of its Korean distinction with part of the name of the city Haeju (now in North Korea) where the clan genealogy began. Haeju in Korean has two sinograms (kanji): “sea” and “city”. Umiyama is spelled with two kanji in Japanese: “sea” and “mountain”. Hae (in Korean) and umi (in Japanese) are spelled with exactly the same sinogram sea. Parenthetically, the founder of the Jung clan was a scholar-official who volunteered to become a warrior, a general, who fought against the invading Hideyoshi forces at the close of the seventeenth century. I was told by my grandfather that for the reason of his “courageous” action, the Jung clan acquired recognition as a family of yangban or gentry.

The “insensitive” visit of the prime minister Koizumi to the Yasukuni jinja was an act of absolving, as it were, the unabsolved sense of Japanese guilt which exacerbated the anguish and resentment of Koreans or the victimized. For it many Americans cringed, and many Koreans became en-

raged. The victimized are not expected to be angels. Several years ago, I stumbled on the curious information that the tombstone of the founder of the Jung clan was removed from his gravesite in Korea to the Yasukuni jinja during the Japanese occupation to appease or “sanctify” the angry dead soul. With the help of a friend, I looked up the jinja’s website whose inscription is an unadulterated manifestation incarnate of Japanese militant nationalism prior to and during World War II. In light of this website, the admission of guilt by issuing a public apology would be a defacement of the Japanese national ego, and commissioning of its shame would be an insult. The hope of reconciliation would disappear, to be sure, like a small island sieged and swept away by the enraged sea of East Asian politics.

The magnitude of the Nanking massacre in China is recently characterized by a Chinese-American journalist Iris Chang in her book *The Rape of Nanking* as “the forgotten holocaust of World War II”. The famed poet W. H. Auden composed in 1939 the poem “Sonnet from China” which reads as follows:

Here war is harmless like a monument:  
 A telephone is talking to a man;  
 Flags on a map declare that troops were sent;  
 A boy brings milk in bowls. There is a plan  
 For living men in terror of their lives,  
 Who thirst at nine who were to thirst at noon,  
 Who can be lost and are, who miss their wives  
 And, unlike an idea, can die too soon.

Yet ideas can be true, although men die:  
 For we have seen a myriad faces  
 Ecstatic from one lie,  
 And maps can really point to places  
 Where life is evil now.  
 Nanking. Dachau.

The expression “forgotten holocaust” is meant to be a plain contrast to the Nazi Holocaust of the Jewish people which has been well remembered.

The question of forgiveness and thus of reconciliation interlocks the three cases of the South African apartheid and its aftermath, the Nazi Holo-

caust, and the Japanese atrocities committed during the Japanese invasion and occupation of Korea and China. Thus far, the Japanese effort to “defactualize” - despite unimpeachable and overwhelming evidence - and minimize atrocities in absolving guilt perhaps for the fear of reprisals, whatever forms it may take, renders reconciliation difficult if not impossible. The atrocities committed by Japan under its colonialism are scarcely noted in the writing of Japanese history, particularly textbook writings for public schools, have infuriated the Koreans and Chinese alike. Forgetting obliterates the warning that the past mistakes will haunt us and be repeated. Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem and the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, are a sober reminder that a holocaust should never happen again. They are vivid signposts to make the world safe for global humanity, not just for Jews, everywhere and all the time. In those two memorial museums which my Jewish-American wife and I visited together, the most moving scene was a pile of the worn-out shoes, not unlike those in van Gogh’s painting, which symbolizes the embodied presence of the countless victimized bodies perished in Nazi concentration camps. The conspicuous absence of the bodies in those shoes accentuates the eternal presence of the dead, which should never be forgotten.

In the context of the preceding discussion, we may ask: should the Japanese be forgiven? In her classic work *The Human Condition* (1958), Hannah Arendt underscores the temporal dimensions of human action. First, since the past and its mistakes or wrong-doings are irreversible, that is, what is done cannot be undone, forgiving is required. Second, action is also in need of promising simply because it is unpredictable. She further contends that like the British social contract theorists such as Hobbes and Locke, promising is declared to be void when its original conditions cease to exist or expire. Hobbes, for example, argues that social contrast itself relies on the human ability to promise in addition to having a language.

Jacques Derrida, I think, is most radical and most forgiving on the question of forgiveness. As a Jew, he raises the question of the “unforgivable Holocaust” among, of course, other unforgivable events. For him, “true forgiveness” is “forgiving the unforgivable,” however strange if not contradictory it may sound, simply because something unforgivable cannot be forgiven. To put it another way: for Derrida, “forgiving only [or ultimately] means something if it is

forgiving the unforgivable”.<sup>52</sup> In the case of the South African “national reconciliation” Desmond Tutu pleaded to forgive something unforgivable. In the case of reconciliation in East Asia, would forgiving be one of those unforgivables? If so, let Derrida’s argument be a lesson for it.

Setting aside the theological position that God alone can forgive; I don’t have the right to forgive, let us dwell on the mundane inter-human, political (i.e., moral) configuration of commissioning a crime or wrongdoing since none of us is divine. Inter-humanly speaking, forgiving involves the reconciliation of two parties: one who forgives and the other who is forgiven. Unlike Derrida’s “forgiving the unforgivable” which is a unilateral and unconditional gift-giving without reciprocity or with “no strings attached”, gift-giving may be conditional and bilateral: the admission of guilt by perpetrators of wrongdoing is a precondition for victims to forgive. Otherwise, there would be no reason for forgiving since there would be nothing to forgive or no one to ask for forgiveness. Forgiveness is a choice of the victimized, not a right to be claimed by the perpetrator. Thus the French philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch poses the right question: “Has anyone asked us [Jews] for forgiveness?” To put it differently, has anyone admitted a wrong-doing or crime? Here the question of forgiving is conditioned by or predicted upon a request rather than the unconditional forgiving that Derrida discusses.

In his most comprehensive phenomenological analysis of forgiveness, Paul Ricoeur argues that “on the level of practice ... there does exist something like a correlation between forgiveness requested and forgiveness granted”.<sup>53</sup> This belief shifts fault from the unilateral sphere of guilt and punishment into the bilateral sphere of exchange. When the question of forgiveness enters into the “circle of exchange” it changes into the bilateral rather than unilateral relation between the request for and the offer of forgiveness which is conditional. In the case of the atrocities which the Japanese government inflicted on the Chinese and Korean populace, I would ar-

<sup>52</sup> J. Derrida, “A Certain Impossible Possibility of Saying the Event,” trans. Gila Walker, *Critical Inquiry*, 33 (2007), p. 456; also see Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes. New York: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>53</sup> P. Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 478.



gue with Ricoeur: it is an exchange - an exchange in the fullest etymological sense of the term. It is a bilateral exchange between the Japanese perpetrators requesting forgiveness based on the professed admission or confession of their guilt and the Korean and Chinese victims granting it. Moreover, this bilateral act will bring about changes in the tripartite relationships and elevate them to a higher and nobler plateau of morals and politics which is a desideratum of reconciliation in East Asian politics. In his Nobel Lecture "Hope, Despair and Memory" (1986), Elie Wiesel insisted that forgetting the Nazi Holocaust or "crimes against humanity" was not an option, and hope beyond despair was a possibility. Invoking the Old Testament of figure Job, Wiesel said movingly: "The source of his hope was memory, as it must be ours. Because I remember, I despair. Because I remember, I have the duty to reject despair. I remember the killers, I remember the victims, even as I struggle to invent a thousand and one reasons to hope". In East Asia, the day of reckoning, of true reconciliation will and must come. To use Wiesel's Hebrew reference here: Rosh Hashana (New Year's Day), which is also called Yom Nazikaron (the day of memory), will and must come in East Asia.

### **In the end**

*The end of a philosophy is the account of its beginning.*

(Maurice Merleau-Ponty)

*If we keep on speaking the same language together, we're going to reproduce the same history.*

(Luce Irigaray)

It should again be stressed, in closing, that globalization or mondialisation makes the world shrink in time and space. This new shrinking world is a consequence of transversals of time and space or chronotopic crossings. It is turned into a "village" - to use Marshall McLuhan's metaphor of communicative proximity as a return to a kind of the Homeric or preliterate society - which would be an eminently hospitable place for all beings and things to live

together. We dwell convivially with other human beings and naturally with nonhuman things, the deed of which calls for compassion across all the species. Speaking of the “sacrament of coexistence,” Henry G. Bugbee, Jr. puts it thus: “We all stand only together, not only all men, but all things”.<sup>54</sup> Nature cannot speak for itself because it is a being-in-itself (*en-soi / an-sich*), not a being-for-itself (*pour-soi / für-sich*): it can react only by way of mutiny (silent revolt) to the action of human beings against it.

Cosmopolitanism, in Dane Rudhyar’s words, is a lateral, not a vertical/hierarchized, movement and attempts to planetarize our consciousness and conscience.<sup>55</sup> It begins with that cultivation and habituation of an attitude or disposition (*Stimmung*) which is readily attuned to the heartbeat of making a new world with the hopes of gradually reducing ethnocentric ignorance. It resides in a fidelity - *hsin* in sinography, which means literally “the human standing by his word” - in the reversibility of “strangers as ourselves” and “ourselves as strangers”. Viewed as such, the elemental opposite of cosmopolitanism is xenophobia.

The end of cosmopolitanism is to create not “one world” with “one government” but a civil hetero-cosmopolis which is necessarily both heterogenous and heteronomic rather than homogeneous and egocentric. By pre/serving the geography of cultural differences, the global is rooted in, but not uprooted from, the national and the local in the foreseeable future. To put it differently, the national and the local are in but not of the global. As the old saying goes, there’s no place like home, and cosmopolitanism is that new phenomenon which makes us feel at home in and with the world. For the eighteenth-century Neapolitan philosopher Giambattista Vico, who was a counter-Enlightenment transversalist and incomparable etymologist, polity, civility and humanity are all synonymous. Nation as birthplace (*nascimento*) is an umbilical cord to cosmopolitanism. Civility (*civilitas*), which is the epicenter of this triangular relationship, is nothing other than, to use the propitious language of Zygmunt Bauman, “the ability to interact with

<sup>54</sup> Henry G. Bugbee, Jr., *The Inward Morning* (State College, PA: Bald Eagle Press, 1958), p. 159.

<sup>55</sup> Dane Rudhyar, *The Planetarization of Consciousness* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

strangers without holding their strangeness against them and without pressing them to surrender it or to renounce some or all the traits that made them strangers in the first place”.<sup>56</sup>

For Levinas, whose footsteps Derrida follows, “the essence of language is friendship and hospitality” (*l'essence du langage est amitié et hospitalité*).<sup>57</sup> Levinas's hospitality as a gesture of welcoming (*bienvenue*) the stranger or foreigner (*l'étranger, xenos*) as a guest (*hostis*) but not as an “enemy” is a noble elevation of his ethical preoccupation with the other (*l'autre*) deeply rooted in the Hebraic tradition. Derrida remarks that “The Torah demands ... concern for the stranger, the widow and the orphan, a preoccupation with the other person”.<sup>58</sup> Thus the ethics of hospitality or hospitality as ethics is thoroughly heteronomic.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press 2000), pp. 104-105.

<sup>57</sup> Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 305.

<sup>58</sup> See also Jacques Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Nass (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); *Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (New York: Routledge, 2001); “A Certain Impossible Possibility of Saying the Event,” trans. Gila Walker, *Critical Inquiry* (Vol. 33, 2007, pp. 441-461). For reflections on Levinas and Derrida concerning the ethics of hospitality, see Hent De Vries, *Religion and Violence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002 - esp. chapter 4, “Hospitable Thought: Before and Beyond Cosmopolitanism” pp. 293-398). De Vries even entertains the idea that Levinas's ethics of hospitality is both pre-political and post-political.

<sup>59</sup> Derrida's elaboration of cosmopolitanism and responsibility is consistent with and an extension of Levinas's “philosophy as first ethics” (*l'éthique comme philosophie première*). After the fashion of Levinas, I call “responsibility as first ethics”. Interestingly, “responsibility” (*ahariout*) and “other” (*aher*) have the same etymological root in Hebrew (see Catherine Chalié, “The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and the Hebraic Tradition,” in *Ethics as First Philosophy*, ed. Andrian T. Peperezak, New York: Routledge, 1995, pp. 3-12). For me, heteronomy defines the most radical profundity of Levinas's philosophy. It is interesting to note, I think, that unlike Heidegger for whom death is the defining moment of Dasein's *Existenz* as “self-oriented” (*eigentlich*), Levinas defines it in terms of one's dialogical existence or coexistence with the other, i.e., “death is the without-response” (Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, p. 130, n. 20). As I mourned the death of my wife, I discovered the

The fear of foreigners or strangers would inevitably lead us to the “essentialization” or Balkanization of humanity into the two hardened if not irreconcilable camps of universal US and particular THEM whose apartheid norms or clashes render impossible the confluence of differences, the hybridization/creolization of different ethnicities and cultural values, or what Appiah calls “cosmopolitan contamination”. If globalization or mondialisation makes us more and more worldly, it would reduce if not remedy xenophobia. Ultimately, the function of public philosophy is to inculcate and distill in the mind and heart of the public the idea that philosophy begins to transform the world the moment it invents new concepts (e.g., transversality, multiculturalism, globalization, and cosmopolitanism) and that, accordingly, theory without practice in mind is a fatal abstraction for public philosophy. In phenomenology as a philosophical movement, “possibility always surpasses actuality” - to borrow the expression of Jean-Luc Marion - will serve as “a nourishing ground” based on responsible politics for the world *à venir* or the arrival of a new world. The end of public philosophy in the age of globalization is not to fiddle while the world burns and to avoid at all cost becoming the proverbial owl of Minerva that takes its untimely flight only at dusk or a dinosaur in a philosophical Jurassic Park.

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depth-chart of Levinas’s philosophy: her death means the total absence of her response and the absolution of her “response-ability”.

## Everyday Life and Philosophy

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### Introduction

One of the oldest and most widespread notions of the origin of philosophy points to everyday life as its prime source. Indeed, all of us “begin” our life and consciousness on the basis of daily experience, where our first concepts are learned and shaped, where we encounter phenomena which capture our imagination and later on lead to our choice of career, be it physician, teacher, or engineer. The question, however, is how is it that we go from everyday practice to scientific institutions, philosophical encyclopedias and academies of art? Furthermore, where does this road end and is it possible to traverse it the other way around? Non-metaphorically speaking, the problem is how to describe the phenomenon “everyday life” and what are the mechanisms by which philosophy springs into existence out of everyday life. Is this springing into existence taking place in every generation or even with every individual, or, once arisen thousands of years ago, is philosophy nowadays a separate field that reproduces itself? Is philosophical thinking a more evolved and superior form of thinking when compared to the everyday one? Is the clearer meaning of philosophical terms in comparison with everyday ones advantageous or disadvantageous for philosophy and in which cases is it the former or the latter? Lastly, does philosophical thinking contribute to acquiring a better sense of adaptation or does it constrain and solidify perspective? Is there a conflict between philosophy and everyday life, as that proposed by Parmenides and his distinction between the way of truth and the way of opinion? If so, what are the manifestations of this conflict, which side in it is the right one, and by what means could the conflict be overcome?

The answers to all these questions depend on the way in which the difference between philosophy and everyday life is conceptualised. The 20th century has repeatedly and tenaciously placed everyday life in the centre of

attentive philosophical reflection. We will remark only several to highlight the contrast to our own position on the importance of everyday life studies in philosophy.

One of the conceptualisations is the product of phenomenology and leads to the concept of “life-world” as in its Husserlian version. Traditionally this concept is also associated with the works of Heidegger, Sartre, and Jaspers. Another focus on everyday life is found in Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* (although this tendency started as early as Wittgenstein’s return from Cambridge in 1929). Wittgenstein’s treatment on the problem is the immediate impetus for the rise of ordinary language philosophy with its main representatives J. Austin and H. P. Grice. Grice’s theory on communication and on intentional-pragmatic parameters of linguistic meaning continue to influence a great number of investigations in the field of philosophy of mind and language. In the late works of Rorty, however, the thesis is defended that philosophy as “conversation about culture” transcends everyday life. Are the upholders of the “continuity” thesis (i.e. that philosophical thinking is a continuation of the everyday one) justified in their claims? As an answer to this question we seek to characterise everyday life in a way that is adequate to the contemporary situation, and to explicate some of the mechanisms which transform everyday life components into specialised (and in particular philosophical) activities.

### **Initial assumptions of the investigation**

The simplified historical frame described points to some of the main problems of the “philosophy-everyday life” which raise our interest in the process of understanding the philosophical terms used in everyday life - a process already documented in *The Philosophical Dictionary of Everyday Language*. In a recent paper (“Nature and Structure of Concepts according to *The Philosophical Dictionary of Everyday Language*”) we examined the linguistic aspect of the philosophy-everyday life conflict. Some of the results of this investigation such as the fabric-type structure of concepts and their embodied character, manifested in body-related metaphors for philosophical concepts (e.g. “reaching a conclusion is similar to brain freezing”) brought us to the belief that the conceptual difference between philosophy and everyday life should be based on activities. Moreover, if we have rights

and concepts that are not definitions, prototypes, exemplars or atoms, but a theoretical (or rather theorising) fabric, if they are processes and not entities, then it is not possible that this difference be carried out through only one criterion or even through a constant set of criteria. In accordance with this belief we try to employ numerous and heterogeneous enough criteria as instruments for distinguishing everyday life and philosophy. We believe that different combinations of these criteria will enable differentiations between philosophical activity and everyday life activity in accordance with situative cognitive needs.

Our investigation sets out from the position of everyday language to which we all have access as language bearers and users. What's more, the usage of this language is the companion, if not means, to man's evolution. This view backs up the intuition according to which the conceptualisations in everyday language are grounded on their successful application. Along these lines everyday life is seen as a combination of activities and practices which characterise every individual; what differs from the everyday is different because it is practised by few people. At the same time this practice should be meaningful and beneficial to most people otherwise the community wouldn't spend resources for it. In such case its performers would have to defend the value of their activity if they are to practise it at all. Such a defence, however, would also be a waste of resources, so we have to accept that those activities which differ from the everyday ones are beneficial for most of the people. The proportion between the minimal number of performers and maximal benefit for non-performers is the measure for the effectiveness of special (non-widespread) activities; and if a higher effectiveness vacates resources for more activities, the community should assign special people to perform already available special activities.

Undoubtedly, philosophy as an academic field requires high degree of specialisation. On the other hand, everyday linguistic practice refers with the term "philosophising" to a number of dealings which are not performed by highly educated people, nor by those with any professional qualifications. In order to answer the question about the place of philosophy in relation to everyday life, we have to build a suitable frame of reference against which their co-ordinates could be specified. By using the above mentioned main characteristic of specialised activity, namely that it is performed by specially

appointed people, we will outline those of its features we find most important. They will form the weave in the conceptual fabric which is capable of “encasing” everyday life, thus allowing the drawing out of fibers towards what is non-everyday or specialised. We refer to these features as “criteria” because, on the one hand, they are a mark of the existence of everyday and/or specialised activities, and on the other they serve as a standard for their demarcation.

### **First criterion: time perception in everyday life and in specialised activities**

The very usage “everyday life” in ordinary language implies the parameters of a particular notion of timeflow which can be attributed to everyday life. There, time in its phenomenological dimension can be understood as uninterrupted and cyclic because everyday activities are continual and regular; i.e., they require perseverance and reiteration, and their performing takes place every day. As far as time perception is possible only on the basis of one change or another in the environment, the key to the understanding of everyday time is the observation of the way in which events occur in the world. Regardless of the speed at which events in everyday life run, this speed is always a mean quantity and is uniformly distributed between all occasions that remain under the regularity barrier. There are no faster or slower, no more or less important events because at the moment in which an event is considered to be faster-running or more important than others, it is no longer part of what takes place every day; in other words it overcomes the regularity barrier and thus is no longer an everyday event. Regularity is what makes happenings on the phenomenal level highly indiscernible and unclear; there are no reliable frames to provide for their segmentation from one another and this is the reason why everyday life is often characterised as grey, dreary, dull, and trite. The very presence of everyday events in our mind is threatened by their own vagueness; they merge, fade out and eventually vanish. With their waning, the phenomenological perception of time becomes weaker as the critical points needed for the “drawing” of the temporal axis are lost.

However, all this doesn’t apply to the conventionalised perception of time which functions properly as long as there are instruments for its meas-



uring available. Thus, contrary to the distinction between everyday life and convention, often used as distinction between everyday life and specialised activities, here we stress out that the time which flows in everyday life is rather the conventional time. Only artificial interrelating units such as seconds, minutes, hours, etc. capable of designating the altogether similar everyday events as rather different from one another than rather identical. On the other hand, the cyclic nature of conventional time markers is another factor that conditions the phenomenal perception for the humdrum, unvaried flow of time in everyday life.

Is it possible for time perception in specialised activities to be different from time perception in everyday life? Or, to be more specific, as up to this moment there were no other criteria for distinguishing everyday from specialised activities pointed out, is it possible for perception to be such criterion? Are there any activities in which time is perceived in such manner that allows for their distinction from everyday ones? The intuitive understanding for specialised activity is limited to professional engagements and studying. These however are activities which are performed “every day”. Therefore, by virtue of their timeflow mode, they do not differ in any aspect from generally acknowledged everyday activities such as cleaning, eating, sleeping, etc. All these activities are regular and phenomenally undiversified, thus being characterised by their uninterrupted timeflow which passes into timelessness.

Nevertheless, we could point out cases in which timeflow is distorted and we are able to perceive a particular happening as very different from any other. Such cases however characterise precisely events and not activities/practices - which as linguistic usages imply repeating actions and thus exclude those occasions on which we perceive time as interrupted, varied, and not constant. Therefore, time perception couldn't possibly be a justifiable criterion for discriminating between every day and specialised activities, but rather between regular and particular events. As far as events are the “building blocks” of activities, it is reasonable to say that specialised activities have greater potential to generate particular events than everyday ones: incidents happen more often at work or at school than in the relatively stable family circle (the necessity of inserting these locations as indicators of difference goes further from the time perception criterion which in our

view is further evidence for the ineffectiveness of the latter). Besides, the distinction in question is not only non-qualitative; even in a quantitative aspect it is highly unstable and can often vary to the point of turning the interrelation between specialised and every day. Thus, when the distinction between regular and specific events is the most peculiar characteristic of the discussed activity, the criterion works (even though only in the framework of the particular activity and not as discrimination between individual activities). Should the situation be different, this criterion would be expanded or replaced.

### **Second criterion: space perception in everyday life and specialised activities**

Perception of personal and public space is dependent on the comparison of particular locations and the size of the human body and the density of the relations between individuals. Those locations that are easily comparable with the size of one's own body constitute private space and those that exceed this size many times constitute public space. In other words, personal space is a mezzo-world while public space surpasses time and again this mezzo-world and touches the borders of the macro-world. The result of this phenomenography of personal and public space (namely, that small means personal and big means public) is compatible with and even helps much to explain the widespread theory in feminist spheres that the confinement of women in personal space is equal to undervaluing their achievements and represents a form of male domination. Further on, the density of the relations between individuals constitutes spatial units such as entrance-hall, dining-room, living-room, bedroom, house, street, office, university, parliament, city, etc. through the following principle: higher density leads to narrower, rather personal space. On the contrary, lower density (that is, fewer or weaker relations) leads to wider or rather public space. This distinction in the degree of density conditions the difference in the accessibility of the respective locations. Location characterised by dense relations is more impermeable from outside, and a person who inhabits it as one of its constituents has privileged accesses ("from the inside") to it. Personal space is accessible from outside to the few individuals who possess specially delegated rights to them. On the other hand, public space is accessible with fewer or

even without restrictions. This determines the interrelation between personal and public space with respect to their value: as far as one of the most important criteria is the limited access, personal space is perceived as more valuable than public. A homeless person who spends his nights on the street is poor not only because he doesn't possess financial resources or any property whatsoever but because he is deprived of even personal space. He dwells constantly in public space and thus the care for him should be expected precisely from public institutions.

Intuitively, we are inclined to understand public space as those locations in which specialised activities are performed and personal space as those locations in which everyday activities are performed. Home is the place for housework and rest, and university, school, office or factory are places for studying or work. The problem is that there are a number of places which remain out of such categorisation: for example, places of transition between everyday and specialised locations such as streets, bus stops, parks, etc. These places intuitively fall under the concept of everyday life, yet in the same time they are part of public space. The opposite case is also available: many people perform their professional duties at home, i.e. at the location which is usually perceived as personal space. Probably the most suitable example here is doing one's homework. This widespread practice transfers the activity of acquiring education from specialised locations to everyday locations. As a result, the labeling of such activities as specialised or everyday ones becomes very problematic. Thus the criterion for space perception also does not sufficiently clarify the borders between everyday life and specialised practice, although it is applicable in more cases compared to the time perception criterion.

### **Third criterion: skill levels in performing everyday and specialised activities**

The skill which a particular activity requires seems as one of the most intuitive and in the same time precise criteria through which the distinction between everyday life and specialised practice could be conducted. Specialists in a given field are engaged in specialised activities that are inaccessible to non-specialists precisely because the latter are not qualified to perform them. It turns out that in order to distinguish between specialised and every-

day life via this criterion it would be sufficient to point out those activities that a person could perform only if competent enough, or, to be more specific, if the necessary knowledge, skills and cognitive/physiological capabilities are present.

The problem here is that all activities without exception could be performed more or less efficiently which means that there is no activity accessible in its totality regardless of the capabilities of its agent. Even activities such as cooking, cleaning, washing, etc., which are usually considered rudimentary, require relatively high skills in comparison, for example, with strictly biologically-related activities. The latter are automatisms and are inherent in every human being. Moreover, we could think of those “rudimentary” activities in their specialised modes: restaurant chef, capable of precisely realising many complex recipes and of inventing new ones, professional cleaner who uses more effective and convenient tools or domestic attendant who does her work in a more organised way thanks to better knowledge and/or longer practice.

Thus, any activity could be performed through a skill (in some cases this is true even for automatisms, for example not everybody knows how to sleep “correctly”), every skill has levels, and every skill developed above a certain level marks its bearer as a specialist and the activity performed by him as specialised.

When exactly does a skill begin to designate a specialised as opposed to an everyday activity? Both on everyday and on specialised levels a skill is understood and specified on the basis of its pragmatic output such as purposeful problem solving, making reasoned decisions, provident implementation of particular activities, and so on. Skill at the everyday level lacks the systematisation of its acquisition, development, and application; i.e., it lacks the theoretical fabric in which it is constructed further, conventionally conditioned and regulated, supplemented with proven phylogenetical experience, enriched by explicit directions for its application and evaluated through clear and unambiguous criteria. Additionally, the theoretical aspect of a particular skill sets before its possible bearers strict and precisely formulated requirements that should be met by those who want to master it. All these features are present in everyday life only sporadically/accidentally and not

permanently: there the skill is dissolved in its practice, its theoretical aspect (if there is one) is idiosyncratic and implicit, and its expansion in the intersubjective consciousness is unprincipled. Every application of a skill in everyday life is measured and evaluated in a rather situative manner without using conventional theoretical criteria.

It is important to notice that even though the theoretisation and the explicitness of particular skill usually bear witness to the higher level of its command, they do not always have direct effect on its appropriate usage as the latter is always situated and the situation can sometimes be solved more adequately in the absence of conventionally imposed schemes and rules. To sum up, a specialised skill differs from an everyday one not in the effectiveness of its application (which can vary in favour of either the everyday or the specialised skill) but rather in the degree of theorisation and explicitness. Therefore, the distinction between specialised and everyday activities with respect to skill is carried out through the oppositions theoretical/explicit/conventionalised - practical/implicit/idiosyncratic.

#### **Fourth criterion: reflection in everyday life and in specialised activities**

Concerning the role of consciousness and reflection in human action, what constitutes the difference between everyday and specialised activities? First of all we must specify the way we will use the term “reflection”. It is a word highly popular in philosophy, but almost always left to be understood. Assumed meanings in philosophy give rise to ambiguity or vagueness (which often can be an advantage, however).

In the broadest sense, and in connection with its Latin etymology, reflection means turning back - the turning back of thinking to something. This something can be the operations of thinking itself (as in Locke’s understanding) or the thinking content (as in Descartes). “Turning back” is a spatial metaphor that can mislead us, because sometimes we can act and reflect simultaneously, but we cannot be turned back and turned forward simultaneously. The spatial position of a human being in a particular frame of reference is one and indivisible, although changeable. In matters of consciousness, or psychologically speaking, reflection usually requires a split of the mind (e.g., as in its alleged synonym “introspection” when meant as “obser-

vation” of our own mental experience.\* We are not going to investigate here the usage of reflection in mathematics, physics, computer science, and statistics, which exploit etymological correlates of bending, reversing, turning, etc., although they may become a source for new and enlightening metaphors of reflection. We will try to sort out the various types of usage of “reflection” connected to philosophy and philosophical analysis of everyday life. We think that there are three such types.

Elementary reflection is the thinking analogue of visual observation or “looking at”. It might take various forms like description, comparison, or explanation. In elementary reflection our knowledge or acts are being scrutinized and examined in order to understand their origins and aims. “How do you know?” and “Why did you do it?” are typical everyday questions that call for reflection if we want to answer them properly. Here reflection appears as heuristic (combining aspects of discovery and invention) principle of thinking as it leads to new information about reasons, motives, and objectives.

When the questions are of the type “Is what you say true?” and “Is what you do right?” the reflection is critical as the limits of validity and the correspondence or disparity between ends, means and outcomes are being judged.

“What is the significance of your statement?” and “Was this what you wanted?” are questions that incite pragmatic or projective reflection on the value of our beliefs, desires, and actions in the context of their realization in a mental representation or in the environment respectively. It is easy to see that critical reflection contains heuristic aspects, pragmatic thinking has critical elements, and so on (i.e., elementary reflection is a mix of various forms of thinking).

In elementary reflection the primary motives for its implementation come from the environment, mainly when impediments to the smooth functioning of the individual arise and when they cannot be removed by augmentation of the usual effort applied. Augmentation here means both increased frequency and a greater number of repetitions of a certain operation

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\* For more details on introspection see A. Karageorgieva (2008). *Philosophy of Mind*, Ch. 7, §3.1.

(mental or physical).

As reflection develops, aspects of thinking that are capable of facilitating or even of securing its reproduction and expansion become more and more significant. This means that further resources for comprehensive thinking grow to be available and because of that the differences between heuristics, critique, and projectivity become more pronounced and durable. Reasons of knowing and acting go to the background, ways of gaining knowledge and performing actions go to the fore. When people are aware of a way to perform a certain action they do not need to keep in memory examples of such actions, loaded with their full content, e.g. who did what, where, when, etc. To have a method at one's disposal (because a way to do something is a method of doing something) frees mental resources for varying and extending the activities that one is able to perform. So in contrast to common opinion, to think about thinking is not a waste of resources but a more efficient way of applying them in our interaction with the environment.

Observation of the ways and the forms of implementation of thought constitutes methodological reflection. In it the three aspects - heuristics, critique, and pragmatics - are present as in elementary reflection, but now they are able to work more independently from one another. This can be seen easily in usages like heuristic method, critical method, and method of application.

Next, there are no logical barriers to reflection turning to itself. Indeed, it happens at first as considering a possible use of the outcomes of elementary reflection to improve the quality of knowledge and action so that they become more efficient in coordinating individuals and environment. In this case reflection functions not only as a critical and heuristic thinking principle, but as a projective, i.e. interested in its own application. Here we have philosophical reflection. It requires identification of a dynamic self which switches its role between acting and observing, sometimes rapidly enough to create the experience of unity of the two processes. And here we encounter the psychological obstacles to infinite reiteration of reflexive acts. A reflection that does not go back to some previous content-filled point loses its object and becomes object-less in the literal sense because it is directed towards an empty point (i.e., towards nothing). Indeed, we can think of the form of a specific content, but we cannot think of the form of a form: the

form of a form is the form itself. In other words, we may think of a form with different contents (or of different contents with one and the same form), such as a cube of plastic, wood, or cheese (or of plastic, wood, and cheese in the form of a cube). In contrast, we are not able to think of forms with a different form (or of different forms of the same form). A cube cannot have the form of a sphere, nor a sphere or a cylinder can have the form of a cube. The analogy with reflection is as follows. Elementary reflection can be likened to thinking (mainly) about the content of our knowledge and action (it differs from regular, non-reflexive thinking in that the latter is a thinking of some content). Methodological reflection is directed (mainly) to the form of the thought content. One example can be formal logic as organon of thinking in contrast to canon of thinking. In a nutshell, philosophical reflection is paying attention to the relationship between form and content, a relationship that is realised in the application of a method to a certain content. Reflexive thinking of the philosophical type tries the possibilities for and the limits of method application. The three types of reflection (elementary, methodological, and philosophical) combine in a different way the three aspects of discovery, judgement, and testing, i.e. heuristics, critique, and pragmatics.

The above analysis makes clear the connection between reflection (philosophical one as well) and experience: they are in touch with each other in their starting point as thinking about the content of knowledge and action, where the content comes from experience and learning. They are connected also in their finishing point as a method that allows for or is liable to application. The knowledge that we discover through reflection is not a priori - as the judgement criteria in reflection are not a priori, and no more a priori are the thinking tests that we execute when reflecting. The latter would have been senseless if they were not controlled by a periodical content insertion. When a thinking test over a contentful thought shows that reflection does not function properly (as when it does not answer the questions of source, applicability of usefulness meaningfully), then the very process of reflection should be corrected accordingly.

Elementary reflection prevails in everyday life (but we must not forget that elementary reflection contains all other forms of reflection). Methodo-



logical reflection is to be encountered predominantly in science. Because some instances of methodological reflection have occurred in the realm of everyday life, they have at times gained an anecdotal status in the history of science. Sometimes, however, they are incorrectly described as mystically inspired irrational breakthroughs. The episode with Archimedes' law, whose discovery was accompanied by the famous exclamation *Eureka!* is a nice example. This discovery was a result of turning back to the contents of repeating phenomena in the practice of dealing with bodies in fluids - and that is what constitutes elementary reflection in which there is nothing irrational. The ascertainment of the discovery, however, constitutes methodological reflection as it requires description of the form in which thinking is implemented. That is why nowadays we cry out *Eureka!* not in cases of the discovery of natural laws, but just when we find something or some way of doing something.

Self-reference of the reflecting subject is very typical for reflection in philosophy. In this process one tries to answer the question about the significance and the role of knowledge and action in changing people's self-understanding and view about their place in the world. However, reflection in philosophy differs from philosophical reflection. Indeed, within the ontological paradigm of philosophical thinking, where philosophy is interested in the nature of being (as in Plato and Aristotle), the most salient form of reflection is elementary reflection. Methodological and self-referring forms of reflection are nevertheless present, and they make ancient philosophy understandable to our contemporaries, but they do not prevail. On the contrary, reasons for actions like being on good terms with the gods are hardly acceptable from our post-pagan and post-religious point of view. Further, within the mentalist paradigm philosophy is being considered as a theory of knowledge and mind, as in Descartes and Kant. There the methodological form of reflection dominates. Consequently, philosophy is being considered as (and identical to) science. This, of course, is inadequate. Within the linguistic paradigm philosophy appears as a critique of language, e.g. in the early works of Wittgenstein. There, linguistically implemented self-reference of the subject, or truly philosophical reflection, is highly widespread. Therefore it is the most subjectivist paradigm. On the other hand, self-reference is senseless outside the context of the world; therefore this paradigm greatly

stimulates the study of the world, i.e. scientific and objectivist thinking which balances the extremes of subjectivism. This interaction turns out to be highly productive. By virtue of the interplay of those two forces - centrifugal and centripetal (away from the object to the subject and away from the subject to the object) a new integrating paradigm arises. It may be called cognitivist as in its investigations it employs all forms of thinking (and their corresponding forms of reflection) - philosophical, scientific, and everyday ones. To posit our main point once again, we stress that in all three kinds of reflection (philosophical, methodological, and elementary) the aspects of heuristics, critique, and pragmatics are present but differ in the extent of their presence.

Lastly, in order to work properly as a criterion, reflection must be correlated quantitatively to the lack of reflection. Reflection may be missing in two ways - primary and secondary. Primary lack of reflection is connected with rapid instinctive actions and with thinking operations which do not pay special attention to their content; they occur as if they coincide with their content, as when I am thinking "This is a tree" I pay attention to the tree and not to the thought content "tree". An example of instinctive response is when I enter a restaurant attracted by the smell of food or the view of people who eat, without formulating the thought 'I am hungry'. Another example would be a baby sucking milk because she is hungry and not because she is thinking that she is hungry. Secondary lack of reflection characterises cases when we have repeated an operation so many times that we are able to perform it without any special effort and with minimal attention; the operation has become automatic. The first type of non-reflexivity is widely spread in everyday life. The same holds for the second type, but the difference is that we find automatisms in specialised activities as well. A professional driver makes a lot more rapid non-reflected decisions in the various traffic situations compared to an inexperienced or even to an experienced amateur. This shows that parts of specialised activities may turn into everyday routine. Analogously, philosophical and scientific results may acquire the status of everyday knowledge, i.e. to become items of common sense.

To sum up, activities in which non-reflexive or elementary reflected elements prevail are likely to be everyday activities. Activities in which

methodologically reflected elements dominate (provided that other factors are present, e.g. ones specified in criteria 1-3) are likely to be scientific practices. Activities in which self-reference (or self-identification) of the agent abound are more likely to be philosophical. The latter may tend to be more similar to science, if the share of methodological reflection is prevalent, or might be more like everyday thought if the part of elementary reflection is greater than that of methodological one.

### **Conclusion**

Our analysis confirms the initial hypothesis that there is not a criterion sufficient in itself as to ensure a distinction between everyday and specialised activities. Thus the lack of a border which univocally separates the everyday from the specialised makes the very identity of the concepts “everyday” and “specialised” dubious. It turns out that according to different criteria one and the same activity may be simultaneously everyday and specialised. For instance, against the spatial criterion, solving a complicated thinking problem may be an everyday activity, but according to the skill criterion it is to be defined as specialised one. Further on, the reflection criterion may put philosophising on the side of specialised activities (especially when methodological reflection prevails), but against the time criterion philosophising may appear as an everyday practice if it is being done regularly. All this suggests that no activity can be defined as plainly everyday or plainly specialised. The solution is found in the application of Wittgenstein’s conception of family resemblances. Each human activity may be likened via one aspect to an everyday activity and via another - to a specialised activity. It is not possible to judge what type is a certain activity by identifying it as X or Y. This judgement becomes feasible only after we have “measured” the degree of X and Y in the particular activity.

The most important implication of this solution concerns a more general problem: that of how everyday and specialised relate to each other. Insofar as everyday and specialised in everyday and specialised activities are subject to measurement and not to some a priori distinction, the analogous distinction between everyday activities, on the one hand, and philosophy and science as activities, on the other, is similarly impossible. Everyday, scientific, and philosophical are all attributes that can be applied with re-

spect to a stage or an aspect of a particular activity, i.e. of an activity in a certain situation. They are not attributes of the activity in general or as a whole. Originally (or by default) any activity is underdetermined; to qualify it as everyday is to compare one of its stages or aspects to another that must then be qualified as specialised, i.e. scientific and/or philosophical.

Within the metaphor which likens concepts to theories that form linguistic-conceptual fabric, “everyday-specialised” is a distinction that influences interdependent vibrations between the fibers: language situations that explicate certain activity as a specialised one at the same time trigger language situations that explicate it as belonging to everyday life. For example, by mentioning philosophy we activate both its academic and its domestic aspect, but concentrate on the first or the second depending on what we intend to communicate. This vibration of fibers and the “mental movement” from one segment of the fabric to another by generating new fibers (connections) enables the process of explanation of the activity we are interested in. This is so because explanation requires some distance from the explanandum. Thus, drawing out a fiber from the everyday to the specialised on the basis of common activities guarantees the possibility to separate (although only partially) the former from the latter. Consequently, we acquire the ability to distinguish between the different aspects or stages of human activity with greater precision and to increase our cognitive and/or (linguistically) communicative “income”.

## **Community after the Subject: The Orthodox Intellectual Tradition and the Philosophical Discourse of Political Modernity<sup>1</sup>**

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The political background which raises conceptual challenges for my investigation into the problematic of human subjectivity and community is the post-Cold War and post-totalitarian constellation of Europe. It is especially in Europe that this problematic gains salience at the present point in time both as a philosophical and as a political issue. Philosophical, because the overcoming of totalitarianism has not brought about the scenario foreseen by Francis Fukuyama (we do not observe a universalization of Western liberal democracy and a global triumph of the individualist-liberalist paradigm). Political, because the Huntingtonean scenario of a clash of civilizations along the borderline of Eastern and Western Christianity requires us to scrutinize the differences and commonalities between a variety of approaches to the issue of the human subject and life in common in different European intellectual traditions. What this paper attempts to do is to bring the two issues which emerge from the post-totalitarian and post-Cold War constellation of Europe together, to intertwine the contemporary debate on subjectivity and community with the question of Europe as a space delimited from the East along the borderline of Eastern and Western Christianity.

The aim of this paper is to examine notions of subjectivity and community in Western philosophy and in a philosophy of Eastern Christian background, and to draw from this encounter some elements of a political philosophy of community and of a European philosophical space that can

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<sup>1</sup> The ideas contained in this article were first elaborated at a workshop organized by the author in May 2006 at the European University Institute Florence under the heading "The Human Subject and Community in European Philosophy and Theology: Eastern and Western Perspectives". An earlier (and much shorter) version of the article was subsequently published in Russian as "Soobshchestvo posle subekta. Pravoslavnaya intelektual'naya tradiciya i filosofskij diskurs politicheskogo moderna." *Voprosy Filosofii* 8 (2007), 34-47.

accommodate, beyond alleged borderlines, those different intellectual traditions which make up the richness and ambivalence of Europe's political, cultural and religious heritage.

### **The question of the human subject and community in post-totalitarian political philosophy**

The historical experience of the totalitarian regimes of Nazism and Stalinism signifies a watershed for European political philosophy. That the dissolution of the individual human being into the body of a postulated *Volk* or *kolektiv*, and that the conflation of state and society into a total representation of power were not only possible, but could also, at their onset, exert a considerable persuasiveness, raises questions that require us to scrutinize the very concepts of our political reasoning.<sup>2</sup> What is the human subject? What is community? And, first and foremost, what is the relationship between the two? These are questions of an eminently political nature because they are concerned with the workings of society, with life in common, with the principles that shape society and human co-existence.<sup>3</sup> From Claude Lefort, the philosopher who has put on trial the concept of democracy in the light of the totalitarian experience, we know that the particularity of modern democracy lies in the fact that it designates the place of power as empty.<sup>4</sup> In democracy, Lefort writes, "the legitimacy of power is based on the people, but the image of popular sovereignty is linked to the image of an empty place, impossible to occupy, such that those who exercise public authority can never claim to appropriate it."<sup>5</sup> Democracy combines two apparently contradictory princi-

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<sup>2</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, ed. Samantha Power (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), Claude Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism" in *The Political Forms of Modern Society. Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism*, ed. John B. Thompson (Oxford: Polity Press, 1986).

<sup>3</sup> Claude Lefort, "The Permanence of the Theologico-Political?" in *Democracy and Political Theory* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell, Oxford, UK, 1988), pp.216-9.

<sup>4</sup> In terms of Cornelius Castoriadis, we could say that modern society acknowledges the contingency of its self-institution. Cornelius Castoriadis, *Gesellschaft als imaginäre Institution. Entwurf einer politischen Philosophie* (Frankfurt a. Main: Suhrkamp, 1990).

<sup>5</sup> Lefort, "The Logic of Totalitarianism" p.279.

ples: on the one hand, power emanates from the people; on the other, it is the power of nobody. Democracy thrives on this contradiction, and I read Lefort as saying that the very task of political philosophy is to uphold and to comprehend this contradiction, and to safeguard the emptiness and creative ambivalence of the place of power in modern democracy.

Post-totalitarian thinking of the political (*le politique*) operates in the light of the totalitarian occupation of the empty place of power, it proceeds from the historical experience of totalitarianism as one of modernity's political possibilities.<sup>6</sup> In totalitarian systems, the place of power becomes identified with one meaning, one individual, or one destiny. The effect is twofold. On the one hand a radical communization of individual life - no life outside of the common cause becomes imaginable. And on the other hand, an extreme atomization of society - the only permissible bond between human beings is the one dictated by the common cause. What is at stake in post-totalitarian political philosophy, is to comprehend this double challenge, to preclude both the danger of all-engulfing communization, in other words the loss of individual freedom, and to preclude the danger of atomization, in other words the fragmentation of society and any form of being in common. The task of modern political philosophy, which emerges in all its clarity maybe only with the totalitarian experience, is to account for the tension between the autonomy of individuals and their inter-relatedness in a common world, between the singular human being and the community.

### **The liberal approach: theorizing the polity**

The conclusions which political thinkers in the second half of the twentieth century draw from this insight differ. From a liberal perspective, the definition of the political which I have just given, is faulty. Liberal political theory rests on the separation of the political from the social. It is concerned with the workings of the polity, not of society in general. We find this most clearly formulated in John Rawls, who seeks to establish the liberal doctrine in a less utilitarian and more legal fashion, retrieving its origins

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<sup>6</sup> Peter Wagner, *Theorizing Modernity: Inescapability and Attainability in Social Theory* (London: Sage, 2001), pp. 54-5.

in social contract theory.<sup>7</sup> Post-totalitarian liberal political theory is characterized by a limited conceptual elaboration of the human subject. It is not in need of any particular theory of the nature of the person since politically people matter only as parties to the social contract, neutralized behind the veil of ignorance. From this definition (or lack of definition) of the human subject follows the precariousness of the concept of community in liberalism. Rawls does not have a concept of community, but one of the polity as a system of cooperation. From the liberal perspective, a well-ordered polity is not a community but the product of an overlapping consensus on political issues related to comprehensive doctrines. In short, the liberal approach advocates the abandonment of substantial formulations of what people are and what people have in common and its substitution with legal ties.

Liberalism has been criticized for this abandonment. The critical voices can be divided into two basic categories, the communitarian and the postmodern response. Communitarian critics of liberalism hold that some substantive grounding of politics is necessary and that it is possible to formulate such a grounding without amounting to a renewed risk of totalitarianism. Postmodern political thinkers, on the other hand, take issue with the ontology underlying both liberal and communitarian political theory, which they accuse of upholding essentialist notions of subjectivity and community.

### **The communitarian approach: theorizing community**

Communitarian political theory, developed predominantly in Anglo-American philosophy in response to the success of Rawlsian liberalism in the 1970s, is best understood in the light of the experience of totalitarianism. In the face of the two totalitarian systems which had marked the twentieth century, the non-liberal political theories of the nineteenth century were frequently interpreted as the culprits of the deterioration of the political into fascism and communism. Hegel's philosophy was considered to have given rise both to the criticism of rational humanism and liberalism from the right, culminating in the theory of the state by Carl Schmitt, and from the left, engendering Marxism and Leninism. Romanticism, marked by Herder's dis-

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<sup>7</sup> John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, expanded ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).



covery of the culturally and linguistically defined Volk, was identified as the root of nationalism.<sup>8</sup> In the light of this apparent breakdown of non-liberal political philosophy, Charles Taylor's reading of Hegel or Alasdair MacIntyre's departure from Marxism was perceived as an affront by many liberal thinkers.<sup>9</sup> The communitarians repudiate the liberals' criticism by insisting that a substantial grounding of life in common is desirable and possible without inevitably leading to totalitarian mutilation.<sup>10</sup>

Much of the substantial grounding which communitarians undertake is rooted in moral philosophy and in sociology. In *Sources of the Self*, Taylor makes the claim that the liberal anthropological paradigm is not politically viable, that a society built on utilitarian, instrumental and individualist-atomist paradigms alone will not function. What is therefore needed, the communitarians argue, is the recognition that human beings are "encumbered selves" embedded in contexts, institutions, personal histories, and that they draw from these context moral orientation and a sense of the common.<sup>11</sup> This communitarian stance certainly does not lack plausibility but at the same time the "sociological shortcut" to community, as one is tempted to call this strategy, bears a considerable weakness. This becomes particularly clear in a text by Etzioni, where he argues the cause that the individual is always embedded in a social context. The alleged fault-line between liberalism and communitarianism runs along the concept of freedom, Etzioni writes. Those who prioritize individual freedom leave out the sociological need for affective, non-rational bonds, those who prioritize community leave insufficient basis for individual freedom and individual rights. Etzioni wants to overcome this distinction by proposing a new vision of the human subject that is modeled after the dialogical concept proposed by Martin Buber. Etzioni uses Buber rather freely here, replacing his notion of the "I &

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<sup>8</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne: Zwölf Vorlesungen*, 1 ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985).

<sup>9</sup> Amy Gutman, "Communitarian Critics of Liberalism" in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 14, 3 (1985), p.319.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge UP, 1989), p. 521.

<sup>11</sup> Michael J. Sandel, *Liberalism and the limits of justice*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Though” with “I & We”: “The *I* stands for the individual member of the community. The *We* signifies social, cultural, political, and hence historical and institutional forces that shape the collective factor - the community.”<sup>12</sup> What Etzioni does basically is to split the human subject into two halves which stand in (his view a healthy) tension with each other: an uncommunitized and a communitized half. According to Etzioni, an equilibrium can and has to be found within every specific historical situation. What Etzioni does not do, and with him none of the communitarian writers, is to argue ontologically for this dual make-up of the human subject. When Etzioni writes that “there is a strong accumulation of evidence that people have a deep-seated need for social bonds (or attachments) and that they have a compelling need for normative (or moral) guidance” he draws from this the conclusion that “the communitarian self [...] is a rather empirically well-grounded concept”; but he falls short of having disproved liberal theory on philosophical grounds. He has not confronted the ontologies of the subject which Taylor in *Sources of the Self* criticized as insufficient - Descartes’ disembodied soul, the self-making subject of Locke, or the Kantian purely rational being.<sup>13</sup> He has opposed them empirically. The consequence of the communitarian restriction to a sociological argument for the embeddedness of the human subject can be seen clearly in the later works of Taylor and in the writings of Michael Walzer.<sup>14</sup> There the constitution of the human subject and the issue of community are considered as two separate issues. Communitarian thinkers suggest that we can theorize community without a prior theorizing of the subject. Their approach is holist.

### **The postmodern approach: theorizing the human subject**

This holistic approach to community is criticized by the second response to individualist liberalism, namely postmodern political thought.

<sup>12</sup> Amitai Etzioni, “A Moderate Communitarian Proposal” in *Political Theory* 24, no. 2 (1996), p. 157.

<sup>13</sup> Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, p. 515.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Taylor, “Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate” in *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge (MA), London: Harvard University Press, 1995); Michael Walzer, “The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism” in *Political Theory* 18, no. 1 (1990).

Postmodern political philosophers single out that crucial element of the political which the other two theories with their focus on the polity and on community respectively neglect, namely the human subject. I will argue that postmodern political philosophy does not necessarily stop at the much acclaimed “death of the subject” but that it represents an innovative take on the problematic of human freedom and life in common which challenges the conceptual limits of Western thought and that it can, beyond negativity, offer an integrative elaboration of individuality and community.

Postmodern political philosophy has been described as “un-political” (*impolitico*) by the Italian philosopher Roberto Esposito.<sup>15</sup> What he means by that is that postmodern political thinking is un-political in the sense that it undoes the separation between politics and the political, it is political-philosophical by way of Lefort’s definition, concerned with the principles that shape life in common. Esposito identifies the roots of this way of thinking in Nietzsche and Heidegger and finds a concrete elaboration of it in the works of Hannah Arendt, George Bataille, Marcel Blanchot and Jan Patočka. The list could be prolonged to include Esposito himself, Giorgio Agamben, Jacques Derrida, Alain Badiou, Jean-Luc Nancy, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, and many others. These thinkers inaugurate a way of thinking about the political that is characterized by a radical questioning of the modern political vocabulary and by a scrutiny of the origins of our modern understanding of the political. What they share is the intuition that the event of totalitarianism was not a negation of the foundational principles of political modernity, but a possible outcome of these.

The postmodern political philosophers understand their task as bringing to the light the tensions between the singularity and particularity of the individual and its boundedness in a common world, inherent in the modern political project, and to maintain this tension in an ongoing critical reflection.<sup>16</sup> From this self-understanding follows that postmodern political thinkers are first and foremost concerned with ontology. This “return of ontology into political theory”, as it has been called, is frequently explained by the

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<sup>15</sup> Roberto Esposito, “Impolitico” in *Enciclopedia del pensiero politico. Autori, concetti, dottrine*, ed. Roberto Esposito and Carlo Galli (Roma, Bari: Editori Laterza, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

growing consciousness that we are living in late modernity, and that this implies a greater awareness of the conventionality of much of what has been taken for certain in the modern West.<sup>17</sup> The postmodern ontological reflection stands in the tradition of Nietzsche's nihilism and Heidegger's *Fundamentalontologie*. The main lesson drawn from Nietzsche is the genealogical method, with which he achieved a thorough criticism of modern subjectivity, rationalism and morality. For Nietzsche, nihilism was not a mere position taken within philosophy, nor a temporary crisis of the spirit, but it was the necessary departure of the entire Western philosophical tradition from its Platonic and Christian origins. Nihilism as the absence of foundations and of stable truths therefore opens up a space for creation.<sup>18</sup> Unlike Nietzsche himself, who interpreted this moment of creativity in terms of power (*Übermensch*), postmodern philosophy has tended to view it as an opening, as freedom, or, in a term coined by Gianni Vattimo, as the "weakness" of our thinking (*il pensiero debole*).<sup>19</sup> The second important source for the ontological turn in contemporary postmodern political thought is Heidegger, who understood his fundamental ontology as a way to question the unquestioned assumptions of classical metaphysics.<sup>20</sup>

One of the entities most thrown into question by the return of ontology is the human subject. The impolitical thinkers identify, with Heidegger, the classical metaphysical subject as the culprit of the dead-lock in modern philosophical thought. The human being understood as subject has become the ultimate foundation for Western thought. At the same time, however, this subject is conceived within that closure of metaphysics which Heidegger has

<sup>17</sup> Stephen K. White, "Weak Ontology and Liberal Political Reflection" *Political Theory* 25, 4 (1997), p. 503.

<sup>18</sup> Roberto Esposito, "Nihilismo" in *Enciclopedia del pensiero politico. Autori, concetti, dottrine*, ed. Roberto Esposito and Carlo Galli (Roma, Bari: Editori Laterza, 2000); Friedrich Nietzsche, "Hinfall der kosmologischen Werte" in *Werke IV. Aus dem Nachlass der Achtzigerjahre. Briefe (1861-1889)*, ed. Karl Schlechta (Frankfurt, Berlin, Wien: Ullstein, 1969).

<sup>19</sup> Gianni Vattimo, "Dialettica, differenza, pensiero debole" in *Il pensiero debole*, ed. Gianni Vattimo and P.A. Rovatti (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1983).

<sup>20</sup> Martin Heidegger, "Was ist Metaphysik?" (1929) in *Gesamtausgabe. Wegmarken* (Frankfurt/M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976), Gianni Vattimo, *Introduzione a Heidegger* (Roma: Editori Laterza, 2000), pp. 55-6.

characterized as the forgottenness or oblivion of Being (*Seinsvergessenheit*). How to liberate the human subject from its closure in metaphysics? And how to understand the Being of the human subject? For Heidegger the counter-notion to subject is *Dasein*, Being-in-the-world and distinct from metaphysical subjectivity.<sup>21</sup>

This contraposition of *Sein* and *Dasein* has given rise to various modes of conceptualizing the human subject and its being-in-the-world in post-modern philosophy. The fact that the task of thinking the human subject anew requires first and foremost an overcoming of classical metaphysics, has frequently led to the accusation against postmodern thought that it has stopped at a deconstruction of the subject. This, however, is in my view too hasty a judgment, for rather than contenting itself with deconstruction, postmodern political thinkers have attempted to make the lack, the empty space of the deconstructed (subject, sovereign, or society) meaningful itself. The clearest testimony of this determination to think the subject after its displacement is found in a collection of essays titled *Who comes after the Subject?*<sup>22</sup> When Jean-Luc Nancy poses this question to his fellow French philosophers, he is more than simply asking a question. He is making a statement. The subject, as understood in modern thought from Descartes to Hegel, has been put on trial by philosophy in the twentieth century. The break with metaphysics and the philosophical gesture of deconstruction that characterizes postmodern thought have not only changed our way of thinking about certain categories in philosophy, they have put Western philosophy as such on trial. This is what the *after* stands for in Nancy's question - it is the being after certainties, the being in a state of nihilism, if we may put it so. But Nancy does not stop with the after: With his question, he is also making a claim. The deconstruction of subjectivity has not obliterated its object! Someone who comes after it: "Everything seems to point to the necessity, not of a 'return to the subject' ... but on the contrary, a move for-

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<sup>21</sup> Simon Critchley, "Post-Deconstructive Subjectivity?" in *Ethics-Politics-Subjectivity: Essays on Derrida, Levinas and Contemporary French Thought* (London, New York: Verso, 1999), p. 55.

<sup>22</sup> Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor, and Jean-Luc Nancy, eds., *Who Comes after the Subject?* (New York, London: Routledge, 1991).

ward toward someone - some one - else in its place.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, the “death of the subject” does not release us from the task to think of that very subject in new ways. It is this thinking of the human subject at a point where the ontological critique of modernism has opened up a clearance for new approaches, which is the task of much of postmodern political philosophy.

What makes postmodern political philosophy political rather than an ontology of the self is the fact that postmodern authors discuss the question of the human subject as an issue of community and vice versa. The two poles - the human subject and community, the “one” and the “many” - cannot, in the postmodern view, be divorced from each other. Talking about the subject and community after the critique of classical metaphysics implies that none of the two is allowed to acquire the status of an unquestionable starting point, of a substance or essence in itself. Their approach is therefore different from the atomism of the liberals, who start with the neutralized individual to arrive at an idea of the polity, and it is also different from the holism of the communitarians, who start from the community in order to say something about the make-up of the person. Postmodern philosophers discuss the human subject in community and community in the human subject, making recourse to figures of thought and speech that go beyond conventional political philosophy and beyond the language of classical metaphysics.

Esposito, for example, talks about “con-division” (*condivisione*)<sup>24</sup> and in his major work *Communitas* he writes that community cannot be thought like a body in which the individual human being is diffused into a larger individuality, nor is community merely the product of mutual recognition. Community for Esposito is the exposition of the human subject to that what breaks its closure.<sup>25</sup> A similar view is expressed by Jean-Luc Nancy, who talks about the human subject as a being singular plural.<sup>26</sup> For Nancy, the classical Western mode of thinking community has been that of essences, of closure of the political. The thinking of community as a “people” or “nation”, as “destiny” or “generic humanity” constitutes closure for Nancy “be-

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>24</sup> Esposito, “Impolitico”.

<sup>25</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Communitas: Origine e destino della comunità* (Torino: Einaudi, 1998), p. xvii.

<sup>26</sup> Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

cause it assigns to community a common being, whereas community is a matter of something quite different, namely, of existence inasmuch as it is in common, but without letting itself be absorbed into a community of substance.”<sup>27</sup>

To conceptualize our existence in common without making it contradict the freedom of the human subject, this is the task of contemporary political philosophy, of all political philosophy, be it liberal, communitarian, or postmodern. I have indicated the different ways in which modern political philosophy has gone about this task, and I have also pointed out that not all approaches succeed in making a proposal that can do justice to both aspects - life in common and freedom. Especially liberalism and communitarianism fail to achieve a convincing balance. The challenge which lies ahead of us is to point out possible ways of thinking further from that point, to venture into a conceptualization of the human subject and community from within and beyond the politico-philosophical discourse in the West.

### **The Eastern Orthodox intellectual tradition**

The beyond which I suggest to introduce into the debate is the Eastern Orthodox intellectual tradition. I coin this term in order to describe a particular expression of Eastern Orthodoxy, a thinking which has its roots in the Russian religious philosophy of the late nineteenth century but developed further in the twentieth century under the impact of the confrontation with totalitarianism. We find it situated on the threshold of theology and philosophy, non-clerical but steeped in the spiritual tradition of the East. The reason for bringing in this perspective is that Eastern Orthodoxy partakes in an important way in the post-totalitarian and post-Cold War constellation of Europe. It has gone through and reacted to the experience of totalitarianism, and it has, after the end of the Cold War, taken stage again as a religious, cultural and partially even political element in Europe. The post-communist situation of Orthodoxy has attracted the attention of many scholars, most of whom have approached the subject from a sociological or from a historical perspective, and frequently we find also a focus on the institu-

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<sup>27</sup> Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. xxxviii.

tional and theological situation of the Orthodox Churches and their relation with other confessions.<sup>28</sup> Comparatively less scholarly attention has until now been paid to the philosophical and intellectual dimension of Orthodoxy, a dimension which must not be neglected given that, in the 1990s, the former communist countries of Europe found themselves in a situation where a dominant ideology (Marxism-Leninism) was being replaced by new schools of thought. What role did and does Orthodoxy play in these processes? What is the place of Orthodox intellectual tradition in contemporary discourses in philosophy? What can it offer to the debate in political philosophy which I have just outlined, to the question of the human subject and community?

It is indispensable to emphasize that any valid attempt to give an answer to these questions must go beyond simplistic assertions of the kind “collectivist Russia vs. individualist West”. Notions of that kind have for a long time dominated the self-understanding of Orthodoxy and its reception in the West, but they cannot do justice to the considerably more complex situation of today. In the face of totalitarianism, not only the West has, as I have shown above, taken issue with its own philosophical trajectory, also

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<sup>28</sup> For a comparative analysis of the changing patterns of religiosity in Central and Eastern Europe, see: Detlef Pollack’s “Modifications in the religious field of Central and Eastern Europe” *European Societies* 3, no. 2 (2001). The author concludes that the status of the churches has risen significantly in the region. A detailed analysis of the Russian case has been provided by a Finnish-Russian research-team which collected statistical data on the “the return to religion after atheism”. The authors found out that in 1996, 88% of Russian respondents answered that their attitude towards Orthodoxy was “positive” even if they declared themselves atheists, while only 34% said they were “believers”. The authors concluded that, on the level of attitude, the end of communism did indeed bring about changes with people moving from a state-atheism to state-Orthodoxy, while on the level of personal religiosity, the impact appears to have been far less significant. Киммо Каарияйнен и Дмитрий Е. Фурман, Верующие, атеисты и рочие (эволюция российской религиозности) (Kimmo Kaariainen/Dmitrij (E. Furman, Believers, Atheists, et al: The Evolution of Religiosity in the Russian Federation) in *Вопросы Философии* 6 (1997). See also: Zoe Katrina Knox, *Russian society and the Orthodox Church: religion in Russia after communism* (New York, London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), Evert Van der Zweerde, “All Europeans are equal... But aren’t some less European than others? (Reflections on Europe and Orthodox Christianity) *The Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 57, no. 3-4 (2005).



Orthodox thought has, under the impact of communism and emigration, re-examined its origins and its development.

The disputes over the term *sobornost*, which expresses the spiritual community among people and was frequently used as a catchword in Slavophile polemics against the West, is a case in point. A key-term in Russian religious philosophy since the nineteenth century, this term came to stand for a certain religious mystification and personalization of Russia, of the Russian people and the “Russian soul”.<sup>29</sup> The reason why it largely fell out of use among Orthodox thinkers in the twentieth century is, I would argue, not much different from the post-totalitarian challenge that Western philosophers were facing. In the wake of the Bolshevik revolution, the religious philosophers of Russia’s Silver Age found themselves caught up in a confrontation between religious-socialist ideas and communism, between their ideal of community and the Soviet *kolektiv*, between the vision of a truly Christian state and an atheist state that claimed salvation. As pointed out by Nikolaj Berdyaev in *The Origins of Russian Communism*, Orthodox thinkers found themselves confronted with the political occupation of an ideal of community that was reminiscent of their own concepts.<sup>30</sup> It should therefore not come as a surprise that many of these thinkers consequently reformulated their ideas in an attempt to safeguard them from totalitarian abuse. It is this moment of renewal within Orthodox thought, manifest in the debates in Paris in the 1930s and in the critical engagement with the religious philosophy of the Silver Age in Russia in the 1990s, which is of primary interest. Not only does it offer a new approach to the subject of the Orthodox intellectual tradition, dominated by the study of the canonical authors Solov’ëv, Florenskij and Bulgakov, it also points the way to a conceptualization of the relation between the West and the Orthodox East that goes beyond the above mentioned simplistic assertion of individualism vs. collectivism.

The debate about the nature of Orthodox theology which took place

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<sup>29</sup> Semën Frank, for example, writes in an essay entitled “The Russian Worldview” that the Russian mode of thinking is anti-rationalistic, spiritually collectivist, and religious. (“Die Russische Weltanschauung” in *Philosophische Vorträge*, ed. Paul Menzer and Arthur Liebert. Charlottenburg: Pan-Verlag Rolf Meise, 1926.)

<sup>30</sup> Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1960).

among émigré-theologians in the 1930s in Paris (and which has entered Orthodox history as the “sophia-controversy”) exemplifies the attempt to renew Orthodox thinking in the light of the catastrophic collapse of Russian intellectual life during communism. At stake was whether the path taken by Russian religious intellectuals prior to the revolution, namely the creative engagement with Orthodoxy in the philosophical and theological language of the day, should be continued, or whether Orthodox thought ought not to confine itself to its very core, namely the theological writings of the Church Fathers.<sup>31</sup> Representative of the first point of view was Fr. Sergej Bulgakov, whose theology and understanding of the role of religion in modern society had been shaped profoundly by the experience of the lively debates between leftist intellectuals and clerics in the period following the Bolshevik revolution and by the optimism and drive for a “new religious consciousness” that informed much of these encounters. The figures behind the second approach were Fr. Georgij Florovskij and Vladimir Losskij. In his two-volume study *Ways of Russian Theology*, Florovskij criticized Russian religious philosophy for containing too many elements of Western philosophy and speculative thought, and he was especially critical of the work of Bulgakov on the grounds of his teaching on *Sofia*, an unconventional rendering of Orthodox theology and its relation to the world.<sup>32</sup> Also Losskij, considerably younger than Bulgakov and indebted to him as his student, spoke out against philosophical and speculative additions to Orthodox theology, whose integrity should be preserved at all costs. He was particularly critical of anything that reminded of Russian romanticism, to the extent that his interpreter Rowan

<sup>31</sup> The conflict is described in all studies dealing with this period, see for example: Sergij Bulgakov, *Towards a Russian Political Theology*, ed. Rowan Williams (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), pp. 172-81, Paul Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology. Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov. Orthodox Theology in a New Key* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), pp. 279-89, Сергей С. Хоружий, “Шаг вперед, сделанный в рассеянии (Sergej Hozhij, A step ahead, taken in dispersal),” in *Опыты из русской духовной традиции* (transl. *Experiences from the Russian Spiritual Tradition*), ed. Сергей С. Хоружий (Москва: Изд. Парад, 2005), pp. 410-13.

<sup>32</sup> See especially chapters eight “On the Eve” and nine “Breaks and Links” in Georgij Florovsky, *The Ways of Russian Theology. The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, Vols. 5-6* (Belmont, MA; Vaduz: Nordland Publishing Company; Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1987).

Williams even speaks about “Lossky’s intellectual allergy to the language of *sobornost*.”<sup>33</sup> The concept of *Sofia*, with its clear symbolistic legacy, was just one such speculative element for Losskij. He held that, theologically, there was no need for the unifying metaphor of *Sofia*, all could be expressed in Orthodox theology purely and simply.<sup>34</sup>

The conflict between the two schools of thought, frequently referred to as Russian School theology and Neo-Patristic theology, has been described as a debate between modernists and traditionalists,<sup>35</sup> liberals, and conservatives<sup>36</sup> - or as an opposition between wanting to lead Orthodox theology “back to the fathers” or “beyond the fathers”.<sup>37</sup> A closer look at the positions shows however that none of these designations quite exhausts what was at stake. The theological dispute between the two schools did not arise around the question whether Orthodoxy needed to reposition itself after centuries-long stagnation, attempts at Westernization and communist defeat (on this there was consensus), and not even on the issue whether the Church should be engaged in the world, also a shared view, but on the question as to which basis such a renewal and engagement with the world could take place. For Bulgakov, the two issues were quite clearly linked. The renewal of the Church would take place on the basis of an active social engagement in the world. Florovskij, on the other hand, thought that the Church needed to re-appropriate its dogmatic foundations, to achieve a spiritual renewal, and from this a true engagement with the world would follow.

What Florovskij had in mind was first and foremost an emancipation from Western ways of thinking about religion and the world. “It is not enough to merely repeat answers previously formulated in the West - the western questions must be discerned and relived,” he writes in a passage which is worth quoting at length:

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<sup>33</sup> Bulgakov, *Towards a Russian Political Theology*, p. 176.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 174-8.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Bird, “The Tragedy of Russian Religious Philosophy: Sergei Bulgakov and the Future of Orthodox Theology,” in *Orthodox Christianity and Contemporary Europe*, ed. Jonathan Sutton and Wil van den Bercken (Leuven, Paris, Dudley: Peeters, 2003).

<sup>36</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, “Russian Theology: 1920-1972. An Introductory Survey” in *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 16 (1972), p. 178.

<sup>37</sup> Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology*, p. 376.

“Russian theology must confidently penetrate the entire complex problematics of western religious thought and spiritually trace and examine the difficult and bewildering path of the West from the time of the Great Schism. Access to the inner creative life comes only through its problematics, and one must therefore sympathize with that life and experience it precisely in its full problematality, searching and anxiety. Orthodox theology can recover its independence from western influence only through a spiritual return to its patristic sources and foundations. Returning to the fathers, however, does not mean abandoning the present age, escaping from history, or quitting the field of battle. Patristic experience must not only be preserved, but it must be discovered and brought into life. Independence from the non-Orthodox West need not become estrangement from it. A break with the West would provide no real liberation. Orthodox thought must perceive and suffer the western trials and temptations and, for its own sake, it cannot afford to avoid and keep silent over them.”<sup>38</sup>

Several things are noteworthy about this passage. First, Florovskij talks about an emancipation from the ways of thinking about problematics in the West, but not from the problematics themselves. When he speaks of “compassionate co-experience” Florovskij departs radically from any simple anti-Westernism in the Orthodox Church, which has usually held the view that the West is doomed by its own fault and the Orthodox East does not share its problems, concluding that if only the Orthodox East stays away from the West, it will be fine. Anti-Western and conservative attitudes were and are, of course, a reality in Orthodoxy; the point here is, however, that the Neo-Patristics were not conservatives of that kind. Their attitude towards the preservation of tradition was different from a merely conservative stance.

This leads to the second noteworthy point about the passage above - Florovskij’s definition of tradition as “creative”. A recovery of the Patristic style would signify a theological Renaissance, not in the sense of a restora-

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<sup>38</sup> Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology*, p. 301.

tion of something past, but of a moving forward in the faithfulness to the spirit of the past. One can follow the path of the Fathers only through creativity, not through imitation. Florovskij writes with a metaphor typical of his polemical style: "One must be steeped in the inspiration of the patristic flame and not simply be a gardener pottering around amongst the ancient texts."<sup>39</sup>

Third, Florovskij's passage breathes an anxiety with the world and with one's own condition, which he shares with many contemporaries in the West: "We are summoned to theology precisely because we are already in this apocalyptic struggle."<sup>40</sup> He is certainly more pessimistic than Bulgakov, of whose view that the Church should go into the world he is critical because both the Church and the world have become precarious: "The social question itself is above all a spiritual question, a question of conscience and wisdom,"<sup>41</sup> Florovskij writes, and adds: "Pastoral routine and teaching cannot resolve the newly arisen task of constructing the human soul and conscience."<sup>42</sup> If we see Bulgakov's task, as described by Robert Bird,<sup>43</sup> to teach modernity to speak a religious language rather than making Orthodoxy speak in terms of modernity, Florovskij would probably still have held against it that Orthodoxy needed to find its own language first.

The theological debate of the 1930s shows in an exemplary way how Orthodox thinkers tried to make sense of the spiritual and intellectual collapse that came along with totalitarianism. While Bulgakov, and with him philosophers like Berdyaev and Frank basically adhered to their pre-revolutionary ideas, refining them in order to safeguard them from totalitarian abuse, the Neo-Patristic theologians took issue with the entire mode of reasoning that determined the pre-revolutionary religious thought. To a certain extent, these two strategies are comparable to the Western reactions to the totalitarian challenge. In the West, liberals and communitarians are refining their instruments of conceptualizing individual life, society and politics, a strategy comparable to the character of Bulgakov's and Berdyaev's

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 294.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 305.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 307.

<sup>43</sup> Bird, "The Tragedy of Russian Religious Philosophy" p. 214.

post-revolutionary work, whereas postmoderns question the modern social and political paradigm as such, a gesture we find also in the Neo-Patristic criticism of the religious philosophers. Let me emphasize that I am making this bold comparison on structural grounds only, looking at the mode of the argument and not on grounds of content. What needs to follow at this point is a more profound analysis of the possible linkages between the Western and Eastern reaction to the totalitarian challenge, an analysis, however, for which we need to move ahead in time - namely to contemporary Orthodox thought.

In Russia, the religious philosophy of Russia's Silver Age and the works of the émigré-theologians and philosophers experienced a boom in the Perestroika period and in the early 1990s. Furthered by prominent scholars such as Aleksej Losev and Sergej Averincev, the religious philosophy of the past acquired an important place in late- and post-Soviet intellectual life. However, not all of this retrieval was perceived as entirely positive by some observers. Sergej Horužij, for example, writes in a reflection on the situation of religious philosophy in Russia in the 1990s, that in public consciousness the forbidden religious philosophy of the Silver Age and emigration acquired the status of a place where all answers to current problems - Russia's future, its place in Europe, its destiny - were to be found if only one could get there. Once the literature was made accessible, however, it became apparent that there were neither ready-made answers nor could these texts serve as an immediate inspiration for new creative solutions. They turned out to be too utopian, too optimistic and too far-fetched, according to Horužij's judgement. Only what was sufficiently "easy" and graspable found an immediate echo in the political and social sphere: nationalism, fundamentalism, Eurasian ideologies.<sup>44</sup> This view is shared by Vladimir Bibikhin, who, under the provocative title *The Revolution*, writes that the re-appropriation of forbidden literature since the 1980s is repeating old mistakes. In particular he criticizes a maze of empty phrases *kosmism*, *sofiologia*, *sobornost* - which serve only as general indicators of a rejection of

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<sup>44</sup> Сергей С. Хоружий, Путем зерна: русская религиозная философия сегодня (Sergej Horužij, The pathway of the seed. Russian religious philosophy today)," *Вопросы Философий* 9 (1999).

Western rationalism and Catholicism.<sup>45</sup> Both Horužij and Bibikhin thereby point out that, just like in the beginning of the twentieth century, also at its end, Orthodox thought is prone to political and ideological instrumentalization.

The judgement of Horužij and Bibikhin makes clear that the post-Soviet revival of Orthodox thought partly risks falling back into the old modes of framing the Orthodox self-understanding exclusively in opposition to the West and of interpreting the relationship between East and West in primarily antagonistic terms. Their point is that many interpreters of Russian religious thought (and most casual Western observers of Russian Orthodoxy) overlook not only the lesson taught by the revolution (to pick up Bibikhin's title), but also the one taught by émigré-theology. The lesson is the formulation of clear standpoints on the totalitarian challenge from within the Orthodox theological tradition, and the recognition of shared problematics between West and East. This lesson can be made productive both theologically and philosophically. Since I am interested in the place of the Orthodox intellectual tradition in the philosophical discourse of political modernity in this essay, I shall focus on the latter, the philosophical aspect, and leave aside the equally important topic of the Russian Orthodox Church and contemporary Orthodox theology as such.

### **Reading across Western political philosophy and the Orthodox intellectual tradition**

What does the Orthodox intellectual tradition, which emerges from the critical self-reflection of Orthodox thinkers in reaction to the totalitarian challenge, have to offer the contemporary political philosophical debate on human subjectivity and community? Let us remember that the task of this debate is to preclude both the danger of all-engulfing communitization (the loss of individual freedom) and to preclude the danger of atomization (the fragmentation of society and any form of being in common). The task which contemporary Orthodox thought shares with Western political philosophy, a task which becomes especially salient with the downfall of Soviet commu-

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<sup>45</sup> Владимир В. Бибихин, "Революция мало чему научила (Vladimir Bibikhin, The revolution has taught little)," in *Другое начало* (transl. *A new beginning*) (Санкт Петербург: Наука, 2003).

nism and with the rapid and sometimes precarious liberalization of societies all over Eastern Europe, is to account for the tension between the autonomy of individuals and their inter-relatedness in a common world, between the singular human being and community. Let me suggest right away that the Orthodox intellectual tradition, as it emerges from the development I have outlined above, has two important considerations to offer to this debate: It can contribute to a better understanding of what is at stake when we try to conceptualize the human subject as both an autonomous and communal being. Orthodox thought criticizes the ontology which underlies classical Western metaphysics as essentialist, a criticism comparable to the position taken by post-structuralist philosophy in the West, and opposes it with an “energetic” ontology that claims to accommodate individuality and communality of the human subject. Second, the Orthodox intellectual tradition can sharpen the debate on community with regard to religion through a re-evaluation of tradition and of pre-/counter-Enlightenment thought, comparable to the efforts made by communitarian philosophers in the West.

Exemplary work in this respect has been done by Sergej Horužij and by the Greek theologian and philosopher Christos Yannaras. What we find there is the philosophical expansion of Neo-Patristic theology, more adequately referred to as Neo-Palamism. As I have pointed out above, this is a branch in Orthodox theology which is concerned with the study of the Byzantine Church Fathers and which draws strongly on the theology of Saint Gregory Palamas, a fifteenth-century theologian who supported the doctrinal aspects of a movement of monastic asceticism that goes back to the very beginning of Orthodoxy, namely to the Desert Fathers. In his *Triads in Defence of the Holy Hesychasts*, Palamas defends the practice of the Jesus-prayer by making a distinction between the essence and the energies of the divine, stating that the divine was inaccessible in essence but could be experienced by way of divine energies. Palamas thereby sought to reconcile two seemingly irreconcilable assertions, namely that revelation means that man has a vision of God “face to face” and that God is by nature unknowable. In a framework of an essentialist philosophy, these two truths could not be reconciled, but in Palamas’ theology of distinction between essence



and energy, this became possible.<sup>46</sup> Both Horužij and Yannaras have demonstrated in several works that Neo-Palamism offers a profound ontological critique and possibly a challenging alternative to classical Western metaphysics, especially with regard to notions of subjectivity and autonomy. They have drawn on Neo-Palamism on the one side, and phenomenology, existentialism, and post-structuralism on the other side, in an engagement with modernity that is situated both within Western problematics and from a perspective outside of the Western intellectual tradition - Yannaras by rendering Palamitian theology in the language of Heidegger<sup>47</sup> and Horužij by linking his own “synergetic anthropology” to the works of postmodern philosophers such as Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault.<sup>48</sup>

A second, more indirect link can, in my opinion, be found between the Orthodox emphasis on tradition<sup>49</sup> and the works of communitarians like

<sup>46</sup> John Meyendorff, *St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998), 119-23.

<sup>47</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Person und Eros: Eine Gegenüberstellung der Ontologie der griechischen Kirchenväter und der Existenzphilosophie des Westens* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 1982), Christos Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God. Heidegger and the Areopagite* (London, New York: T&T Clark, 2005).

<sup>48</sup> Сергей С. Хоружий, *К феноменологии аскезы (Sergej Horužij, On the phenomenology of asceticism)* (Москва: Издательство Гуманитарной Литературы, 1998), Сергей С. Хоружий, “Подвиг как органон. Организация и герменевтика опыта в исихастской традиции (Sergej Horužij, The organisation and hermeneutics of experience in the hesychast tradition),” *Вопросы Философии* 3 (1998), Сергей С. Хоружий, “Человек и его три дальних удела. Новая антропология на базе древнего опыта (Sergej Horužij, Man and his three destinies. A new anthropology on the basis of an ancient experience),” *Вопросы Философии* 1 (2003), Сергей С. Хоружий, “Человек Картезия (Sergej Horužij, The Cartesian Subject),” *Точки-Puncta* 1-2, no. 4 (2004), Сергей С. Хоружий, “Неотменимый антропоконтур. 1. Контуры До-Кантова Человека (Sergej Horužij, A non-annulable anthropological outline. 1. The contours of the pre-Cartesian subject),” *Вопросы Философии* 1 (2005), Сергей С. Хоружий, “Неотменимый антропоконтур. 2. Кантовы антропотопики (Sergej Horužij, A non-annulable anthropological outline. 2. Topography of the Kantian subject),” *Вопросы Философии* 2 (2005), Хоружий, “Шаг вперед, сделанный в рассеянии (Sergej Horužij, A step ahead, taken in dispersal).”

<sup>49</sup> Christos Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984). See also: John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985).

Charles Taylor and Alasdair MacIntyre. Both of these two North American authors adhere to a concept of tradition and community which is recognizably Christian - the former<sup>50</sup> more explicitly than the latter.<sup>51</sup> I would like to suggest that a cross-reading between approaches that are, implicitly or explicitly, informed by Western Christian paradigms and by Orthodox Christian paradigms respectively can bring to the fore the specificities and possible shortcomings of the way in which the problematic of subjectivity and community has been framed in the West. One point which comes to mind here immediately is the relationship between philosophical and sociological accounts of human subjectivity and community. The Orthodox intellectual tradition operates with a dual emphasis on ontology and on living tradition, and therefore does not suffer from the same strict separation between the philosophical and sociological discourses as does the Western debate, divided into a postmodern and communitarian branch.

The main argument of this paper has been that contemporary Western political philosophy and Orthodox thought are situated in one and the same struggle with the modern condition from within the modern condition itself, a condition they have in common due to the shared European experience of totalitarianism. More work needs to be done in order to substantiate such a cross-reading between Western political philosophy and the Orthodox intellectual tradition, but the main arguments which I have outlined in a preliminary fashion clearly demonstrate that such a cross-reading is not only highly desirable but also promises original perspectives and challenging takes on issues which are at the centre of political modernity.

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<sup>50</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue. A study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1981). See also: Giovanni Giorgini, "MacIntyre, Alasdair," in *Enciclopedia del pensiero politico. Autori, concetti, dottrine*, ed. Roberto Esposito and Carlo Galli (Roma, Bari: Editori Laterza, 2000), Chris Huebner, "MacIntyre, Alasdair," in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed. Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>51</sup> Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self. The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), Charles Taylor, *A Catholic Modernity? Charles Taylor's Marianist Award Lecture* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

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## IV. ELEMENTS OF HUMANNESS

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### Education for Knowledge Societies

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School is one of the most powerful social institutions. Its significance consists not only in the deliverance of a wide range of accumulated meaningful and socially valid knowledge and experience but also in the distribution of individuals to various positions throughout the various social strata as well as their governance and, therefore, in the reproduction or reconstruction of the entire social structure. Education was long ago recognized as that cultural lever by which one can transform humans and social reality as a whole.

The historical-philosophical review of education shows that there is a close relationship between the type of society and the activities of education. The interplay between philosophy and education, and also between the specific society's "philosophy" of culture and the mode of education, admittedly accepted as the most appropriate for a certain society at a certain time, could be very conducive to both philosophy and education - as theory and practice. Walter Feinberg remarks that "although dominated by psychology, the field of educational research was once largely restricted to the general discipline of philosophy [but] *the status of education as an applied field makes it difficult to identify any specific method or conceptual domain* which would single it out from other fields. For most scholars and researchers, however, the study of education has meant investigating activities related to learning, usually within the context of school [*italics added*]."<sup>1</sup>

The philosophical study of education presupposes a profound analysis of the contents and methods of education as a means of realization of educa-

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Kuper and Jessica Kuper, editors, *The Social Science Encyclopedia*, (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 231.

tional goals, i.e. the philosophy of education. Answering the question about what did/does it mean for a person to be educated, one can provide the necessary reasons as the basis of one or another contents and methods of education. According to Feinberg, “the deeper question about education involves the understanding of *intergenerational continuity and change*, and the normative concerns that guide the process of *social and cultural reproduction* [italics added].”<sup>2</sup>

But in contrast to the earlier philosophical studies that accentuated the question of educational goals, the prominence of the behavioral and social sciences has lately shifted the researchers’ concern mainly to the question of means. The exploration of the more practical issues as, for example, the institutional arrangements that protect and carry on knowledge, the methods used to identify and measure the level of competency, the training of people who will bear and deliver the knowledge acquired by society, the way in which knowledge is being distributed amongst different social groups, etc. have often replaced the more significant question about the identification of the kind of knowledge (truths) and skills that are praised by a given society to be developed and delivered as experience to the next generations. The concrete ways of realization of educational content is no less important than the very contents. They need to be philosophically scrutinized as an integral part of education in order for the fruitful interaction between the developmental patterns (related to student learning abilities and practical skills) and the transmission of the curricular knowledge through teaching to be preserved.

Wilfred Carr, a prominent scholar of education, draws attention to the great variety of views on the subject and goals of education - what he taught and why he taught it. In his inaugural lecture given at the University of Sheffield in December 1995 he says:

“What I had learned, particularly from these two distinctively modern philosophers [Descartes and Kant] was that answers to fundamental educational questions had to be independent of religious traditions and had to be grounded in rational prin-

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

ciples and truths. But what I found when I became a lecturer was not a single rationally justified interpretation of my subject, but a wide range of conflicting and competing views about how education should be understood. For some of my colleagues, education was synonymous with ‘socialization’; to others, it was a process of ‘emancipation’. Yet others saw it as a natural process of development and growth. Some regarded education as primarily ‘liberal’; others as primarily ‘vocational’. For some, education was essentially concerned with ‘realizing the potential of the individual’; for others, it was about ‘meeting the needs of society’. But what I also found was that this multiplicity of definitions was reinforced and sustained by an equally diverse range of academic disciplines, theoretical perspectives and research methodologies, each incorporating its own interpretation of what education was about.”<sup>3</sup>

In spite of the variety of diverging and competing theoretical views and models, “education’s broadest function has been to act as caretaker and dispenser of certain cultural resources of society” and also to raise the “culturally unformed - the child and the immigrant - to the state of capable adult ... Formal education is therefore an effort to do explicitly and systematically what family and community had long accomplished in an undifferentiated fashion before society became so complex that the task had to be performed by specialists.”<sup>4</sup>

As philosophy and social practice, education must foster the process of natural human development and growth through personal transformation (in the sense that human being is “doomed” to life-long education). Thus, in preparing children for their future social life, the system of education has to provide for individual and social continuation through change, in preserving the balance between the needs and interests of both sides. Modern researches suggest that “a society’s pool of ability is socially, as well as bio-

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<sup>3</sup> Wilfred Carr, “Professing Education in a Postmodern Age,” in: *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 31, No 2, 1997, p. 311.

<sup>4</sup> David L. Sills, ed., *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 4, (The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, 1968), p. 512.

logically defined; ‘talent’ is a function of social strata, educational provision, and the interaction between the two.”<sup>5</sup>

Social philosophy actualizes itself through the philosophy of education (in the broader sense of upbringing or enculturation). In the first place, as a dominant cultural code (of a certain society at a certain time) it shapes individuals submersed in the pre-given socio-cultural context. A part of the everyday social knowledge is being internalized by the social subjects and, in turn, boils down to objectifications that, according to Burger and Luckman,<sup>6</sup> are constitutive for the individuals’ reality per se. In the second place, the philosophical worldview pervades and influences the socially produced theoretical reflections on this reality (e.g. scientific knowledge/truth).

Answering the question about what knowledge (in general) is and how it is being delivered and distributed amongst people, the Hungarian sociologist Ferge says that while the term culture (broader than education) represents a conglomerate of the human-social experience including the objectified forms of activities built on it, knowledge (a term different from “knowledges” as definite pieces of knowledge) consists in the rationalization and generalization of this experience. On the one hand, she says, knowledge is related to the identification and understanding of the cultural signs and symbols (i.e. the objectifications and materializations) and on other it consists in the acquaintance with the principles and methods of establishment, reproduction, and the development of these materializations.<sup>7</sup>

The generalization and classification of different types of knowledge distributed by the educational institutions and criteria of evaluation and selection shall contribute to the philosophical understanding of the social role and potentialities of schools. Schooling generally conceived has never been confined to the system of formal transmission of knowledge, which implements “pure” cognitive tasks. The organized distribution of generalized, significant and socially valid, i.e. relevant knowledge and experience (the primary function of education), serves to the realization (by the means of the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman - *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the sociology of Knowledge*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1996).

<sup>7</sup> Zhyuzha Ferge, *Dvete Litsa na Obrazovaniето*, (Sofia: Narodna Mladezh, 1984), p. 11.

first one) of its second function related to people's socialization and allocation into hierarchically differentiated status social positions.

One of the peculiarities of education is that the type of school institution is inseparable from the whole socio-cultural context, out of which it originates. Economics, politics, and other social influences pervade education both directly and indirectly. Direct influences include the shaping of educational institutions, their organization, structure, the criteria for educational contents and learner-outcomes by different methods of teaching. Additionally, there are a number of laws, operative rules, policies and practices reflecting educational goals and social expectations. Indirectly, we find influences such as the social determination of science and knowledge development (as revealed by Kuhn <sup>8</sup>), of their use and value. Schools not only mirror the "spirit" of time, i.e. the socio-economical conditions of their historical origin and the "code" of civilization. They are designed to meet the needs of the dominant social groups and, therefore, to preserve the status quo. The concept of science as well as the concept of education still express an implicit enlightening and humanitarian faith in progress and betterment. But besides the transmission of socially valid knowledge and experience, the institution of education implements its second, not always obvious, social function. It consists in reproduction of the existing social order and the stratification and inequality by a number of internal mechanisms of selection, testing, evaluation and control over knowledge. It is understandable that such a function may lead only to opposition towards innovations and obstacles to any school reforms.

If we go back to the beginnings of contemporary models of education, we shall see the two faces of education. The dualistic educational philosophy is represented by the double-track system of education - a manifestation of the most basic structural support of class-linked social inequality. Actually, it is not a single one but two systems, established under different historical conditions and pursuing different social goals. The central question is what types of knowledge have been delivered (and why) by the two "branches" of the dualistic school system. As we have already mentioned, it

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (The University of Chicago Press, 1962, 1970).

is characteristics of the school institution to be unbreakably tied to the character of teaching material and to reflect the historically rooted educational contents that becomes an obstacle in the process of institutional renovation and the transformation of educational content and structure.

The origins of the dualism in education could be found in the beginnings of the oldest schools, namely the Chinese schools for mandarins, in the academies of antiquities, and in the medieval universities. Such schools were built from top to bottom, as far as their students had been selected amongst the privileged. Although their quantity gradually widened to other social strata, they were still expressly selected. The establishment of a highest school institution - the school of a university type - precedes the formation of lower forms of schooling. The medieval university had been forced to establish in its framework the preliminary classes (collegiums) to complement the pre-university preparation of students. Thus, the structure of the educational system has since been built in a reverse order, i.e. from higher education down to the lower stages. Ferge reminds that, with few exceptions, the university students couldn't write and read until the end of the Middle ages!<sup>9</sup> Thus, the grammar schools that precede the contemporary secondary schools were born as a form of an educational institution. (The emphasis on grammar and Latin were reminders of its historical beginnings.) The established primary schools met a double social need. On the one hand, they were designated to prepare the children of the wealthy to continue their education further to the highest level; on the other hand, the popular schools, built from the bottom, were the product of the industrial revolution. This second line of education, especially the short cycle of the vocational education, was designated to prepare good workers and citizens in providing some initial general and special knowledge and skills, including religious education. The emergence of *petites écoles* (formally compulsory, with universal character) turned to a national task - to save the poor in the industrial cities from marginalization. (This is why, by the means of legislative measures, the initial age for entering the work force had been made

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<sup>9</sup> This fact found place even in the Statute of the University of Heidelberg from 1466, where we read that one who is really not able to write, must look at the others attentively. Ibid., p. 28.



to coincide with the age of leaving compulsory schooling.) Therefore, the established “bottom-upwards” school system was designed for lower social classes, although initiated not by themselves. The peculiarity of that primary schooling consisted in that it was not designated as a basis on which one may “build” his further education, but as a short cycle that leads to an individual’s realization in the field of non-qualified work and consequently in the frames of lower-paid and dependent social groups.

We have revealed so far how and for what purposes the different types of educational institutions were established, trying to explain how and to what degree the dualistic character of education and the different socio-cultural functions implemented by the educational institutions built for different purposes and designed to meet different needs result in contradictions of contemporary models of education. As numerous theoretical analyses and generalizations over case studies of practical experience in different countries show, there are still many contradistinctions resulting from the dualistic (in principle) character of the school system: the co-existence of “elite” and popular educational models; the academic and vocational school lines; the unequal access to knowledge and information; socio-economic barriers; the predominantly individual selection criteria and the limited testing methods - all of them staying on the route to different educational levels.

Cultural traditions and authority are inevitable dimensions of every educational institution and relation. Wilfred Carr has mentioned that: “like our own modern new universities, the original medieval universities adopted the structures and practices of the dominant institutions of the time: in their case the church, the monastery, and the guild. From the church, they took the idea of an organization which transcended national boundaries as well as a fetish for mysterious rituals and colorful dress; from the monastery, they adopted the idea of a self-governing community which made its own rules and developed its own way of life; and from the guild, they adopted the idea of a community of individuals bound together for mutual support and with the authority to determine its own membership.”<sup>10</sup> But it was not only the methods of organization but also the methods of teaching that universities have developed over time. Since the formal scholastic method known as

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<sup>10</sup> Carr, *op cit.*, p. 318.

*disputatio* was introduced, it was never sufficient to acquire the expertise of skillful and competent teaching and discussing texts that constituted the liberal arts curriculum. When the young radical scholar from the University of Paris, Peter Abelard (1079-1142), recognized that religious texts also contain “inconsistencies and contradictions which could be systematically exposed and examined by using the new dialectical methods that had been made available by the rediscovery of Aristotle’s philosophy”, the purpose of education became not so much to transmit or even add to existing knowledge but, in Abelard’s words, to “modify through criticism the doctrines of the received theology”. The use of dialectical reasoning and the formulation of questions that elucidate the various sides of an issue, Carr sees that this “stimulated intellectual activity, aroused intellectual curiosity, and made radical dissent a real possibility”. What also had to be learned was that “inherited and large, unarticulated body of tacit knowledge which constituted the craft tradition into which the apprentice was being initiated”. Thus, *liberal education* was sought “to cultivate civilized social and moral conduct” in contrast to the more vocational forms of education concerned to transmit practically more applicable knowledge and skills (italics added).<sup>11</sup>

In the process of social development a huge amount of knowledge has been accumulated and the impact of useful knowledge has increased enormously. Science has become a main productive force and a factor of social innovation. As science implies knowledge, which consists in truths, education implies teaching and learning of these truths. But every teaching and learning act also implies a judgment (social or individual) that some things are more important than others (a function of various internal and educational interests that are external to science). Therefore, from the body of seemingly irrelevant socially neutral knowledge, a set of socially valid and significant, i.e. relevant knowledge has been differentiated.

How could knowledge become invalid? The aging of the accumulated information and knowledge is a natural process in the development of societies. Of course, there could hardly be any social knowledge that is completely invalid and non interesting for society. However, the role of some knowledge elements changes alongside the social significance of a number

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 319.

of different kinds of abilities as, for example, communication, human creativity and ingenuity, the ability of team-working on common projects, etc.

In a heterogeneous society (as our global informational and network society is), one and the same piece of information or knowledge proves to be relevant or irrelevant according to the different interests of individuals and groups. The information or “facts” is value-blind in itself, but its value comes from and depends on the needs of recipients and their ability to convert it into valuable knowledge. In its turn, knowledge (the “state of knowing”) requires “information, understanding and skills, that you gain through education or experience.”<sup>12</sup> Whether theoretical or practical, knowledge is something inseparable from man and cognitive ability. The more concrete information/knowledge supports the actualization of an individual’s goals, the higher is its value!

According to Danylov, while in the non-intellectual world information is context-independent, in the intellectual world it is predominantly context-dependent. For an intellectual recipient the information processing passes through two phases: The first one consists in the evaluation of information value for the achievement of individual goals and the resulting decision concerning the purposefulness of its further use or non-use. In this phase we already have some knowledge plus an educated decision. In this way, the neutral information acquires value but only for persons who are able to produce knowledge from it. The unconditional value of the context-independent information consists in the hidden, potential possibility such information to be turned into knowledge. In the second phase the evaluation is related to the possibility this knowledge to be put in use for the realization of the individual’s purposes. Here, the available knowledge and the individual’s capability to achieve his/her goals on the basis of this knowledge is what is valuable. Knowledge could not have any value in itself if the intellectual recipient does not possess intellectual capacity and previous knowledge as a fundament on which the new knowledge is to be built and put in use.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Sally Wehmeier and Michael Ashby, editors, *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English*, by A.S. Hornby, sixth edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) pp. 666, 714.

<sup>13</sup> Andrey Danylov, “Tsennost’ Informatsii” [The value of information] in: *Proceedings of the XI<sup>th</sup> International Conference ‘Knowledge. Dialogue. Solution’* (Sofia: FOI-COMMERCE, 2005), p. 649-651.

For some reason, knowledge may not have value for the realization of an individual's goals (such a situation often happens in the information-analytical centers). There are always a number of conditions (individual and social) that affect knowledge value and use. Although one and the same piece of information can be simultaneously received by many users, its value remains individual because the intellectual recipients have always different scales of values, abilities, and previous knowledge despite the fact that they might pursue common goal(s). Unemployment may be a special case when socially significant and relevant knowledge and skills become irrelevant for personal realization and goal achievement because of some definite socio-economical and political reasons. Amongst the socially neutral elements of knowledge one can put also the informational "noises" resulting from the increase and complication of society's information streams.

The role of educational institutions to deliver knowledge may be seriously distorted because of the fact that there are not steady, inflexible borders between the types of knowledge put in operation. The out-of-date (unfit in social practice) knowledge may still turn out to be useful or valuable in some contexts and for some people. A huge part of social knowledge is distributed in a formal, organized, institutional manner and their achievement is institutionally recognized (with diplomas). Such knowledge imparts to individuals' social status. In contrast to this, knowledge gained in non-formal or informal ways depends on particular situations. It is considered more accidental (although no less relevant and important for everyday life) and there are hardly any methods of its measuring and certification beyond an institutional model. The specialized, professional knowledge was differentiated as a certain type of knowledge in the Middle Ages and in a similar way non-compulsory knowledge may penetrate and interfere with everyday practical knowledge and vice versa. Although there is an essential difference between the ways in which society delivers knowledge used in different spheres of life, the differentiation of knowledge as relevant and irrelevant to the above mentioned areas of life is very crucial.

In the process of social development the primordial function of education, cultural transmission becomes one of the areas most seriously disturbed by modern social forces. Since industrialization and modernization, "the instruction

of youth became extensively differentiated, internally complex, and elaborately connected with other features of society.”<sup>14</sup> “Gradually, education became more and more necessary for national economies and became a major mediator between labor demand and supply. Occupational *competence, general and specific, is increasingly certified by schooling*. Schooling is becoming a precursor of adult *status*, especially as labor shifts from manual to mental and from low to high degree of skills. New and expanding economic, political, and social functions have *pulled education into the mainstream of society*. Education is also becoming a prime source for differences in the political perspectives of people who consider themselves free to engage in political discussions and competent to influence governmental affairs [italics added].”<sup>15</sup>

In the global knowledge economy, where the criterion of competitiveness will be the capacity for innovation, the fostering of a culture of innovation is the way of encouraging the rapid spread of inventions and new ideas throughout society. But innovation cannot be arranged by decrees and political measures, i.e. from top to bottom. The global informational and knowledge-based society (as a higher stage of development) is a society pluralistic in its forms of activity, and open in its network architecture. It provides people with almost unlimited possibilities to exchange information and acquire or deliver all kinds of messages almost instantly by the means of the new ICTs, reproducing the same quality and quantity as many times as desired. In such a dynamic and complex “society of streams” (as Castells puts it),<sup>16</sup> where the principle of “informationalism” and the process of the globalization of knowledge and information tend to model the entire structure of social life and “architecture”; innovation becomes largely unforeseeable. That’s why it is important to concentrate on the conditions that favor the emergence of the process of innovation, for they constitute the only factor that is in our power to affect. As Schumpeter used to say, innovation is truly a process of “creative destruction”.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the destructive mecha-

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<sup>14</sup> *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, p. 512 .

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 510-511.

<sup>16</sup> Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture: Vol. 1 The Rise of the Network Society*, 2d ed., (Blackwell, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> Cited in *Towards Knowledge Societies*, ( UNESCO Publishing, 2005), p. 59. Accessible on-line at <http://www.unesco.org/en/worldreport>.

nisms inherent to innovation must be paid special attention, as their social and cultural consequences can be mitigated.

Globalization and “informatization” lead to a thorough shift of the entire mode of human cohabitation. They transform society’s everyday culture and change traditional attitudes toward knowledge, education, teacher-student’s relation, etc... The technological revolution, which stays at the bottom of the rise of the information- and knowledge-societies, carries a serious danger of making some social relations unstable and the positions of some individuals and social groups uncertain. Despite the new possibilities that could be eventually given to individuals by the global information society, access to the significant information flow is quite unequally distributed over the world and amongst the individuals themselves. Yet, in the information society, where information/knowledge is a basic resource, the degree of connection to the global information supply is an evidence and a very precise criterion for social inequality, retardation or longing for power. Resulting from this are individuals who “drop out” from the system of education and distribution of knowledge and thus put themselves amongst the non-privileged and socially deprived.

Tomorrow’s jobs will be more and more a matter of producing, exchanging, and transforming information/knowledge. UNESCO reports prove that our societies will be wholly engaged in assimilating a continuous flow of new knowledge. They are in need “to be both *knowledge* societies and *innovation* societies - and must therefore become *learning* societies [italics added].”<sup>18</sup>

This challenge engenders a demand for knowledge in the terms of ever-recurring need for continuous learning. A culture of innovation and knowledge show that the relations between education (the traditional educational models) and society (turning to a learning society) have been seriously disturbed. There is some “slippage of educational functions onto other institutions and educational subsystems.” The so called “on-the-job education” emerges and develops extensively in the institutions of adult work. Vocational training is forced to evolve and the same is true about communication and social skills. The UNESCO report says: “Today, a first degree is above all a so-

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

cial qualification, and the culture of innovation will require even these degrees to carry a ‘Sell By’ date, in order to combat the inertia of cognitive skills and to meet a never-ending demand for new capabilities.”<sup>19</sup> In societies that have reached the informational stage of development, there is a growing amount of unsystematic cultural indoctrination through the information/knowledge delivered by mass-media and the Internet, where a kind of “soft” and multilateral instruction is combined with entertainment and commerce (the characteristic of the post-modern “mosaic,” multi-media-and-consumption-culture). “The media blend, competing with the school and affecting its performance, and is new in its near-universal coverage.”<sup>20</sup>

The historical-philosophical research on contemporary models of education prove that they differ not so much in the “pure” educational methods by which the mode of education (as a process and product) is being realized. The educational models differ mainly in their socio-cultural specifics and implicated elements of the public “agenda” such as economic, political, and social ones. In complex societies the system of education has to face many forces. Its adaptation in one direction may generate serious strain in another. The educational contents, methods and organization depend on knowledge and science development, but they often lag in relation to the changes in other spheres as, for example, the spheres of economics and labor. “As education connects more closely to economy and political order, *the role of education in assigning status of individuals and groups also sharpens and intensifies* [italics added].”<sup>21</sup> The close link of education to the knowledge economy in advanced societies may turn education into a “people processing” enterprise which prepares manpower to the specifications of informational and knowledge societies’ demands or into a “talent farm” where people increasingly create themselves with all the dangers that this may involve (expressed by some thinkers as “post-humanity”).

A review of the educational enterprise in a number of countries (societies living under the conditions of an informational stage of development) might reveal how and to what degree the educational models have been

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, p. 513.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 511.

shaped by the global tendencies mentioned already and how educational systems in turn might be able to affect the social structuring of these societies by allocating great resources in knowledge development and information technologies. The presumption is that when society locates so much cultural transmission and socialization in a separate major institution, namely education, the distinctive social qualities of that institution will have significant consequences for the rest of society. According to Pepka Boyadjieva, "The personal realization is not only realization in society, it is impossible without it."<sup>22</sup> The educational system can influence both the two groups of factors, related to the process of personal realization: the character and development of the social conditions and the individual potentiality development.

The need of socio-philosophical investigation into the characteristics of some educational strategies - relevant to the process of building knowledge societies - originates from the growing role of knowledge and information and their implications in almost all activities of global informational society. Learning societies will need the diversity of learning. They will need to engage in a study on different forms of knowledge, distinguishing descriptive knowledge (facts and information), procedural knowledge (answering "How?" questions), explanatory knowledge (answering "Why?" questions) and behavioral knowledge. The growing knowledge of memory and emotions will eventually serve to develop a new type of learning based on learner stimulation.<sup>23</sup>

As far as the spreading up of technical progress makes competencies obsolete increasingly rapidly, it is advisable, in all fields of knowledge, to encourage the acquisition of flexible forms of learning instead of imposing a well-defined set of knowledge. Contemporary philosophy of science and education admits that every particular subset of truths can be conditional or conventional<sup>24</sup> (although educational multiculturalism is not in conflict with

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<sup>22</sup> Pepka Boyadzheva, *Kakvo mozhe da ni daje obrazovaniето?* [What can education give us?] (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1985), p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> *Towards Knowledge Societies*, op cit., p. 60.

<sup>24</sup> The existence of diverse races, genders, cultures, and ethnicities and the range of distinctive values and perspectives that typically accompany these diverse identities is itself a fact of "truth" that is to be taken into account in the analysis of any particular educational model.



veracious epistemology). But despite the value one might place upon diversity and difference, education is inherently an activity containing moments of “normalization”<sup>25</sup> that requires the paradigms of the leading scientific traditions (and the respective logical-cognitive methods) to be followed. Nowadays, change is the supreme norm.

Education for knowledge societies consists first and foremost in learning how to learn: learning to think, to doubt, to adapt as quickly as possible, yet to be able to question one’s cultural heritage. In doing so, one shall necessarily call into question the monolithic and unitary conception of intelligence, which justifies the relatively stable character of knowledge evaluation (criteria of testing) and transmission procedures (teaching-learning methods) in the modern standard educational systems. In our view, the philosophy of education for knowledge societies is to encourage the practices of developing multiple intelligence (including emotional intelligence and all other facets of intelligence neglected in conventional teaching<sup>26</sup>) and offer inexpensive possibilities for expression and understanding. The aim of education is not to develop all forms of intelligence equivalently in everyone, but to identify the best suited to each learner’s approach to intelligence. However, the diversification of education is not manifested only in the methods and types of activities proposed, but in the different ways of gaining access to knowledge. The monopolies of educational institutions and books have been seriously disturbed on the account of the Internet and multimedia. The future will show how books and the experience of reading will change through the contact with the new media and the entire context of information and knowledge-based societies.

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<sup>25</sup> It is because of the universality of knowledge and human cognition, the knowledge character of openness and closeness.

<sup>26</sup> For example, the special intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence (Cf. UNESCO, 2005:63).

# The Idea of Man

Mark Kalinin (Fort Kent, Maine)

If we look towards the origin of man, surely there we will find his essence. And with this essence broken from its hiddenness, the “point” of man’s existence, the reason and logic of his being will surely manifest itself. In the light of that manifestation, we will see how man can begin to gain an understanding of who, how, and why he is.

## Significance - the essence of humankind

The evolutionary appearance of man in pre-history did not proceed as a simple and direct development from a single ape-like ancestor. Nor did his development occur in only one particularly hospitable place that could be recognized as his original cradle. Rather, the record of early man shows a complex lineage that is diverse and diffuse in both time and space. And yet, from estimates we can be fairly certain that man as man began to walk the earth approximately three million years ago across a vast territory of the present African, European, and Asian continents.

“As man”... This redundant qualifier added above could better be phrased as a question. What is the essential quality that defines the presence of “man” among his pre-hominid and hominid ancestors? By what measure of judgment do the archeologists and anthropologists in their search for original man decide that among the bones at one site of excavation there has been found evidence of man, while at another it can be concluded that man was not there? This question is critical. The answer to this question will frame the idea of man by recognizing that original and essential element without which and before which man could not be present.

In this most simple and objective and original sense, what constitutes the “idea of man” is first and foremost his upright posture - “uprightness”. The discovery of man’s oldest presence on earth to date, “Lucy”, finds only bones that verify an upright posture. And so, with near awe and reverence, she is called “man”. Later archeological sites have since found all sorts of recognizable and familiar traces that verify man’s distinctive presence -

tools, artifacts, burial sites, primitive structures, and art. But these later refinements should not be confused with essence and the very first appearance of man recognized “as man” is by merely the physical characteristic of holding himself upright. This uprightness, possessed as the distinguishing essence of the first man is nothing less than the essence and origin of man; that without which man “as man” is impossible to conceive.

The significance of this cannot be overestimated. This quality of man is essential not only because it is possessed by the first man, but precisely because it is unalterable and inescapable to any conceivable man of any time or place. It has nothing to do with what man does, nor with anything that he could possibly make, think, acquire or destroy. Rather, this quality is identical with man. It pertains precisely to what man *is*.

Essential ideas, ideas of “being”, are at once the poorest and richest of ideas. On the one hand, in terms of logic and definition, they contain nothing but what is necessary and inherent to a thing, excluding the rich and confusing array of qualities and variations that find themselves in the world. To say in the present case that “uprightness” is the *essential* and sufficient quality of man is weak and untenable. Ideas formed purely on essence (those which identify what is necessary and inherent in a thing for it to be) are indeed the richest of ideas but in terms of their significance or what they “point to”. To have an idea of a table, for example, is essential; it contains only what is necessary to every table, not only the opportunity of understanding what a table *is* but beyond that, the inherent significance of a table, what it “means” or “points to”. While the essence of a table might be described in a few simple words (perhaps as a “flat, raised surface”), many volumes could be written and works of art performed about the “meaning” that such an idea has for the world and life of man, for his eating, working, meeting, reading, writing and playing. The essence of a table points to man as he is in all these activities and thus the significance that flows from this essence is profound and extensive. If it is so with tables, mere things in the world that “point to” man, how much greater a treasure of significance must inhere to the idea of “uprightness” - the very essence of man himself. With uprightness we recognize what man is but from this we may proceed to his significance.

Man’s evolution toward upright posture draws him in a vertical direc-

tion that is unique in the animal kingdom. While vertical space is explored and mastered by a multitude of species, man is the only one for whom verticality itself is a necessity. Whatever evolutionary, bio-mechanical advantages were afforded man by standing erect, the effective freeing of the hands from locomotion for example, verticality soon came to determine man's development in a way that superseded the forces of evolution and biological determinism. Man "as man", the upright animal, whether by chance or by design is not important, broke free of the determinism of the natural world. Suddenly on the earth (if three million years can be sudden) there is an animal that, rather than adapting its biological self to its environment by a torturous process of generational selection, adapts the environment to its needs. Suddenly, there is a creature for which the central determinant of evolutionary selection in animals, survival, is not the primary necessity. For this free creature, the primary necessity, first even before biological survival, is "to stand". Uprightness is the first and original "value". For man, to remain in orientation to the vertical is more necessary than to remain alive. Verticality, uprightness is his essence, his very being and to lose that orientation is to cease to exist "as man". This "counter-evolutionary" logic is further proven by the fact that with time and history, countless men will kill, die and sacrifice their lives for the original value of uprightness and for the ideas that seem to sustain it.

Whatever the evolutionary path that brought man to assume uprightness, standing upright, man finds himself determined by a different logic than the biological one that bore him and "raised" him. For man, biological necessity, while inescapable to sustain his life and remaining the first of "urges", is superseded by the need to *be*. Biological determinism is transformed into ontological determination: upright man is no longer a creature entirely determined by biological and environmental necessity. Man is indeed determined, but determined toward being. He is determined to be. For man, it is first necessary to be according to the significance and value of his innate essence, uprightness. So closely and dearly did even the earliest people hold the value of Being that they likely believed that their own being could not end with this life. The ritual burial sites that are found where early man is found bear testimony to this belief. Thus man moved from evolution

to history.

Free from the strict determinism of biological and evolutionary logic, man is free for the logic of being. To understand this logic, we return to the question of the significance of uprightness for the being of man. What does uprightness signify? To what does man, necessarily, “point”? Man “points up”. The essence of man is to be drawn vertically as radiating from the center of the earth to the realm of ideas and to heaven. It is a manifestation of Being whose very physical being is constituted by pointing vertically upwards. Simply and solely by standing upright, his essence *is* significance and what he signifies is “on high”.

Before there were tools, before there was art or language, the human species’ distinctive essence was likely cast in a vertical dimension as a pointing, a reference, a signifying, as an IDEA. Standing upright, man is identical with the primordial idea... the idea of the supreme, the highest, the ideal Being, the idea of Being itself. Man points to God. Simply put, man *is* the idea of God. The idea of God points to the idea of man. Which came first is trivial in this light because in either case there is an inherent and thus necessary relationship between the ideal Being and the mortal one. God needs man (to be) and man needs God (to be). The only thing of importance, of ultimate importance, is that the alignment of man and God in the vertical dimension is necessary and is necessarily vertical, oriented by gravity from the depth to the height. This relationship in this specifically vertical direction is the condition for the possibility of Being itself, necessary for any thing to be, for the world itself to be. Michelangelo gave near perfect expression to this mutual pointing, but in which God indeed points with more force and purpose; God needs man more than man thinks he needs God and in this depiction man correctly portrayed as only “half awake”. He points but only with half his heart and languid strength.

The idea of God is the first and essential idea of man. God is that ideal to which man, in his essence and in his being, from his first day on earth, simply as standing upright, points. As such, it is an idea that is so much a part of his core, his very being, his soul, that he cannot think it or speak it. He can only believe it. Man thinks the ideas of things that exist in terms of his horizontal space. He is the author of those ideas. He calls them down and articulates them with ease. He names, makes, destroys and remakes tables,

chairs, nations, hammers, houses, automobiles, codes of law and works of art. But thinking the idea of Being itself is nearly impossible for him since this idea is inseparable from man himself. Man IS this idea. Man's essence as standing upright is precisely this significance. And so, man lives his uprightness and his apprehension of the meaning and significance of the vertical dimension in the only way that he can - in the mode of belief - thanking, meditating, praying, performing devotion and making sacrifice. He lives it in mute recognition of the value of uprightness that is contained in a moral creed, in a mantra of wisdom or in the life-history of a truly upright man and in the practice of that creed, the repetition of that mantra and the emulation of that man. The beliefs, values, practices and histories of what we call religion are inseparable from man, the sign of his being as the idea of God.

### **The priority of essence to history**

*The essence of man is significance* and far from being an abstract "philosophical" formulation this is the simplest and most concrete of ideas. Man embodies significance, man is significance simply by drawing a line with his body from the center of the earth vertically upwards. In this way, by nature and by physical bearing, man signifies - he points. The first original and fundamental pointing is the vertical one that man does naturally, without thinking, without speaking, without conscious awareness. Then, flowing from this primordial treasure of Being, the significance of every human act, every thought, idea, plan and project, is ultimately measured vertically, according to the purpose of signifying and touching and knowing more adequately that to which man, in his nature and his being, points. Pointing vertically, to the ideal, to the realm of ideas and ultimately to the idea of Being itself, is nothing less than the essential purpose and fundamental value of all human endeavor, thought, and action.

But this characterization is the ideal of man. It speaks of the way man is "meant" to be. This is the man of Eden who knows perfectly what his essence, his place, and purpose, is. But man is not ideal and Eden is "no longer" his home. He is mortal, fallen. He is vulnerable. He is weak of body and weak of will and it takes time - hours, months, centuries, millennia, for him to accomplish things of value. He is distracted and confused. He stumbles and fails and is prone to all sorts of illness of body and mind. He dies.

But in no way do our repeated, lasting and constant failures devalue our essence or disqualify the meaning of our being. Just as constant as our failure is the abiding possibility of our being as we are truly “meant” to be. “Meant to be” by the God to whom we point, that points to us. The essence and purpose of man, to point on high, “to God”, is prior to his failure. It is temporally prior as possessed of the first man and it is logically prior as the most original and essential quality possessed of any conceivable man.

The biblical authors ingeniously expressed this priority by depicting man’s beginning as originally and perfectly in alignment with divine Being. From this original, “right” relationship with Being, they understood that the being of things would flow naturally to make a world of goodness and plenty, a garden. Understanding his essence and true purpose, man would not be confused and muddled and the world would be set easily and comfortably in order according to his good will and the clear strength of his mind. Depicting this relationship and this world as original but “lost” is a way of expressing both the priority of that relationship as it was “in the beginning” and at the same time its abiding priority as a possibility that is present but “lost” at each moment and that projects itself with hope toward a heavenly future. The mythical account, with sensitivity and insight, carefully and truly conceives man’s original, evolutionary situation in its essence, when man, as man, standing and pointing “up”, first appeared on the earth.

So, Eden is nowhere to be found in the archeological record. It was not a place on earth but rather it was and IS a possibility for being. It is necessarily prior to history because even the first page of the history of failure cannot be written without the possibility of success. Man’s living according to his nature, in truth and uprightness, in harmony with Being, with himself, others and the world, is a possibility that is not to be found at any time or place in history. Rather, the presence of this possibility and its constant “loss” precisely *is* history.

We have identified man’s “origin” with the physio-ontological “pointing” that is constituted by upright posture. Now we seek the significance of this uprightness as it shows itself in history, in the record, laid down in stone, paint, ink, thread, song, wood, silicon and a thousand other means, of his being on earth.

## The significance of pointing

In the first pages of our historical record is told a truly amazing story, the story of the first “thing” and certainly one of the first “ideas”: the hand-ax. This simplest of tools, a crudely sharpened triangular-shaped rock, was ubiquitous among widely disparate populations of early man. Like a pre-historic version of the modern “hand-held device”, it seems to have been something that every early man just had to have. But the really amazing thing about this object was the duration of its “popularity”.

The psychologist is well acquainted with the fact that all things fashioned by man are, on some level and in some way, a “self-portrait”. Man himself is “reflected” in all things of significance and especially in those things that he actively and purposefully “makes”. This is simply to say that all things that man points to, insofar as they have significance, also point to him. How in this crude, flaked and pointed triangle of rock can we find a portrait of its maker? With this question, the methodology that we confess to have followed only intuitively up to now, becomes clear. Our question to this first of human ideas and implements must be the same as the question just asked about man himself: What is its essence (i.e., being)? And proceeding from that essence: What is its significance (does it point to)?

As is the case with man himself, whose essence, uprightness, is so simple and obvious that its significance has been largely overlooked over nearly three thousand years of systematic thought, so it is also with the simplicity of man’s first tool. Beyond the basics of how the tool was made and used, what can be said of any significance about an implement as simple and crude as this? And so, as with man himself, we quickly pass over the essence that is so apparent (that is to say, “hidden”) and move on to the more advanced works of early man - tools, art and artifacts that seem more worthy of attention. And even regarding these, our “scientific” interest is largely occupied with the details of “how” - how they were made and how they were used. Study in this vein will normally conclude with only a few speculative (i.e. seemingly “unverifiable”) comments about the far more significant and fascinating question of why, as if there is no verity to be found in the essence of a thing.

In its essence, the hand-ax is a rock that has been shaped by flaking off



equal amounts from both sides to make a sharpened edge. The fact that it needs to be held in the hand requires that it be made in a more or less triangular shape with most of its mass at a flattened or rounded top. However, beyond the practical, everyday uses of such a tool, it came to possess significance to early man that proceeded from its essence, its idea, as a massive “point”. In this essential respect, we find profound and extensive significance for the life of early man as well as for historical and modern man. In this significance we discover the sense in which this simple, original tool is indeed a self-portrait of its maker.

The triangular design of the hand-ax, with its greater mass at the top and pointed bottom, naturally imparted a certain direction to its use. As it seems to have been made to fit in the full center of the human hand, it’s difficult to imagine that it could be used effectively in any but a vertical, downward motion. Grasping it, the hand became empowered with a “point” that could be directed with force against objects, transforming their hard, resistant surfaces according to man’s will - breaking bones for precious marrow, cracking nuts for tender meats, shaping wood, not to mention the chiseling of other stones to make more hand-axes. We are accustomed to reckoning the pace of the development of ideas in terms of decades and centuries. The modern world is 100 years old; systematic thought in the west began in Greece less than 3000 years ago; and 5000 years is the span of written history. And the entire record of civilized human life for which there is evidence available is easily contained within a period of 20,000 years. Thus it is difficult to even conceive of the length of time that it took man to move from the utilitarian “thing” to the higher “idea” of the hand-ax. Man used only this one pointed tool for hundreds of thousands of years with very minimal alteration or innovation before he began to grasp with his mind the essence, the idea of the massive “point” which he had been grasping in his hand all along.

After hundreds of millennia of “practice” with this pointed rock, man suddenly awoke to the idea of what had occupied him for so many ages. Transcending the utilitarian, he suddenly “knew what he was doing” in fashioning and using the hand-ax. Simply, a critical moment in human development occurred: man realized the power and the possibilities of “pointing”. Awakening to the essence of the tool as a “point”, man quickly discovered

that pointing in and of itself was powerful. He had been pointing vertically downward with the hand-ax; now he began to find new direction and purpose for his pointing. He fashioned his age-old tool with new possibilities for leverage and for directing its point more effectively and forcefully in a horizontal plane rather than a vertical one. Soon, the horizontal direction of the point predominated first in the form of the spear and then in the arrow. With these developments man became a matchless hunter and warrior. And indeed the perfection of directing pointed objects, lately made of metal, toward horizontal targets continues to modern times.

But this is only to speak of points in stone, wood and metal and the tools and weapons that they made possible. And yet man's apprehension of the idea of "pointing" was far more profound and extensive than this. Man's awakening to this idea was an awakening to his very essence as "one who points", as "one who signifies". The hand-ax is a self-portrait of man, the being whose essence is pointing, whose essence is significance. In the point of the hand-ax, man could see himself reflected and begin to understand the power that he held not only in his hand but in his very nature and being - the power to point.

It was indeed a long time in coming, but with this first and essential idea held in a nascent "mind", pointing became for man as natural as breathing and man was set on a course to become the rational animal and lord of the earth. Just as his own body, standing upright, forged a primordial relationship with Being in the vertical dimension, so too did man have to look no further than his own body for the ultimate and perfect "tool" with which to point horizontally to things in the world - his arm, hand and index-finger. By pointing with his finger, man forged a relationship of being with "things" that took on being and derived their significance by virtue of this pointing. The act of pointing is nothing less than the pre-lingual dawn of consciousness, the incipience of the world itself.

We speak here of pointing as forging the being of things. But what, in the mere act of pointing to a thing, is "forged"? Certainly the material constitution of a thing is not changed merely by man's cognizance of it. The mere act of pointing might seem to be of no consequence whatsoever. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. What is forged by the act of point-

ing is the *idea* of the thing - a link, a connection a reference to its essence, its being. In that sense, man imparts being to things by pointing to them in two dimensions, horizontally with his finger (later with his voice and other means) that points to the particular thing before him and vertically to the idea that constitutes the essence of the thing: its being. The vertical dimension of pointing is implicit in all horizontal pointing because it is by virtue of the original alignment of man with Being, constituted by his upright posture, that he is able to “channel” being to things. He does this by thinking their idea, by “understanding”. Standing upright, man understands (stands under) ideas of being. Only in this two dimensional pointing do stones become stones and trees become trees. While the tree must have seen the light of many days to have grown tall and strong as it appears before man, it’s not until man points to it, understands (stands under) the idea of it, that it sees the light of Being.

The question of whether “things exist” prior to man is trivial in light of the issue of ultimate importance - the necessary relationship between man and things and that this relationship-of-being is constituted by a two dimensional pointing, the horizontal explicitly and the vertical implicitly. There is no significance that is not derived from pointing. Pointing indeed “matters” to all things. It forges the very essence of things by “standing under” their ideas. The relationship-of-being that is forged by the simple act of pointing is a necessary and essential relationship. Things need man as man needs God to be. And man needs things as God needs man to be. It is the essence of man, standing upright, to point vertically in reverence to Being. In that sense, upright posture is the original and abiding attitude of prayer. In pointing horizontally, with reference and understanding, this prayer is answered in the form of a world that is rich in things and ideas.



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## V. BOOK REVIEW

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**Tom Rockmore's *Marx After Marxism:  
The Philosophy of Karl Marx*, Oxford:  
Basil Blackwell, 2002, pp. 224 , \$35.95**

Maria Dimitrova (University of Sofia)

The intention of this book is clearly expressed in its title—to rediscover Marx's philosophy after the end of politics that has been using it as an ideological cliché during an entire century. After the “wind of change” and whirlpool of events that led to the fall of the Berlin wall, it can be seen that the end of history has not come yet. Today, we are asking ourselves whether a new epoch is emerging or the old capitalism is transforming itself into a financial/silicon mode.

Tom Rockmore himself is convinced that Marx's philosophy “will be worth reading as long as capitalism lasts.”<sup>1</sup> He ironically observes that the statement that Marx's theory is dead is “as accurate as the idea that ideology is at end.”<sup>2</sup>

Rockmore's study belongs resolutely to the field of the history of philosophy. Marx's texts are the object of a research wherein both description and interpretation are pursued. As Rockmore emphasizes, the description itself is impossible “without picking up what is significant in the texts, hence without interpreting them”<sup>3</sup>. Unlike the Marxists “who claim to speak in Marx's name, we should enable his texts to speak for him.”<sup>4</sup> Rockmore's message is that we need to regard Marx's philosophical insights not only as

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<sup>1</sup> Tom Rockmore. *Marx after Marxism. The Philosophy of Karl Marx*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002, p. xi

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.x

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.xiv

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.xiv

a completed result and theory *sui generis* but in “the way they emerged in the debates of his own time.”<sup>5</sup> This means that Marx should not be opposed to Hegel, but rather viewed within the larger Hegelian framework.

Such an approach is welcomed by Eastern European readers. Why? Because during the times of the old regimes, the official publications on Marx were supposed to follow the Party directives. However, in the universities, in particular after 1968, a clandestine movement of intellectuals opposed to power began to form. For them the issue of Hegel’s influence on Marx and, especially, the issue of the dialectical method were matters to be discussed with scholarly precision and scrupulousness. Unofficially and in a dissident mode, an enormous amount of work was done to show the narrow-mindedness of those interpretations which Rockmore calls “Marxist” and to discover the authentic Marx. It was known that Marx is among those giants of human thought to whom we constantly go back in order to synchronize our compass. Today as the compass hand has turned 180°, the territory of the former Soviet block, regrettably, is experiencing exactly what Rockmore has noticed in the context of the Western democracies: “Almost everyone who writes on Marx feels obliged to say something about Hegel. But what is said is often minimal, sometimes very minimal ... by writers who are themselves insufficiently informed, or again who fail to reflect on ... the singular importance of Hegel.”<sup>6</sup> However, in this book Hegelian logic is highlighted less than the relevance of the Hegelian themes which attracted Marx most of all and focused the attention of his whole life and work. “If ... Marx is centrally concerned with very nearly the same set of issues as Hegel in *Philosophy of Right* ..., then Marx’s own specific contribution can be grasped, the way he differs from, modifies, and surpasses Hegel.”<sup>7</sup>

Rockmore’s book in fact recovers, besides Marx’s own life trail, the development of his ideas from his early works to his *opus magnum*, *Das Kapital*. The “rediscovery” operation is carried out within the intellectual horizon of Marx’s predecessors, contemporaries, and followers. Rockmore possesses an incredible aptitude to expose comprehensively and simply, but

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.xvi

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.xv

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.30

with no profanation, the most complicated relations and perspectives This can be achieved only by a profound connoisseur of the subject. His conclusion at the end of the study is that “as a philosopher Marx remains generally within the Hegelian orbit.”<sup>8</sup> In such a way Rockmore overturns the interpretations of Marxists\_who, in their majority, “consider Hegel as merely leading up to Marx.”<sup>9</sup> For Rockmore, the truth is just the opposite: “despite Marx’s criticism of Hegel, Marx’s own theories are broadly Hegelian.”<sup>10</sup>

The final judgment of the book states that “Marx is our greatest theoretician of modern industrial society”<sup>11</sup>. It would be very difficult not to agree with this assessment. Our problem today is that society is not modern and industrial anymore but post-modern and post-industrial.

As mentioned in the book, Heidegger talks of the need to dialogue with a great thinker on the thinker’s own level. Evidently from our perspective, a dialogue with Marx is timely and necessary. Rockmore’s book clears the way for such a dialogue.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.195

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.162

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.183

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.183





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## **VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS**

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### **Identity, between the Unspeakable and the Dreadful (an international interdisciplinary conference held on October 1-16 at Université de Picardie-Jules-Verne, FRANCE)**

#### **Argument**

Is it possible to name to "identity" without running the risk of reifying it? And, where it has been stated in words, does it not evoke forces and tensions behind one of the most explosive of human phenomena? Whether it may be conveyed in words or not, identity is one of the most extensively debated words in our contemporary world. The successive upheavals which this phenomenon has undergone on a global scale, due to technological, economic and other forms of mutation and to the ensuing loss of habitual points of reference (whether political, sociological or geographical) has brought into question the relevance and validity of our bearings more generally. This state of affairs obliges each of us to face the novelty of his or her destiny and the necessity of choosing an orientation in light of this novel situation. The case of Europe is particularly significant, if it is not exemplary. The obsolescence of past solutions, and anxiety in face of an unpredictable future, confer a new significance on the most fundamental existential questions, which come to expression under the heading of "identity". The query takes on a collective scope. The apparent capacity of a single term to join together different significations unavoidably raises the question concerning the multiplicity of its dimensions (political, cultural, sexual, economic, political, geographic, etc.) which at times may also reveal themselves, often tacitly, to be not only ambiguous but even contradictory. In neutralizing its emotional charge, one may expect that a debate that unites different human and social sciences will lead to dialogue concerning the different "dimensions" of identity. What is the "sociological" component of singular identities? Is there such a thing as collective identity? What is the role of history and of memory in the articulation of identity? In

what manner might the places one frequents contribute to its definition? How do religious beliefs, a language practised, etc. also play a role? And, if at all possible, how might one combine these different aspects as a whole? The encounter of different disciplines intends to encourage the exposition of different approaches, conceptions and - if possible - definitions. Is identity simple or multiple? Innate or acquired? Is it situated in what is permanent or in what changes? Does it refer to a singular or a collective reality? Otherwise stated, such encounters should permit us to confirm, reformulate or invalidate, in any case to broaden the estimation which, in his own time, Thomas Mann voiced when he situated identity between the unspeakable and the dreadful.

### **Schedule**

The program of our meetings, organized at the Université de Picardie-Jules Verne, extended over a period of two days, the 15th and 16th of October 2008. The meetings revolved around three topics: The first concerns epistemology. It proposes to reflect on the notion of identity itself as well as on the viewpoints of the various disciplines or approaches to this notion. The second concerns identity as a problem. Here the papers related identity to other themes: identity and politics, aesthetics, democracy, religion, etc. The third provided the possibility to present talks on particular cases or situations. The fourth half-day was reserved for speakers whose themes do not fit into the topics of the first three. The time allotted to the talks was a maximum of 20 minutes.

### **Scientific committee**

Prof. Jeffrey Andrew Barash, Prof. Bertrand Masquelier, Prof. Olivier Lazzarotti, Prof. Thierry Roche, Équipe "HABITER-PIPS", University of Picardie-Jules-Verne

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**Conference Secretary:**

Ms. Françoise Potelle

**International Participation:**

Among the international participants two faculty members from the Sofia University took part in the conference — Assoc. Prof. Maria Dimitrova and Assoc. Prof. Alexander Gungov.

# **An ongoing seminar on Production and Causality, Productivity and Reproduction: Conceptual Constructions and their Repercussions in the Contemporary World (Institute of Philosophical Sciences, The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)**

## ANNOTATION

### **George Angelov:**

The seminar's task is to outline and to submit to discussion some of the basic conceptualizations of the production and the productivity (the critical, the dialectical, the hermeneutic ones, these of critical rationalism, postpositivism, etc.); to juxtapose their advantages and shortcomings; to analyze the extent of their application to some topical problems of science and the contemporary societies. As well as to reply to some of the following questions:

- To whom does productivity belong – to nature, to the subject, to being, to humans, to the imagination, to the community, to technique, to simulation, to the spirit?
- What is the specific categorization of the types of production (Herstellen) – creation, origin (genesis), creativity (poiesis), making (techne), production (Herstellung, Gestell), constitution (establishing of the community or the state), discovery (foundation, innovation in science, philosophy), etc.?
- What characterizes the relationship between the various ways of being, fixed up in the transitions at the becoming and the annihilation – for instance between Ready-to-hand (Zuhandeheit) and Present-at-hand (Vorhandeheit), between Dasein and Being-with (Mitsein), between the Dasein, the living creatures, fenced in their environment and the most-existing of the existing entities (God).
- What is the status of the new forms of knowledge (cognition) and

education, influenced by the new means of visualization and conveying of information? Is there a new capability, which is to be responsible for a presumable new form of constitution and synthesis?

### **Assen Dimitrov:**

Provisional exposition of some of the ontological aspects of production:

- What is the difference between physical causality and production?

There is no production in the physical universe. Production however comes forward as a result of the evolution of the physical universe. Why and how did this happen?

1. Why has it been necessary to nature to start producing at all?
2. How could nature start producing in the conditions of a deterministic physical causality?

3. What is the ontological effect of a process of production? Unlike the effect of a standard physical causal process? Is there a difference at all? What is it?

4. In what way and does the nature of the single entity, as well as that of the universe as a whole, change in the presence of the ontological fact of production?

- What is the ontological nature of production?

1. Production as *an ontological mechanism of acquiring of new capabilities, new possibilities*, by being.

2. Production as a process, most generally speaking – of learning.

Nature, by itself, is unable to produce. In order to start producing, it has to acquire new capabilities. Its new, synthetic, constructive capabilities are neither a fruit of an ‘intelligent design’, nor of an emergent evolution – two approaches, which presuppose more than they can explain themselves. Nature acquires its productive capacity through “learning”. The way of “learning”, as a possible solution to the origin of life, to the intelligence, to the evolution problem, to the ontological nature of production in general.

- The problem about the production of knowledge.

While production is a process of learning, the opposite is also true. Learning, the acquisition of knowledge is not some immediate intuitive, naturalistic process. It is a process of production. In particular, it will be emphasized on the application of *cognitive tools*, as long as tools are something totally escaping out of the scope of the classical cognitive subject-object relation, where they are totally absent as a member enjoying full epistemological rights.

## Overview

of Dr. George Angelov's presentation

Uncovering of Understanding vs. Faculty of Imagination:  
Figures and Limits of Productivity  
November 27, 2008

The presentation by George Angelov was focused on the nature of productivity. Built up on the opposition between Kant's critical analytics of the faculty of imagination and the existential-hermeneutic construction of the uncovering of understanding (enowning of being), it claims that productivity is not specified through a requirement for a result. This, unexpected at first glance, statement is based on the phenomenological distinction between meaning and expression and the fulfillment (*Erfüllung*) of the intention as a noema, that is, as an intentional correlate.

The phenomenal (existential) confirmation of the presented treatment entails the conclusion that productivity does not consist in the production (of artefacts), but on the contrary—the produced appears only in the horizon of the productivity of the understanding. This means that the productivity above all bears the character of an uncovering of the understanding. This uncovering may have a logos-definition (scheme) or be hidden in the logos as a Secret, i.e. as a function of the intent.

Thus, it ought to be generalized that productivity can be related to a

result, but in a proper sense it has the sign-trace as its correlate. As long as productivity is, on balance, a function of the intent (which means it doesn't have a logos-character, but only a logos-expression), it is manifested either *with a view to an artefact* (scheme), or regardless of any result it acquires the profile of an enowning of the corridors of understanding.

Assen Dimitrov

## Overview

of Associate Professor Dr. Maria Dimitrova

Heidegger and Levinas about the status of the produced  
December 11, 2008

Maria Dimitrova has presented a unordinary interpretation on the subject of the production and the produced. The emphasis was placed on the way of the comprehension of the produced—not as an autonomous and a completed entity in itself, but as a temporal projection of the horizon of meanings. Since in the final and the proper sense of the word, according to Dimitrova, the production should be understood as a constitution (production) of meanings, and the produced in the genuine sense is primarily the proper character (the identity), the other (person), the time and the language.

The interpretation of the nature of the production and the produced through the problem of the otherness is based on the understanding that the other (person) is not represented in advance, existing in itself (An sich) monadic entity of sense. On the contrary, the other is a definition of the proper character; besides, as its innermost moment: the advent of the other is the event (enowning), which delineates the horizon and the contours of the proper character, the identity, and the other person.

In her presentation, Maria Dimitrova has traced out the ways of interpretation of the produced by Hegel and Heidegger—through reducing of the otherness to the proper character at the self-unfolding of the spirit or the being's un-

covering, opposing them to Levinas' construction of the irreducible otherness. The understanding of the nature of the otherness outlines the possibility for the appearance of the meaning and the responsibility beyond the being. The self-revealing of the transcendence (the Person and the Word) and of the meaning in itself occurs in the horizon of the proper character. In such a way, it for the first time shapes this proper character, forms the personal identity, as well as the topology of the proper character and the otherness.

George Angelov

## Overview

of the presentation on Production: an Ontological Outline  
by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Assen I. Dimitrov

January 15, 2009

### *Abstract:*

What is the difference between physical causality and production?

Between a subject and an object?

Why do we have desires and needs (while the objects don't)?

Why do we have problems?

Why do we always find a way and means of their solution?

Why do the entities (as we ourselves) have meaning and make sense to us (while nothing has meaning and makes sense to the objects)?

*These are the questions.*

### *Here are the answers:*

The productive capabilities are explicated;

A special subjective (inherent especially in the subject) capability for production doesn't exist;

It is a matter of natural causal capabilities, which are expressed in a complex hierarchical ontological context.



*Plan of the exposition:*

1. Nature doesn't produce.
2. Which are the productive capabilities?
3. A special subjective (inherent especially in the subject) capability for production doesn't exist;
4. It is a matter of natural causal capabilities, which are however expressed in a complex hierarchical ontological context.

*Epilogue*

## Master's and Doctoral Studies in Philosophy Taught in English at Sofia University

Sofia University was founded in 1888 following the best patterns of European higher education. Sofia is the capital city of the Republic of Bulgaria. Bulgaria is a Member of the European Union (EU).

### MASTER'S PROGRAM IN PHILOSOPHY TAUGHT IN ENGLISH

The MA Program in Philosophy taught in English provides instruction in all major areas of Western Philosophy; besides, the master's thesis can be written on a topic from Eastern Philosophy as well—an expert in this field will be appointed as the supervisor. This program secures guidelines by faculty and leaves enough room for student's own preferences. The degree is recognized worldwide including the EU/EEA and Switzerland, the US, Canada, Russia, Turkey, China, Indian Sub-Continent, Latin America, and the Middle East.

**Courses offered:** Philosophical Anthropology, Ethics, Axiology, Philosophical Method, Truth and Meaning, Philosophy of Intercultural Relations, Social Philosophy, Continental Philosophy, Philosophy for Children, Philosophy of Culture, Logic in the Continental Tradition, Theories of Truth, Existential Dialectics, Philosophy of the Subjective Action, Phenomenology, Renaissance Philosophy

**Faculty Members:** All faculty teaching at the program are approved by the Bulgarian State Highest Assessment Commission. They feature successful teaching experience in this country and abroad and are well published in Bulgarian and English.

**Duration of Studies:** two semesters of course attendance plus a third semester for writing the master's thesis.

**Admission Requirements:** Bachelor's degree in any field of humanities, social science, science, or professional disciplines. No tests or application fee are required (for citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland applying for a state scholarship 10.<sup>15</sup> € fee is charged and an interview is held). No previous degree in philosophy is required.

**Tuition fee:**

- 1) citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland – 612 € per school year
- 2) international students - 3, 850 € per school year

**Financial aid:**

A) *The citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland* are eligible for state scholarships carrying 70% tuition waiver plus a monthly stipend beginning from the second semester.

B) The Fulbright Graduate Grants are offered to *American citizens* as a form of a very competitive financial aid; for more information see [www.fulbright.bg](http://www.fulbright.bg). Furthermore, the American applicants are eligible for Federal Loans; please check for more details at the Education Department web site, <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/DirectLoan/index.html>; at Sallie Mae, <http://www.salliemae.com/>, and at Student Loan Network, <http://www.privatestudentloans.com> and <https://www.discoverstudentloans.com>. It is possible to use some other sources of government financial assistance by the American citizens (please contact the Program Director for details).

C) Financial aid to *Canadian nationals* is provided in the form of Government Student Loans by the Province where they permanently reside.

D) *The Western Balkans citizens* are welcome to apply for Erasmus Mundus/BASELEUS Project scholarship carrying full tuition waiver and monthly stipend, <http://www.basileus.ugent.be/index.asp?p=111&a=111>.

E) *Students from Turkey* can receive financial aid within the Erasmus Student Exchange Program.

F) Financial aid for *Chinese students* is available within the bilateral Chinese-Bulgarian Cultural Agreement. Please contact the Chinese Ministry of Education for more information.

H) *Students from Russia* (Financial aid for *Russian students* is available within the bilateral Russian-Bulgarian Cultural Agreement. Please contact the Russian Ministry of Education for more information), *Ukraine, Belarus, and the other CIS countries, Indian Sub-Continent, Latin America, and the Middle East* receive financial aid in the form of inexpensive dormitory accommodation (about 40 € per month including most of the utilities)

plus a discount on public transportation and at the University cafeterias. The same type of financial aid is available for *the citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland, American citizens, Canadian nationals, the Western Balkans citizens, students from Turkey, and Chinese students.*

**Application deadline:** June 30, to start in October; January 31, to start in March.

**Student Visa Matters:** The Sofia University in cooperation with the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science provides the necessary documents for student visa application to all **eligible** candidates outside the *EU/EEA and Switzerland.*

**Cultural Life and Recreation:** Being the capital of Bulgaria, Sofia features a rich cultural life. In most of the cinemas, English language films can be seen. There are a number of concert halls, dozens of art galleries, and many national and international cultural centers. Sofia's streets are populated by cozy cafés and high quality inexpensive restaurants offering Bulgarian, European, and international cuisine. Sofia is a favorable place for summer and winter sports including skiing in the nearby mountain of Vitosha. More about Sofia and can be found at <http://www.sofia-life.com/culture/culture.php>. You can follow Sofia and Bulgarian news at <http://www.novinite.com/lastx.php>.

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## DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN PHILOSOPHY TAUGHT IN ENGLISH

The Ph.D. Program in Philosophy taught in English, besides studies in residence, offers an opportunity for extramural studies (extramural studies is a Bulgarian version of distance learning). This Program provides instruction in all major areas of Western Philosophy; besides, the doctoral dissertation can be written on a topic from Eastern Philosophy as well—an expert in this field will be appointed as the supervisor. This program secures guidelines by faculty and leaves enough room for student's own preferences. The degree is recognized worldwide including the EU/EEA and Switzerland, the US, Canada, Russia, Turkey, China, Indian Sub-Continent, Latin America, and the Middle East.

**Courses offered:** Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, Philosophical Anthropology, Applied Ethics, Epistemology, Philosophy of Science, Social Philosophy, Philosophy of Intercultural Relations, Philosophical Method, Continental Philosophy, Philosophy for Children, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Culture,

**Eligibility Requirement:** Master's degree in any field. No previous degree in philosophy is needed.

**Checklist:** CV, two letters of recommendation, standardized tests scores are NOT required. No application fee (for citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland a 20.<sup>30</sup> € fee is charged and an entrance exam is held).

### Tuition fee:

1) citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland – in residence: 940 € per school year; extramural: 600 € per school year

2) international students - in residence: 6,400 € per school year; extramural: 2,600 € per school year

**Dissertation defense fee:** 1,400 €

**Duration of studies:** in residence – 3 years; extramural – 4 years

### Financial aid:

A) *The citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland* studying in residence are eligible for state scholarships carrying full tuition waiver and waiver of the dissertation defense fee plus a significant (for the Bulgarian standard) monthly stipend. For extramural studies only tuition waiver and the disserta-

tion defense fee waiver are available.

B) The Fulbright Graduate Grants are offered to *American citizens* as a form of a very competitive financial aid; for more information see [www.fulbright.bg](http://www.fulbright.bg). Furthermore, they are eligible for Federal Loans; please check for more details at the Education Department web site, <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/DirectLoan/index.html>; at Sallie Mae, <http://www.salliemae.com/>, and at Student Loan Network, <http://www.privatestudentloans.com> and <https://www.discoverstudentloans.com>. It is possible to use some other sources of government financial assistance by the American citizens (please contact the Program Director for details).

C) Financial aid to *Canadian nationals* is provided in the form of Government Student Loans by the Province where they permanently reside. This type of aid is usually unavailable for extramural studies.

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**Application deadline:** July 31, to start in October; January 31, to start in March. *The citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland please check with the*

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**Visiting Fulbright Professors:**

Prof. William McBride, University of Purdue, USA - Fall 1997, May 2000;  
Prof. Jeffrey Mirel, University of Michigan, USA - June-July 2002.

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