The Resilience of Bulgarian Nelsonianism

Dimiter Tsatsov (Institute for Philosophical Research, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

The Bulgarian scholars studying Leonard Nelson are few in number, but they are important for philosophy and culture. The main figures among them are Professor Tseko Torbov and Valentina Topuzova-Torbova, who have both exerted a very strong and heuristically important impact on the development of philosophical knowledge and especially on Kantian studies in Bulgaria. This was not only because they translated the major works of Kant into Bulgarian, but also because their scholarly efforts were ruled by the principles and logic of the philosophy of Leonard Nelson. The second period in the development of Kantian studies in Bulgaria was dominated by their works.

The first period began in the middle of the 19th century and spanned to 1925. The second period occurred between that year and the end of the 1970s and is connected with the appearance of Nelsonianism, personified by Prof. Tseko Torbov and Valentina Topuzova-Torbova as scholars and translators. The third period encompasses the development of Kantian studies since the 1980s and up to the beginning of the 21st century.

Characteristic for the first period was the gradual formation of a professional attitude to Kantian ideas and to their entry into the sphere of philosophy in Bulgaria. At that time no sustainable scheme of interpretation was formed, and between philosophers there were not even the rudiments of unity based on a connection with Kantian ideas or the modern interpretations of Kantianism. Most of the works devoted to Kant's philosophical system were fragmentary, episodic, and were usually written in connection with other philosophical systems or problems.

Up to the 1920s, the influence of Kantian ideas remained eclectic, fragmentary, and without clearly expressed principles of interpretation. In the period between the two world wars a completely new phase began, marked by consistency, the quality of a system, numerous publications

devoted to a single school but referring to various fields of philosophy, such as the theory of knowledge, ethics, law, politics, etc. All this was accomplished by Tseko Torbov.

He was born on April 15, 1899 in the town of Oryahovo. In 1920 he arrived in Berlin to study law. In Germany he established contact with Professor Leonard Nelson, who sent him some of his publications. Torbov translated two of them and thus laid the foundation for the series of books known as "Public Life". In this series the following books were published in Tseko Torbov's translation: Leonard Nelson's *Public Life* (1925) and *Ethical Realism* (1925); *Confucius* (1926); Victor Hugo's *Voltaire* (1926); and Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *The Grand Inquisitor* (1926). In later years Torbov worked in Gőttingen as an associate of prof. Leonard Nelson.

In 1956 the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences assigned Torbov the task of translating Kant's main works. As a result, the following titles came out for the first time in Bulgarian: *Critique of Pure Reason* (1967); *Critique of Practical Reason* (1974); *On Eternal Peace* (1977); and *Critique of Judgment* (1980). Under his editorship were published the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (1968), and *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1974), translated by V. Topusova-Torbova.

In 1970 Torbov was awarded the Herder Prize of Vienna University for his translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and in 1973 he was elected honorary member of the Kant-Gesellschaft. He was also winner of a number of other international and national awards and distinctions. He died on June 8, 1987.

Tseko Torbov was impressively consistent in following the traditions of the Fries-Nelson critical school. After 1925 and up to his last publication ("Das Grundgesetz des Rechts bei Kant, Fries und Nelson, in *Kant-Studien*, 65. Jahrgang. Sonderheft, Akten des 4. Internationale Kant-Kongresses. Meinz, 6-10.IV.1974), all his studies were devoted to problems connected with this school. He was the author of dozens of works, all based on the main principles of this school. The development of Nelsonian philosophy in Bulgaria is an excellent illustration that it is precisely in the philosophical "oddness" of the philosophers of small nations that the intellectual importance of these thinkers lies, for, owing to their specificity, they assimilate, preserve, and develop traditions and ideas that are not part of the

mainstream of general philosophical knowledge.

In his works Torbov proceeds from the standpoint that philosophy must always stem from practice, from life, and should never "get involved in fictions". That is why the fundamental scholarly activities of this Bulgarian Nelsonian thinker were aimed at practical philosophy. Torbov considered the basic problems of philosophy to be those of truth, virtue, justice, and religious faith. But he believed the study of these important topics could be fruitful only when a number of preliminary questions had been examined and clarified.

For Torbov practical philosophy deals with the commands of reason, with their place and role in human life. Ethics as a philosophical discipline must consist of synthetic a priori judgments, but, as we know, the system of ethics cannot begin with a dogmatic exposition of ethical principles, for these principles are not transparent or self-evident.

Consequently, if human reason is not capable of producing ethical synthetic a priori propositions out of pure concepts, then ethics cannot be a science. Torbov believed the fundamental point was that Kant had set the critique of practical reason before the system of ethics and thus defined the task of this critique: to discover the principles of ethics and to indicate deductively the conditions for the validity of these principles. According to Torbov, Kant did not proceed with enough logical precision when presenting the basic principle of duty and law and illustrating it with a "classical" example for this school: Kant passes from the notion of duty to the law of duty through a syllogism, whereas, according to the requirements of the critical method, this must be done by a regressive breaking down of our ethical judgments through abstraction. That is why Kant did not see the principle of law as constituting the contents of the critical imperative, and did not indicate judicial law as being the content of moral law. Hence in his doctrine of law he was obliged to use the familiar definition, whereby the principle of this doctrine is that the freedom of individuals is limited by the condition that they must accord their freedom with the freedom of all others on the basis of a common law.

But this formal definition of law fails to provide criteria for the requirements that daily social needs impose. What is necessary for

providing such criteria is knowledge about this law of freedom. Consequently, according to Torbov, one of Kant's basic errors is connected with his fundamental principle. Kant defined this principle only formally and did not succeed in giving content to it. This is how Torbov defines his attitude to Kant's procedure and outlines the general direction of his own theoretical search.

This is precisely what necessitates a more extensive explanation of the method of critical philosophy, a method that, according to Tseko Torbov, draws to the light of consciousness the immediate non-intuitional or a priori knowledge in order to use it as a foundation for our thought and activity. The essential point is that the critical school of Fries renews Platonism. All philosophizing is a remembering! This is likewise a guiding principle of critical philosophy as developed and elaborated by Kant, Fries, Apelt, and Nelson through the method of the critique of reason. The Socratic method is in fact nothing but the regressive method of abstraction that the critique of reason uses. Plato also used this method. That is precisely why the entire critical school Fries-Nelson-Torbov devotes such attention to Socrates. Torbov regards this method as a detailed elaboration of the Socratic method.

Ethics comprises the doctrine of virtues (pedagogy is the practical applied part of this science) and the doctrine of law (politics is the practical field of application of this doctrine). The moral law is a principle of the "doctrine on virtues" (ethics in a narrower sense), in other words, it is the doctrine about the ethical requirements regarding society. Here is where the philosophical foundations are developed and the aim of "pedagogy" is defined, thus providing systematic guidance for the upbringing of individuals. The applied field of law is politics as a systematic guidance for achieving a society ruled by law.

Particularly important for Torbov was the rule that he who neglects fulfilling his duty and lives only according to esthetic and cultural ideals has no right to existence. This proposition demonstrates the restrictive character of the moral principle or the fulfillment of duty, and it gives a rigorous scientific foundation for Kant's famous statement that, if justice perishes, the life of humankind in this world has no value. This argument of Torbov's indicates the place of morality in the social world. Good is not "external" to the world but is its constitutive principle. This is yet another theoretical

application of familiar Platonic formulations.

The deduction of the judicial law as the contents of the moral law is the culmination of ethical studies after Kant. This law states: Act justly or observe the equality of personal dignity! As a law of measurement it is capable, where there is a conflict of interests, to serve as a methodological guide for resolving the conflict. Equality in this case signifies that it is of no importance whose interests are at stake when measuring right in a conflict. Torbov's defense of equality expresses the demand of justice, which excludes preference based on affiliation; this does not imply that we must treat all people in formally the same manner, or that all interests are equally significant. Torbov is categorical on this point: "The factual interests are to be assessed according to their value and intensity, which may vary in different cases; justice consists in keeping a blind eye to the difference between interests, and, without asking whose they are, giving the advantage to the more intense and more valuable interest. At that we are obliged to observe not only the factual but also the true interests of people."

In thus deducing the contents of judicial law from moral law, Torbov brings to completion a very significant tendency in the development of practical philosophy, which had begun with Kant and Fries. This grounding of the moral law eliminates ethical skepticism. After this preliminary task, there followed the building of a philosophical doctrine of virtues and pedagogy, and of a doctrine on law and politics. The practical importance of ethics is grounded on the fact that ethics presents the norms of reasonable action and, thus, is actually based on will. Although ethics, the doctrine of virtues, and pedagogy do not reveal to us the specifics of concrete actions whereby social injustices may be overcome, they nevertheless play an important role for law and politics because "the need for political work is a practical necessity and, as such, can be deduced only from ethics". Ethics provides politics with a theory of true interest that permits measuring the interests of social members not only by their intensity but also by their value. Moreover, it is in the interest of political activity that children be educated in a way that guarantees the security of politics. Such an upbringing can be possible only if based on a philosophical pedagogy that sets the general practical conditions for realizing the freedom of human

reason as an "a priori grounded moral ontologeme".

Torbov sets the concept of state at the core of the philosophy of law and politics. He is interested in the question of the character of the social order and that is the issue that leads him to the need for some organization that will limit the activities of given social forces at a given point in time, subordinating them to the requirements of law. In this sense the state is not a creator of law but its servant; it's not the cult but the critique of the state is the true subject of science.

Critical ethics defines the ideal as a goal that is objectively prescribed to us, not spontaneously determined by us. When the goal that the ethical command obliges us to pursue refers to the external form of society, then this goal may be called a political ideal.

Whereas the political ideal, as all things political, refers directly to the external form of society, regardless of the internal attitude and the mental disposition of the people that make up society, the pedagogical ideal refers to the internal attitude and mental disposition. This ideal is defined by ethics in the narrow sense of the word or by the doctrine of virtues. The latter doctrine deals with the internal development of humans, whereas the doctrine of law determines the goals of external development of society. The former instructs us as to the requirements we must fulfill in order for human life to have value; the latter teaches us about the requirements, the fulfillment of which gives social life its value.

Torbov was an active participant in the struggle for a new moral world. His early political involvement imparts fullness and harmony between his ideas and life, and this was determined not only by the fact that politics is an applied field of law, but also by his existential conditions. His theoretical interest was aimed at large-scale ethical interrelations between people as a relationship between law and society, state and citizens, idealists and realists, the topic of the Balkan Union, etc. There is something particularly interesting and specific in the approach of analysis. Torbov discovered specific epistemes, to use Foucault's term, through which he examined social life. These epistemes are a particular synthesis of cognitive and social materiality, and thus they represent particular forms in which historical processes run their course. In the works of Tseko Torbov there are several such epistemes of heuristic importance. The traditional ones for

which he seeks "alternatives" are those of mysticism and sophism. The mystic ones emphasize authority according to the assumption that humans cannot discover truths and are in need of a revelation coming from a higher authority. This theme introduces into ethics a law imposed from outside and above. The other alternative is the proud and willful use of human understanding whereby all authority is eliminated. The understanding alone is called upon, through experience and logic, to solve all problems. But the application of the understanding is only goal-oriented understanding and is the best "Protestant agent"; it is without value reference and refers only to instrumental goals. Max Weber clearly showed this instrumental aspect of rationalization and the role of Protestantism in it. But this second episteme leads to ethical relativism, anarchism, and to the nihilism of modern times.

These two epistemes define two extremes in social life which are specific syntheses of irrational historical forces and clearly defined logical "schematisms". In history these two alternative epistemes are expressed in modified forms: they are not given once and for all, but are manifest in a cascade of embodiments. The alternative of these two extremes appeared in the philosophy of Socrates. The importance of this Greek thinker, as Torbov points out, is that he indicated the existence of "unwritten laws" which man must obey by virtue of the reason man finds within himself and without depending on any random situation. These laws are at times denied or challenged, but only because they are not given to people with self-evident clarity. Moral knowledge, Socrates stated, lies within us in darkness, but everyone possesses it. That is why Plato said that all knowledge is only a remembering. If we take this as a third episteme, it is one that opposes the other two and thus the ideas of Socrates and Plato demonstrate that neither heteronymous ethics nor ethical anarchy are justified. The true alternative is ethical autonomy, i.e. the autonomy of human reason. This tendency was further developed by Kant-Fries-Nelson. Tseko Torbov uses the correlation between these three epistemes in order to explain the processes that arose during the Enlightenment, the age when authorities were pushed out of social life and emphasis was set on the understanding, on trust in reason. Kant's philosophy made a significant contribution to this process. But this was the time when reason was not yet clearly distinguished from

understanding and an attempt was made to base cultural norms on understanding, on reflection, which, however, is in itself empty and gives no new knowledge. This led to the useless attempt to build the norms of science, religion, ethics, and esthetics upon reflectivity, which lies in the sphere of analytical knowledge alone. Even Kant's philosophy does not make this distinction clearly, as the analyses carried out by Fries' school showed. According to Torbov, it was only Fries who clearly differentiated reason and understanding. But Fries' philosophy has remained unassimilated and thus, after the general elation with reason, when it failed to fulfill its promise to provide clarity regarding the potential of metaphysics, there followed despair, evident in the so-called Romantic Movement, and a reverse swing back towards authority. There ensued, according to Torbov, a general contempt for reflection and an escape into the realm of illusions, dreams, mysticism, and other occult temptations. This technique of analysis used by Torbov can be applied to the "spirituality" of our time as well. A testimony to the efficacy of this Nelsonian approach are the following lines by Torbov, which seem to have been written for our times: "Thus, once again in place of the desired natural religion, came the reverence for the positive church. The patronage for superstitious rites and empty piety returned… A cult began for the autocratic personality… It was the same in philosophy. Original and clever formulations were sought, rather than a scientific investigation of the truth. Philosophy turned away from reality and life and towards what was merely a dialectical play with concepts, devoid of seriousness and a sound basis, or limited itself to the simple study of the history of philosophy." These reflections are a precise diagnosis of the contemporary situation.

According to Torbov, the ethical realist is the true idealist: he knows how to free himself of all fantastic notions in pursuing ideal aims and neither gives himeself up to dreams nor to despair, but looks upon the world as it is, using experience as a realist; from this realism stems his experience and courage. Being a realist, he knows that, in nature, the outcome of things according to the expectations of justice is only a matter of chance. He knows, however, that the right outcome will happen only when good puts strength behind itself. Realism indicates to the idealist the means necessary for achieving his ideal goals. Realism teaches us that a wishful attitude of

love of peace has no motive force in the real world, and that humans must renounce their placidity in order to achieve their ideals. Torbov proposes one other alternative. A reconciliation can be made in politics: it may, on the one hand, take into consideration that every goal of government must be in harmony with law, and, on the other, meet the requirements of political realism.

The adherent to the strict demands of the law will reject a policy of compromises, because it swerves from the legal goal and is made to fit in with other goals that have nothing to do with the basic and obligatory principles of law. The politics of compromise must be rejected as incompatible with the principle of strict application of law. Hence this stance is not that of a fantasist. For a politician who sacrifices the so-called immediate demands of life is only sacrificing the non-lawful. But what does political realism demand? The fulfillment of the ideal of law depends on a number of conditions, and this dependency is of a direct kind. The fulfillment of law depends on the disposition of actual forces in society. The realistic politician is hence obliged to fit the means at his disposition to the obstacles that arise due to the power relations, which may be helpful to him or impede him. At times, perhaps very often, this means giving up unlimited fulfillment of the law. If the politician insists on complete fulfillment, he will risk never achieving the ideal of justice and will not even have taken the possible steps for at least approaching this goal. The politics of compromise implies a retreat from the goal of law. This retreat, however, must not be carried out for the benefit of some other goal, alien to justice, but only in adjustment to circumstances.

The inauthentic realists are concerned only about the ratio of factual forces in society at a given moment, and their desire is to achieve results at all costs, without regard for the strict requirements of law. In philosophical terms, these political opportunists believe they must forsake the practical non-limitation of the juridical ideal so they will not have to forsake its physical limitations. However, the strict requirements of juridical imperatives are against this opportunist attitude; although these imperatives allow for comromises regarding the means of realizing justice, they decidedly reject any compromise with the requirements of justice.

Torbov is particularly sensitive regarding the qualities of actual politicians, of those who decide the destinies of the people they govern. He clearly stresses that two things have always impeded the normal functioning of a healthy public life: the lack of clarity in society and in the governing politicians regarding public goals, and the lack of willingness to pursue these goals. The former stems from misapprehensions about the basic issues of public life, and the second comes from self-interest in public functionaries.

In order to overcome this state of error regarding public matters and cut short the presence of self-interest, which leads to political despotism and personal self-seeking, it is necessary that all, and especially public leaders, be bearers of an enlightened philosophy that sheds ample light on the goals of a healthy public life and on the courses and means for attaining them. This philosophy, which puts reason to the fore, will indicate the true goals of a healthy public life and trace the ways and best means for achieving it.

This requires following a definite policy unswervingly, and the taking possession of public or state power must be a means for making power serve public goals, not self-interest.

Tseko Torbov, in keeping with the philosophy of his teacher, stated that the use of power for socially important goals, not private aims, required the united efforts of all people who uphold an enlightened philosophy. The most natural form in which these efforts can find expression is the struggle for public goals, which in the consciousness of the masses becomes an ideal of their life in general. Thus Torbov expresses his preference for a combative attitude to life, not passive contemplation. In this perspective the most reasonable way to achieve common human ideals is through organized struggle against ignorance and self-interest in society and its leaders. All reasonable people can be worthy members of society only if they participate in the struggle against all trendencies that aim to make society serve private goals. Torbov's reasoning is exceptionally topical for our times, for it impells readers to an active position against resignation (an inclination to expect that society will of itself remedy its injustices and troubles, social inequality, the distance between rich and poor, manipulators and manipulated, etc.)

In this perspective, Torbov states that general toleration and

resignation with respect to the events that damage the common ideals must be condemned. They always lead to unjustifiable indifference and passivity. All attitudes of indifference in public life, all passivity regarding the common task of achieving greater justice and greater truth, would amount to encouraging self-seeking, selfish arbitrary action, and despotism, as well as toleration of error. Universal toleration leads to the erroneous ideal of an attitude of universal indifference. Only people who are indifferent to truth and justice can tolerate error and injustice. All idealists in public life strive to use the forces of society for the sake of public goals. All realists strive to put the greater social force at the service of these goals. Does this imply that taking possession of power is indicated as an ideal? Not at all. The reference here is to the intention of acquiring power only as a necessary condition for any ideal striving in public life. He who fights violence and wants to put the public force at the service of public goals, must set the task of obtaining the greatest possible force in society, wresting it from those who abuse force for selfish purposes.

Tseko Torbov opposes setting toleration as an ideal; he believes this is not an ethical stance but mere prudence rooted in the weakness of one's own positions. Every person who lacks favorable outlooks for victory in a struggle is being reasonable in preaching toleration, thus he avoids the danger of being defeated. Such toleration, however, is not a moral ideal, but simply a rule of prudence for the weak. It is a seeming virtue by which the weak hide their weakness and give it the appearance of a moral value.

The erroneous ideal of toleration should not be confused with the ideal of love of peace, nor should the ideal of struggle be confused with the belligerent ideal. We should distinguish toleration from love of peace, just as we distinguish struggle from war. If this difference is ignored, one falls into a misconceived dispute, which, on one hand, transforms the ideal of a combative attitude into an erroneous belligerent ideal contradictory to the well conceived ideal of love of peace; on the other hand it leads turns the in-itself truthful ideal of love of peace into the erroneous ideal of general toleration and lack of party alignment. Only by having a correct conception of the difference between struggle and war, between love of peace and lack of party alignment, can the peace-loving ideal be harmonized with the ideal

of a combative attitude to life.

At the end of this survey, it would be well to consider the role of the philosophy of reason, as Torbov called it, in today's post-modern times. For Torbov the philosophy of reason is a specific remedy:

> "We live in a time when lack of faith has killed almost everything in us and made us the pitiful toys of so many theories, so many books, mostly written only to gather dust in libraries. The single, eternal truth is no longer sought. Books are not being written for the sake of truth, but only in order to display to generations the power and might of the author. In them the eternal necessary truth is usually undermined for the sake of building an original system of this or that author or only in order to present a snapshot view of reality in its historical course. Our time is the heir of the ethical-philosophical anarchy of the 19th century. We find ourselves at a historical moment when faith in human reason has been completely shaken. In philosophy, as in politics and pedagogy, there is a fateful relativism that threatens to destroy the values of an enlightened philosophy."

Torbov's diagnosis, though referring to the 1930s, is entirely valid today. Most emblematic for the spirit of our times is post-modernism, combined with neo-pragmatic "praxis". The post-modern, pragmatic spirit accompanies the culture of multi-national contemporary information societies, and although Bulgarian society is far from such a development, its vapors are penetrating into our spiritual atmosphere as well. In post-modern forms, surfaces interact with other surfaces, forming a new human nature, which accepts as quite normal the inhospitable world of economic horizons, the imposition of motley styles, the deconstruction of totalities, collage of differing principles, language games, and the breakdown of integral wholes. Historical continuity is violated by the "permanent revolution" of capital, which unites different cultural models and thereby destroys them separately. Rootless juxtapositions correspond to the life of people torn from the soil, peasants who have migrated to giant cities where de-contextualized patterns abound; they correspond to the viewers of American-style fragmented television, viewers with a mentality that perfectly suits the world financial

managers that are shifting around information and capital.

It is correct to associate the activity of Tseko Torbov and Valentina Topuzova-Torbova with a stable tendency in Bulgarian philosophy. After they translated Kant's major works in the 1960s and 1970s, a strong professional interest in the philosophy of criticism was formed, a trend that has not diminished regardless of external social-political events. In the early 1990s the Kant Society was created, whose first chairman was Professor Ivan Stefanov, with Valentina Topuzova-Torbova as honorary chairman; this society became a collective member of the Kant-Gesellschaft. It served as an institutional framework for the efforts of its members. Intense translating of additional works by Kant began. Together with translations, various aspects of the critical trend were studied: post-neo-Kantianism (I. Stefanov, V. Kanavrov, D. Ginev); logic (D. Denkov); transcendental philosophy as ontology (I. Stefanov, V. Kanavrov, G. Donev); esthetics (I. Pasi, I. Tsoneva); Kantian ideas in modern physics (A. Stefanov); practical philosophy (K. Neshev); the pre-critical period (V. Miteva); philosophy of politics (K. Shopov); the history of Kantianism and Nelsonianism (D. Tsatsov), etc. In the journal *Philosophical Forum*, which began publication in the late-1990s, the articles on transcendental philosophy have been constantly growing in number. In May 2002 a conference was held in Southwest University Neofit Rilski, jointly with the Bulgarian Kant Society, on the topic *Kant and Metaphysics*, and the conference papers were published in the collection *Kant and Metaphysics* (Blagoevgrad, 2003).

In the 1990s interest in the ideas of Leonard Nelson grew, as indicated by the new editions of a number of works by Tseko Torbov or the first publications of some of his manuscripts: *Natural Law and the Philosophy of Law* (Sofia, 1991); *Philosophy of Law and Jurisprudence* (S., 1992); *Basic Principle of Law. Law and Justice* (S., 1992); *Studies on Critical Philosophy* (S., 1993); *History and Theory of Law* (S., 1993); *Doctrine on the State* (S., 1995), *Memoirs* (S., 1996), and others.

During the same period an intense study of the ideas of Leonard Nelson and Tseko Torbov began. The first monograph on this topic was *The Fries-Nelson-Torbov Critical School* (S., 1999) by D. Tsatsov. In that same year an international conference was held on *Kant and the Kantian*

Tradition in Bulgaria, dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Professor Tseko Torbov. A considerable number of the papers presented at this conference were on Nelsonianism and its reception in Bulgaria.

In 2001 Vesela Lyahova published her study *A Life that Was a Mission: Professor Tseko Torbov*, which was the first attempt at a comprehensive biographical account of the life and scholarly activity of the Bulgarian Nelsonian philosopher, enriched with archive and documentary materials. The dynamics of publication in the decades of the 20th and 21st centuries clearly shows the exponential growth of their numbers, for which Prof. Torbov and V. Topuzova-Torbova had a decisive influence.

Period	**Number of publications**
1900-1909	13
1910-1919	5
1920-1929	22
1930-1939	39
1940-1949	15
1950-1959	2
1960-1969	9
1970-1979	50
1980-1989	52
1990-1999	81
2000-2003	72

The growth trend is obvious. It permits the hypotheses that perhaps many of the leading ideas in the area of philosophy in Bulgaria will some day be induced by transcendental philosophy, in which the ideas of the critical school of Fries-Nelson-Torbov hold an essential place.