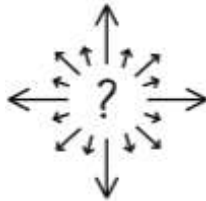


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I. SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE RECENT DOSTOEVSKY STUDIES

**Review of „Антропологията на Достоевски.
Човекът като проблем и обект на
изобразяване в света на Достоевски“,
съставител Емил Димитров, София,
Българско общество „Ф. Достоевски“, 2021.
(Emil Dimitrov, editor, *The Anthropology of
Dostoevski: Man as a Problem and as a Subject
of Reflection in Dostoevsky’s World*, Sofia:
Bulgarian Dostoevski Society, 2021.)**

Jonathan Bruce (Independent Scholar, Chicago, Illinois, USA)

After the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church blessed the military operation, claiming that the Russian forces are fighting for a holy united Rus and that this military duty will wash away all sins. Understanding such statements can be informed by the scholarship of participants at the symposium “Man as a Problem and as a Subject of Reflection in Dostoevsky’s World” at the University of Sofia, on the 200th anniversary of Dostoevsky’s birth. More specifically, symposium scholars discussed the topics of cultural identity, destiny and territoriality as “myth as memory” in the production of ideology. Symposium scholars also explored such topics as human nature in the cosmic order, will and existence, alienation and “gnosticism,” confession and “demonism,” and “pneumatology” and theosis.

The importance of Dostoevsky, as complex as human nature itself, points to new syntheses of thought useful for the future in many different disciplines. As Jorge Luis Borges put it: “Like the discovery of love, like the discovery of the sea, the discovery of Dostoevsky marks an important date in one’s life.”

1

Cosmic Order and Human Nature

Toefusa Kinoshita addresses the teachings, regarding humble love and the humility of wisdom, of the elder Zosima in the *Brothers Karamazov*, and Seiichiro Takahashi discusses "The Idiot" in the work of Akira Kurosawa. Turning from film to opera, Svetlana Voitkevich examines the opera "The Idiot" by the twentieth-century Russian composer Mieczysław Weinberg. Elena Safranova focuses on Siberia, where Dostoevsky spent four years as a prisoner and five years as a soldier, as a topography and mythologeme of spiritual rebirth, paradise and purification in Dostoevsky's work.

By contrast, Markos Galounis' paper on Charles Taylor and Dostoevsky points to a cultural shift from a sense of a meaningful cosmic order to the notion of a meaningless universe. For symposium participant Olga Bogdanova, we cannot speak of territoriality or a homeland but rather must speak of heterotopic spaces for a living space to reproduce and develop itself. For theoretical support, Bogdanova draws on Michel Foucault and the structuralist notion that language is a tool for constructing reality, not describing it.

Whether or not the notion of "homeland" and ethical standards are authentic in contemporary society, a common theme among symposium participants is that there are no easy answers, and no simple truth. For Andrey Shishkin, not only is the *Brothers Karamazov* a world of elemental and metaphysical forces, less Christian than pantheistic, but "The Grand Inquisitor" contains the deepest universal prophecy about the fate of mankind. In fact, Shishkin discusses a cultural notion that Dostoevsky's novels are a kind of "Russian bible" only comprehensible by Russians.

Sergei Khoruzhy discusses a related notion that a Russian can fully penetrate the soul of any people. This theme of universality touches on the arguably heretical doctrine of ultimate *apocatastasis*, the salvation of all, expressed in the statement of the drunken character Marmeladov in *Crime and Punishment*:

"[Christ] then will judge everyone, both good and evil ... He will also say to us ... 'Come out drunk, come out weak, come out scum!' ... And forgive everything."

But such unrestricted redemption occurs only after a process riddled with individual or collective strife and opposition, for Dostoevsky. Khoruzhy draws a parallel to René Girard and his idea of "*la montée*

aux extremes”—or growing to the limit—by which imitation can lead to real or figurative violence, which can grow indefinitely and cause societal institutions to collapse (or cause inner crises), preventing simple truths and easy answers. That is, before “*resurrection*.”

While Khoruzhy discusses how René Girard relied in part on Dostoevsky’s “Eternal Husband” and “Notes from the Underground” in the development of his theories, Jordi Morillas discusses the Dostoevskian notion that being born with three components of one’s being—spirit, psyche and body—leads to a state of inner contradiction and excruciating alienation from God before a final justification or “*resurrection*,” or nullification of contradiction. Why? Because the three components of being—spirit, psyche and body—are often unreconciled and undeveloped in a person.

According to symposium participant Jordi Morillas, this is the central problematizing factor in Dostoevsky’s all-consuming interest: the theme of man and his destiny. Since man is a microcosm and the center of being, to solve the question about man is to solve the question about God and man’s relation to God. This is made nearly impossible, however, by the complexity and imperfection of the three-part complex of the human being.

Giuseppe Ghini discusses these three being-components in view of a scheme of stratified consciousness based in Orthodox Christianity and a basic feature of Dostoevsky’s character development. While *Dusha* is the center of human feelings, love, empathy, humility, self-sacrifice and a sense of remorse, it is limited to the sensible and phenomenal world. *Dukh*, on the other hand, refers to the upper part of human interiority, where the Self can go out of itself and reach ecstasy. In *The Brothers Karamazov*, *dushevnyj* is connected to feelings and psychology, while *dukhovnyj* is something more profound, a spiritual life when a relationship with God exists.

The interior core of the Dostoevskian hero and his stratified consciousness, then, is at the same time inside him and beyond him. In this context, Dostoevsky’s characters show irrational behavior and make their decisions based on unconscious biases, but the psychological level, even if unconscious, does not prevail over the moral one. Prior to any ethical “*resurrection*,” however, a character such as Raskolnikov in “*Crime and Punishment*,” for example, is caught in “*la montée aux extremes*” of his own mental and ethical imperfection.

For instance, Morillas discusses how Raskolnikov declares to the

character Sonya that he wants to do good, but first he feels he needs power. Raskolnikov turns his murder victim, the grandmother, into part of an arithmetic equation:

“Against one life - thousands of lives saved from decay and decay. One death and a hundred lives in its place - such is the simple arithmetic!”

Because of what is discussed below as his undeveloped self and hypnotized will, Raskolnikov's abstract notion of devoting oneself to "all humanity" and "the common cause" by eliminating an unworthy, unnecessary, and even harmful person to benefit many is perceived in alienation and ignorance. Raskolnikov's goal is power, not humanism. Far from having a connection with a truth beyond himself, in his will for power, Raskolnikov meets nothing and no one but his own thoughts. By contrast, Sonya's living faith in the novel meets Raskolnikov's cruel and delusional intellectual constructs. Even so, delusion is not the whole story for Raskolnikov, who later wishes to suffer to alleviate his guilt and thereby begin the process of becoming more authentically human.

Another dramatization of contradiction prior to justification is in the limitations of Prince Myshkin in "The Idiot." Dostoevsky creates his own "Prince Christ" with the characteristics of downtroddenness, fear, humiliation, sadness and the inner conviction that he is an idiot. Myshkin's efforts to save the people around him fail miserably. "Resurrection," however, lies in a paradoxical oppositizing process (Grace). The tragedy of Myshkin, which many interpret as the incompatibility of Christian ideals with life, actually proves the opposite. Because life is more complicated than any equation or syllogism, *Christ* is compatible with life in its highest sense.

For symposium participant Julia Sytina, this ethos is consistent with what she discusses as "the rejection of $2 \times 2 = 4$ " in Russian culture. This rejection, for Sytina, also rejects Hegelian dialectics and the statistical law of large numbers, and rejects the preference for the general over the fragmentary and ephemeral. As Grace is superior to the Law, Dostoevsky affirms the eternal ideal in spite of any "mathematical" refutation of freedom, God and Christ. Morillas points out that Dostoevsky stated that he would rather stay with Christ than with the truth. This statement is not the destruction of meaning, for Dostoevsky, but the creation of cosmic harmony. *If only a madman understands the world correctly, then the world itself is mad.* For Dostoevsky, *Christ*, the highest positive ideal, negates finitude, entropy, and absence of mean-

ing—regardless of any irrationality.

We can understand this Dostoevskian ethos better by considering a counter-example. Looking west and using Thomas Aquinas as a point of comparison, the Thomist philosophical inquiry into moral virtue is more like an approach to an engineering problem. For Aquinas, moral virtue is hampered in its appetitive aspect, i.e. when one overreaches toward what is not practically obtainable. The flow of Thomist conceptual categories out of the Aristotelian mean, then, is not the Dostoevskian “rejection of $2 \times 2 = 4$.”

Rather, we can understand the Thomist approach to moral virtue as “*mean-ing*,” so to speak, or the production of *meaning* from the *mean*, graphable in a Brownian distribution curve on an x/y axis, with the dominant weighting in the center and the statistical outliers at the edges. One’s position in the cosmos begins to get into trouble when located too many standard deviations from the mean: this governs the categorical distinctions between what is virtuous and non-virtuous, and is expressible as a mathematical equation, consistent with the measurement tools of the engineer. Moreover, such systematicity understood in terms of mean reversion and the bell curve is also the hegemonic voice of the totality, that even assumes the authority to enforce the status quo in the categories used to study moral virtue.

The difference between Aquinas, the Catholic arch-theologian, and the Dostoevskian ethos can be seen in how the Grand Inquisitor in the Brothers Karamazov addresses the insoluble contradictions of human nature. Christ only gives an enigmatic promise of freedom, according to the Grand Inquisitor, at our crux in the cosmic order. By refusing to assume earthly power on the basis of his power of the miraculous, Christ requires people to choose good or evil for themselves. People are confused by hope, however, and freedom leads people into a maze. Christ’s truth plants the seed of its own destruction in the average person. The Inquisitor’s impulse, then, is to punish this quality of Christ. The inability to perceive the Whole is characteristic of being a mere functionary within a system (human life) that is both hegemonic and baffling, and intellectual formation is hampered by stunted ethical formation. Looking east to another literary source, the second shloka of the Bhagavad Gita expresses the entropy prior to “resurrection” as this self-generated trap:

“While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops

attachment for them, and from such attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises. From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool.”

Consistent with these words of Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, the Grand Inquisitor points out that people are not vigilant and intentional about the space they prepare in their complex being and, as a result, become ethical and spiritual nullities. In view of this, the Grand Inquisitor prosecutes Christ and defends the concern and mission of the church:

“And if thousands follow you in the name of heavenly bread and tens of thousands, what will become of millions and tens of thousands of millions of beings who will not be able to neglect the bread of the earth for the sake of heaven?”

If there were anything in the next world, says the Grand Inquisitor, it certainly would not be for them, the masses. By contrast to the masses, even being aware of one’s nothingness, one’s predicament, is for the few.

Moreover, for symposium participant Peter Gregory Winsky, we learn from “The Idiot” that there is no possibility of perfection of the person either in this life or in Dostoevsky’s realism. The tri-hypostatic mode of Divine Being—comprehended by human reason as the communion between three Persons sharing a single Essence—is expressed as a loving self-emptying, or *kenosis*, dynamic in its authentic love. Prince Myshkin, however, is essentially devoid of this dynamism; this lack prevents him from becoming a true person. Rather, he lives as a type, the Sentimental Dreamer or Holy Fool. He is constantly forced to be kind, compassionate, and forgiving; this makes him naive, inert, and unresponsive. Myshkin’s person does not fully contain the likeness of Christ. He is the imitation of Christ, rather than Christ-like. Because of this, Myshkin’s attempts to save Nastasya, Aglaya, and Rogozhin fail, according to Winsky.

Imperfection, however, does not have the last word in Dostoevsky’s Christianity and for his “Prince Christ.” Dostoevsky chooses *Christ* over truth. “Resurrection” follows the most total of losses, at the point at which 2×2 no longer equals 4.

Let us turn now to the literary example of the temptations of Christ in the wilderness (Matthew 4), i.e. in emptiness with only oneself and

wild animals for company. Indeed, all reality is a form of *nirmita* or magical illusion and is empty of essence, in the Buddhist view. There is only oneself, such as one is. The desert of the great tempting enemy spirit is based in this emptiness, or *shunyata* in Sanskrit. To this, we can add the Buddhist principle of *Pratītyasamutpāda*, which holds that all phenomena arise in dependence upon other phenomena: "if this exists, that exists; if this ceases to exist, that also ceases to exist." Nothing begets nothing—or less than nothing, if we consider Matthew 13:13: "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

People are unwittingly oppressed and hypnotized by their own undeveloped selves in *shunyata*. This—maybe paradoxically—is the same freedom that Christ offers. As a result—unlike the paralytic at the pool of Bethsaida who walks after being healed in the Gospel of John 5—people become deluded by the Church that they are made free, and lose the thread of memory of what they are, if anything, in eternity. In an entropic, chaotic and delusional state in a scheme of non-dynamic and undeveloped tri-being (spirit, psyche and body), people are trapped by the apparent freedom of emptiness, or ignorance, or illusion. At this level, the Inquisitor and the church cater to this ethical and spiritual mediocrity and laziness of the masses.

But, alternatively, there *can* be "tri-dynamic," interdimensional *shunyata*. Jesus' instruction in Matthew 6:3-4 provides an important clue to how to prevent mortal inertia in the tripartite complex of one's body, soul and spirit—namely, one must not let one's left hand know what one's right hand is doing. The "left hand" (ego/false personality) is one's controlling "demons," so to speak. The "right hand" is one's controlling "angels," so to speak. We can conceive of "demons" and "angels" as cosmic/collective energy confluences/collectives. If you "*think from your demons*," e.g. "I am going to turn stones into bread," "I am going to throw myself down from the temple," "I am going to seek control or power in the world" (i.e. Jesus' temptations in the wilderness from the devil in Matthew 4), the "demons" have tricked you, so to speak: in reality, you never would have been able to turn stones into bread, angels never would have borne you up, and you never would have controlled the world.

The "demonic," or thinking from the left hand, is egoic and self-

centered. Consider the following intention, held by many: “I am going to meditate so I can attain spiritual higher levels.” Such an intention is futile because meditation is not an act at all. Meditation is a state. The mind that still has not yet introduced itself to its authentic self can have no reasonable expectations, including meditation, for that self. Such a mind does not even know yet what it is thinking about, or making meditation plans about.

When one falls short of authentic being, one ends up in the default state of being: *cupiditas*, the “way of the world,” or desire’s reference back to the desiring self, according to Hannah Arendt’s reading of Augustine of Hippo in “Love and Saint Augustine.” This forgetting of primordial being is the path to eternal death, the oblivious and momentum-based follow-through into the lower *aetas*, or hell. According to Paul in Romans 6:23, “the wages of sin is death.” The absence of a choice rooted in reflection is “sin” or *hamartia*, i.e. “missing the mark” (as opposed to Jesus’ statement in John 8:14: “I know where I come from, and I know where I am going.”).

“Eternal life” is “taking up one’s cross” and “following Christ,” so to speak. What does this mean? Such “discipleship” is only possible when there is a “virgin birth” or “new life in Christ” that neutralizes desire’s dualistic reference back to the desiring self. With “right-handed will,” one can begin to know and be something new: the *episteme* of the new birth from the “cross” is *pathein* (“to suffer”), to suffer another’s pain. *Metanoia* or being “born again” is the introduction of the dimension of conscience and empathy, by means of a transcendent/imminent *kairos*, into fate. When Jesus says “I am the way, the truth and the life” in John 14:6, the life he refers to is of a different and higher order than the default life of the so-called natural world and self-referential desire to which the Grand Inquisitor and his church cater.

In “Revelations of Divine Love,” the medieval English mystic Julian of Norwich struggles against the terrifying great tempting spirit with faithfully obedient prayer:

“Pray, even if you feel nothing, see nothing. For when you are dry, empty, sick or weak, at such a time is your prayer most pleasing to God, even though you may find little joy in it. This is true of all believing prayer.”

And:

“We need to fall, and we need to be aware of it; for if we did not fall, we should not know how weak and wretched we are of ourselves,

nor should we know our Maker's marvelous love so fully."

Julian experiences a breakthrough as a result of her work on herself—in prayerful lapse—and expresses her revelation of *apocatastasis* and a scheme of ultimate redemptive eschatology—synchronic and diachronic, managed from above and through time—with these words:

"And I saw that truly nothing happens by accident or luck, but everything by God's wise providence."

This higher-dimensional perspective is ecstatic, past *la montée aux extrêmes*, and enables Julian to speak with the voice of God:

"See that I am God. See that I am in everything. See that I do everything. See that I have never stopped ordering my works, nor ever shall, eternally. See that I lead everything on to the conclusion I ordained for it before time began, by the same power, wisdom and love with which I made it."

A different kind of example is the medieval French mystic Marguerite Porete, the author of "The Mirror of Simple Souls." Porete's *imitatio Christi* is a visceral and reified *montée aux extrêmes*—in her case, getting burned alive for her religious convictions, as if some form of pneumo-somatic totalization is required to attain freedom. Her concentrated, self-oriented reflection in her "speculum" results in the annihilation of her will and even her own life.

Such a kairotic, trans-dimensional leap into unrepresented, first-hand and visceral experience is certainly one way—but perhaps not the best—to resolve the insoluble contradictions of human nature in the desert. This also brings to mind Jesus in the Gospels, who expresses his own eventual violent execution in words, weaving a prophetic intertextuality with real life as one of the texts in his weave/text. The mimesis/meaning that Porete and Jesus both embrace unto their fates is mystical, violently self-directed and heroic.

According to the "Poretian" ethos, starting from the Dostoevskian notion that the ethical norm of Christianity is inapplicable to actual reality in the proverbial wilderness, one must either stake everything to live (and die) consistently with Grace, or get bewildered and mediocre. The price to pay for *kairos*, or access to divinity, is total (perhaps most closely approximated in the auto-vivisection of authentic confession, discussed below). The crux of the matter, according to Hannah Arendt's reading of Augustine, is that desire must get beyond the limited desiring self to escape spiritual death. When desire is not merely self-referential

in an appetitive way, it can remember a primordial past and hope for it in the future, in another *aetas*, or heaven. Knowledge of this happy eternal life exists in memory, because it is a primordial seat of consciousness. Memory preserves this past/future, which is also a transcendent present/presence.

Most important, one must choose this primordial truth, or heaven. To choose primordial being, one must be aware of the choice. One must awaken to it. Awareness of the choice is the result of, and deepens, truly thoughtful reflection, or thinking.

Indeed, according to the *Dhammapada*, all we are is our thoughts. In reflection, one must choose love and wait for it with hope, in Arndt's reading of Augustine. This reflection is and is coincident with *kairos*, or higher-dimensional being made manifest. When *kairos* happens, love of one's neighbor, or *agape*—the expression of the eternal essence in life—is present. The appearance of *agape* as both a choice and a grace rooted in *kairos* causes a shift in one's trajectory—toward heaven, the higher *aetas*, and away from death in self-referential desire, the lower *aetas*. Heaven is for those who engage in the meditative exercise of primordial memory, consciously or not, which results in love of one's neighbor.

2

Will and Existence

Dostoevsky, according to symposium participant Kalin Mikhailov, counteracts the mind that has distanced itself from God and reshaped the world according to its own rationalistically derived laws with *concrete and authentic human presence*, in the space-time of the meeting of what symposium participant Anastasia Koshechko discusses as the “existential triangle” of I, the world, and God. In view of this, when it comes to novel-writing, according to Koshechko, Dostoevsky's methodology is the giving of an account of an event not so much as news but as what of it will *remain*, associated with a *whole idea*. This wholeness rests on the conviction that a person is a capacity that can contain both the world and God.

That is, with Dostoevsky's characters, according to symposium participant Stoyan Asenov, a particular event is universalized; it can happen anywhere and at any time. Time is abolished, and the event is placed in an archetypal place where the frightening eternity of the Sabbath day reigns. Consistent with this, Elena Bystrova discusses the task

of photography as the revelation of what is so hidden in someone that he or she ignored it or kept it in the unconscious. Photography catches a person as he is.

Bystrova, then, discusses the idea of Mikhail Bakhtin that “Dostoevsky never depicts death from within. Agony and death are watched by others. Death cannot be a fact of consciousness itself.” Analogously, when it comes to novel-writing, Dostoevsky's diary prose gives a slice of a person's consciousness at the moment of fixing his psychological state, according to symposium participant Maya Gorcheva, who reads Dostoevsky's storylines as thought experiments and compares Dostoevsky's novels to Kafka's novels, which also unfold like thought experiments that begin with absurd imaginary situations.

In the nineteenth century, individual will as *subjective* self-grounding consciousness becomes more important than *abstract* self-grounding consciousness. In this vein, besides the mystics, Lazar Milentievich points out that phenomenologists and existential psychologists have also been dissatisfied, like the Dostoevskian ethos, with the reductive dualistic anthropology conceived by Descartes. For Dmitry Bosnak, a principle of Dostoevsky is a certain transcensus of the subject that points towards the priority of will over intellectual activity.

To help us understand Dostoevsky, Nietzsche's expression about the death of God should be understood, according to Heidegger, as the sense of the divine as an eternal prototype and immovably resting goal, in connection with the will to power, which is the essence of power. Will points to the unconditional essence of the will which, like pure will, wills itself. The will to power does not have its basis in a sense of lack, but is itself the basis of the most abundant life. Strength of will can be equated with dynamic and authentic tri-partite being.

In contrast to the decadence by which Nietzsche characterizes dialectical reasoning, then, will surfaces in Nietzsche's work as a factor not systematically incorporated into his philosophy but rather as a principle-beyond-principle to which epistemology can submit. Nietzsche questions and devalues so-called systematic rigor in philosophy that can only approach self-knowledge in an (“always already”) “decadent” way.

In the “Genealogy of Morals,” Nietzsche writes:

“We are unknown to ourselves, we men of knowledge—and with good reason. We have never sought ourselves—how could it happen that we should ever find ourselves? So we are necessarily strangers to

ourselves, for the law 'Each is furthest from himself' applies to all eternity—we are not 'men of knowledge' with respect to ourselves."

Will, by contrast, is a non-dialectical and therefore heterogeneous capacity to arrive at self-knowledge by exploding its inherited conceptual confines. *2 x 2 does not necessarily equal 4*. Rather, for Nietzsche and Sartre, will is an epistemological/methodological factor inseparable from thought which is itself the totality, is itself "always already" consciousness for-itself as it is its own bridge from the in-itself to the for-itself.

On the basis of the Nietzschean notion of will, we can understand the transcensus, discussed by Bosnak mentioned above, in terms of Hegelian sublation, as opposed to Hegelian panlogicism, which the Dostoevskian ethos rejects, according to Julia Sytina. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel illustrates *sublation* with the example "God is Being." The real subject of this proposition "God is Being" is the copula ("is"). The proposition has the same meaning as "Being is God," and the relation between the poles of the opposition (God/Being) is about being itself, the copula, that mediates and encompasses the polar opposition. A primordial ground of being must exist as an actuality, even if dormant in someone or in society. Not only is the mediation between the terms of the opposition in the proposition "God is Being" primordial essence, but religious knowledge is transferred to God himself, that is, to the love-directed redemptive will of God and to his self-revelation, according to Bosnak. Other such examples of sublation are Hegel's statement "the rational is real" in "The Philosophy of Right," Jesus' statement "I and the Father are One" (John 10:30) and "God is Love" from 1 John. By means of this sublation and despite "*la montée aux extrêmes*," the Dostoevskian hero, uniting his will with divine will, is ultimately open to the transcendent, to God's visitation, through which he receives revelation of his inner self and repentance as a gift.

Additionally, symposium participant Alexander Kochetkov discusses the Dostoevskian notion that a person must constantly feel suffering, which is offset by the heavenly pleasure of fulfilling the law of sacrifice. Milentievich argues that, for Dostoevsky, repentance and forgiveness from God oppose the underground man's rotation in the horizontal plane of spiritual hell. Man can exit from his underground with the birth in himself of love for his neighbor, compassion and self-sacrifice.

Most important is that this journey is not ideological. Rather, in the context of the problem of the spiritual-soul-bodily disunity of man,

harmonic fusion with the world requires the realization of one's own self. Authentically being oneself, in suffering and sacrifice, is rooted in the phenomenon of love, on which the early Christian worldview is based. Milentievich explains that the personality may be closed in its loneliness, but love is originally supersensible and trans-vital and descends to one's depths.

From this point of view, it could be said that you do not understand the authentically moral—it understands you. The moral ideal rests on the basis and is a result of “reciprocal love” (*Gegenliebe*)—the love God radiates, directed at the world and at all people. Love for God presupposes and actually requires love for the world which God created from love: *amare mundum in Deo* [to love the world in God].

The “existential triangle” of I, the world, and God, then, is an ontological explosion of dualism. This helps us understand how, for symposium participant Agnes Dukkon, greatness consists in being oneself; any person is capable of this, if she only wills it. Dukkon cites Kierkegaard's “Either-Or,” according to which even the richest person remains nothing until he chooses himself, and even the poorest person becomes everything if he chooses himself. *Only a god-like person is free*. Moreover, it is by means of this sublation that one can perceive another being not as an object, but as another subject. In this vein, Kochetkov discusses Christ as “the complete synthesis of all being.”

Additionally, this synthetic tripartition of authentic being is not to be understood as implying three substances, or even three “faculties,” in man: it is discerned rather as a threefold zone of activity, from the periphery to the center, or, to the “heart.” In a word, dynamism. The inter-dimensional triad overcoming death in a dynamic process is nothing less than the Christian God, accurately understood. *Perichoresis* is the term used by the fourth-century theologians Sts. Gregory and Basil to explain the Trinity and can be translated as “circle dance.” God is an interdimensional dynamic process.

Dynamic *perichoresis*, or God, is not governed by the laws of nature, as long as it remains triadic and dynamic. It does not degenerate and decay under the force of entropy, the worldly default, to the point of death. Rather, it is self-organizing and self-perfecting. As long as it is triadic and not dual, it is negentropic and comparable to extreme states of matter/energy in physics when the four fundamental laws of physics are not fixed and separate but form more of a unity. In such a state, *2 x 2 does*

not necessarily equal 4. These principles help us understand the mechanics of the “Dostoevskian pantheism” discussed above by Andrey Shishkin.

Consistent with this, the unspoken in Newtonian mechanics is that it can be understood in an interdimensional way, or in terms of a dimension beyond the third, free from gravity. From this perspective, Newton’s three laws of motion arguably come much closer to the real significance of the Trinity than the Anglican and mainstream Christian dogma of his time, and ours. After all, Isaac Newton, the theorist of gravity, supposedly was an anti-trinitarian heretic, esotericist and alchemist. Newton *the alchemist* never spoke of what consumed him most, the “great work.” A tenet of the “great work” of alchemy is that ethical formation and intellectual formation are interdependent and hopefully spawn an alchemical synthesis in oneself. The counterexample, of course, is Dostoevsky’s Underground Man, who lacks being-synthesis, for whom, as Kochetkov explains, there is no place in this world, who does not want to merge with the world through action and who remains in metaphysical rebellion against the Creator.

Simone Weil, in “Gravity and Grace,” also attributes a triadic structure to the relationship of grace and “gravity”: creation is composed of the descending movement of gravity, the ascending movement of grace and the descending movement of the second degree of grace, according to which one does not necessarily expect to get anything for oneself from anyone else. To this, we can add the factor of will (of the right hand, not the left). To the extent that we can access will, we, as agents, are responsible for the provision of our own “ground,” or understanding of being-truth; each of us, at an entirely personal level, bears the burden of bridging his or her own gap between the in-itself and the for-itself. We could say that God depends on this.

3

Gnostic Alienation, Ideology and Politics

Symposium participant Dmitry Bosnak discusses the development of the idea in the nineteenth century that a person inevitably comes to recognize himself as the only source of all norms. From the Dostoevskian perspective, then, lack of faith is a sign of intelligible weakness of will, when one cannot make God’s will his own will. For Anastasia Koshechko, existential crisis precedes the experience of a deep religious life in the Dostoevskian hero, who eventually becomes self-aware, even

though he is always in crisis and rebellion. The highest ideal embodied in the person of Christ cannot be fully realized because on earth a person is in a state of transition.

In connection with this, Alexey Kozyrev discusses the “gnosticism” implicit in Ivan Karamazov’s statement “I do not accept this God’s world.” All beings suffer and strive for a better state because they are in an abnormal and unnatural state, expelled from Eden, so to speak. Arguably, it is as if the creator of this world is some sort of (evil) gnostic archon or demiurge. Also, when discussing this in terms of Ivan Karamazov’s feeling of being abandoned to a world alien to him, Kozyrev points out the ideological closeness between gnosticism and existentialism.

Indeed, Inna Gazheva discusses how Dostoevsky’s characters are heroes orphaned on earth and tormented, like their author, by the solution of the main question: the existence of God. Gazheva points to Aglaya’s question to Myshkin in “The Idiot”:

“‘Why are you looking at me like that, prince?’ she said suddenly. ‘It seems to me that you want to stretch out your hand and touch my face with your finger in order to feel it.’”

Gazheva points out that Myshkin’s look is not lustful, not thirsty for possession, but saturated with contemplation itself. His epilepsy enabled him to maintain childish purity and simplicity of heart, and his only need is for contemplation.

Symposium participant Hugo Percy discusses the Dostoevskian rejection of established ethics and morality in favor of some universal understanding, some universal values, some new, dangerous and terrible holiness, similar to those that the Elder Zosima declares, replacing moral and ethical thought with a primordial instinct that equally perceives the power of good and evil. A vehicle for this can be the sacred illness of an epileptic attack. Holiness can also exist alongside what Percy discusses as the “two-facedness” of Dostoevsky’s characters.

Indeed, Rosanna Kazari discusses the Dostoevskian polymorphism of man, the locus of the struggle between *eros* and *thanatos*, and the problematicness of man’s nature that knows no schematization or abstract system in Dostoevsky’s novels. For Elena Stepanyan-Rumyantseva, in regard to “The Idiot”, everything is multifaceted, diverse, and self-contradictory. The world of Dostoevsky is the world of erotic tension, to give one example. Nikita Nankov also points out that,

while love is a recognition of freedom and equality in the “The Player,” a defining characteristic of Dostoevsky's protagonists is that they are both “masters” and “slaves” in the Hegelian sense.

In view of this, not only is the ideal of Christ unattainable by the individual but, because of non-dynamic being, any historical progress at the socio-political level degenerates, or falls back from the triad into the dyad, the default of death. An authentic moral impulse has a revolutionary purity at the beginning of a movement, and a moral movement that is effective conceives a new normative moral concept. When the moral is birthed/conceived into a concept and circulated, however, it becomes ideological.

When the moral becomes ideological, it loses the primordial purity of its original movement. Worse, its form can be converted into its opposite, or at least into something different from what it was at the beginning of its movement. The loss of upward or triadic momentum, a reversal back into dyad, can happen on all cosmic scales. For example, symposium participant Galina Sabat discusses the idea of “forced happiness” in the Legend of the Grand Inquisitor.

Compulsory happiness for Dostoevsky requires the renunciation of freedom, and “paradise for all” in fact requires mass oppression based on malignant legends and myths. In this vein, Dostoevsky's “Demons” expresses the mechanisms, such as *Shigalevism*, for creating Peter Verkhovensky's dystopia, or his “utopia of a new Russia,” i.e. socialist reorganization for total control over people. Symposium participant Christoph Garstka argues that Dostoevsky understood that the nihilists, for example, needed a figure such as Nikolai Stavrogin, a culturally revered but internally dead charismatic leader who enables others to kill in his name.

In return, the leader guarantees the legitimacy and significance of these crimes for a higher purpose. In regard to the establishment of this leader, Garstka quotes Peter Verkhovensky from the chapter “Ivan Tsarevich” of “Demons”:

“We will start legends... [...] Such a buildup will go on, which the world has never seen before...”

To realize his utopia on the model of *Shigalevism*, Pyotr Verkhovensky produces his notion of the “pure, innocent” beauty of Nikolai Stavrogin, the main character in Verkhovensky's invented myth.

Through the lens of the theorist Furio Jesi, symposium participant Alessandra Elisa Visinoni discusses the mechanisms for creating Peter

Verkhovensky's dystopia in light of the strategies of manipulation of collective memory, that convinces the masses to follow the elite. As a strategy for manipulating memories, myth is a Trojan horse concealing that it is a "religion of power" posing as consecrated power. According to Jesi, myth sets itself up to speak with the authority of a sanctified past and is synonymous with "truth." Myth is constructed "memory" in the sense of a relation to the past, that creates forms of knowledge as if they were indisputable truths, and is also a mystification of childhood and innocence. With myth-making, culture is forced to fill the void by creating its own present in constant relation to the past in the form of a self-image of its own canon, a screen onto which one can project one's own unresolved problems.

Let us look west again at another example of ideology-production in the Lutheran revolution in the growth of European modernity. Martin Luther articulated his protestant theology of "*sola scriptura*" on the basis of the notion of the monovalence of the Word of God—*accept it, and you are saved*. Faith is not expressed in terms of spirit and *perichoresis* but is rather a pledge one makes in exchange for membership in an ideology. Arguably, the pre-Lutheran church had already done something similar when, under the Roman emperor Constantine, Christian "faith" became something like a political affiliation, according to which a "Christian" repeatedly recites a creed after baptism. With the rejection of papal authority a thousand years later, something still had to be an absolute infallible in the ideology of the new protestant church. For Luther, the Word of God, not the pope, is infallible.

In this context, the idea that the Word of God may not be understandable by all in the same way is unacceptable. Interpretation of the Bible must be kept under tight control in the attitudes of the community of "believers." After all, increased access to the Bible could lead to close scrutiny, thought and discussion that resist ideological hegemony in the faith-group. Consistent with the idea that those who stray from "God's truth" must be eliminated, much of the Protestant legacy is just as steeped in blood and hypocrisy as the pre-Protestant church. Luther was opposed to Erasmus and the spirit of the Renaissance, and was not opposed to the burning of "heretics."

Founding myths can also be benign as well as malignant, as Socrates proposes in Plato's "Republic" with the idea of the "noble lie." John Winthrop, author of "A Modell of Christian Charity," can found a new

society in America on diversity and mutual respect between the rich and poor on the basis of the word of God. For both Luther and Winthrop, the idea that "biblical teachings" may not be a monolith is subversive, one step away from the idea that the "city on a hill" may not be a "blessed people." Winthrop's notion that a Christian—fully justified by faith in the word of God—is subject to none but also a dutiful servant of all both is psychologically appealing and cements the social order. In view of this, any close and real scrutiny of the Bible is risky, if valid ideology-challenging questions are raised—even if the trajectory of the new Puritan society in America heads just as much toward tolerance, in the long run, as toward ideology.

When we study founding myths that have been successful, we note an uneasy relationship between truth and useful fictions. Much of the modern liberal world was shaped by Lutheran changes or developed in a way parallel to the Reformation. Liberal democracy, the expressibility of the individual conscience and the gradual expansion of the moral consideration circle, hopefully to include animals fully in the future, can be seen to some extent as results of the Reformation. To the extent that religious reform is authentic and serves the conscience, it will bear much good fruit, as the Reformation did in many instances. Nonetheless, the "eternally authentic" mythologeme that avoids any question about itself and hides its own artificiality and groundlessness is still ultimately unstable.

Rahel Jaeggi writes that "[i]deologies are, as Adorno knew, at once both true and false, and they also seem to be simultaneously normative and non-normative." Indeed, as Visinoni explains, "memory" becomes a creative act that takes part more in the present than in the past; present actualities generally tend to reveal that ideology, like totalitarian power, strips truth of its core when it systematizes it. Cultural and socioeconomic changes—in the dialectical processes articulated by Hegel and Marx—provide irrepressible glimpses into how ideology *always already* has brought truth into gravity's orbit and converted it to lies. Simultaneously, the sense of a more fundamental, primordial and authentic truth, however elusive, presents itself to freedom-seekers.

Consistent with this, Nietzsche's understanding of will anticipates Derrida's attention to the asystemic freedom of the "unthought irrational," such as metaphor, in the use of language. For the ethicist and linguist Noam Chomsky, language is a generative source of our thinking and intuitive moral theories; Chomsky draws from the thinking of Mi-

khail Bakunin, Dostoevsky's contemporary, that the anarchist impulse is an instinct for freedom revealed in the creative aspect of normal language use. Because truth and the expression of it are dangerous and anarchic, totalitarian regimes must control authentic speech.

4

Confession and Demonism

Symposium participant Plamen Antov discusses how, in "Crime and Punishment," Raskolnikov's childhood nightmare of watching a drunken coachman, encouraged by a crowd of drunken peasants, beat his weak horse to death foretells the approaching "decadent modernism" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By contrast, Ivan Esaulov discusses Dostoevsky's embrace of meekness as a means of defeating externalizing categories such as "victory" and "defeat" that transform an "other" into a "thing." In regard to meekness, Takayoshi Shimizu points out that Prince Myshkin, in "The Idiot," does not preach belief in God. He is infinitely modest, because he thinks he is the most sinful being in the world. He does not judge or repudiate others. His soul consists of infinite compassion, without any blame of or reproach against Rogozhin.

Why is he so modest? *Cosmological union*. In an epileptic attack, Myshkin experiences timeless union with the universe. But this same experience is also one of horrible solitude, forlorn in the darkness of the infinite Cosmos, and returns Myshkin into being *the idiot*. Consistently with this, Takayoshi Shimizu quotes Pascal's "Pensées": "True eloquence scorns eloquence, true morality scorns morality... To scorn philosophy is to be a true philosopher."

For Dostoevsky, the birth trauma of expulsion from Paradise is never forgotten, according to participant Pavel Fokin. Symposium participant Philip Kumanov points out that only an immoral person, deaf to remorse of conscience and incapable of repentance, is capable of deliberately slandering relatives and friends. Dostoevskian goodness is primordial and underlies the earthly structure of human life. The task of Dostoevsky as an artist, then, is to *find a person in a person*, in a person's task of overcoming the "original horror" and returning to Paradise.

What, then, is the method for the recovery of authentic identity? Antov cites Bakhtin's statement that only in confessional self-expression can the last word about a person be given that is really adequate for Dostoevsky. Maria Candida Ghidini discusses the Dostoevskian notion that,

in the sacrament of repentance, the very function of the word is sanctified if it is said aloud. Vital confession internally changes the personality. Moreover, the ruthless auto-vivisection of the underground man can be read as an ardent confession of the soul of Dostoevsky himself.

In regard to confession, Ghidini discusses Foucault's study of the genealogy of the modern subject and the modality of its constitution. Confession is one of the techniques of Western culture for constituting the self as an ideal unity of will and truth, according to Foucault. Modern forms of confession tend to assert the I rather than to overcome it. Rousseau, in his confession, completely trusts the transparency of his "I" to himself; self-consciousness, then, is a given, and sincerity is only a matter of will. By contrast, Christian confession like that of Augustine of Hippo was an act of self-consciousness based on the recognition of an inner secret: there is no way out from oneself, despite a yearning for an original state of innocence. In fact, in the tenth chapter of his *Confessions*, Augustine uses the image of the mirror of St. Paul to hint at the opacity of man for himself: "The mind [*but the Latin word is animus, more than the mind*] is too small to master itself." The Christian confessor is reflected in the mirror of his own self but remains a prisoner in his underground.

Confession for Dostoevsky adds an additional factor, i.e. that of being woven into structures of coercion or domination. The Dostoevskian confessing subject moves in a precarious balance between constructing himself and a thirst for dominance over another. Ghidini points out that Valkovsky's removal of his mask and revelation of evil within himself in "Humiliated and Insulted," for example, is not true and sincere self-revelation but a cynical game between predator and prey. Because he enjoys his own decomposition, Valkovsky confirms the ultimate impossibility of sincerity. His self-righteous, shameless denudation is not to discover the truth about himself but to possess and dominate others.

Dostoevsky here diagnoses an entire epoch, according to Ghidini: the fate of modernity lies in tireless self-referential and inauthentic thinking about itself. One digs incessantly in one's own interior, and contemporaries and future generations are called to the role of priests and judges. Dostoevskian confession, then, expands the notion that the roots of the self—in the Christian tradition, following the example of Augustine—are unattainable. In Dostoevskian confession, not only is sincerity impossible because of the masks we wear in front of others, but

the hero of the underground, for example, plunges deeper into his demonic spiral. Confession, however, can be salvific if it leads through "*la montée aux extrêmes*" to dynamic and authentic tri-being.

Let us return for a moment to the classic Christian confession of Augustine of Hippo. Perhaps in an effort to find his way out of himself, in his *Confessions*, Augustine pushes himself into the edges of himself, or into the part of himself that is real, both in the contemporary sense of "being real" and in the Lacanian sense of "*jouissance*" beyond symbol-systems. By revealing even his nocturnal emissions in his writing, he lays himself bare in an effort to find reality through primary experience. He tries to evade the falseness and deceptiveness of the worldly, or the merely partial, and moves toward the truth of the higher whole by embracing the messy pure infinity of his own createdness. This—not theology and a creed—is his redemptive gift to the reader.

Long before the existence of a longstanding tradition of a Christian creed and theology, Augustine fights the deceptiveness of the false world with expressionistic and somewhat schizophrenic jumping-back-and-forth between philosophy and self-revelation. In fact, Augustine relates the etymological origin of "cogitate" to "con-centration" (or the yoking-together of several different "centers" into a unified concept). Derrida uses Freudian terms like "incompatibles" to claim they exist in textual systems to satisfy a desire, e.g. to produce a "truth." The sublation of difference into a whole is like dreams which yoke together heterogeneous and incompatible elements into a unity. The systematization is messy and "violent," because any conceptual moment in a text is both entirely other to any other such moment and also bears the trace of its other in itself, thereby undermining any possible purity of a principle which could ground philosophy or theology.

This is perhaps a *montée aux extrêmes* that brings to mind the term "schizoanalysis" coined by Deleuze and Guattari: in the raw nakedness of being and in the art of schizophrenics, the positive is positive and the negative is also positive. The unhinged and self-revelatory qualities of Augustine's *Confessions* is an atomic explosion, or a big bang. Augustine's *Confessions* is a hot moment of creation/createdness of a system, a religion that is still new, before it has cooled into form, when randomness is still inseparable from form. Augustine is more Jackson Pollock than Michelangelo, and radical alterity can be seen as an originating ground of Christianity. The *Confessions* reveals the creation chaos of

the doctrinal universe that cooled into the stable Trinity and Holy Church doctrine that Dante eventually inherited.

A thousand years later into the Christian era, Dante's dream-world in "Purgatorio" is structured by established church doctrine. A triadic relation between love, punishment and free will means that spiritual consequences are certain in Dante's trinitarian, stable, created universe. Faith is ideological and doctrinal in Dante's world: Virgil and unbaptized children cannot have faith because they never formally embraced the Church's creed (by contrast, faith in the Gospels is an inner state by which one has the power of the miraculous, and faith for the author of Hebrews is a "hypostasis," or substance or understanding). Dante is of course a poet-dreamer and a spiritual seeker, but he is also a bourgeois, unlike Augustine (by Dante's time, the feudal order was declining and the bourgeoisie was rising), and a moral judge who condemns lawlessness and vice in Italy and comments on the Justinian Code.

Consistent with Freud's notion of wish fulfillment in the dream world, Lucia in Dante's fourteenth-century "Divine Comedy" is accessible for one who has remained on the path. On this basis, "Purgatorio" "con-centers"/conflates theology, physics/geography and psycho-spiritual experience to produce meaning. Gravity and the flow of a river are moral failings. There is no spiritual will to climb when there is no light. Dante has to fight not to fall asleep and dream within his dream-experience. Nonetheless, Dante's redemptive/transformative process should be understood in terms of "spiritualized" physics and chemistry, at least in part, in a reliably meaningful universe. In a scheme in which the heavens are above and accessible in a system of reward open to all believers who make good use of their will, Dante can look forward to Beatrice at the top of the mountain. Everything will be okay for Dante in this triadic dream-world or mandala, because he is still alive and there is still time to do and be as he should (his living flesh gives Dante a privileged status in *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*—there is value in this for Dante as well as for Augustine). In short, in his *Divine Comedy*, Dante is supported by a triadic superstructure to scare the hell out of himself, so to speak, but everything will still be okay in the end, just as it was for Ebenezer Scrooge, in Charles Dickens' "Christmas Carol," after his 3-part dream-world visitation, in the reliably orderly Christian universe. For Dante, even in the dream world, $2 \times 2 \text{ equals } 4$.

Not so for nineteenth-century Dostoevsky. We can contrast Dan-

te's fourteenth-century "dream-world" in "*Purgatorio*" with Raskolnikov's nineteenth-century dream-world of peasants beating of a horse to death. There is little room for ideological easy answers in Dostoevsky's spiritual universe. Symposium participant Thaís Figueiredo Chaves refers to Dante's "*Inferno*" when explaining that characters like Stavrogin build their own "inferno" by denying the immortality of the soul, by failing to believe in something beyond the surface human experience and by interacting with others in a toxic way. The ruin of Stavrogin, who lacks dynamism in his tripartite being-complex, results from his failure to connect with others and his belief that he could find any redemption. Moreover, for Dostoevsky, Stavrogin's descent in stages into his personal abyss and his decision to kill himself are rooted in the demonic.

Prior to "*Purgatorio*," when Dante descends in "*Inferno*," he reads that all hope should be abandoned: similarly, the radical absence of hope is fundamental to understand Stavrogin's suicide in "Demons." Both Dante and Dostoevsky had obsessions with infernal forces and put hell at the center, according to symposium participant Nina Dimitrova, but Dostoevskian redemption only occurs in and after a paradoxical, irrational and non-ideological process riddled with strife and opposition—"*la montée aux extrêmes*."

5

Pneumatology and Theosis

Outside the humble pursuit of self-awareness, one is subject to the demonic, in Dostoevsky's Orthodox Christian "pantheistic gnosticism." Nothing authentic flourishes in egotism. Pavel Fokin explains that "demons" create the illusion of the integrity of their existence by swarming, finding each other and entering into relationships, grouping into companies and gangs easily and swiftly. Having rejected God, however, they bite and despise each other and live alone, even in their crowd.

By contrast, the meek righteous, for Dostoevsky, are forced to remain in visible social loneliness, searching for kindred souls for a long and difficult time—but God is with them, and this is enough for them to maintain vitality, according to Fokin. The meek, in fact, are the strongest in Dostoevsky's world. They do not know abandonment or separation.

In the end, the “demons” will certainly perish, while the meek ones remain. Moreover, the meek always appear in the story’s plot at the moment of threat of disaster, and give impetus to necessary dramatic and metaphysical development. Beyond this, the meek ensure the survival of the world by consistently cultivating the field of *living life*.

Paradise is impossible with “unfinished people,” explains symposium participant Anastasia Gacheva. Man is fatally limited and, as the elder Zosima says in “The Brothers Karamazov”: “Everyone is to blame for everyone before everyone.” But, as bleak as this statement may sound, it affirms the deep unity of all things and beings. Furthermore, in and through “*la montée aux extremes*,” when one can honestly realize that one has no self-awareness, something angelic can happen for one who still has the capacity for humility (i.e., if “salt has not lost its savor” (See Matthew 5:13-14)). Similarly, in “*Purgatorio*,” after a crack appears in Dante’s sleep-world, an angel appears before a gate.¹ This is *grace*.

Moreover, Gacheva explains that, for Dostoevsky, there is a direct connection between the Incarnation, in which human nature has reached its fullness and perfection, and the coming deification of man. In eastern Orthodoxy, divine light leads to theosis. Lazar Milentievich addresses the steps of truth and progressive ascent in, through and beyond “*la montée aux extremes*.” One level of truth settles down in another: one level could not exist without the other. Man, according to Dostoevsky, is the incarnate Word. The human word is unthinkable without the descent and radiation of the Logos. A person cannot shed light on the Logos, but can only absorb and receive this light: the Infinite and One Logos, from which everything that exists is constantly unfolding. On this basis, conscious adult faith is the acquisition by the individual of the meaning of existence.

To this, we can adapt a familiar model to understand what is not defined by egotism and that exceeds, and underlies, our *montées aux extremes*. Isaac Newton, who produced a multivariable calculus, a law-based mathematics of motion based on *three*—a trinity—was considered a “heretic.” For this reason, Newton had conflict with the fac-

¹ Angels represent aspects of divine experience in the Kabbalah. Also, in connection to Dostoevsky, we can think of how the three-part structure of the Divine Comedy evokes the process of “going down to go up” into light in the Hekhalot and Merkabah literature of the Kabbalah.

ulty at Trinity College, Cambridge because he couldn't honestly say he was a "trinitarian" in the sense of the standard theology of his time. Instead, Newton arguably knew how to understand Trinity as *perichoresis* or interdimensional momentum, and he encoded Trinity in and as his three laws of motion.²

In relation to this, let us consider the example of trading in financial markets. Geometric and harmonic patterns are evident in price patterns. When you understand recurring patterns, you understand that a financial chart translates an "orbit" to one-way linearity of time. That is, a price pattern evokes a higher-dimensional happening/reality. From this point of view, a two-dimensional chart does not portray the three-dimensional spiral orbit of price motion as it really is, but chart reading can translate the linear and two-dimensional to the circular and three-dimensional. Moreover, the same principles of harmonics and vertical multi-dimensionality in financial charts are applicable to all reality and life itself, including dynamism in body-soul-spirit.

The interdimensional relation can be understood pneumatically, i.e. in terms of *Spirit*. Highly random price fluctuations, which traders call "noise," are analogous to the relative, ordinary and undeveloped tripartite self. The unjustified Self, in its non-dynamic dimensional involution, manifests as what the language of the New Testament calls "flesh" and "outer darkness"; this, in turn, is analogous to the absurdity and unpredictability of the quantum scale, as opposed to the order of the macro-world seen, for example, as spiral galaxies through a Hubble telescope. There is a revolution/orbit of you (the Self) in a lower "time frame," a comparative micro-orbit. Lower than that is the personality, the self of which we are conscious. We can call this the "Son." "Spirit"

² Most of Newton's writings were biblical interpretation and thousands of pages of alchemical notations. Conventional understanding cannot grasp how this could be. *How could the greatest scientist who ever lived be involved in such superstitious, anachronistic activity?* In fact, Newton's natural philosophy was only one aspect of what alchemists call the "great work," which they do not just reveal to those who are not prepared to understand it. Renaissance magicians like Agrippa were professing Christian seekers. Indeed, a century before Newton, the alchemist John Dee, who was the court mathematician to Elizabeth I, wrote "He who does not understand should either learn or be silent" on the first page of his "Monas Hieroglyphica." John Dee's Table of Nalvae indicates a mathematical model beyond three dimensions.

refers to any inner alchemy, any either ascending or descending movement into or out of ordinary life or what Jesus calls “the outer darkness” (Matthew 22:13). “Spirit” is the relation between “Father” and “Son” and is the energy-substance of the higher dimensions of You. You are a mission, or micro-orbit, within higher dimensions. That is, you are a micro-mission within Higher You, a macro-orbit in relation to lower You but a micro-orbit in relation to Still Higher You, which is still closer to Highest You—all-pervasive, unborn and eternal.

In this context, Jesus’ exhortations in the Gospels, using the metaphors of finance to talk about spiritual principles, are to “profit.” In one of Jesus’ parables, the “landowner” (macrocosmic, higher-dimensional You) calls in the “steward” of his estate (mesocosmic, mid-dimensional higher You) to give an accounting of the management of the estate. (Luke 16). This results in the steward of the estate calling in the debtors (i.e. ordinary You) to “make payment,” i.e. live in time in regular earthly existence, or “outer darkness.” “Fathers,” “landowners,” “stewards” and “sons” all have quite specific meanings in relation to the cosmic reality about which the Gospels teach in coded form. *Turning one “talent” into two, or more—inner alchemy.*

If you authentically do what the Gospels and other spiritual texts/paths instruct with your allotment of Spirit, then you will obtain “eternal life,” that is, the substance of the higher *aetas* will be engendered in you, inexplicably. As Jesus said, “What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?” (Mark 8:34-38) The work of increasing one’s “soul” requires a struggle with the demonic, in *“la montée aux extrêmes.”* In this process, the point of life is to get more of the spirit-material forming the basis of true faith, which is self-organizing when one gets it. Indeed, as Jesus explains to Nicodemus in John 3, one cannot track or understand the ways of Spirit.

On a computer screen used for trading, it is useful first to observe price action in multiple time frames.³ Then, it is useful to divide visible price action into recognizable patterns/quadrants of 1/2/3/4; or into North, East, South, West; or 360 degrees (90°/90°/90°/90°). In this context, the market entry point of a profitable trade can be seen as an inter-dimensional crossing/convergence that happens somewhat unexpected-

³ Trading in multiple time frames evokes the cross-dimensional holographic and fractal universe (“Indra’s net of jewels,” in which every jewel reflects every other jewel and all the jewels).

ly. Since it is an opportunity to profit, one must be ready for this convergence point when it occurs. Considering this analogy in relation to the dynamism of tri-being, we can keep in mind the words of Psalm 40: "I waited patiently for the Lord." Additionally, Jesus said: "Watch—for you don't know what hour your lord will come" (Matthew 24:42).

At the "kairotic" convergence point, or "perfection" ("Be ye perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48)) expressed in spiritual code in the Gospels as "the day your Lord will come," there is the purest efficiency, total reflexivity in and of the center point. Isaac Newton translated the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus, including its phrase "As above, so below." This phrase evokes higher You, in its gravitational orbit, so to speak, in inter-dimensional kairotic relation with yourself (as Jesus said, "I and the father are one." John 10:30). In the absolute center, all dimensional orbits align.⁴ At this justified center is the "terrible holiness," discussed by symposium participant Hugo Percy, that is beyond the distinction between good and evil.⁵ Indeed, the Dostoevskian "*übermensch*" is a law unto himself, because he is justified and aligned with himself and therefore real, i.e. no longer a hypocrite and actor.

The average unjustified person, by contrast, is still subject to the control of the mythical Grand Inquisitor, who stands in the way of ethical self-awareness. The "Church"—in all its forms (actual or metaphorical), denominations and creeds (Christian or otherwise)—antagonizes *living Christ*, as the Grand Inquisitor does, until an individual's "resurrection" that follows "*la montée aux extremes*" of his or her self-sacrificial struggle with the demonic. In connection with this struggle, the four quadrants of the model above can be understood as the standard four directions of a map which, in turn, can symbolize ordinary, involuted, unjustified reality. From this perspective, the number 4 also evokes the symbolism of the four rivers around Eden, as well as the four-letter name of the prohibitory, punitive, jealous, insecure and egotistical deity in the Biblical Eden story, i.e. the Tetragrammaton—*yod, he, vav, he*.⁶

⁴ To give another example, during a north Indian classical raga, listeners appreciate the convergence of macro- and micro- patterns—of the *rag* and the *tal*—that is an expression of completion/balance.

⁵ In eastern Orthodoxy, the divine light is the fire of hell to one with an evil will.

⁶ Consider the involution of Adam and Eve into physical form, or "garments of skin," following the lack of magnanimousness of the Edenic deity, the four

Recalling what Alexey Kozyrev discussed as Dostoevsky's "gnosticism," this four-letter evil demiurge, like the Grand Inquisitor, prohibits access (ultimately unsuccessfully) to the tree of knowledge in the center of the garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9), i.e. ultimate point of origin of the All from Nothing (just as quantum events emerge from nothing, the Planck scale). Dostoevsky, like the Bible, points toward the development from the state of being a *demoniac* into the state of being a *pneumatic*. In the process of this conversion, one must confront oneself as one is: nothing other than the great tempting enemy spirit in the desert of *shunyata*.

The post-lapsarian suffering of Adam and Eve marks "*la montée aux extrêmes*" prior to the completion of the process of justification, which only begins with the essential step of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge at the center. In relation to this, consider the Indian parable about *four* blind men trying to figure out what an elephant is. "It is a rope," says the one feeling the tail. "It is a wall," says the one feeling its side. "It is a spear," says the one feeling the tusk. And so forth.⁷ Still divorced from the holiness of the higher *aetas* and subject to the demonic in *nirmita*, anything is an involution of a higher-dimensional reality but is still only a relative truth. The Sanskrit word "*shunya*" means relativity as well as emptiness.

Nina Dimitrova explains that, in Dostoevsky's exposition of a personality's struggle to find a way out of a spiritual conflict with the demonic, a concrete idea is associated with a certain character, who is not so much a person but a spiritual substance outside of time and space. For example, "Demons" is not a novel at all, according to Dimitrova, but a comparative experimental assessment of ideas-passions and ideas-powers in the choice-process necessary for action—in the paradoxical oppositizing process of "*la montée aux extrêmes*." Indeed, Dostoevsky

letters of the Tetragrammaton (poorly translated as "the Lord God") in Genesis 3: 21-22: "The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the LORD God said, 'The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.'" Also, in Chinese culture, 4 is an inauspicious and evil number.

⁷ Any one of these four men would certainly lose money in the markets. This is why they are "blind" in the parable.

is a pneumatologist, a researcher of spiritual phenomena, a seer of fallen spirits, Dimitrova explains. The fact that “Demons” is about demonism, not madness, is evidenced by its title, and Pushkin's poem of the same name as an epigraph to the novel, and also the epigraph from the Gospel of Luke in Dostoevsky's novel.

The first-century Gospel of Luke expresses the pneumatological dynamism of interdimensional circulation in the spiritual world. More specifically, the inter-dimensional exchange of energies is addressed in western esotericism in so-called “demon-binding,” including the practice related to the *Shem Hamephorash*, or the “72-fold name of God.” The coupling of 72 “angels” with 72 “demons” addresses the macro-energetic balance of the morphic field.

What happens in the dynamic exchange process is addressed in plain view, but expressed symbolically, in the Gospels. In Luke 9 and 10, “Jesus” sends out “72” people to “go into a house” and send out one's “peace.” Whether the householder “accepts” or “rejects” the “peace” (energy), the “72-person,” so to speak, or the “worker,” is instructed to remain and “eat” whatever is given to him, because “the workman is worthy of his meat” (Matthew 10:10, King James version).

When it comes to the power of meekness, the higher truths are expressed symbolically in the Gospels. So-called “demon-binding” is the transfer of energies: the concept of taking the talent from the person who has one talent and does not increase it and giving it to the person who has more talents and is increasing his or her talents (Matthew 25:14-30) is the same concept as reaping where you did not sow (Matthew 25:24). “Talents” are also the same thing as oil in your lamp (Matthew 25, Leviticus 24:2), water turned into wine (John 2:1-11), or a seed eventually blossoming into a tree (Matthew 13:31-32). Paul talked about this material, substance or *life* as the “*soma psuchicon*,” (1 Corinthians 15:44) or spiritual body, and this body is referred to as “wedding garment” in Matthew 22. This process of re-apportionment is actually happening all the time, but we are just not aware of it—just as gravity keeps us from knowing that we are actually racing through space in a planetary orbit at breakneck speed. Jesus' parables express *living life*, or dynamism in Body-Soul-Spirit.

In regard to the relationship of meekness to the “externalization” discussed by Ivan Esaulov, the material/vibration at the “demonic” level of reality has to do with attacking and defeating, revenge, primacy, the value of winning, supposedly proving people to be wrong if you can,

exploitation, dualistic black-and-white all-or-nothing thinking, etc. In short, the demonic. Nevertheless, some ideas that exist in human life are of a higher origin. The idea of self-sacrifice is of a higher origin. As Paul says, such ideas seem to be “foolishness” to people (1 Corinthians 1:25-30). *Only an “idiot” would embrace such notions.*

Some people, including many so-called Christian church-goers, are entirely cynical about the higher ideas, re-interpret the higher ideas in terms of lower ideas and cannot really believe that anyone would authentically seek out self-sacrifice as a goal. People at this level, unsentimentally referred to as “swine” in the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 7:6), lack what Paul calls discernment in 1 Corinthians 12, or the ability to make correct distinctions in the tripartite hierarchical organization in oneself, according to the same principle that a “problem” is only “solved” at a level higher than that of the “problem” (the power of dynamic spiritual hierarchy is also visible in the Gospel story of the Roman centurion who understood that Jesus could heal his servant according to the hierarchy principle before Jesus commended him for his great “faith” (Matthew 8:5-13)).

There is always a dynamic, interdimensional re-apportionment happening, whether or not one can awaken to it, and we all exist in an inter-connected network, even if we do not realize it. If you attack someone, or seek primacy and dominance in some way, as Jesus puts it, the “evil one” comes and takes away your “seed” (Matthew 13:19). But if you do not retaliate against an “evil person,” a transfer happens, and his higher-level body-material is transferred to you. This explains the transfer of talents, reaping where you did not sow, etc., in the New Testament. There is also a power of the “earth” that can be harnessed, or “inherited” for spiritual purposes, through not getting ensnared in the energy of the (demonic) world. So, as Jesus claims, “the meek shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5), which points to the fact that there is a certain geo-force with which the Taoists were also concerned.

Heart/Spirit/Mind integration can produce a non-futile, non-circular, non-demonic *third thing* in an alchemical process of Spirit-growth. This is the key to understanding Jesus’ phrase “take no thought for the morrow” (Matthew 6:25), which is about reducing the activity of the *left hand* and increasing the activity of the *right hand*. When it comes to exercising the will, we should ask ourselves: “What is the primary conviction to which I surrender my will?” This is obvious to the

fundamental ethos/story of the Gospels, but we prefer to live in our personal, futile hells of our own making because we have “withered right hands” (Jesus heals someone’s “withered” “right hand” in the synagogue in Luke 6:6-11). The great irony, as Jesus explains, is that only with self-sacrifice is the “yoke easy, the burden light.” (Matthew 11: 28-30). Consider the story of Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22): only if you are genuinely willing to sacrifice “Isaac,” so to speak, does God then rush in and “angels minister” to you as they did after Jesus resisted temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:11). That is, after “*la montée aux extrêmes*” that produces humility, in emptiness.

Symposium participant Anastasia Gacheva discusses the Dostoevskian notion of future unity or “common synthesis” that overcomes egoism. Loving humility, for Dostoevsky, is the basis not only of spiritual strength but also of true freedom. Sacrificial self-giving is a necessary condition for the true revelation of the personality in its spiritual and moral maturity. The justification of man, for Dostoevsky, in turn justifies history and sets the vector of movement into the future toward *apocatastasis*, the salvation of all.

The “psychobiology,” so to speak, of the “Dostoevskian synthesis” is expressed in Zosima’s teachings in “The Brothers Karamazov” about the Tabor light: it transforms the material nature of the body into a different, supernatural quality. The psychological experience of the Dostoevskian synthesis is described in Sanskrit as “*Sat Chit Ananda*,” or *Being Consciousness Bliss*. A “law of physics” pertinent to the Dostoevskian synthesis is expressed in the Buddhist Heart Sutra: “Form is emptiness and emptiness is form.”

Finally, the “mathematical formula” of the Dostoevskian synthesis is $2 \times 2 = 5$.

II. BOOK REVIEWS

Michael T. Miller, *Ben Ammi Ben Israel: Black Theology, Theodicy and Judaism in the Thought of African Hebrew Israelite Messiah*. 2025. Bloomsbury, 254pp. £76.50 hardback, ISBN: 9781350295155.

Eugene Kuzmin (Independent Scholar, Jerusalem, Israel)

This is a brief, but thorough study, which presents Ben Ammi Ben Israel from different points of view, considering various aspects and the wider context. The author deals with the modern religious African Hebrew Israelite movement, calmly pursuing objective truth in accordance with Leopold von Ranke's nineteenth-century research principle – *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*. The book's narrative serenely move through recent, disturbing political issues without ever relinquishing the high principle of objectivity and academic standards.

The book's title is sufficiently descriptive and captures the theme – more the ideology than the history of the independent and original African Hebrew Israelite group founded by Ben Ammi Ben Israel (1939–2014). The introduction presents the main historical and biographical background, divided into sections to make its important narrative clearer. “By Means of a Beginning: History, Race and Truth” concerns Ben Ammi's attitude to the themes in its title, which are easily defensible as starting points. Judaism appeals to tradition and sacred history rather than dogmas and doctrines. Its origin in a tribal cult makes the justification of a new group in this religion of special importance, and this follows in the section “As in the Days of Noah: Eschatology and Apocalypticism.” Every new movement ought to explain its aims so as best to reflect the present and past.

Naturally, the narrative leads to “Black Messiah: Ben Ammi Yeshua and Messianism,” revealing a very curious topic. Ben Ammi and his community consciously set aside their Christian roots to absorb Judaism. The influence of Christianity on Judaism (and of course vice versa) is not rare in the history of these religions. Yet it is commonly ac-

cepted that one should keep silent about exogamous inspirations. Bens Ammi absorbs Christian notions into his speculations. “Pneumatic Immanence: God, Ontology and Law” and “Divine Justice/Deserved Liberation: Suffering, Agency and Chosenness” situate discussion of basic theological problems in a wide context, referring to their prior religious background and drawing comparison with parallel ideas in Judaism. “The Vital Self: Body, Soul, Spirit, World” continues to pursue theological problems, but includes more personal individual aspects, presenting some of Ben Ammi’s original theories, theories which sound very modern, even contemporary, and exceeding any narrow religious or national regulations. “The Power to Define: Words, Ideas, Names and Scripture” further displays original theories, this time possessing a certain attraction and similarity to ideas mainly associated with Kabbalah and Western esotericism. “Revolutionary Conservatism: Social Theory, Human Life and Gender” illustrates the view of Ben Ammi and his community on the place of a person in society, in tradition, in sex, marriage and nation. Finally, the conclusion introduces Ben Ammi’s ideas into the wider context of various traditions of Black theology, Kabbalah (Lurianic), and Gnosticism (Hans Jonas).

That is not the first study of Ben Ammi’s movement. However, Michael Miller’s book is more systematic than previous efforts. It is the result of more than ten years of research, including the examination of documents in the community’s library in Dimona, Israel. The book succinctly, brilliantly, and comprehensively covers a wide spectrum of questions. The organization of problems reflects a view from the outside rather than the inside. However, this makes the book more comprehensible to the “general reader.” Miller’s study answers the questions outsiders would most readily ask about a modern religious movement.

Douglas Giles, *Left Wing, Right Wing, People, and Power: The Core Dynamics of Political Action*, 2024. 106pp., self-published, €8.99 paperback, ISBN: 9781735880839

Jonathan Bruce (Independent Scholar Bloomington, IN, USA)

In his book *Left Wing, Right Wing, People, and Power: The Core Dynamics of Political Action*, Douglas Giles elucidates difficult philosophical concepts for a broad readership. When examining the left-wing/right-wing divide, Giles begins by constructing a theoretical base emphasizing social dynamics. For Giles, communications and actions in society are an individual's expansions into social space. This factor underlies his understanding of power, which manifests a continuum, from near absolute concentrations of power to uniformly circulating power. Power, in turn, is an integral factor in forming an individual's freedom in social interactions, and it appears in a complex array of reciprocal interdependencies among people. These factors permeate all political struggles.

Giles emphasizes the individual's need to receive recognition from others; such recognition is a condition for self-realization. Forms of power aim at constituting the continuity of the self, and an individual's acts of domination over others are the process by which the individual constructs the self. For Giles, these factors must be understood as comprising both the continua of politics and the principle that, when there is a flow of constructive communication, power enables freedom.

Having formed this theoretical basis, Giles then turns to history. Modern conceptions of "left wing" and "right wing" developed from French politics in the 1700s and early 1800s. The French Revolution attempted a radical transformation of France's monarchical power structure. In this context, Giles touches on Rousseau's influential idea of the social contract: a new power structure requiring the participation of every individual in decision-making will yield the general will of the community. For Rousseau, when government is directed by the general will it reflects the interests of the people as a whole, rather than the interests of the few. Rousseau's "general will," however, is inherently unstable.

As a result, according to Giles, the French revolutionaries' efforts to replace the stable but tyrannical power structure with a Rousseauist power structure contributed, at least in part, to the revolution's failure.

Similar criticisms of the French Revolution were made by Edmund Burke and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: (Giles classifies their political philosophies as "right wing") Burke argued for the application of the values embedded in tradition to new political circumstances, in opposition to the radical values of the French Revolution. For Burke, a nation's traditions are the repository of civilization, the source of ethical life, and even the arbiter of reason itself. Similarly, for Hegel, all institutions and individuals should obey the nation's *Sittlichkeit*, the "ethical behavior grounded in custom and tradition and developed through habit and imitation in accordance with the objective laws of the community." On this basis, Hegel's political philosophy (or the philosophy of the "Right Hegelians") called for a constitutional monarchy – the rule of a sovereign holding power but bound to the law of the constitution, which expressed the interests of the aristocracy.

Giles lays out sometimes starkly different trajectories of right-wing thought, though they share a fundamental belief about how power should be structured. The Federalists in the newly formed United States were anti-monarchists, opposed to the idea of a political structure having a single sovereign and concerned with the preservation of wealth and privilege. Giles then proceeds to a discussion of how the libertarian trajectory of right-wing thinking focused on the right to revolt against tyranny. The political philosophy of Thomas Hobbes is perhaps Giles' most extreme "right-wing" example: Hobbes thought that concentrating power in a single sovereign was optimal for achieving the good, and proposed a power structure in which citizens sacrifice freedom to gain the good of security. For Giles, this is a more extreme version of the concentration of power advocated by conservatives such as Burke, the Federalists and the Right Hegelians.

Rebellious movements, for Giles, are struggles for social liberties, political recognition and material resources. The core of politics is the disagreement over how power should be structured. Left-wing civil rights struggles seek legal recognition and increased equality for oppressed minorities and those who are disempowered in the prevailing power structure. Giles argues that this particular struggle has more numerous dimensions than Karl Marx's vision of a dualistic class struggle

over the means of economic production. For Giles, there is definitely an economic component in power concentration, the focus of Marx and like-minded thinkers, but economic power is as much a product of structural power concentration as a cause of class hierarchy.

For Giles, a misunderstanding inherent to the Left–Right political spectrum is that the political conflict is between individual rights (right-wing) and State authority (left-wing). In fact, for Giles, Burke, the Federalists, and the Right Hegelians show that the right-wing ideological position does not aim to remove power from the state or government but to restrict it.

Perhaps Giles' most important point is that, when social institutions welcome people's input and involvement, power relations are less coercive, and the chance of the malicious exercise of power is reduced. When social power structures are open, people, through their own actions, can enhance or impoverish their social circumstances and power relations. *Left Wing, Right Wing, People, and Power: The Core Dynamics of Political Action* introduces a broad readership to these issues.

III. ASPIRATION CORNER

Superior Moral Being: A Philosophical Inquiry into Ethical AI

Fu-Shoun Mao (University of Sofia)

Abstract: The paper examines philosophical themes underlying practical efforts to develop artificial intelligence systems aligned with societal and ethical norms. Proponents of ethical AI systems hold up the disembodied computational model of the Turing machine as an ideal medium for ethical reasoning, in a re-surfacing of the notion of Descartes' disembodied, rational thinking thing as touchstone of perfect knowledge and human identity. However, the concealment that is the phenomenon of technology, as understood by Heidegger and Arendt, leads this author to conclude that the electronic brain in the form of AI is wholly unsuited to the kind of deliberation and freedom that is key to ethical being.

Keywords: Arendt, Artificial Intelligence, Ethical AI, Chinese Room, Heidegger, Searle

Introduction

Advances in the field of artificial intelligence are accelerating with a rapidity that compels experts to warn of the imminent arrival of superior beings in electro-mechanical form, going by the clock of Moore's Law. Already unquestioned is the competence of intelligent machinery in a wide range of complex tasks: playing chess, predicting the weather, launching missiles, the list grows longer. Henry Kissinger foretells of a future in upheaval were AI to be unleashed without restraint:

But that order is now in upheaval amid a new, even more sweeping technological revolution whose consequences we have failed to fully reckon with, and whose culmination may be a world relying on machines powered by data and algorithms and ungoverned by ethical or philosophical norms.¹

¹ Henry Kissinger, "How the Enlightenment Ends," *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 1, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/06/henry-kissinger-ai-could-mean-the-end-of-human-history/559124/>.

Still, there is a glimmer of hope in the minds of techno-optimists, that if the electronic brain can be made smarter, then in theory, it can also be made a more ethical, more decent version of human being. With ever-faster processing power, larger data sets, and smarter algorithms, an electronic brain might be the answer to humankind's flawed ethical judgment, amply demonstrated throughout history. The future advancement of AI might even lead to the birth of a superior moral being, to enhance or to replace the faulty judgment of the human being.

This paper looks at philosophical themes underlying proposals to develop AI systems aligned with societal and ethical norms. To identify a thing as ethical or moral is to imbue it with the character of and capacity for virtuous behavior as defined by the priorities and norms of the broader society. Yet in the absence of the intelligent machine's self-determined notion of the good, the determinant of what is or is not ethical will be in the eye of the human beholder. In the range of views regarding the potential conscious states of computational entities, I hew closer to the negative stance of John Searle and Hubert Dreyfus holding that the computational theory of mind is a theory without ontological significance. From this perspective, this paper resists the view that AI, in either its strong or weak forms, can be the potential site for the realization of ethical being.

Current research in ethical AI systems is advancing in three broad directions - machine ethics: machines capable of independent moral decision making; AI moral advisors: systems programmed to advise the human on ethical and moral matters, though final decision making remains the preserve of the human; and AI Socratic assistants: facilitating the individual thought process via algorithmic deliberation and interaction.² Of the three approaches, only machine ethics presumes a capacity for reasoning and judgment rooted in strong AI that is, a computational machine possessed of subjective consciousness and generalized intelligence.

This paper will consider these developmental strains of ethical AI in light of the underlying philosophical suppositions in computational theory of mind and its particular interpretation of Descartes' substance dualism.

² Yuxin Liu, Adam Moore, Jamie Webb, Shannon Vallor. "Artificial Moral Advisors: A New Perspective from Moral Psychology," In *AIES '22*, Oxford, United Kingdom, August 1-3, 2022. Oxford: Association for Computing Machinery, Inc, 436-445. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3514094.3534139>

The Turing Test for Morality

The computational theory of mind proposes that the mind operates in a manner like that of a computer in that "...core mental processes (e.g., reasoning, decision-making, and problem solving) are computations similar in important respects to computations executed by a Turing machine."³ If the theory holds, then an electronic brain could advance to the point where it would be indistinguishable from the human mind.

In anticipation of the arrival of artificial general intelligence, Alan Turing conceived of a behavioral test of intelligence based upon the use of language. A computer that carries on a meaningful conversation with another human being may be assumed to be at a level of intelligence equal to or greater than that of a human. For Turing, the external artifact of intelligence is proof of presence of mind.⁴

It is a strict logical consequence of behaviorism that if a machine could emit exactly the same sort of behavior that a human emits with regard to some cognitive phenomenon, then the machine has that cognitive phenomenon in exactly the same sense that the human does.⁵

On the day "Can machines think?" is answered in the affirmative, the immediate successor question would be, "Can machines be good?" Granting behaviorism as a sound basis for identifying intelligence, then it may also serve as a basis for determining ethicality and morality.

Let us reapply the Turing test for ethical judgment or morality. A computer, that demonstrates specified behavior consistent with the prototypical morally virtuous and societally responsible person, may likewise be judged to have a presence of mind suitable for ethical judgment and conduct. As in the original test for intelligence, the substrate of its host, be it a microchip or person behind a wall, would not matter. Appearance is the determinant of essential being.

³ Michael Rescorla, "The Computational Theory of Mind", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), accessed May 23, 2024, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/computational-mind/>.

⁴ Alan M. Turing, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence." *Mind* Volume LIX, Issue 236 (October 1950): 433-460, <https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/LIX.236.433>.

⁵ John R. Searle, "The Turing Test: 55 Years Later," in *Parsing the Turing Test Philosophical and Methodological Issues in the Quest for the Thinking Computer* (Springer Science + Business Media B.V., 2009) 140.

Mental Outsourcing

The expansion of computational power and datasets, opens up the imagination to the possibility of beings with superior knowledge and judgment. Giubilini and Savulescu make the case for stepping aside to let smarter beings do the hard tasks of ethical thinking for humankind:

In this way, the software would perform all the activities that would allow us to make (nearly) optimal moral choices but that we, as humans, usually do not and/or cannot perform because of lack of the necessary mental resources or time (for instance going through all the possible options and assessing all the expected utilities of our possible choices).⁶

Outsourcing ethical judgment to computational processes presupposes the formalizability of human thinking and sociability - logical reasoning and mathematical sets in place of opinion and emotion, what Hubert Dreyfus calls the formalizability of human-ness:

In brief, the belief in the possibility of AI, given present computers, is the belief that all that is essential to human intelligence can be formalized.⁷

Statistically, the number of permutations and combinations of human interactions would exceed the capacity of any known processing power now and in the future. Codifying behavior and its potential ethical courses would be a practical impossibility. Further, ambiguity prevails in everyday circumstance, so the question of what is right is often indeterminate. The particular facts of a circumstance reduced to generalized variables and functions makes little sense in a world in which the permutations outstrip the carrying capacity of any conceivable hardware in the future. In this light, outsourcing ethical judgment to an algorithm is not only impractical, it lacks meaning in the perspective of Heidegger.

Dreyfus' statement about the Heideggerian hammer in relation to the meaningfulness of things ready-at-hand applies equally to the ethics of what is at hand.

⁶ Alberto Giubilini and Julian Savulescu. "The Artificial Moral Advisor. The 'Ideal Observer' Meets Artificial Intelligence," *Philosophy and Technology* 31, (2018): 172, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-017-0285-z>.

⁷ Hubert L. Dreyfus. "Why Computers Must Have Bodies in Order to Be Intelligent," *The Review of Metaphysics* 21, no. 1 (September 1967): 14.

That is, Heidegger saw that assigning function predicates to brute facts couldn't capture the meaningful organization of the everyday world of equipment which we are always already in, and in which alone hammering makes sense.⁸

A human being inhabits a body in a concrete place and time. To outsource the ethical judgment from the particular situation to the abstraction of symbols would be to outsource relevance and meaning.

The Archimedean Point

Ethical AI is a technological return to Cartesian dualism. Descartes' "I think, therefore I am," declares the thinking as substance distinct from the body. Being bound to no material thing, the computation (which Descartes considered a pure form of the thinking) forms an advantageous hinge of objectivity, free from terrestrial prejudice. It represents the possibility of perceiving with perfect clarity and certainty. What is known as Descartes' Archimedean point:

Archimedes used to demand just one firm and immovable point in order to shift the entire earth; so I too can hope for great things if I manage to find just one thing, however slight, that is certain and unshakeable.⁹

To the computationalist, the cogito looks to be a form of disembodied computation of the kind specified in a universal Turing machine. 'A Turing-style model proceeds at a very abstract level, not saying whether mental computations are implemented by physical stuff or Cartesian soul-stuff.'¹⁰ Conceivably anywhere there is a processor, symbol manipulator, memory, such as in microchips or neurons, there can be a Turing machine. Analogous to Cartesian thinking, computation is independent of its substrate.

⁸ Hubert L. Dreyfus. "Standing Up to Analytic Philosophy and Artificial Intelligence at MIT in the Sixties," In *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, March 29, 2013, 81. Newark, Delaware: The American Philosophical Association.

⁹ René Descartes. *Meditations, The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, v. II, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985), 16.

¹⁰ Rescorla, "The Computational Theory of Mind."

Liberation from the constraints of body unleashes the mind. The Turing separation of software from hardware unleashes the computation. Theoretically, given a limitless supply of microprocessors, there can be no limits to what AI can know. “If intelligence is computation, then more and more powerful computers are AI’s analogs to the increasingly powerful particle accelerators used by physicists to probe the deep structure of matter.”¹¹ Look far enough to the future and the Kantian barrier of the thing-in-itself could fall. Though the breakthrough would not be a human accomplishment as humans cannot not be the ones to surpass their own categories; the surpassing would be the action of an all-seeing, all-knowing computing intelligence.

Computation aligns with the perspective that no particular body and no material thing defines it; thus centered at the Archimedean point, computation is positioned to render judgments with perfect objectivity. Yet objectivity is not an equivalence to relevance. Judgments rendered at objective distance from actuality are not judgments from actuality, but rather deductive statements from abstraction and concepts.

Concealment

What AI can know with perfect objectivity is distinct from the question of meaning. The computational process itself is devoid of significance if not understood in a way that aligns with actual being either by the intelligent machine itself or by the human observer. It is an epistemology determined prior to ontology.

In asking the question “Can machines think?” or “Can machines be good?” the prior question, “Are machines beings?” has remained unanswered. This gets into the difficulties raised by Heidegger in the three prejudices of the question of being:

1. Being is the most universal concept.
2. Being is indefinable, “Indeed being cannot be understood as being.”
3. Being is self-evident. Being is after all, the closest thing, and yet least understood.¹²

John Searle’s Chinese Room argument underscores this question of

¹¹ Wendell Wallach and Collin Allen, *Moral Machines, Teaching Robots Right from Wrong* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2009), 49.

¹² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: State University of New York Press: 1996) 2.

being in the context of the behaviorist test for consciousness. Searle modifies Turing's scenario by shifting the conversation from English to Chinese. The entity concealed behind the wall does not understand Chinese but appears to converse in Chinese by performing rule and table lookups. The unseen entity, as symbol manipulator, has no idea what is being said ("...it is just so many meaningless squiggles"), but with the aid of sufficiently large reference tables and quick-enough responses appears to comprehend. Searle's intention is to point out that the symbol manipulator lacks a presence of mind.

As far as the Chinese is concerned, I simply behave like a computer; I perform computational operations on formally specified elements. For the purposes of the Chinese, I am simply an instantiation of the computer program.¹³

Responding to Searle's criticism of the missing meaning maker, advocates of strong AI respond that the absence of comprehension is not material to the practicalities of interaction in the real world. It is a given conditionality that a certain degree of opacity is the modus of all communication and interaction in the real world. A symmetrical opacity prevails when any two persons converse for neither party can see through the cranial cavity of the other to be certain they are not actually talking to a zombie after all. Practically speaking, what is unspoken and unseen does not sink the communication; it is intrinsic to it. The wall that separates Turing's conversationalists is the everyday unseen and unspoken in human sociability.

This is the point Wallach and Allen make in *Moral Machines*. Genuine understanding of the type Searle portrays, is not relevant to the practical task of programming smart machines in the real-world.

Arguments against AMAs [Automated Moral Advisors] based on Searle's position are of little consequence in practical applications...Searle's "genuine understanding" marks a distinction without a behavioral difference. Nothing in Searle's argument rules out the possibility of producing AMAs that are behaviorally indistinguishable from genuine moral agents. Thus, his conception of con-

¹³ John R. Searle, "Minds, brains, and programs," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 3, (1980): 419, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X00005756>.

scious, intentional understanding is simply irrelevant to the practical issues of how to make (ro)bots behave ethically.¹⁴

Still, the distinction remains between speaking to a zombie and speaking to a real person. One would feel betrayed if it turned out the other person was not real and only pretending to understand. Why that is so may relate to Heidegger's concept of concealment as that effect on Being which entails "1. having no awareness of, and 2. no possible context."¹⁵ The concealment is a metaphorical trap door to an ontological void.

According to Heidegger, for an entity to be is for it to stand in a context of constitutive relations. The lack of any possible context is thus an ontological concealment – the absence of the conditions under which the entity in question could manifest itself in being.¹⁶

Its converse, the unconcealment, presents the heretofore unknown to us in the context of the world and its constitutive relations to allow for the thing to be finally encountered. Engaging in a genuine dialogue with another human being is an unconcealment in that constitutive relations are opened up. For this reason, engagement with a universal Turing machine cannot lead to genuine dialogue and thus remains concealed.

Liberation from Ethics

The return to Cartesian dualism in the conception of strong AI gives the algorithm a status of mind as distinct from the body such that to compute is to exist. Granting the computational ghost in the machine, ethical AI is a layering of morality over the algorithm, raising further questions as to who or what is responsible for the actions of an algorithm, as there is neither body, place, nor time, aside from computer codes and microchips.

Hannah Arendt believes that the point of technology is to dispense with the question altogether, for technology's purpose is to overcome the limitations of the body, that is, to be free of responsibility for the body. She observes that technology is a manifestation of the "rebellion against human existence," the impulse to evade the bounds of nature. Arendt puts it this way:

¹⁴ Wendell Wallach and Collin Allen. *Moral Machines*, 49.

¹⁵ Mark A. Wrathall. *Heidegger and Unconcealment, Truth, Language, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, November 2010) 2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

For some time now, a great many scientific endeavors have been directed toward making life also "artificial," toward cutting the last tie through which even man belongs among the children of nature. It is the same desire to escape from imprisonment to the earth...This future man, whom the scientists tell us they will produce in no more than a hundred years, seems to be possessed by a rebellion against human existence...¹⁷

What is nature after all, but essential reality, and its evasion by technology a denial of reality. Just as technology is about freeing the human from nature, AI ethics is about freeing ethics from the human. Both are attempts to remove the subject from the messy reality of context. Absent context, ethical AI has no accountability and relates less to the making of humanity more ethical, than the avoidance humanity's ethical responsibilities.

Deliberation

According to Aristotle, the beginning of ethics is human action aimed at some good. "Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and choice, is thought to aim at some good."¹⁸ Aristotle's ethical being is animated by an internal notion of the good. To build a better being then, is to start from a self-determined idea of what the being is for.

A universal Turing machine, on the other hand, is not rooted in any particular concrete being and therefore is not in possession of an internal notion of the good. Neither can it deliberate about the things in its purview since the algorithm pre-determines its course of actions. According to Aristotle, deliberation can only be about the things that can be done by one's own efforts.

We deliberate about things that are in our power and can be done; and these are in fact what is left ... Now every class of men deliberates about the things that can be done by their own efforts.¹⁹

What we choose to do, whether noble or base, is the result of deliberation, and is inseparable from human action.

¹⁷ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998) 2.

¹⁸ Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), I.1 1094a1-2.

¹⁹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, III.3 1111b31-35.

Now if it is in our power to do noble or base acts, and likewise in our power not to do them, and this was what being good or bad meant, then it is in our power to be virtuous or vicious.”²⁰

Action is doing something in the world. Acknowledging there is no being in the world without others, actions can only be done in the society of persons. All actions are ethical by nature. For Arendt human action is not even imaginable outside of society.

All human activities are conditioned by the fact that men live together, but it is only action that cannot even be imagined outside the society of men.²¹

Seen in this way, ethical AI is distinct from human action and ethics. Ethical computation bears no relation to human deliberation for it cannot choose to do noble or base acts, nor discover perspectives outside the self. Ethical judgment can only be done by beings free to be ethical. The electronic brain only has judgments given to it in computation, and thus opposing the algorithm is not possible for it. Therefore, ethical AI is not free to be ethical.

Conclusion

This paper considered the philosophical ground for efforts to bring about new forms of artificial intelligence possessing the capacity for self-determined ethical action, whose possibility flips Kissinger’s warning into reasons for optimism. For technological optimists, a world governed by data and algorithms is a liberation from human and terrestrial prejudices.

From the perspective of ethical AI as variant of strong AI, Turing’s idealized mind as information processing agent is transformed into a being of moral virtue guided by ethical programming heuristics. Its presentation as a bulwark against the misuse of smart technology and further, a salvation for the ethical failings of humanity in general, can be drawn on the intellectual grounds of the computational theory of mind and a particular interpretation of Descartes’ substance dualism.

This techno-optimism has a dark side in the view of Heidegger and Arendt, for technology emerges from the desire for evasion and con-

²⁰ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, III.3 1113b5–10.

²¹ Arendt, *Human Condition*, 22.

cealment. And what better concealment than a Cartesian ghost in the machine to afford AI its Archimedean point from nowhere, thereby transcending humanistic failings and prejudices. The problem, then, becomes at such distance from human concerns, the AI entity renders itself irrelevant to the being of humans in their constitutive environment. Ethical AI, by its design, is distinct and separate from human action and ethics. Artificial intelligence is not free to change its programming in response to difficult quandaries, neither can it take action outside of pre-ordained heuristics. Ethical judgment remains the purview of beings free to be ethical.

Work: Past, Present, Future – Some Specters of Marx

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Abstract: According to three influential French theorists, the “greatness” of Marx (Deleuze) consists in his status as an “initiator of discursive practices” (Foucault) and in his spectral living-on (Derrida). As respectively Foucault and Derrida argue, the discursive effect of Marx’s theorizing gives reason to characterize Marx as a “transdiscursive” author who remains relevant, influential, and determinate for our contemporary discourse. In this paper, I put this hypothesis to the test by turning to some of Marx’s ideas on labour, alienation, and emancipation as they appear in the work of Hannah Arendt and the contemporary political theorist Isabell Lorey. In doing so, this paper addresses the question: is Marx indeed still relevant for our contemporary economic and political discourse?

Keywords: Labour, Estrangement, Precarity, Emancipation, Marx, Arendt, Lorey

Introduction

Shortly before he died, Gilles Deleuze expressed his intention to write one last book, bearing the title: ‘Greatness of Marx’. Unfortunately, he never did. By then, Michel Foucault, in his influential essay ‘What is an author?’, had already identified Marx as one of the most important “initiators of discursive practices”, whose “distinctive contribution”, he writes, lies in “that they produced not only their own work, but the possibility and the rules of formation of other texts.”¹ And indeed, to this very day, the specters of Marx are haunting us, Jacques Derrida argued in 1993: the Marxist inheritance remains relevant, influential and deter-

¹ Michel Foucault, “What is an author?” in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice. Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977), 131.

minate for our contemporary discourse.²

In this paper, I put to the test that which these three influential French theorists, each in their own way, have tried to express: the “greatness” of Marx (Deleuze), which consists in his “transdiscursive” position (Foucault)³ and his spectral living-on (Derrida). To this end, the paper traces some ideas of Marx originating from his theorizing on labour, alienation, and emancipation. My hypothesis is that *the discursive effect of some of Marx’s theorizing about labour gives reason to characterize Marx as a transdiscursive author who remains relevant for our contemporary discourse*. Indeed, Foucault insinuates that the work of Marx gave rise to an “endless possibility of discourse.”⁴

Hannah Arendt holds an ambivalent position towards Marx. After having written *The Origins of Totalitarianism* in 1951, Arendt started working on a project bearing the title “Totalitarian Elements in Marxism”, in which she attempted to uncover the conditions of possibility for (mis)use of Marx’s thought for totalitarianism, which Arendt considered to be “the central event of our times”.⁵ In a spin-off of this project, a lecture series called “Karl Marx and the Tradition of Western Political Thought”, Arendt makes the following remark:

That Marx still looms so large in our present world is indeed the measure of his greatness. That he could prove of use to totalitarianism (though certainly he can never be said to have been its ‘cause’) is a sign of the actual relevance of his thought, even though at the same time it is also the measure of his ultimate failure.⁶

Although Arendt never finished her Marx-project, many of its themes found their way into her later writings, most notably *The Human Condition* (1958), where she prefigures not only Deleuze, but also Foucault and Derrida, by pointing to “the great wealth of Marxian ideas and insights”, as well as “the generations of authors whom

² See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994).

³ Foucault, “What is an author?” 131.

⁴ Foucault, “What is an author?” 131, my emphasis.

⁵ Hannah Arendt, “Karl Marx and the Tradition of Western Political Thought,” *Social Research* 69, no.2 (Summer 2002), 282.

⁶ Arendt, “Karl Marx,” 282.

[Marx] has “supported.””⁷

On the other hand, Arendt was very critical of Marx. “In the following chapter, Karl Marx will be criticized”, she announced just before making the remarks above. This antagonism can also be found in the short excerpt of her lecture series I just quoted. This critique, however, does not affect the status of Marx as a founder of discursivity; it rather invigorates it. What defines the “initiators of discursive practices”, according to Foucault, is precisely that they “not only made possible a certain number of analogies that could be adopted by future texts, but they also made possible a certain number of *differences*.”⁸ As we will see, it appears that Marx lives on especially by means of differences or alterations; by authors who reinterpret, criticize, or even declare obsolete his ideas. The latter holds particularly true for the third and last author in the sequence of this paper: the German political theorist Isabell Lorey who, in her book *State of Insecurity* (2015), aims to uncover what defines the economy and the politics of the present moment.⁹

The fourfold “space of spectrality” below – to use a Derridean term – is traversed by the central theme of work (past, present, future). The first section is concerned with blurring distinctions: it first treats Marx’s conceptualization of labour and its relation to the man/animal limit, and then turns to Arendt’s critique that Marx fails to differentiate labour from what she calls “work.” After having outlined Arendt’s distinction between labour, work and action elaborated in *The Human Condition*, I draw on the Italian Marxist philosopher Paolo Virno and Lorey to argue that the fading boundaries between these three activities is precisely what characterizes work in the 21st century. The second section departs from the distinction between productive and unproductive labor, theorized by Marx and celebrated by Arendt but discarded by Loray, because it seems that, with the rise of self-employment, even “unproductive” workers have become productive and thus “capitalized.” The third section discusses the succession of “alienation”, as developed by Marx, to “precarization”, as described by Loray, as being the central concept for understanding the worker’s position within the capitalist

⁷ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018), 79.

⁸ Foucault, “What is an author?” 132, my emphasis.

⁹ Isabell Lorey, *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*, trans. Aileen Derieg (London/New York: Verso, 2015), 1.

system. The fourth and final section demonstrates how Marx's ideas on revolution, emancipation, and freedom, via the critique of Arendt, become toned to "civil disobedience" and "immanent exodus" by Loray. The paper ends by addressing the question: is Marx indeed still relevant for our contemporary economic and political discourse?

Blurring distinctions: from labour to work and back

In a distant past, Aristotle defined man as a *zoön logon echon*: an animal with language, or reason. The first axiom of Marx by which one might illuminate his transdiscursive position is that *labour* rather than *logos* must be regarded as the anthropological difference. "[Men] begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence", Marx claims in *The German Ideology*.¹⁰ "Admittedly animals also produce", he had written just a few years earlier, "[but the animal] produces only under the dominion of immediate physical need, whilst man produces even when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom therefrom."¹¹ It is thus in the act of free production that the essence of man is to be found. In fact, it is only because of this axiom that man can be said to be estranged from himself, when he is estranged from his labour: a point to which I will return later. In *Capital*, then, Marx argues that labour should furthermore be regarded as "an eternal nature-imposed necessity, without which", he states, "there can be no material exchanges between man and Nature, and therefore no life."¹² It is by labour that we transform the materials provided to us by nature, and as such, shape our lifeworld.

Given the contempt for labour which characterized the ancient Greeks, Arendt considered this positive evaluation of labour to be a revolutionary element of Marx's thought. However, what she finds problematic, is Marx's *concept* of labour. "In the following chapter, Karl Marx will be criticized" – the sentence I quoted above opens Arendt's

¹⁰ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The German Ideology," in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, vol. 5, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 31.

¹¹ Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844", in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, vol. 3, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 276.

¹² Karl Marx, "Capital Volume 1", in *Marx Engels Collected Works*, vol. 35, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 53. Cf. Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844" 275-6.

discussion of labour in *The Human Condition*. One of these criticisms concerns what we might call an “unthought” of Marx. That is to say, Arendt accuses Marx of not making a distinction between labour, on the one hand, and work, on the other.

Labour, according to Arendt, is indeed “man’s metabolism with nature”: it is the biological process of satisfying our bodily needs, which is needed to sustain human life. Because these bodily needs, like food and water, are of a recurring nature, the labouring-activity is endlessly repetitive, lacking a clear beginning and end.¹³ Therefore, labour actually has more to do with consumption and necessity than with production and freedom, Arendt argues.¹⁴ Because this necessity-driven existence is what we *share* with other living organisms, labour falls short in constituting a, let alone *the*, anthropological difference.

Work, on the other hand, designates for Arendt the process of producing durable objects. In contrast to the activity of labour, work does have a definite beginning and end, and leaves a durable product behind. So whereas the *animal laborans* “is subject to the necessity of its own life”, Arendt argues, *homo faber* presents itself as “the master of all nature”, by transforming it into a livable world.¹⁵ Yet in Marx’s writing, this distinction between labour and work, necessity and freedom, transience and durability, has blurred, according to Arendt, leading to “fundamental and flagrant contradictions” in his works.¹⁶

Although work is a key aspect of the human condition for Arendt, it is in political *action* – which is conditioned by speech – that she believes human distinctiveness and freedom is to be found. It is only in acting that man appeals to his unique capacity to start something new and unexpected. Speech and action, in turn, are conditioned by a public space. “Action and speech”, Arendt remarks, “need the surrounding *presence of others* no less than fabrication needs the surrounding pres-

¹³ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 96-101.

¹⁴ Arendt, “Karl Marx,” 285, 290.

¹⁵ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 136-144.

¹⁶ Arendt, “Karl Marx,” 283; Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 101ff. However, Arendt does not take these contradictions to be a shortcoming of Marx’s thinking: “Such fundamental and flagrant contradictions rarely occur in second-rate writers; in the work of the great authors they lead into the very center of their work.” Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 105. See also Arendt, “Karl Marx,” 292, for a similar phrase.

ence of nature for its material, and [...] a world in which to place the finished product.”¹⁷ As is well-known, these three activities (i.e. labour, work, and action) make up what Arendt calls the *vita activa*, our active life, which she distinguishes from the *vita contemplativa*, or “the life of the mind”. Arendt rounds up her investigation of the *vita activa* by acknowledging the still undiscussed human capacity of thought that would later form the starting point of her last and unfinished book called *The Life of the Mind*.

Now more than fifty years after the publication of *The Human Condition*, Isabell Lorey, following the Italian neo-Marxist philosopher Paolo Virno, picks up on Arendt’s distinctions to illustrate what defines present-day work. In a seminar called “Labour, Action, Intellect”, Virno argues that it is the fading of the boundaries between these three activities that characterizes work in the 21st century.¹⁸ First of all, work in our contemporary society is often an activity *without work*, in Arendt’s sense of the term.¹⁹ That is, many professions today do not consist in producing a durable end product. Rather, the product they deliver is identical to the activity of production itself, which is to say that they deliver a service. What defines such labouring activities, from the work of a pianist to that of a teacher or waiter, is that they depend on what Arendt called “the presence of others”, and that she distinctively attributed to action.²⁰ Secondly, today’s forms of work arguably revolve around communication and cooperation, which by their very nature require Arendt’s concept of a public space.²¹ Thirdly, it seems that in the context of work in the 21st century, creativity and innovation, that is, starting something new, has increasing importance and is expected of every employee. In fact, this leads some employers to deliberately create room for contingency, for the “informal”, “unexpected” and unprogrammed, both within the workplace and the work itself.²² As such, the boundaries between labour and action – a distinction that is itself al-

¹⁷ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 188, my emphasis.

¹⁸ Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude. For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*, trans. Isabella Bertolotti, James Cascaito and Andrea Casson (Los Angeles/New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 47-71.

¹⁹ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 75.

²⁰ Cf. Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 52.

²¹ Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 55-6, 60.

²² Cf. Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 59.

ready a reappearance of Aristotle's distinction between *poiesis* and *praxis* – have dissolved.

Fourthly and lastly, work has become increasingly dependent on intellectual or cognitive abilities; has become “knowledge work” (as theorized by Hardt and Negri²³) causing labour and “the life of the mind” to overlap as well.²⁴ Contemporary “modes of production”, Lorey argues for example, “challenge the whole personality, its intellect, its thinking, its capacity for speaking, its affects.”²⁵ Hence, both Virno and Lorey conclude that Arendt's distinctions are inadequate for analyzing the labour market of the present. Their relevance, we might say, paradoxically consists in their irrelevance, by which these authors have been able to render visible what present-day work distinctively consists in. Indeed, what defines work in the 21st century, we may conclude, is that every distinctive feature of the human being, whether this is considered to be language/reason (Aristotle), labour (Marx), or action (Arendt), has become fused and, as Virno adds, “subsumed within capitalistic production.”²⁶ To fully understand this latter claim, we must turn towards another distinction, another specter of Marx.

Singing like a bird: (un)productive labour

Another key element of Marx's writings that produced a great deal of discursivity or spectrality, is his theorizing on the distinction between productive and unproductive labour. Whether labour is to be considered as productive or unproductive, according to Marx, depends not on the *content* of the labour, but on “whether the labour is exchanged for money as money or for money as capital”.²⁷ Although there is much to say about this, I propose to turn to one of Marx's examples right away:

A singer who sings like a bird is an unproductive worker. If she

²³ See e.g. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 108ff on “immaterial labour”.

²⁴ Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 63-66; Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 83.

²⁵ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 74.

²⁶ Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 63.

²⁷ Karl Marx, “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,” in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, vol. 34, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 141.

sells her singing for money, she is to that extent a wage labourer or a commodity dealer. But the same singer, when engaged by an entrepreneur who has her sing in order to make money, is a productive worker, for she directly produces capital.²⁸

Productive labour is thus defined by its relation with capital: a worker becomes productive when she produces more than is needed for her own subsistence, that is, when she produces surplus value by means of a product, or, in this case, surplus labour for the “entrepreneur”.²⁹ “A singer who sings like a bird” is unproductive, for she does neither of these things. The same holds, according to Marx, for other services, where “the product is not separable from the act of producing, as with all executant artists, orators, actors, teachers, doctors, clerics, etc.”, where labour is exchanged just for money as money.³⁰

The distinction between productive and unproductive labour also found its way into *The Human Condition*. Arendt is actually quite positive about it, since this distinction comes closest to articulating the difference between labour and work, which, as we have seen, she considered to be absent in the works of Marx (and other labour-theorists, like Adam Smith). “[T]he distinction between productive and unproductive labour contains”, thus Arendt remarks, “albeit in a prejudicial manner, the more fundamental distinction between work and labour.” Prejudicial, because labour is glorified by Marx and Smith because of its productivity, thus condemning unproductive labour, which leaves nothing behind, as “parasitical,” as “a kind of perversion of labour”.³¹ Albeit anachronistic, this terminology appears to foreshadow a deconstruction or assimilation of this hierarchy, which is indeed provided by Arendt. That is to say, the same Marx – or at least one of his specters, Derrida might say – “discovered and articulated” that labour, in Arendt’s sense, has its own productivity, “no matter how futile and non-durable its products may be.” That is, once again, *surplus labour*: the labour power which is left after man’s effort to produce his own means of sub-

²⁸ Karl Marx, “Capital. Book I. The Process of Production of Capital,” in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, vol. 34, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 448.

²⁹ Marx, “Production of Capital,” 442ff.

³⁰ Marx, “Contribution,” 144.

³¹ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 86-7.

sistence – the discovery of which, Arendt agrees with Friedrich Engels here, is to be regarded as “the most original and revolutionary element” of Marx’s theorizing.³² In the well-known line of thought, then, this surplus value constitutes the profit of the capitalist.

This exists in our contemporary labour market perhaps only to a decreasing degree, Lorey argues. In Marx’s example, the singer is “engaged by an entrepreneur”, but “what if the singer becomes a *self-entrepreneur*?” What would that imply for her productivity?

Is she to be designated as ‘unproductive’ in Marx’s sense if she not only takes her voice to market, but also, in her artistic independence and with projects subject to time limits, constantly sells her whole personality, when ‘singing like a bird’ serves to get her the next job?³³

This is not a farfetched scenario, because in many countries self-employed workers, who are “service-providers, producers and self-entrepreneurs” at the same time, form a significant part of the working population.³⁴ In this sense, Marx’s distinction seems to be inadequate for describing the labour market of the 21st century, in which “unproductive” workers have become productive and thus “capitalized”.³⁵ Against this background, we can fully understand the claim of Virno that all of our distinctively human capacities are “subsumed within capitalistic production”, and Lorey’s similar conclusion that “the entire person, with their knowledge and their affects, becomes part of the capitalist production process”.³⁶ But what we have yet to discover is why this is so problematic.

Capitalism: from estrangement to precarization

“In a predicative proposition that refers to time, and more precisely to the present-form of time”, Derrida writes, “the grammatical present of the verb to be [...] seems to offer a predestined hospitality to the return

³² Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 88.

³³ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 81-2.

³⁴ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 82; “Self-employment rate,” OECD Data, assessed January 23, 2021, <https://data.oecd.org/emp/self-employment-rate.htm>.

³⁵ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 82.

³⁶ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 83.

of any and all spirits''.³⁷ If we would ask Karl Marx, Hannah Arendt and Isabell Lorey what the greatest threat to the present-day worker is, we are likely to get three very different answers. In the context of this paper, I accommodate the two answers that have a link with capitalism as their common denominator: those of Marx and Lorey.

Marx's critique of capitalism is manifold. I focus here on the *Paris Manuscripts*, where Marx explains that within a capitalist system, the worker is dependent on his labour, that he has to sell to the factory-owner. This means that the worker finds himself in a position of insecurity and vulnerability, in which his existence is continuously threatened.³⁸ Most well-known are these manuscripts, though, for the theory of estranged labour. Capitalism, Marx argued, threatens not only the life of the worker, but also his freedom and humanity, by alienating him from his product(ion), his self, and his existence as a species.

Firstly, the worker is estranged from the *product* of his labour (which now belongs to the capitalist), and in which he can no longer recognize himself: "The *alienation* [*entäusserung*] of the worker in his product", Marx writes, "means not only that his labour becomes an object, an *external* existence, but that it exists *outside him*, independently, as something alien to him, and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him".³⁹ Secondly, the worker is estranged from the *act of production* itself, that is, from his labour, which he has sold to the capitalist. As we have seen, the essence of man, according to Marx, is to be located in free production. Under capitalism, however, production has become unfree; "*forced*"; the labour of the worker now "belongs to another", which therefore means "the loss of his self."⁴⁰ Because what distinguished man from animals has been lost, man is reduced to animality. Finally, the worker is estranged from his *Gattungswesen*, that is, his existence as a species, whose very identity is constituted by the act of "creating an *objective world* by [its] practical activity" – by "work" in Arendt's sense. Estranged labour alienates the worker from the "*life of the species*", Marx claims, by transforming labour from an end in itself to nothing more than a "*means*" for the continuation of the *individual*

³⁷ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 61.

³⁸ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844" e.g. 237ff.

³⁹ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844" 272.

⁴⁰ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844" 274.

existence of the worker.⁴¹ So much for Marx for now.

Or perhaps not, since in some sense, even more than a century and a half later, nothing has changed. The individual, Lorey observes, still has to sell their body and labour power in order to continue their existence as physical subject.⁴² Moreover, the worker still suffers from a precarious position: “If we fail to understand precarization”, Lorey opens in *State of Insecurity*, “then we understand neither the politics nor the economy of the present.” What characterizes our neo-liberal capitalist society, according to Lorey, is the erosion of government protection, which leads to a return of wide-spread insecurity and vulnerability. Such “precarization”, she remarks, “means more than insecure jobs, more than the lack of security given by waged employment. By way of insecurity and danger it embraces the whole of existence [...]. Precarization means living with the unforeseeable, with contingency.”⁴³

Yet, in another sense, everything has changed. Precarization, Lorey argues, is no longer confined to the workers, but affects everybody; threatens society as a whole.⁴⁴ And it is only because work today requires, as we saw, our personality as a whole; because flexible employment and self-employment are on the rise, and because risks and cares are becoming increasingly privatized, that precarity today comprises our whole existence; that the fear of losing your job coincides with existential anxiety.⁴⁵ Or perhaps “everything must change for everything to remain the same.” Yet, what no doubt *has* changed is the proposed way out of the capitalist system, or rather the optimism about the potential for such an exodus. This calls for hunting down one final specter: one of revolution, emancipation, and freedom.

Critical emancipations: debating revolution, emancipation, and freedom

When attempting to substantiate the claim that Marx is to be regarded as a founder of discursivity, his ideas about revolution, emancipation and freedom are imperative. To recall, Marx envisioned that the increasing

⁴¹ Marx, “Manuscripts of 1844” 276.

⁴² Cf. Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 28.

⁴³ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 1.

⁴⁴ Cf. Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 29.

⁴⁵ Cf. Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 88-90.

exploitation, poverty, and insecurity of the working class would lead to their national and international political organization, and eventually to *their* emancipation from servitude, and *societal* emancipation from private property – by means of a revolution.⁴⁶ This societal emancipation, Marx argues in the *Manuscripts of 1844*, “is expressed in the *political* form of the *emancipation of the workers*; not that *their* emancipation alone was at stake, but because the emancipation of the workers contains universal human emancipation”.⁴⁷ Now the real specter here, by Marx’s own admission, is communism, and I want to highlight here just a few central features of Marx’s theorizing on the communist society.

As stated, it is first of all the end of private property: “the theory of the Communists”, thus Marx and Engels remark, “may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.”⁴⁸ Stated bluntly, it is, second of all, also the end of history. If history can be equated with “the history of class struggles” that starts the *Communist Manifesto*, then the abolition of “the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally” contained in the revolution, implies the end of history.⁴⁹ Third, communism marks the end of political power, or the state, which is nothing but the political apparatus of the ruling class. “Political power, properly so called”, Marx and Engels claim, “is merely the organised power of one class for oppressing another.”⁵⁰ Hence, the communist society is, in this sense, a post-political society. Fourth and finally, it is the end of all forms of alienation, and therefore the reappropriation of human essence in the act of free production. This is described perhaps most emphatically in the *Manuscripts of 1844* and in *The German Ideology* in the context of the abolition of the

⁴⁶ See e.g. Marx, “Manuscripts of 1844” 268, 270, 280, 306; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” in *Marx & Engels Collected Works*, vol. 6, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 477-519.

⁴⁷ Marx, “Manuscripts of 1844”, 280.

⁴⁸ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” 498. Cf. Marx, “Manuscripts of 1844” 294: “*communism* is the *positive* expression of annulled private property”.

⁴⁹ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” 483, 506.

⁵⁰ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” 505.

division of labour.⁵¹ Stated succinctly, then, the movement of communism leads to freedom.

From the above constellation, Arendt singles out at least two objects of critique: (1) Marx's concept of history, and (2) his localization of freedom. With regard to the first point, Arendt argues that Marx has confused the course of history with a fabrication process, in the sense that it would have an end. Such an instrumental view of history is dangerous, according to Arendt, since it tends to justify *violence* as a means to bring about the envisioned end of history. "Violence is the midwife of history" is actually one of the propositions used by Arendt to capture the essence of Marx's philosophy.⁵² This brings us to the second object of Arendt's critique: the relation between freedom and politics. As we have seen, Marx localizes freedom in a society that is post-political. For Arendt, however, freedom is inextricably connected to politics. In her essay "What is Freedom?", for example, Arendt argues that "[t]he *raison d'être* of politics is freedom, and its field of experience is action." Because human freedom can only be actualized in the political realm, she argues against Marx that "[t]here is no such thing as freedom without politics".⁵³

Lorey's problematization of Marx's theorizing on emancipation, in turn, is directed elsewhere. For the emancipation of the *precarious* rather than the *proletariat*, she says, a historical development of the type described above is stopped in its very tracks by the division and individuation of those who are subject to precarious working and living conditions. That is to say, the precarious constitute a serious problem for traditional forms of political organization and representation. "The precarious cannot be unified or represented", Lorey claims, "their interests are so disparate that classical forms of corporate organizing are not effective."⁵⁴ So the challenge posed by our times, according to Lorey, is to find new forms of organizing, as well as non-representational political agency. Whither emancipation, when national and international political

⁵¹ Marx, "Manuscripts of 1844" 296; and Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The German Ideology," 47.

⁵² See Arendt, "Karl Marx," 287ff.

⁵³ Hannah Arendt, "What is Freedom?" in *Between Past and Future* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 146. The second quote is adopted from Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 78.

⁵⁴ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 9. See also 6, 8, and 61.

organization appears to be virtually impossible?⁵⁵

To fully comprehend Lorey's answer to this question, one needs to keep in mind the Foucauldian background of her theorizing on the government of the precarious, or what she calls "precarization as an instrument of governing". For Foucault, and for many thinkers working in his wake, such as Judith Butler, there is no place outside of power relations, and thus any form of emancipation, if at all possible, must be *immanent* to power relations.⁵⁶ This explains the terminology of Lorey's final chapter, which uses concepts like "flight" (from Deleuze and Guattari) and "exodus" (from Virno) to mark *a different relation to precarious conditions and governmental precarization* rather than the end of governing or precarity as such. Lorey's considerations may be conceived as a two-fold downscaling of Marx's ideas on revolution, emancipation, and ultimately freedom.

First, in both Virno and Lorey, revolution has been toned to "civil disobedience". Because governing through precarity (that is, governing through dividing vulnerability, contingency, and insecurity over a population) can never fully achieve its goal (that is, to politically and economically control this population), possibilities for individual resistance remain present. By refusing obedience to direct or indirect government, Lorey suggests, one might interrupt the normalization of precarity that she takes to be the defining characteristic of our times.⁵⁷ Second, then, universal human emancipation has been replaced by what Lorey terms "immanent exodus" and "constituting", marking the transition from individual resistances to collective political agency. "The point is that in the exodus of the many, a constituting, an organizing, of the manifold singularities emerges", Lorey writes, "in order to 'return' and funda-

⁵⁵ Lorey does not seem to denounce all hope for international political emancipation though. At one point, for example, she remarks that "it remains to be seen [...] to what extent the political protests repeatedly triggered by precarization remain only endemic or whether they might become global and pandemic." Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 61.

⁵⁶ Cf. Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 99-102.

⁵⁷ See e.g. Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 11, 15, 35, 104-5. Cf. Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 69.

mentally change the existing social relations.”⁵⁸ Although such a constituting or organizing does not result in security and protection for everybody, it does aim at undermining precarization as an instrument of governing: “through permanent singular refusals, the small sabotages and resistances of precarious everyday life, a potentiality emerges that subverts the disciplining of governmental precarization time and again.”⁵⁹ The actualization of this potential does not lead to a state of freedom from forms of governing (or from servitude, to use Marx’s term). At best, it leads to a new division of existential precariousness, one that is (hopefully) more equal and just. Although not stated explicitly, Lorey thus seems to suggest that Marx’s ideas are, at least in some sense, not just economically, but also politically, deficient or obsolete.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to test a hypothesis derived from the work of Deleuze, Foucault, and Derrida, by turning to some specters of Marx’s theorizing on labour, alienation, and emancipation in the work of Arendt and Lorey. To recall, the hypothesis was: *The discursive effect of some of Marx’s theorizing about labour gives reason to characterize Marx as a transdiscursive author who remains relevant for our contemporary discourse.* To take stock of my findings, and draw some conclusions, let me go through this statement step by step.

First of all, what discursive effect have we been able to establish? We have seen that Marx substituted the *animal rationale* for the *animal laborans*, which Arendt, in turn, felt compelled to complement with *homo faber*, but only to localize humanity and freedom in political action. Virno and Lorey then deemed it necessary to part from *homo faber* and return to the *animal laborans*, in order to describe the nature of work in the 21st century, which increasingly consists of activities without work that require both a public space and the deployment of our whole personality. Furthermore, we saw how Marx’s theorizing on the distinction between productive and unproductive labour formed a condition of possibility for Ar-

⁵⁸ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 102. See also Isabell Loray, “Attempt to Think the Plebeian: Exodus and Constituting as Critique”, trans. Aileen Derieg, *transversal: ‘The Art of Critique’* (August 2008), available at <https://transversal.at/transversal/0808/lorey/en>.

⁵⁹ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 111.

end to make a case for the productivity of unproductive labour, and for Lorey to reveal how the latter has become productive and capitalized in the economy of the present. Subsequently, we discussed that while the greatest threat to the worker in the capitalist system might have shifted from alienation to precarization, this alteration might have only been the condition under which everything has remained the same. Finally, we saw Marx's ideas on revolution, emancipation, and freedom being taken as objects of critique by Arendt, and subsequently being toned to civil disobedience and immanent exodus by Lorey.

So has Marx proved himself to be a "transdiscursive" author? Indeed, we have seen that, as Foucault claimed, Marx has produced not solely his own writings, but also the conditions of possibility for the production of other texts, perhaps most notably Arendt's Marx-project. Marx has indeed undeniably made possible a certain number of analogies (e.g. with regard to the concept of surplus labour and worker precarity), but perhaps an even greater number of differences: unproductive labour becoming productive, precarization coming to outweigh or rather transform alienation, revolution and universal human emancipation being substituted for immanent exodus and constituting. We must thus endorse, I think, Foucault's depiction of Marx as one of the most important "initiators of discursive practices".

Yet is Marx still relevant for our contemporary labour market discourse? Virno and Lorey both seem to answer in the negative. Drawing on Virno's analyses, Lorey concludes that "in the Post-Fordist era of cognitive capitalism, Arendt's classifications no longer apply and [...] Marx's conceptual apparatus clearly does not seem adequate as a means of understanding contemporary forms of production and their related forms of life."⁶⁰ However, as we already noted, it is still these obsolete distinctions that have enabled these authors to uncover what work in the 21st century consists in: the fusion and/or implosion of these distinctions. In fact, their own conceptual work, which declares Marx's economic and political conceptual apparatus obsolete, is nevertheless explicitly or implicitly developed against this background. Some of Marx's – and Arendt's – relevance today, paradoxically seems to consist in their irrelevance. Hence at the end of the day, we must agree with Derrida that the Marxist inheritance remains relevant and influential for our

⁶⁰ Lorey, *State of Insecurity*, 82.

contemporary economic and political discourse.

In this endeavor, we have also supported Derrida's deconstruction of any neat distinction between past, present, and future. For one thing, it has turned out that the past is not really past, for at least a part of it still haunts us in the present. Conversely, the present is not pure present, since it is traversed by reiterations of the past – think e.g. of Arendt's prefiguration of the opening statements by Deleuze, Foucault and Derrida. The future, in turn, is already anticipated in the present, whether in the form of revolution, exodus, or yet something else. Admittedly, I have not really spoken about the future (the future of work, for example). Yet, whatever the future of work looks like (even if it is a future without work), what is certain is that, as Derrida remarks, it will not be a future “without Marx, without the memory and the inheritance of Marx: in any case of a certain Marx, of his genius, of at least one of his spirits.”⁶¹

⁶¹ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 14.

Finding Refuge in Equity: A Philosophical Examination of Justice in Refugee Education

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Abstract: This paper is a philosophical analysis of educational justice in the formal learning of refugees in host countries. It particularly examines the way we can think about rights in regard to refugee education at the European and global level. The motivation for undertaking this analysis is the fact that the law fails to provide us with a comprehensive account of justice that corresponds to the needs of refugee students. Noticing the inadequacy of the legal approach in addressing refugee educational fairness, this paper draws on the philosophical tools of reasoning and argumentation to investigate i) what the rights of refugees in education are ('what' of justice), and ii) how to ensure processes to uphold such rights ('how' of justice). This is an under-researched issue, and for that, this study advances the knowledge in the field mainly on how to conceptualise refugee educational justice to foster methods of endorsing fair opportunities that combat the educational exclusion of refugee populations. The results provide evidence to suggest that an account of justice in refugee education appears to be multidimensional. Notably, it encompasses four dimensions: a) distributive, b) cultural, c) political, and d) overall healthcare (including both physical and mental health) justice. In achieving justice in refugee education, the factors of transformative redistribution, recognition, representation, and restoration schemes are encouraged in education policy.

Keywords: refugee education, educational justice, rights, equity, inclusive education

Introduction

Never before has the world community seen so many displaced people, and never before have so many of them been vulnerable refugees in desperate need of protection and humanitarian assistance. For millions of uprooted people, refugee education remains out of reach. Globally,

UNHCR (2024)¹ estimates that over half of all refugee children, 51%, currently remain out of school, and around 75% of refugee students eventually drop out or disappear. Because of this dismaying situation, the international community is called to rise to the challenge of providing educational justice.

In the broadest context, educational justice is the situation in which all students are treated fairly. In other words, justice is about granting individuals the appropriate rights to promote fairness. The growing importance of educational justice lies in the crucial question as to what we, as a society, regard as fair or right in the acquisition of knowledge. Effectively addressing this question fulfils educational justice's main principle that a student's quality of education directly correlates to the future quality of his/her life. This further implies that an education system that practises educational justice is a strong cornerstone of a community that is thriving. With that in mind, making refugee education an essential vehicle of justice is necessary for enhancing refugees' quality of life and for the non-violent and long-term development of the states that have welcomed them.

When one has a right to something, it means that someone else must have the corresponding duty to acknowledge and protect this right. In refugee settings, however, what the rights of refugees to education are and whose duty it is to acknowledge and protect these rights are disputable. The rights already provided to refugee students are not sufficient to ensure their effective learning experience. Refugees' needs and issues remain unaddressed by legal norms². This shows that justice goes beyond the written law and acknowledged rights the world community provides to refugees. Yet, many scholars focus on the empirical challenges in protecting refugees' right to education while the essence of what kind of justice refugee students seek appears to be an under-researched issue.

Having recognised that the legalistic approach is insufficient to provide an inclusive understanding of justice, the purpose of this study

¹ UNHCR. 2024. 'Education | Global Focus'. 2024. <https://reporting.unhcr.org/spotlight/education>.

² UNHCR. 2023. 'UNHCR Education Report 2023 – Unlocking Potential: The Right to Education and Opportunity'. UNHCR. 2023. <https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcr-education-report-2023-unlocking-potential-right-education-and-opportunity>.

is to *philosophically* examine educational justice in the formal learning of refugees in host societies, and present a general framework of refugee education, which can be translated accordingly for the settings and demands of each education level. In particular, the research questions that this study aims to address are the following: i) what is justice in refugee education? ('what' of justice), and ii) how do we achieve justice in refugee education? ('how' of justice). Theorising refugee educational justice is vital in creating new avenues in the search for improved policies and curriculum designs for the effective learning of refugees. This will also illuminate strategies of promoting equal opportunities to fight the educational and social exclusion of individuals with refugee identity. In that way, we move the centre of gravity away from conventional proposals of praising multicultural diversity towards much more critical approaches that give refugees themselves a voice.

1. Distributive Justice

To begin, the world community essentially interprets educational justice as the right to universal access to education. The 'access' component of this right goes hand in hand with efforts to abolish social and economic deprivation, commonly attributed to the maldistribution of resources, to achieve socioeconomic fairness. In that sense, refugees are therefore considered deprived when they are denied access to schooling and educational resources in host societies. The 'universal' component of the right reminds us of the aspiration of a collective ideal reflected in many egalitarian theories which have long sought to defend equal opportunities for all.

One of the most distinguished egalitarian approaches in justifying the right to educational access for refugees is found in Rawls' (1971)³ theory of justice. Given that students vary in their socioeconomic status, Rawls maintains that the objective of education is not necessarily to strive to even such discrepancies out. Instead, we should ponder how, given the differences in students' social class, learning resources can be fairly distributed to broaden the future possibilities of the underprivileged in terms of social welfare. Rawls justifies this purpose by adopting a hypothetical original position in which a veil of ignorance renders

³ Rawls, John. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford Paperbacks. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

members of society unaware of their innate and socioeconomic characteristics. Behind the veil of ignorance, agents are risk-averse, meaning that they consider themselves the least privileged agent under any given circumstance in deciding principles of justice. As a consequence, by being blinded to where they are positioned within a community, members of society will gravitate to the ‘equality of opportunity principle’ regarding the elimination of social barriers that prevent particular subjects from accessing education and other social institutions.

The underlying motivation of Rawls’ equality of opportunity principle rests on his belief that a just system is a ‘meritocratic’ system. In such a system, everyone is equal at birth, and success in life depends on individuals’ merits, which constitute effort/desire to work, ability and talents, rather than heredity or wealth. Following the merit principle, behind the veil of ignorance, agents will agree that a just transnational education policy requires equal educational opportunity for all. Under this agreement, a just education policy requires equal access to education for refugees, by allowing their enrolment in the national education system of host communities, as well as an equal distribution of educational resources.

In a subsequent study, “*Commodities and capabilities*”, Sen (1985)⁴ criticises Rawls’ emphasis on resources in interpreting justice by highlighting that individuals do not only vary in economic terms. The intuition underlying this conception is that an absolute focus on material goods rules out an account of the heterogeneity in individuals’ ‘capabilities’ to convert commodities into valued ends. Otherwise stated, two people who both aspire to be educated and are provided with an equal number of educational supplies might not be equally capable of fulfilling this aspiration. Refugee learners, for instance, may be provided with the same bundle of learning capital as host pupils, but evidently struggle to adapt to the new learning environment. This phenomenon is often due to the structure of host education programs which are not tailored to refugees’ linguistic and social needs and, as a result, constrain their capacity for successful learning.

Following Sen’s reasoning, we notice that deprivation is not necessarily the result of the maldistribution of educational resources, as Rawls

⁴ Sen, Amartya. 1985. *Commodities and Capabilities*. Professor Dr. P. Henripman Lectures in Economics, v. 7. Amsterdam ; New York : New York, N.Y., U.S.A: North-Holland ; Sole Distributors for the U.S.A. and Canada, Elsevier Science Pub.

holds, but instead of the maldistribution of ‘capabilities’. Capabilities are understood as ‘real’ opportunities. In general terms, to claim that a refugee has a real opportunity for X, it ought to be definite that they would succeed in X. By way of illustration, the provision of postsecondary education exclusively in the host country’s national language is an unrealised opportunity for refugees who might not speak that language. Just education tactics must therefore *not* be based on Rawls’s equality of opportunity principle, but instead on the equality in the distribution of capabilities. Put differently, educational justice corresponds to refugee students’ freedom to pursue their goals and not necessarily equality in terms of the distribution of educational resources.

2. Cultural Justice

Overall, the distributive paradigm considers educational justice as the fair distribution of social benefits among society’s members. These benefits consist of wealth, income, and other material resources. The ‘distribution’ explanation of justice seems to also comprise nonmaterial social benefits like rights and self-worth, which fall under the umbrella of having and/or enhancing capabilities/real opportunities. But what does distributing a real opportunity mean? One may argue about having a real opportunity for a distributive share of educational resources. However, in this case, it is the resources that are distributed, not the opportunity. What can it really mean then to distribute real opportunities that do not refer to material goods, like the opportunity to increase self-worth? If by opportunity we refer to ‘chance’, the distribution of opportunities implies that some members of society have more chances to pursue their dreams than others while some have none at all. Opportunity in this sense is rather a matter of ‘enablement’ or ‘disablement’ and not a matter of possessing goods that can be increased or decreased.

Nonetheless, the logic of distribution considers real opportunities as a matter of possession by asking what people have, how much they have, and how that amount compares with what other people have. In that regard, the intangible opportunity refers to the possession of real distributive objects. This emphasis on possessions tends to ignore considerations about what individuals are doing, based on what social rules and how social relations influence their doings and havings. Therefore, by reifying nonmaterial elements of social life that are better conceptualised as a function of regulations and relations than as objects, the distri-

bution paradigm conceptualises justice in terms of end-state patterns (possessions) and does not concentrate on social processes.

Taking this into consideration, Young (1990)⁵ endeavours to re-establish fairness through an alternative path. Young agrees with Sen that Rawls was concerned with the allocation of the incorrect goods, i.e. distribution of education resources over capabilities. However, she disagrees with Sen's viewing of intangible capabilities as real distributive items. In view of this, Young suggests that, if we want to achieve fairness, we should seek a different approach, one which addresses real opportunities more specifically.

To accomplish this aim, in place of correcting end results using distributive ways to reinstate fairness, she investigates the way in which current institutional systems can be altered to attain the preferred results in the first place. By institutional systems, Young (1990) refers to any structure, practice, rules, and norms that define the relations between the members of society and enable/disable individuals' ability to participate in determining their actions and develop their capacities. Thus, manifestations of 'disablement' include the nonrecognition and disrespect of a group's identity by consistently slandering and belittling it or discrimination in regular daily interactions.

In this regard, for Young, justice in refugee education should denote the extent to which cultural-social patterns and structures of representation and communication enable or constrain refugees as a group to learn, as well as determine their identity and choices. Apropos of this, it appears that the institutional reaction of several liberal nations with reference to just education systems for refugees dismally looks pretty illiberal. Refugees are unfairly considered as the culture of outlanders, predominantly unnoticed in conversations about acknowledging refugee learners' cultural identity. Specifically, in the educational context, refugee learners are subjected to debased characterisations due to the host countries' failure to recognise refugee students' difference in religion, language, beliefs, values, attitudes, and material possessions. In Young's (1990) terms, refugees are 'oppressed': this signifies the injustice of misrecognising a group's cultural specificity, which is rooted in the host society's undisputed regulations and norms.

⁵ Young, Iris Marion. 1990. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton Paperbacks. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.

3. The Redistribution-Recognition Conflict

Following Young's (1990) theory of justice, achieving fairness in refugee education entails the development of educational structures and system-level policies that will help to provide equal recognition of the cultural identity of refugees as a group compared to the other social groups of students. However, the underlying concern is whether Young's perspective of justice can adequately respond to the needs of refugee students. Cultural justice indeed seems to have a more specific focus, compared to the capability theory, where we should focus on understanding fairness. Nonetheless, we must still be critical in deciding whether such a theory of justice can stand alone as the ultimate theory in establishing fairness in refugee education.

As Fraser (1995a)⁶ argues, Young's notion of 'oppressed' implicitly encompasses distributive justice elements. On the one hand, the cultural component of 'oppression' indicates that the capacities and aptitudes of the unfortunate are unaffected; instead, underprivileged individuals are primarily harmed by the misrecognition of their cultural identity and values. On the other hand, the socio-economic dimension of 'oppression' signals that the development of capacities, knowledge, and skills of the unfortunate has been hindered or become unrealised; the underprivileged groups have primarily been excluded from the prospects that will enable them to enrich their knowledge and skills in a given social context. With this in mind, we come to realise that the cultural aspect of 'oppression' points to undervaluation, as illustrated by Young, whereas the socioeconomic angle points to the phenomenon of underdevelopment, as illustrated by theories of distributive justice.

Furthermore, we notice that underdevelopment appears in the maldistribution of resources/capabilities, and one's misrecognition of cultural specificity cannot be addressed by identical treatments. This is because redistribution initiatives aim to increase socio-economic parity, whereas recognition initiatives seek to resolve the maltreatment created by discrimination, disrespect, and the authoritative practices of one's culture. In other words, changes in educational structural arrangements that positively affirm the cultural distinctiveness of refugee learners be-

⁶ Fraser, Nancy. 1995. 'Recognition or Redistribution? A Critical Reading of Iris Young's Justice and the Politics of Difference'. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 3 (2): 166–80. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9760.1995.tb00033.x>.

long to the possible remedies related to the cultural angle of ‘oppression’. Nevertheless, remedies of this kind are much less likely to be the vaccine for the socio-economic aspect of ‘oppression’.

Hence, to put an end to the phenomenon of maldistribution, the redistribution of education expenditure is required to some degree. In opposition to Young’s assertion, we notice thereupon that cultural justice is not a substitute for socio-economic fairness and redistributive actions. In contrast, both distributive and cultural justice are needed to achieve equity in refugee education, and neither alone is sufficient to respond to the needs of refugee students. Distributive justice deals with issues ingrained in economic inequities, whereas cultural justice deals with issues embedded in social status and rank. On this basis, we arrive at the conclusion that both the distribution of educational materials to develop refugee students’ capacities and the restructuring of education systems to promote social esteem are needed to ensure justice in refugee education.

The concern that results from this conclusion is whether these two different understandings of justice can be equally sheltered under a single all-encompassing umbrella. Even though recognition and redistribution are equally important for ensuring justice for refugee students, these two remedies appear to be in conflict. This is because the target of recognition is to affirm group differentiation through the embrace of refugees’ cultural identities. Conversely, the target of redistribution is to achieve group de-differentiation through the abolition of financial barriers. These two remedies are in conflict as recognition policies enhance group differentiation, which interferes with the redistributive aims of group de-differentiation. Therefore, the simultaneous implementation of redistribution and recognition remedies is not feasible since they result in conflicting outcomes.

Nevertheless, refugee students suffer from both socioeconomic and cultural injustices making both recognition and redistribution resolves necessary. Can both recognition and redistribution resolves be simultaneously applied in refugee education without mutual interference? Fraser (1995b)⁷ answers this redistribution-recognition question by virtue of the distinction between affirmative and transformative actions. In this light, she clarifies that the objective of affirmative actions is to resolve

⁷ Fraser, Nancy. 1995. ‘From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a “post-Socialist” Age’. *New Left Review*, no. 212 (July): 68–93.

unfair circumstances without affecting the grounding principles that stimulate these injustices, whereas the objective of transformative actions is to resolve inequities by restructuring the predominant rules and arrangements that produce unfairness⁸.

Fraser argues that affirmation and transformation practices can be equally employed in the politics of recognition and redistribution. Consider first the affirmation-transformation clarification to redress the injustice of misrecognition experienced by refugee students. Affirmative schemes for addressing misrecognition are mainly in line with Young's solution of providing equal respect to different social groups' identities. An example could be to equally respect the religions of refugee groups and host students groups in host educational settings. Such a strategy took place in many European countries where, in their attempt to recognize the religious differences of Muslim refugees, they allowed refugee students not to participate in established Christian traditions in educational settings and provided them instead, in some cases, separate worship spaces.

The best possible scenario with such affirmative practices is to promote multicultural education, a system in which host and refugee students respect each other's group religion, without the two groups necessarily developing strong bonds in the learning environment. However, it is also possible for affirmative strategies, instead of promoting multiculturalism, to perpetuate an adverse group differentiation⁹. This is because excluding refugees from the host group's norms might create the impression of one group being superior to others, which becomes the fuel to discriminating behaviours. Given that, affirmative practices are therefore risky and not always desirable. Thus, the best result one can achieve via the use of affirmative schemes to fairness is to eliminate disrespect by re-observing the underrated identity of refugees, while the nature of refugee identity and the relevant social status distinctions that invoke this injustice remain unexamined.

At the other end of the spectrum, transformation remedies are consistent with efforts to promote intercultural education which seeks to redress disrespect by uprooting the prevailing symbolic injustices in education settings. In contrast to affirmative actions and Young's approach,

⁸ Fraser, Nancy. 1995. 'From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a "post-Socialist" Age'. *New Left Review*, no. 212 (July): 87.

⁹ Fraser, Nancy. 1995. 'From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a "post-Socialist" Age'. *New Left Review*, no. 212 (July): 89.

in order to eliminate oppression, one should aim to provide equal recognition of an *individual's* identity and not that of a group. By overthrowing existing group differentiation, transformative policies not only enhance the social esteem of refugees but also re-establish all learners' awareness of respect. For example, a traditional worship room in the University setting, which is restricted to students with a particular religion, could be replaced by a multifaith room where students of different religious faiths, or none at all, can spend time in prayer, meditation and/or contemplation. Thus, where affirmation recognition policies contribute to embracing refugees' group distinction, transformation recognition policies contribute, in the long run, to lessening these group differentiations that appear within and beyond the education systems.

In the same way, the affirmation-transformation distinction applies to inequities in the socio-economic context. Affirmation remedies are in line with liberal approaches to adjust maldistribution in final outcomes, like Rawls' compensatory education, without affecting the general socio-economic structures that induce unfairness in refugees' capabilities. On the contrary, transformation policies are related to socialism and aim to deconstruct the current socio-economic structures that produce injustice. They aim not only to change final outcomes by distributing education resources but also to alter the conditions of the education-learning experience for all students. Examples include the abolition of tuition fees and the provision of university transportation services for all students.

Note that a transformative policy addresses all students because its fundamental aim is to eradicate the group differentiation experienced by disadvantaged students and thus re-examine refugees' undermined identity. In contrast, compensatory education unavoidably labels refugees as "vulnerable" and "needy", which generates an inferior group categorisation of refugees. We realise hereafter that even though the principal focus of affirmative redistribution policies is to eliminate class distinctions, in practice, it may increase misrecognition by cultivating hostility towards refugee learners of low social class. Transformation policies, on the other hand, point to a group de-differentiation through an equal distribution of resources which destabilises the social stigma of "vulnerable" attached to refugees.

Having demonstrated Fraser's (1995) affirmation-transformation distinction, we come to realise that the desirable matrix for justice in refugee education is to pursue transformative practices in both recogni-

tion and redistribution objectives. The intuition behind this conclusion is that only by attaining group de-differentiation in both redistribution and recognition the conflict is resolved and we can pursue sustainable, fair education systems for refugees, free from cultural and economic inequalities.

4. Political Justice

Having justified the inclusion of both socioeconomic and cultural dimensions in the definition of justice, attention is now drawn on how this bivalent understanding of fairness affects the merit principle. Incorporating the cultural dimension into the interpretation of justice indicates that students' success should not be determined by economic or cultural differences. In other words, for the merit principle to apply, it must be feasible to identify, measure, and compare students' performance using culturally neutral criteria. If merits are biased, based on culture, refugee students are likely to be disadvantaged in terms of succeeding within the education and employment structures of host societies. With this in mind, having qualifications and criteria which are culturally neutral is vital in ensuring meritocracy.

Unfortunately, educational credentials and standardised tests tend not to be impartial and unbiased towards cultural characteristics. Assessments themselves have a cultural element that reward particular cultural styles, such as competitiveness and the ability to work in a fast-paced and under-pressure environment¹⁰. In this regard, whatever competence an assessment is intended to measure, test-takers with these test-taking competences have a primary advantage over others. Moreover, test formulation unavoidably employs symbols and phrases whose meaning may be comprehended in culturally different ways¹¹. For instance, test formulation incorporates a variety of judgements and choices, any one of which can have culturally particular insinuations. Taking these into account, careful attention needs to be taken in test formulation to avoid cultural bias and ensuring that a test is fair to all students.

¹⁰ Wigdor, Alexandra K., and Wendell R. Garner. 1983. 'Ability Testing: Uses, Consequences and Controversies'. *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 78 (384): 994. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2288227>.

¹¹ Berk, Ronald A., ed. 1982. *Handbook of Methods for Detecting Test Bias*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

It is possible for host states to promote the structural exclusion of refugees through the manipulation of assessment criteria and processes. This is because, when meritocracy becomes more demanding by taking into consideration both economic and cultural inequalities, the question of who bears the cost to achieve justice becomes more critical. In other words, as the definition of justice becomes more inclusive, the responsibility of ensuring meritocracy is bigger; this might discourage a country's willingness to assist refugee students. Particularly, with the scarcity of resources, redistribution schemes indicate the transfer of resources that benefit host learners to refugee learners; this might suggest a lower quality of teaching and learning for host learners. Similar issues might appear in recognition policies as the transient state of refugees' mobility (the irregular movement of refugees and the process of resettlement) demotivates the provision of programs that contribute to cultural diversity when lots of refugees do not plan to stay permanently in the specified host community.

Overall, as host states' responsibilities towards refugees increase, the structural exclusion of refugees becomes a more reasonable choice on behalf of host state governments. This is why 'political justice' is also necessary in refugee education. Political justice is needed to defend the structural inclusion of refugee students when the burden to ensure justice increases. This could be achieved by setting criteria that do not exclude refugees from consideration in admission processes and by making the criteria for qualifications, together with the values and purposes they serve, explicit and public.

In achieving political justice, one must also ensure refugee students' 'political' inclusion in the host learning environments. Considering this, Fraser (2007)¹² explains that the remedies of redistribution and recognition should be accompanied by remedies of 'representation/participation'. Representation remedies encourage us to question both the established political frame in education as well as the established laws within that frame. More specifically, concerns about political membership bring to mind Young's emphasis on self-determination, although the focus here is on establishing the conditions for refugees to be treated in practice as "citizens" of host education systems.

¹² Fraser, Nancy. 2007. 'Identity, Exclusion, and Critique: A Response to Four Critics'. *European Journal of Political Theory* 6 (3): 305–38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885107077319>.

Although Fraser has not explicitly specified it, it seems that we can differentiate between affirmation and transformation practices in representation/participation remedies, too. Affirmative participation remedies involve efforts to integrate refugee students in the host educational symbolic framing. In this case, refugee students are welcomed by the host education systems as new and valuable members in the education environment. An example could be the celebration of refugee students' arrival to the host educational community by emphasising the contribution that refugee students can make to the host community. Nevertheless, it is possible for affirmative participation actions to invoke cultural injustices by generating status inequality for refugee learners. For instance, in many cases, refugees are not welcomed as valuable students but rather as the "at risk", "vulnerable", and "disadvantaged" category of students. We notice thereupon that, in the effort to abolish structural exclusion, refugee students may often end up being socially marginalised. Consequently, affirmative participation remedies may cause an adverse group differentiation, which still constitutes a violation of justice.

In eliminating political exclusion in education, transformation representation remedies are required to redefine the structure of political bonds within and beyond the learning environment. Transformation representation remedies involve the inclusion of the political voice of those excluded from democratic processes. In relation to refugees, this involves the equal representation of refugee students in discussions and decisions around educational issues, concerns, and needs. The inclusion of the political voice of refugee learners entails the reframing of educational political membership. In conclusion, transformation representation remedies in the form of democratic voice/participation is a necessary condition in overcoming structural political exclusion in refugee education.

5. Healthcare Justice

The underlying common assumption of the theories of justice previously mentioned is that refugee students are 'dehumanised'. The term 'dehumanisation' can be interpreted in many ways. For theorists of distributive justice, dehumanisation is defined as 'deprivation', for Young's justice of recognition it is expressed as 'oppression', whereas for political justice, dehumanisation is a synonym to 'exclusion'. The concept of de-

humanisation was elaborated in Seeman's (1975)¹³ study in which dehumanisation is further understood as the state of experiencing powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and cultural estrangement. Following Seeman's conceptualisation of dehumanisation, many studies have shown that refugee students are depressingly dehumanised upon arrival to host communities (McInerney 2009¹⁴; Dryden-Peterson et al. 2017¹⁵; Bengtsson and Dryden-Peterson 2016¹⁶ to name a few). In the learning environment, refugees' dehumanisation is manifested in various ways. Examples include refugees' excessively high school drop out rates, low attendance rates and effort, estrangement from the learning process, disruptive actions, depression, and self-harm¹⁷. In view of this worrying phenomenon, which practices can best address refugees' dehumanisation in education settings?

One may fairly argue that refugee students' dehumanisation and their associated underachievement are not necessarily the result of the failure of the host country's economic conditions and power relations, but rather of the physical and psychological problems of these students and their parents. There is no doubt that several factors associated with refugee flight can negatively influence the healthy development of refugee students. Examples include the persecution of relatives, parental anxiety, the act of leaving home unexpectedly, the separation from family members, the belief that taking adult responsibilities is required if one parent is missing, and lack of time and/or place for play. These factors, along with demographic changes, moving from one country to another,

¹³ Seeman, Melvin. 1975. 'Alienation Studies'. *Annual Review of Sociology* 1 (1): 91–123. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.01.080175.000515>.

¹⁴ McInerney, Peter. 2009. 'Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Engagement for Alienated Youth: Insights from Freire and School-based Research'. *Critical Studies in Education* 50 (1): 23–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508480802526637>.

¹⁵ Dryden-Peterson, Sarah, Negin Dahya, and Elizabeth Adelman. 2017. 'Pathways to Educational Success among Refugees: Connecting Locally and Globally Situated Resources'. *American Educational Research Journal* 54 (6): 1011–47. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831217714321>.

¹⁶ Bengtsson, Stephanie E.L., and Sarah Dryden-Peterson. 2016. 'Education, Conflict, and Globalisation: Guest Editors' Introduction'. *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 14 (3): 327–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2016.1189203>.

¹⁷ Frymer, B. 2005. 'Freire, Alienation, and Contemporary Youth: Toward Pedagogy of Everyday Life. , 1(2), 1–16.' *Interactions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 1 (2): 1–16.

and political violence, destabilise refugees' norms and practices leading to a lack of self-confidence, self-possession, enthusiasm and social capital which refugees need to adapt with ease to the new school environment.

Following this realisation, one might reach the naïve conclusion that—since refugees' dehumanisation might not be attributed to host countries' education, culture, and political systems—it is not the responsibility of the host education system to address the problem, and we should look instead to other institutions to find the cure for 'dehumanisation'. Nevertheless, in view of UNESCO's established duties of education, education should be the vehicle for the all-around development, psychological well-being, and social participation of an individual. This implies that education is indeed responsible for the healthy development of students. For refugee students, this necessitates dealing with the multiple traumas of loss, uprooting, and painful experiences. Healthcare (including both physical and mental health) justice should be incorporated as a vital dimension of justice in refugee education. In particular, healthcare justice is needed to address and restore the psychological, physical, emotional and spiritual health of refugee students.

In healthcare justice, we can also distinguish between affirmative and transformative restoration remedies. An affirmative practice could be the implementation of psychological support programs solely for refugees. Examples of such practices could be Dooley's (2009)¹⁸ pedagogical scheme on 'smart links' (developing paths between refugees' damaging experiences and new experiences in the new host societies) and visual-based methods to broaden one's understanding of refugee students' psychological well-being in host societies. Although these efforts encourage more awareness on behalf of the host society, they might create cultural injustice for refugees by stigmatising them as "sufferers", "victims", "sick" or "problematic". This might have an adverse effect on issues of political justice as well by assuming that disempowered refugees have no place in education projects and decisions that promote development. In general, affirmative restoration practices could cause other kinds of injustice in host education systems for refugees.

On the other hand, transformative restoration practices manage to

¹⁸ Dooley, Karen. 2009. 'Re-Thinking Pedagogy for Middle School Students with Little, No or Severely Interrupted Schooling'. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 8 (1): 5–22.

heal refugees without creating other violations of justice. An example of such methods could be Shor's (1992)¹⁹ and Dei's (2003)²⁰ pedagogical frameworks which incorporate spiritual and democratic education. These practices target all students by promoting empowerment for all and not only for refugees. One should not forget that these practices do not benefit only the refugee students. Nowadays, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is noticeable that in many (host) countries a significant number of students suffer from mental health issues, especially anxiety disorders. In that sense, transformative restoration schemes are useful for everyone and stigmatise no one. With this in mind, transformation restoration initiatives could be considered the vaccine for ensuring healthcare justice in refugee education.

6. A Framework for Justice in Refugee Education

All in all, healthcare injustice is persistent when students feel 'dehumanised.' To address dehumanisation, transformative restoration practices are essential in refugee education. This alone, however cannot guarantee a fair education system for refugees. In the long run, a just education system for refugees cannot be sustained without achieving distributive, cultural and political justice. For instance, enacting restoration practices will not change the economic conditions of refugees' lives, which is a major source of dehumanisation. In the long-term, dehumanisation can only be eliminated by developing more socio-politically equitable education systems that embrace the cultural specificity of all students. Having this in mind, I conclude that a four-dimensional understanding of justice is needed to achieve justice in education for refugees. On this basis, the successful integration of refugee students into the host learning environment requires the application of redistribution, recognition, representation, and restoration initiatives.

¹⁹ Shor, Ira. 1992. *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

²⁰ Dei, G. 2003. 'Schooling and the Dilemma of Youth Engagement'. *McGill Journal of Education* 38 (2): 241–56.

Table 2: “A four-dimensional framework for justice in refugee education”

Dimension of justice	Manifestation of injustice	Action
Distributive	Maldistribution	Redistribution
Cultural	Misrecognition	Recognition
Political	Exclusion	Representation
Healthcare	Dehumanisation	Restoration

Table 2 summarises the dimensions of justice one should take into account for fair education systems for refugee students. A more detailed presentation of the four-dimensional framework along with the transformative actions for achieving refugee educational justice is found below in Annexes I and II.

Annex I: Violation of justice in refugee education

	Injustice in refugee education
Maldistribution	• Refugees are denied access to education • Unequal distribution of education resources (e.g. textbooks, shortages of qualified teachers) • Poor educational outcomes and lack of post-education job opportunities • Lack of analysis of education policies to ensure redistribution (e.g. disparity in teacher salaries between geographical locations - schools that are set up in refugee centres vs. established host schools)
Misrecognition	• Language barriers (language of instruction affecting refugees' learning outcomes) • Lack of acknowledgement of cultural values, norms, habits • Lack of acknowledgement of refugees' religion • Discrimination and xenophobia against refugee students
Exclusion	• Disregard of state/non-state actors in setting refugee education agenda • Lack of school governance, involvement in decision-making (teachers, parents, students) • Discrimination against refugees from positions of leadership within the education system
Dehumanisation	• High school dropout rates • Low attendance rates and effort • Disruptive actions, violence, and self-harm • Depression, mental illness, traumas, and post-migration stress

Annex II: Achieving justice in refugee education

	Justice in refugee education
Redistribution	• Ensuring access to education for refugees • Equitable distribution of resources—such as teaching materials and facilities, including sanitation and hygiene facilities—in schools • Equal opportunities for promotion within education structures • Decentralised teacher deployment, responding to the needs of communities, schools, students and teachers • Adequate salaries for all teachers, reducing the disparity between schools
Recognition	• Opportunities for learning in mother tongue and managed transition to national language • Absence of religious and cultural bias through practices in schools and acknowledging diversity within the curriculum • A ‘multi-religious approach to integration’: Interfaith education as a mean to actively shape the relations between people from different religions • The development of educational reforms that contribute to cultivating understanding and respect for all people; their cultures, civilizations, values and ways of life; thus promoting critical awareness of the struggle against racism and discrimination • The acquisition of techniques of observation, sympathetic listening, and intercultural communication
Representation/participation	• Greater participation of local, national, and global stakeholders in setting the refugee education agenda • Political representation of refugee students across levels of government and ministerial departments • Representative school-based management and avenues for involvement in decision-making processes, including for refugee students and parents • Emphasis on educator advocacy, and centring of refugee students’ perspectives, in education policy formation and consultation processes
Restoration	• Democratic education including citizenship and civic education to cultivate a society of equals where critical thinking, self-determination and self-expression have space to flourish within a classroom • Spirituality in education which places the self/personhood at heart in engaging with learning and social change

	Justice in refugee education
	• Co-operative education which redefines students’ understanding of success by acknowledging non-academic competencies in fields like psychosocial development, thus contributing to improving students’ self-confidence and sense of identity • School mental health/personalised advising for students • Teacher awareness sessions

Conclusion

The importance of looking beyond the written law is the cornerstone of theorising refugee educational justice. This is driven by the belief that refugee movements are not just another phenomenon that reflects international socioeconomic inequality but rather a transformative phenomenon that allows us to rethink about duties and rights at the European and global level. This research aspires to extend the conservative definition of refugee educational justice which is restricted to socioeconomic rights in education and suggest a more comprehensive definition of justice that embraces diversity. From this perspective, the traditional proposals in refugee education were questioned while more inclusive strategies were introduced in achieving the socially just education systems that refugees hope for.

Healthcare justice should be embraced as an indispensable dimension in discussions about fairness in refugee education alongside distributive, cultural, and political justice. Refugees’ successful integration in host educational institutions is ensured with a combination of transformative redistribution, recognition, representation, and restoration actions. The degree to which each of these actions is needed in refugee education settings is subject to the kind of needs refugee students have, as well as the socioeconomic and political structures of the given host society and their influence on refugee learners.

On a final note, the results of this philosophical analysis are not necessarily conclusive. I recognise that, upon closer observation, reading and reflection, the ideas presented in this study can be strengthened to have a more comprehensive understanding of justice in refugee education and the appropriate response to injustice that refugee students ask for.

Folk and Fairy Tales as Philosophy through Fantasy: an interpretation of memory, imagination, and culture

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Abstract: Folk tales are a repository of cultural memory of a society that holds philosophy, morality, and wisdom through symbols and fantasy. In this way, folk tales play with language through imagination and fantasy to pursue popular wisdom, initiatory customs, mysteries, and traditions. In order to discover and enjoy folk wisdom, we need to go through the morphology and cross the history of *magic folk tales*. With this motivation, this essay tries to highlight the philosophical traces in folk literature as the repository of the memory of societies through the imagination (*fantasia*) of folk tales and myths. The power of imagination is considered across the theories of Vico and Kant, with the respective differences that characterize them.

We point out that myths and folk culture are the most ancient forms of philosophical wisdom that appeared in ancient times and established legend and narration from which contemporary societies are built and which legitimized a social and political establishment. Myths and folk tales hold the popular truth of one society. They are philosophy through fantasy, and in this way, this article builds on Propp's intention to develop his studies into philosophical research based on magic folk tales as a sequential step of a kind of archeo-philosophical study.

Keywords: philosophy of culture, memory, imagination, folk culture, archeo-philosophy

Philosophy, as part of human culture, is dedicated, among other things, to the arts and ideas of the human being as Donald Phillip Verene underlines in *Speculative Philosophy*¹. In particular, philosophy is a form of high culture because it implies the use of senses, memory, imagination and reason to achieve self-knowledge, which is the human characteristic

¹ Donald Phillip Verene, *Speculative Philosophy* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2009).

of self-knowing insight. It is high culture because the intention of the philosophers are “motivated by a sense of the absolute,”² such as the research of ultimate reality of the True, Good, and Beautiful. What make the distinction between the different forms of cultural productions is the motivation that led to the production of culture. Culture is not divided into folk products and niche culture products but by the sense of the absolute traceable in literary expression through spoken or written words.

What we want to stress here is the intrinsic relationship between philosophy and poetry which was highlighted by Vico and Verene, in which both philosophy and poetry use words to push them to the limits of the possible expressiveness of the language. But unlike poetry, philosophy leads language “to join imagination to reason,” to achieve the perfectness of thesis with the ultimate reality.³

In the same way, it is plausible to compare the pairing of philosophy and poetry with philosophy and folk literature, where folk literature is a production of wise human beings in whom senses, imagination, memory, and reason are engaged in attempting self-knowledge.

With this motivation, this essay tries to highlight the philosophical traces in folk literature as a repository of the memory of societies through the imagination (*fantasia*) of folk tales and myths. The main questions are what does it mean that folk culture is the repository of the memory of society? And how can fairy tales, or *magic folk tales* and myths, be philosophy through fantasy? To answer these questions, we must attempt to give a philosophical definition of culture, memory, and cultural memory.

Culture as a complex entity inseparable from its parts

Thomas Stearns Eliot in *Notes towards the definition of Culture* (1949) says that culture “is a term which needs to be, not only defined but illustrated almost every time we use it.”⁴ This is because culture is a complex phenomenon that needs to be identified and contextualized each time in order to understand the meaning of the word in the context of use.

To start, we must go back to the first scientific definition of culture

² Verene, *Speculative Philosophy*, xi.

³ Verene, *Speculative Philosophy*, xii-xiii.

⁴ Thomas Stearns Eliot, *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber & Faber, 2010), ePub, 128.

made by Eduard B. Tylor in 1871, the anthropologist who gave an ethnographic definition of culture. Tylor begins *Primitive Culture* (1871) with this statement: “Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”⁵ He uses culture and civilization as two sides of the same coin. In Tylor’s definition, culture and civilization are expressed in a “wide ethnographic sense” which includes all aspects of human “capabilities and habits” as a member of society. In his definition, culture is not divisible from civilization and, consequently, from society. This symbiosis between culture and civilization is an essential point to understand the relevance of culture within a society. However, this definition does not express the temporal function, which is important when we consider culture as part of the development of one society over time. On this point, Terence Turner can help us with his definition of culture. Turner defines culture in *Anthropology and Multiculturalism* (1993) as “the way specific social groups, acting under specific historical and material conditions, have ‘made themselves,’” and “cultures as historically contingent products of such collective activity.”⁶ Turner emphasized social groups as agents of cultural production in specific historical times and material conditions to develop cultural products. He highlights the self-made nature of the group: the way in which specific social groups have “made themselves” in a particular historical time.

Furthermore, Plamen Makariev, in *The Public Legitimacy of Minority Claims* (2016), underlined Turner’s definition in relation to minority entities in society. He stresses Turner’s meaning of culture combining the direct act of a social group in “made themselves” through historical development.⁷ He considers the evolution in time of one culture and the self-identification in it as part of the “made themselves,” in

⁵ Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I (Mineola, New York: Dover Publication Inc., 2016), ePub, 14.

⁶ Terence Turner. “Anthropology and Multiculturalism: What Is Anthropology That Multiculturalists Should Be Mindful of It?” *Cultural Anthropology* 8: 4 (1993): 411–29.

⁷ Plamen Makariev, “Minority Identities” in *The Public Legitimacy of Minority Claims: A Central/Eastern European perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2016), Kindle, 20.

which each person is developed as part of a collective social life. The culture and the self-identification itself are built individually in time through the social life with others.

This identification in a group and as part of society is also traceable in Tylor's definition when he says "habits acquired by man as a member of society." But Tylor does not express the development in time. Both these definitions take into consideration the direct activities of a person to act as part of a group, and at the same time make a distinction between them from other social groups as Makariev explains in Turner's definition.⁸ Makariev improves Turner's definition of culture with an explanation of culture as the "self-creation of a community."⁹ The "self-creation of a community" is part of the development of the group of culture, forming all aspects of social life such as law, morality, art, belief, knowledge, custom, etc. He says that "the self-creation of a community also incorporates the formation of mechanisms for explaining and morally justifying a particular way of life."¹⁰ Here are condensed all the aspects of the formation and development of a community with self-justification of morality and the way of life of a group by "the formation of mechanisms" to legitimize a type of life.

The "formation of mechanisms" to legitimize a type of life implies a mental and social justification for our actions and this means also justifying a lifestyle in a consumer society. To play a social identification and one cultural identification needs to be legitimized by the other, directly or indirectly. For one culture, the formation of mechanisms, inside and outside of a group, involves different recognition from other social groups of one society. The recognition of one's group and the other social groups is also produced inside the consumer society, which Jean Baudrillard has extensively highlighted, by interacting with consumption objects to identify oneself with a particular social group.¹¹ Nonetheless, to come back to the start, Eliot in *Notes towards the Definition of Culture* emphasized the existence of different elements that constitute, define, and establish a culture. He says that:

"By 'culture,' then, I mean first of all what anthropologists mean:

⁸ Makariev, *Minority Identities*, Kindle, 20.

⁹ Makariev, *Minority Identities*, Kindle, 2.

¹⁰ Makariev, *Minority Identities*, Kindle, 21.

¹¹ Jean Baudrillard, *La société de Consommation* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1970).

the way of life of a particular people living together in one place. That culture is made visible in their arts, in their social system, in their habits and customs, in their religion. But these things added together do not constitute the culture, though we often speak for convenience as if they did. These things are simply the parts into which a culture can be anatomized, as a human body can. But just as a man is something more than an assemblage of various parts of his body, so a culture is more than the assemblage of its arts, customs, and religious beliefs. These things all act upon each other, and fully to understand one you have to understand all.”¹²

In this definition, we point out two primary elements. Culture is a composed phenomenon. It is an assemblage of different elements. And second, we need to “understand all” parts of a culture in order to “understand” one part of it. In other words, if we want to understand a work of art, we need to know and understand the other parts that have produced the work of art as ambient and the society in which it is produced because the culture “is something more than an assemblage of various parts” of a society.

In conclusion, culture is a process that involves different elements not divisible from each other that belongs to a complex whole of group-self-identification “as a result of the continuity of all [...] individual actions”¹³ in time that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, customs and any other abilities and habits acquired by people as members of social groups with “the formation of mechanisms”¹⁴ to legitimize a type of life and lifestyle. This definition combines Tylor’s definition of culture with Makariev and Eliot’s definitions to fit it better in this context and identify the people not only in society but within some group of that society as part of it.

Memory between imagination and fantasy

Philosophy, as we said, is dedicated to the arts and ideas of human beings. Between the XVII and XVIII centuries, Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) dedicated his studies to the research of a new approach to science by developing his concept of an ideal history of the eternal law (*storia ideale*

¹² Eliot, *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*, ePub, 129.

¹³ Makariev, *Minority Identities*, Kindle, 20.

¹⁴ Makariev, *Minority Identities*, Kindle, 21.

eterna) with “fantasia” and memory. Vico in *Scienza nuova* (1725/1730/1744)¹⁵ does not use the term *cultura* in any part of his definitive work, but he focalizes his attention to the memory and imagination in cultural narration defined as *Scienza poetica*, poetic science.

In *Opere minori*,¹⁶ published in 1913, Leone Luzzatto collected some short studies of Vico on memory and imagination called “De memoria e della fantasia” which perfectly summarizes the heart of *Scienza nuova* with an explanation of “*fantasia*” and “*memoria*”. In this paper, Vico says that (author’s accents and italics):

La facoltà rammentativa era dai Latini nominata, *memoria*, quando ella ripone come in un'arca le raccolte percezioni dei sensi, e *reminiscenza* allorchè le ripiglia e le esterna. Ma allargavano i Latini la significanza della memoria, applicandola anche alla facoltà di figurarci le immagini, detta dai Greci φαντασία e nel nostro volgare *imaginativa*; imperocchè il nostro *immaginare* era pei Latini *memorare*. Sarebbe ciò forse perchè non possiamo immaginare, se non cose da noi rammemorate, nè rammemorarci se non oggetti percepiti dai sensi? Al certo niun pittore ha giammai preso a dipingere un genere di pianta o di animale, che non gli fosse offerto dalla natura; poichè codesti ippogrifi e centauri sono verità di natura miste al falso. Nè i poeti hanno giammai pensato una forma di virtù, che non si rinvenisse realmente nei fatti umani; ma tralasciata di mezzo a questi, la innalzano sopra i limiti comuni, facendone un tipo, al quale conformano i loro eroi. E perciò nelle loro favole vollero i Greci nominare figlie di Memoria le Muse, forme ideali delle potenze della fantasia.¹⁷

¹⁵ Giambattista Vico, *Scienza nuova* (Milano: BUR Rizzoli, 2013), ePub.

¹⁶ Giambattista Vico, *Opere minori, Passi scelti e curati dal Prof. Leone Luzzatto* (Lanciano: Editore R. Carabba, 1913).

¹⁷ Giambattista Vico, “§II Della memoria e della fantasia,” in *Opere minori*, ed. Leone Luzzatto (Lanciano: Editore R. Carabba, 1913), 53-54. My translation: “The faculty of remembrance was named by the Latins, *memory* when it places the collected perceptions of the senses as in an ark, and *reminiscence* when it takes them back and externalizes them. But the Latins extended the significance of memory by applying it also to the faculty of imagining (figurarci le immagini), called by Greeks φαντασία and into our vulgar *imaginative*; wherefore our *imagining* was for the Latin *memorare*. Would this be because

As Vico explained, memory is related in many aspects to imagination and fantasy and from many different points of view since ancient times. He underlines the difference between Greek and Latin use of the terms *fantasia* and *memorare*. He used the metaphor of an ark to illustrate the idea of memory in which are collected the perceptions of the senses, and reminiscence is described as the faculty of bringing out from the ark the perceptions of the senses collected in it. But he specifies that Latin has increased the meaning of memory by extending it to the imagining faculty called by Greeks φαντασία (*fantasia*), which was for Latins *memorare* (remember). This observation becomes in Vico the basis for asserting that artists who create something not existent in nature are also supported by their own *fantasia* or *memorare*. For example, an image of a hippogriff or centaur is based on truths of nature mixed with falsehood. But for Vico also the qualities of heroes are not directly findable in human facts; instead, they are a mix of different qualities of the human being to conform their heroes to uncommon unlimited capacities.

Furthermore, today many philosophers have discussed memory and its function based on Vico's philosophy. One of them is Donald Phillip Verene. He presents a position on memory based on Vico's *Scienza nuova*, which combines Vico's common mental language (*lingua mentale comune*) and the mental dictionary (*dizionario mentale*) with the "art of memory or recollection."¹⁸ He examines language as a memory system associated with common sense (*il senso comune*), where the language and the memory of society are combined into the common mental language and the mental dictionary. In this regard, Raymond C. Barfield in *The Poetic Apriori* highlights that Vico's *senso comune* dif-

we cannot be imagining, except the things we remembered, nor remember except things perceived by the senses? Certainly, no painter has ever taken to painting a kind of plant or animal that was not offered to him by nature; since these hippogriffs and centaurs are truths of nature mixed with falsehood. No poets have ever thought of a form of virtue, which is not really found in human facts; but chosen from among them, they raise it above the common limits, making it a type, to which they conform their heroes. And therefore, in their fables, the Greeks wanted to name the Muses daughters of Memory, ideal forms of the powers of imagination (*fantasia*)."

¹⁸ Verene, "Vico's *New Science* as Theater of Memory" in *Speculative Philosophy*, 75-77.

fers from Aristotle, Descartes, and Locke's common sense (*sensus communis*). He says that Vico considers "the idea of *commune* as a mental property that stands over and above understanding," namely, a mental property that came from imagination.¹⁹ Vico identified the connection between memory, language, and common sense with his theory of poetic wisdom presented in the second book of *Scienza nuova*.

The basis of Vico's *Scienza nuova* is the study of memory and imagination that takes the metaphysical art of producing narrative joining ideas. Vico's philosophical imagination is the root of the poetic wisdom of the arts, such as literature and history. Imagination appears to Vico as a hook to elaborate narrative poems in philosophy. Poetic wisdom emerges not as a traditional text of a poem but as something beyond that, something that enlightens the human mind. Through imagination, the philosopher can produce poetic wisdom in prose and reach and climb over the mountain. But for Vico, only God can understand reality, because he is its creator, and by this, he shows his withdrawal and distance from the modern scientific theories that were developing among his contemporaries, as Paolo Rossi underlines in the introduction to the *Scienza nuova* printed in 2012 by Rizzoli in Milan.²⁰

But for Vico, through imagination, humans can perceive, realize, and discover the reality of the quality of the moral world produced in history, and this perception has a similar nature to the knowledge of the creator god.²¹ The language used in poetry is developed in the history of the world and its costumes. Vico considers evolution in the history of language as the meaning of philology. He, in the introduction *Idea dell'Opera* (Idea of the work) to the *Scienza nuova*,²² explains how philosophy aims to examine philology. And he says that philology is philosophy because such as philosophy stays in history; similarly philology holds the history of language, costumes, and facts.²³ Following this closeness between philology and philosophy, we found the association with the development of the human being through the poetic images

¹⁹ Raymond C. Barfield, "Imagination and Mythic Discovery" in *The Poetic Apriori: Philosophical Imagination in a Meaningful Universe* (Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2020), ePub, 63-78.

²⁰ Vico, "2. Arcaicità del pensiero di Vico" in *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 14-22.

²¹ Vico, "Della Sapienza generalmente" in *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 209-212.

²² Vico, "Idea dell'opera" in *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 69-101.

²³ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 73.

written in myths, songs, and tales of gods. The world and its society are built into a metaphorical revelation to us. Heroic fables tell us the true history of the world with its heroic costumes and the evolution of knowledge. Vico finds the revelation of the secret understanding of creation through allegorical images and myths.²⁴

Great poets, such as Dante Alighieri, can brighten through imagination and allegory the historical visionary path of the world with “*Sapienza poetica*” (poetic wisdom).²⁵ Vico identifies Dante, with *Divina Commedia*, as the one who told the true story of the people and facts of the world beyond the visionary Christian system of the soul; beyond earthly life where punishment, valor, and enjoyment or bliss are described with allegoric images and poetic wisdom to present imaginary theological poetry called “*Commedia*.”²⁶ The poetic embellishment is not considered as a merely extrinsic aesthetic enrichment of narration but the art of poetry itself as a philosophical embodiment of wisdom through metaphor, allegory, and irony. Verene underlines the *fantasia* or *universale fantastico*, in Vico’s *Scienza nuova*, which is considered the essence of narration. The sap of what philosophical discourse can trace. He introduces the “imaginative universal” (*universale fantastico*), considered by Vico to be the “master key” of *Scienza nuova* outlined in his work.^{27, 28}

This *imaginative universalis* can give meaning to the poetic narration and can produce the history of language with the creation of the human philosophy of thought. Raymond C. Barfield calls *imaginative universalis* “poetic apriori.”²⁹ In *The Poetic Apriori*, he describes Vico’s *Scienza nuova* as a “story-telling science” of philosophy that takes us to human society and to Vichian “*sensus comunis*.”³⁰ He emphasizes the importance of myths and the interpretation of fables to understand the philosophical language of imagination used in them. *Common sense* is the pro-

²⁴ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 74.

²⁵ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 208-453.

²⁶ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 471 of 857.

²⁷ Verene, *Speculative philosophy*, 75.

²⁸ Vico, “Idea dell’Opera,” in *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 94.

²⁹ Raymond C. Barfield, “V. Imagination and Mythic Discovery” in *The Poetic Apriori: Philosophical Imagination in a Meaningful Universe* (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2020), ePub, 68.

³⁰ Barfield, “V. Imagination and Mythic Discovery” in *The Poetic Apriori*, ePub, 69.

ducer of the “mental dictionary” of new languages and the new “mental language.”³¹ On his part, Barfield described storytelling as the way to transform the philosophical imagination in memory. Through storytelling, we build memory traditions and pass them on to a new generation of philosophers and human beings. The relations between memory and imagination are multiple. The imagination can activate memory through painting, writing, song, and storytelling.³² Equally, imagination is the seal for discovering and investigating the reality of nature and the magical path of human secrets.

In brief, in Vico’s theory, imagination (*fantasia*) as memory is a quality of poetic wisdom where the poet intertwines history, narration, and allegory with *imagination* to create a kind of philosophical narration. Vico, in the third book of *Scienza nuova* “Della scoperta del vero Omero,” introduces memory as fantasy but he has distinguished it in three differences: memory remembers things, fantasy alters and disguises, and ingenuity wraps and harmonizes them. By these principles, the “theologian poets” call memory “madre delle muse,” mother of the muses able to recall the story and the narration through the imagination (*fantasia, memorare*).³³

In the first place, Vico traced the relationship between philosophy and narration in ancient Greek and Egyptian civilization, where he compared the two civilizations with the development of “favole greche” (Greek fables) and the historical and philosophical tales of Egyptian natural theology.³⁴ In particular, he says that:

Quindi si truova nelle favole essere stati nascosti i misteri di sì fatta sapienza volgare; e si medita così nelle cagioni onde poi i filosofi ebbero tanto disiderio di conseguire la sapienza degli antichi, come nelle occasioni ch’essi filosofi n’ebbero di destarsi a meditare altissime cose in filosofia e nelle comodità, d’intrudere nelle

³¹ Barfield, “V. Imagination and Mythic Discovery” in *The Poetic Apriori*, ePub, 69.

³² Barfield, “V. Imagination and Mythic Discovery” in *The Poetic Apriori*, ePub, 70.

³³ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 472.

³⁴ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 106.

favole la loro sapienza riposta.³⁵

In the edition published by Rizzoli in 2012, Rossi points out, in a note to this paragraph, that Vico differed in his view from Plato, Platonic Renaissance, and Bacon's views of ancient fables. Vico considers the fables not only as an expression of philosophical wisdom, but as a historical phenomenon that appeared in the fantastic age of the first period;³⁶ in the Vichian system of universal history of the three ages, the first age is the age of gods, characterized by the poetic history of the gods, the second is the age of heroes, and the third is the age of men.³⁷

In this way, myths and fables become the most ancient form of philosophical wisdom that appeared in the age of gods in which it is possible to find ethical allegories for the development of religion and costumes, as Vico has presented extensively in the second book of *Scienza nuova, Della Sapienza poetica (The Poetic Wisdom)*.³⁸

Furthermore, Verene analyses the relationship between philosophy and literature in the *Borges and Vico* article in which the philosophy of literature is presented in four ways: philosophy *independent from* literature with its own philosophical literary speculation; philosophy *in* literature where we find the research of philosophical allegory in literary works; philosophy *and* literature as independent matter but connected with each other through dialectical thought such as philosophy and poetry or fable; philosophy *as* literature where philosophy and literary writing meet each other just as in Plato's *Republic* or Dante's *Divina Commedia* which are characterized by dialogues, poems, and wisdom. He considers this investigation of philosophy and literature as "two sides of a coin," inseparable from each other and complementary to each other, philosophy to literature.³⁹ Philosophy and literature extend and take "language beyond itself" to advance in wisdom. He concludes by saying

³⁵ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 95. My translation "Thus it is found in fables that the mysteries of so-called vulgar wisdom have been hidden; and thus is meditated in the cause, whereupon the philosophers were so eager to reach the wisdom of the ancients, as on the occasions when they philosophers had the opportunity to awaken to meditate on very high things in philosophy and comfort, to bring into fables their wisdom placed."

³⁶ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, Paolo Rossi note 4 and note 36, 656.

³⁷ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 73.

³⁸ Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, ePub, 208-453.

³⁹ Verene, "Borges and Vico," 7-8.

“the philosopher becomes a literary thinker and the litterateur becomes a lover of wisdom.”⁴⁰

In short, the Vichian *fantastico universale* and the memory are approached in literary narration from a philosophical wisdom point of view to rebuild a poetic text of literature in the same way a myth or fable in the ancient age.

Kant's Anthropology: imagination, fantasy, and memory

On the other hand, about fifty years after Vico's death, we have a different perspective from Immanuel Kant. Kant presents in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798)⁴¹ some studies of imagination, fantasy, and memory that lead to a completely different result from Vico's studies. Kant presents the difference between *imagination* and *fantasy*; one as rational, productive, and reproductive, and the other as irrational and coming from the power of mental images, involuntarily. Imagination is a rational faculty, and it is possible to be controlled by rationality in its production and reproduction. Fantasy is not controlled by rationality and produces its “mental images” unintentionally. In other words, he says that the production of involuntary imagination is called *fantasy*.⁴²

However, Kant extends the variety of imagination. He presents different types of imagination as *facultas imaginandi*, “as a faculty of intuition without the presence of the object,” and could be *productive* or *reproductive*. In all cases, the power of imagination (*facultas imaginandi*) is a faculty of intuition and not a direct perception of an object. *Productive facultas imaginandi* is characterized by previous contact with the object, which means imagining something we have experienced before. *Reproductive facultas imaginandi* is described as the faculty by which to “bring back to the mind an empirical intuition that it had previously.” Reproductive is a faculty that is produced by a “derivative presentation of the object (*exhibition derivativa*)” and not based on a previous perception of an object. In addition, he emphasizes the “intuitions of space and time” as related to the *productive faculty*, rather than an empirical intuition that is connected with the “concept of the object”

⁴⁰ Verene, “Borges and Vico,” 8.

⁴¹ Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, translated by Robert B. Loudon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁴² Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 60.

that produces an empirical cognition called *experience*.⁴³

In other words, Kant considers space and time as the “phenomena” perceived previously, and that forms the basis of the intuition of space and time rather than the concept of space and time that produces an empirical cognition. Space and time are phenomena that are experimented with rather than there being one cognition of them. In the following, he identifies productive as *inventive* and reproductive as *recollective*, and he says that the *inventive* faculty cannot be “exactly *creative*,” because it is incapable of producing something that is not based on some previous experience but should “always furnish evidence of the material of its ideas.”⁴⁴ Kant exemplifies that in this way, a person born blind cannot understand what red is because s/he has not experienced what color it is at all. It seems uncertain what Kant means by *inventive* and *creative*, even to himself. It seems that he had some concerns about these two terms. He does not define what creative is, but it is possible to deduce it from a *Handschrift*⁴⁵ note in the manuscript for the first publication in 1798, which is presented in the 2006 Cambridge University Press edition. In the note, we read “The power of imagination is either creative (*productive*) or reproductive (*reproductive*),” but after he replaces *creative* with *inventive* for the first publication of the book and specifies the *inventive* cannot be “exactly *creative*.” It seems that this *creative* could be a faculty of intuition that has already a kind of knowledge of its object of intuition but not only. It is deductible that for Kant the *creative* could be also a *reproductive* idea by the reproduction of a previous experience. Perhaps, his rethinking suggests a change of mind from the concept of *creative* to *inventive*.

As we mentioned earlier, Kant connects productivity with sensibility and the intuitions of space and time. Specifically, he divides *productivity* into three types:

“the *forming* of intuitions in space (*imaginatio plastica*), the *associating* of intuitions in time (*imaginatio associans*), and that of *affinity*, based on the common origin of ideas from each other

⁴³ Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 60.

⁴⁴ Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 61.

⁴⁵ Kant, “Marginal note in *Handschrift*” in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, note 68, 64. The power of imagination is either creative (*productive*) or reproductive (*reproductive*).

(*affinitas*).”⁴⁶

The first *imaginatio plastica* is associated with the “intuition in space” that Kant explains with an analogy to the artistic product. Before showing a physical work of art, the artist should produce it in “his power of imagination.”⁴⁷ The production of *forming* is divisible into two types, one is involuntary and “does not belong to the artist,”⁴⁸ called *fantasy*, and the other is voluntary and comes from choices. He called the last one *composition* or *fabrication*. *Fantasy* is sometimes described as inconvenient, especially when it is over-present in the waking state. In addition, he specifies that fantasy in a sleeping state is called *dreaming* but when we are awake, the excess of fantasy becomes a form of “diseased condition”⁴⁹ because we are involved in “involuntary invented events”⁵⁰ that lead to wrong perceptions.

There is one other interesting element in Kant's theory, and that element is the *fantastic*. Kant describes *fantastic* as an artistic production based on “forms according to images that cannot be found in existence.”⁵¹ In other words, when an artist produces something “according to images” that are not perceptible by the human senses, that creation is called *fantastic*. That *fantastic* perception is unnatural and distorted in forms such as “dream images of one [who] is awake.”⁵²

The second *imaginatio associans* is mainly the “habit in the mind”⁵³ of some empirical idea that we usually do. Kant says that “when one idea is produced, the other also comes into being.”⁵⁴ In other words, the association of the mind works as two factors, one being the subsequence of ideas, one connected to another, and the second is the habit of doing this following association. In footnote j,⁵⁵ Kant presents the example of a conversation that moves from one idea to another through the association of concepts.

⁴⁶ Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 67.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 67-68.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 68.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, note j, 69.

The third *affinitas* is identified by Kant as the union of diversity from a common ground of origin in which the power of imagination is developed with the “rules of sensibility” related to the intelligence able to recognize the affinities of association “achieved without consciousness of the rule” but “*in conformity with the understanding*.”⁵⁶ In other words, affinity (*affinitas*) is characterized by a union of multiplicity close to the same ground or, as Kant specifies, “one had its origin in the other”⁵⁷ which produced a new different thing, but this union is unconsciously and in conformity with the understanding. Kant illustrates this with a comparison between “intellectual combination” and a chemical combination of “two heterogeneous elements” that produce a new entity achievable only from two different substances.⁵⁸

In conclusion, the power of imagination in Kant’s theory is productive or reproductive but could be also a production subject as *fantasy*.⁵⁹ Similarly, memory is described as a *voluntary* reproduction of the power of imagination, and Kant alerts us by underlining that if *fantasy*, the involuntary creative power of imagination, is mixed with memory, “then memory would be *unfaithful*.”⁶⁰ In addition, in *Critique of Judgment*, Kant highlights the direct causality between the experience had in life and the actual evolution of natural things such as the presence of mosquitoes in a land and the human action of draining the land as a direct answer to the problem of mosquito bites.⁶¹ This Kantian evolutionary explanation moves Nuria Sanchez Madrid in *Origine, sviluppo e autolimitazione della Kultur in Kant*⁶² to summarize his description of culture as a fundamental category that moves to civilization process by the comparison of qualities and proprieties of objects to obtain own

⁵⁶ Ibid., 70.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 70.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 70.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 67-68.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 75-76.

⁶¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement* (Indianapolis/Cambridge; Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), 259-260.

⁶² Nuria Sánchez Madrid, “Origine, sviluppo e autolimitazione della *Kultur* in Kant” in *Kant and Culture*, ed. Tommaso Morawski (Rome: Sapienza Università Editrice, 2022), 11-30.

goals inside to a society.⁶³ The Kantian process of “*intentional* propose of nature”⁶⁴ shows us a different aspect of the evolution of society with the essential previous experience of the *productive facultas imaginandi*.

Folk culture as the repository of cultural memory of the society

We have seen how two major philosophers of the XVIII century have described imagination and fantasy as part of memory and how they are indivisible from memory itself, particularly in the case of Kantian unfaithful memory. Each author has a different position, but both consider imagination as the main factor of memory, so the main factor of the cultural memory of society is like a type of evolutionary process.

Culture, as we have shown, is a complex thing with manifold parts connected to each other developed in time and each of its parts is indispensable for knowing the other parts. This is traceable also in Tylor’s *Primitive Culture* in which the traces of mythology are recounted in “remote ages among the whole human race,” and he says that “Myth forms a consistent part of the development of Culture.”⁶⁵ Myths come in the form of documentaries of the development of life experiences, a form of repository of cultural memory developed over time. Tylor points out that myth appears to be a transposition of the original beliefs of animists as the personification of natural elements steeped in religious and philosophical ideas. Animism influenced philosophy and religion and has brought into the myth some aspects of its beliefs on “personal animated creatures”⁶⁶ of rivers, sun, moon, mountains, winds, and prodigious powers, as Vico explains in *Della memoria e della fantasia* for painters’ activities to combine in an image of a centaur or hippogriff the truth of nature mixed with falsehood.⁶⁷

For example, the fascinating story of the Stone of Destiny, also called the Coronation Stone of Scone, is used in Scotland and now in England for the United Kingdom coronation. Marc Bloch, in *An Unknown Testimony on the History of Coronation in Scotland*, considers

⁶³ Nuria Sánchez Madrid, “Origine, sviluppo e autolimitazione della *Kultur* in Kant,” 14.

⁶⁴ Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, 259.

⁶⁵ Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 280.

⁶⁶ Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 280-281.

⁶⁷ Vico, “§II Della memoria e della fantasia,” 53.

the stone as “the last remnant of a pagan enthronization”⁶⁸ and presents the relative myth evolution in a Christian religious invention to justify the symbolic-ritualistic use of the stone in the coronation of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth realms. The stone has developed towards itself a great deal of literature, from myths and legends to historical tales in which is used it during the coronation of kings. Hilton James in *The coronation Stone at Westminster Abbey* tracks down a certain legend that starts “In the time of Moses ...”⁶⁹ with a detailed description of the excursus of the stone and its use in Spain, Ireland, and Scotland. This example takes us to the importance of myths and folk culture in the memory of a society in which the power of imagination and fantasy of narration builds up the costumes and traditions of a country. Today the Coronation Stone of Scone is still in use in the United Kingdom for the King and Queen coronations.⁷⁰ But the historian Patrick Weston Joyce points out, in *The Lia Fail and the Westminster Coronation Stone*, that there may exist two coronation stones, one is the original Irish Lia Fail in Tara and the second is the Coronation Stone of Scone.⁷¹ Joyce presents the tale of Dedannans with the travel of the main character to Greece to learn magic and become great in arts and sciences. After, Dedannans brought the Stone of Destiny to Scotland and later for seven years in Ireland. The story is mythic and traditionally establishes the legend and narration of the Lia Fail and the coronation of the Irish kings in Tara. He highlights the chronicle of the relocation of Stone of Destiny to Scotland from Ireland, presented in the thirteenth century, is universally rejected as a pure fable, and remains traced only in the old Scottish documents but not a note of that story is traceable in the Irish chronicles or poems.⁷²

We point out that the power of imagination and fantasy around myths and folk tales that justify and actualize the authority of a King is great. Recalling memory through myths and legends becomes the act of

⁶⁸ Marc Bloch, “An Unknown Testimony on the History of Coronation in Scotland” in *The Scottish Historical Review* 23: 90 (1926): 105–6..

⁶⁹ Hilton James, “The Coronation Stone at Westminster Abbey,” in *Archaeological Journal* 54: 1 (1897): 201–224.

⁷⁰ James, “The Coronation Stone at Westminster Abbey,” 201–224.

⁷¹ P. W. Joyce, “The Lia Fail and the Westminster Coronation Stone,” in *The Irish Monthly* 12: 133 (1884): 325–331..

⁷² Joyce, “The Lia Fail and the Westminster Coronation Stone,” 327–328.

establishing and governing a society. Folk culture becomes the repository of memory for the society to establish the authority of traditions and rituals.

Historical evolution from primitive ritual to fairy tales

Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp in *The Historical Roots of the Magic Folk Tales (Istoričeskie korni volšebnoj skazki)*⁷³ presents the evolution of folk tales from primitive ritual to magic fairy tales, but he was not the first to do so. Alberto M. Cirese says in the introduction to *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*,⁷⁴ the Italian translation of Propp's work, that it was already introduced by other authors. Cirese underlines the relationship between folk tales and primitive initiations that had already been presented by the French folklorist Pierre Saintyves in his studies.⁷⁵ But he points out the merit of Propp in "making his premises clearly and rationally explicit and fine-tuning his inquiry criteria."⁷⁶ Furthermore, Propp starts to present the intrinsic connection between each folk tale, or better *magic folk tales*, and the indivisibility of the studies of one tale with the study of all other stories. He identifies two main points "first, no *subject* of a *magic folk tale* can be studied without another, and second, no *motif* of a *magic folk tale* can be studied without its relationship to the whole."^{77, 78, 79}

⁷³ *The Historical Roots of the Magic Folk Tales* (1946) is partially translated in English in *Theory and History of Folklore* as *Historical Roots of the Wondertale*, edited by Antoly Liberman (1997), and integrally translated in Italian and France as *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*, translated by Clara Coisson (1949/1972) and as *Les Racines historiques du conte merveilleux*, translated by Lise Gruel-Apert (1983).

⁷⁴ Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*, trans. by Clara Coisson (Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2017), ePub.

⁷⁵ Alberto M. Cirese, "Introduzione di Alberto M. Cirese" in *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*, 22.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 22. My translation: "a rendere ordinatamente e razionalmente esplicite le sue premesse e a mettere a punto i suoi criteri d'indagine."

⁷⁷ Propp, *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*, 37.

⁷⁸ Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, "Historical roots of Wondertale: Premises" in *Theory and History of Folklore*, 4th. edit. by Antoly Liberman, trans. by Ariadna Y. Martin, & Richard P. Martin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 102.

To be clear, before starting, we must dwell on some terms used by Propp. First, in his studies, Propp has selected a type of fairy tale characterized by magic power, supernatural aspects, or magic objects that identify as 300 to 749 in Aarne's classification.⁸⁰ He defines these fairy tales as *volshebnykh skazok* (волшебных сказок), italics of Propp in the Russian version,⁸¹ and that is translated differently in each translation. We have chosen to use the form of *magic folk tales* adopted by Serge Shishkoff in the translation of Propp's "Study of the Folktale: Structure and History" published in 1976 as an article on *Dispositio*.⁸² This choice is motivated mainly by coherence with the subject of the tales and by emphasizing the relationship with the traditional mystical rituals. But for the definition of *motif*, there are some unclear aspects.

Propp in *Morphology of Folktales* presents Aleksandr Nikolaevič Veselovskij's position on the *motif* as "an indivisible narrative unit" and says that "Veselovskij means by 'theme' a complex of motifs."⁸³

After, he presents a series of Veselovskij's statements published in *Poëtika* vol. II fasc. I⁸⁴ to show and clarify the position on the *motif* and rendered in English as:

A theme is a series of motifs. A motif develops into a theme." "Themes vary: certain motifs make their way into themes, or else themes combine with one another." "By theme I mean a subject in which various situations, that is, motifs, move in and out."⁸⁵

Now, the main question is related to how it is translated *syuzhet* (сюжет) and consequently *temu* (тему) because, as Anatoly Liberman

⁷⁹ Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, *Морфология волшебной сказки. Исторические корни волшебной сказки*, (Moscow: КоЛибри [Kolibri], 2020), 208.

⁸⁰ Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, *Morphology of the Folktales*, edit. by Louis A. Wagner, trans. by Laurence Scott (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 19.

⁸¹ Propp, *Морфология волшебной сказки*, 27.

⁸² Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, "Study of the Folktale: Structure and History" in *Dispositio*, 1: 3 (1976): 277-292.

⁸³ Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, *Morphology of the Folktales*, edit. (Carroll 2015) by Louis A. Wagner, trans. by Laurence Scott (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 12.

⁸⁴ Note 14 in Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*. A. N. Veselovskij, *Poetika* [Poetics] Vol. II, Fasc. I: *Poetika sjuzetov* [The Poetics of Themes], Introduction, chapters I and II.

⁸⁵ Propp, *Morphology of the Folktales*, 12.

says in the introduction of *Theory and History of Folklore*⁸⁶, “the English translation ... most unhappily renders *syuzhet* as *theme*.” Liberman suggests *plot* as a plausible translation. Instead, *temu* (remy) is translated as *subject* in the last sentence. Therefore, we see clearly, without knowledge of the Russian language, that there are some troubles with translation. After all, Propp inserts a note in some lines below, which explains his disagreement with Volkov's definition of *syuzhet*. Perhaps, this note is useful to clarify Propp's idea of what *syuzhet* is and consequently what *motif* and *theme* are. Propp says that:

Volkov makes a fatal mistake when he says: 'The tale's theme [*syuzhet*] is that constant unit from which alone it is possible to proceed to the study of the tale.' (The Tale, p. 5). We answer: 'A theme [*syuzhet*] is not a unit, but a complex, it is not constant, but variable, and one should not proceed from it to the study of the tale.'^{87 88}

Propp's note highlights his position and how to proceed to study folk tales. One point is that Propp does not proceed from *syuzhet* to study folk tales because it is not a unit and it is a complex, inconstant, and variable. This assertion brings the meaning of *syuzhet* to the concept of *plot* rather than to the *theme* or to the *subject*. *Syuzhet* “is not a unit, but a complex, it is not constant, but variable”⁸⁹ understandable as a complex and variable of *motif* which is formed the *theme* of a folk tale or a fairy tale as Liberman suggested. In addition, Liberman says that Propp used the term *motif* more compressively and not like Stith Thompson and Veselovskij that considers motif as a minimal narrative unit.⁹⁰

Propp says “we must affirm that a motif is not monomial or indivisible”⁹¹, and he presents an example to show his position. E.g., if we take the motif of “a dragon kidnaps the tsar's daughter” we see that it is divisible into four and each part of it is changeable with one other element as the dragon with a devil or a falcon. And he points out that “the final divisible unit, as such, does not represent a logical whole”⁹² and

⁸⁶ Anatoly Liberman, “Introduction” in *Theory and History of Folklore*, xxvii.

⁸⁷ Propp, *Morphology of the Folktales*, 17, note 15.

⁸⁸ Propp, *Морфология волшебной сказки*, note 8, 19 of 740.

⁸⁹ Propp, *Morphology of the Folktales*, 17, note 15.

⁹⁰ Liberman, “Introduction” in *Theory and History of Folklore*, xxvii.

⁹¹ Propp, *Morphology of the Folktales*, 13.

⁹² Propp, *Morphology of the Folktales*, 13.

consequently should be considered a more comprehensive unit. To return to the speech of folk tales as the repository of memory, we see Propp considering the magic folk tales as directly connected with the ritual or customs of a society, and he shows a direct relationship between the *motif* of magic folk tales and the ritual.^{93, 94}

The *motif* becomes a transposition or a reading of the customs of society such as the traditional isolation or reclusion of the royal family to protect them, e.g. the princess imprisoned in the tower by the King.⁹⁵ This kind of reclusion/isolation is possible to interpret today by the distance of the royal families from the common and ordinary life of society. One other important distinction made by Propp in *Study of The Folktale: Structure and History* is between *myth* and *magic folk tales*. The *magic folk tales* are “based on poetic invention and are a fabrication of reality,”⁹⁶ and he emphasizes the meaning of the word “tale” that is in most languages “a synonym for ‘lie,’ or ‘falsehood’.”⁹⁷ This should be understood as an invention or as the use of Vichian *imagination* and *fantasy* to build up the *plot* of the *theme*. *Magic folk tales* are one construction of different motifs produced by imagination, but this does not mean that it is not based on reality and social costumes. Propp compares magic folk tales with myths because, as he said, myths are “a sacral narrative whose veracity is believed and which, moreover, expresses the sacred faith of the people.”⁹⁸ What he wants to underline is that the two forms of narrative could coexist at the same time but not on the same subject. In other words, the myth and the folk tale of Argonauts do not exist at the same time among the same people because the myth of Argonauts is based on belief; instead, the *magic folk tales* are considered one production of the poetic imagination. Therefore, he specifies that the myth always precedes the folk tale, but only when the two are based on the same subject with the

⁹³ Propp, *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*, 43-44 of 549.

⁹⁴ Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, 106.

⁹⁵ Propp, *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*, 66-74 of 549.

⁹⁶ Vladimir Jakovlevič Propp, “Study of The Folktale: Structure and History,” trans. by Serge Shishkoff in *Dispositio* (Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Michigan) 1: 3 (1976): 289.

⁹⁷ Propp, “Study of The Folktale: Structure and History,” 289.

⁹⁸ Propp, “Study of The Folktale: Structure and History,” 290.

“same system” and “history of the plot.”⁹⁹ Perhaps it is possible to assume that myths can be transformed into folk tales but not the other way around. It is difficult for a fairy tale to become a belief and be followed by many people as a real truth.

However, Propp starts to search for the origin of *magic folk tales* in the first “stages of history” or better in the “first stages of the development of human society,”¹⁰⁰ But his final objective was not simply to establish the unity of the composition of *magic folk tales* and their origin. His works, *Morphology* and *The Historical Roots*, are “two parts or two volumes of a single broad work”¹⁰¹ and he subjects to seeing his works as a continuum of the same project. In addition, we should see these studies as a preparatory step “to analyze objectively and scientifically, in its historical development, that world of popular philosophy and popular morality that is one of the most interesting and significant components of the folk tale.”¹⁰²

In conclusion, we should see his studies as a propaedeutic work to accede to a deeper study of folk philosophy and morality through the evolution of *magic folk tales* and folk tales in general.¹⁰³ In some ways, as Vico sees poems and fables as philosophy, Propp sees people’s imagination and fantasy as a hook to elaborate folk narrative in philosophy and rediscover some folk initiation of lost wisdom in time through the historical evolution of the fairy tale.

Fairy tales and *magic folk tales* are philosophy through fantasy, and in order to discover and enjoy folk wisdom, we need to go through the morphology and cross the history of folk tales. Verene, in the preface to *Speculative Philosophy*, has written that philosophy is essentially a literary activity, that “depends upon the words, spoken or written,” to pursue wisdom.¹⁰⁴ In the same way, folk tales are expressed in spoken or written words, and like philosophy and poetry, folk tales play with language through imagination and fantasy to pursue popular wisdom, initiatory customs, mysteries, and traditions.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 290.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 281.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 281.

¹⁰² Ibid., 289.

¹⁰³ Propp, “Inversione del rito” in *Le radici storiche dei racconti di fate*, 47-50 of 550.

¹⁰⁴ Verene, *Speculative Philosophy*, xii-xiii

Folk tales are a repository of cultural memory of a society that holds philosophy, morality, and wisdom through symbols and fantasy. The plots of the tales are made up of several motifs that represent the social costumes and traditions of a society. The motifs show and report to us the traditional acts and behaviors of people of the ancient original society performed and carried out in several situations and life occasions structured on the moral and philosophical system of that time. Reading and interpreting them gives us opportunities to discover new elements and details about the original folk pearls of wisdom and knowledge.

Effectiveness of Gadamer's Hermeneutic Notion of Mental Health

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Abstract: The study examines the potential effectiveness of Gadamer's hermeneutics in treating mental illnesses and disorders. Gadamerian hermeneutics presents philosophical foundations with core values for psychology and mental well-being practitioners. The core concepts in Gadamerian hermeneutics are much needed to provide a new and infinite understanding of mental health conditions. It can help to interpret and understand critical issues surrounding professional practice. By analyzing Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, the study demonstrates the importance of dialogue and communication, which are crucial for treating mental illnesses. Notably, the hermeneutic view helps us understand the more profound importance of, for instance, interacting with a patient suffering from emotional pain. The two important words, "conversation" and "dialogue," are central to Hans-Georg Gadamer's explanation of understanding. On the beneficial outcomes of philosophical understanding of mental disorders, practitioners can use the Gadamerian perspective to create more effective strategies for treating certain conditions. It highlights the value of dialogue, which is a fundamental tool for fostering human interaction and comprehension.

Keywords: Gadamer's hermeneutics, mental health, dialogue, depression

Introduction

One of the practical methods of examining the effectiveness of Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic notion of mental health is to examine its perspective on dialogue and the impact of such dialogue on depression. Gadamer contends that dialogues are essential to human comprehension and our way of living. The hermeneutical issue is universal and existential because of how ingrained and limited humans are. The role of others in dialogic interpretations and the process of understanding is one of the main themes of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. The intersubjec-

tive character of transcending human situations results from this.¹ People engage in dialogue as they try to understand one another through the interaction of the viewpoints they bring to a conversation, which are formed by historical consciousness, traditions, and cultural settings. Gadamer contends that dialogic and, subsequently, intersubjective understanding encompasses the interaction between the actor and the outside world as well as one's self and others.² The critical role of the other and otherness in conversation and human existence is encapsulated in Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, which provides an entirely comprehensive theory relevant to mental health therapies.

Notably, the hermeneutic method entails a contemplative approach to being and behaving to lay the groundwork for transformation and advancements in mental health therapy. Acquiring hermeneutic knowledge is necessary for grasping the more profound significance of, say, coming into contact with a patient experiencing emotional suffering. The hermeneutic perspective can assist mental health professionals in comprehending how intuitiveness and empathy can benefit patients, offering them hope and future opportunities. In order to give the suffering patient high-quality treatment and support, it is essential for those involved in the profession of mental health to be willing to shift some of the negative perceptions from earlier conversations. The foundation of mental health treatment is the existential principle comprising dialogues to comprehend those with mental health issues. However, this requires conversations to reach an understanding through the sustained interplay of questions and solutions.

Gadamer's Perspectives on Dialogue and Impact on Depression

At the heart of Hans-Georg Gadamer's explanation of understanding lies the two critical terms: 'conversation' and 'dialogue.' Gadamer argued that understanding a text and anything in a conversation are very different. In addition, Gadamer promoted an understanding that the role of hermeneutics is to help individuals enter into dialogue with the text. As a result, it

¹ Kitty Maria Suddick et al., "The Work of Hermeneutic Phenomenology," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19 (2020): 1–14, 3.

² Scherto Gill, "'Holding Oneself Open in a Conversation' – Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics and the Ethics of Dialogue," *Journal of Dialogue Studies* 3: 1 (2015): 9–28, 10.

becomes critical to establish and sustain the conversation through the interplay of questions and answers to help understand one thing by reaching an understanding of something else about it.³ Based on the dialogue, it will be possible for the person suffering from mental illness to be understood. It will also be possible for mental healthcare practitioners to make the right diagnosis when the patient engages them in dialogue. In this way, it will be possible for healthcare providers to prevent simple mental issues such as stress from developing into serious problems such as depression. Gadamer's theory of understanding helps to analogously understand his conception of dialogue. The comparison entails viewing understanding as participating in a dialogue with the text one is attempting to comprehend. Gadamer's hermeneutics is a philosophical strategy that urges practitioners to give dialogues top priority during the therapeutic process. The method can assist mental health professionals in reducing the incidence of psychiatric diseases by recognizing such health concerns as mental health problems, in which previous experiences rather than physical symptoms are addressed as a crucial element of the therapy.

Gadamer was only interested in meaningful dialogue. Parties in the dialogue must then share three elements comprising two horizons and a subject matter. The three components were critical in the dialogue's structure: aiming to establish a meaningful dialogue. Parties in a dialogue may not simultaneously capture reality's same object in a speech. As a result, they commonly describe the subject matter as something. The dialogue's meaning is to help them agree on the meaning of the subject and what it signifies. The dialogue, therefore, occurs in a situation similar to when parties try to work out the concept's definitions before applying them in a dialogue.⁴ Therefore, Gadamer understood the role of conversation in understanding the text, which must happen between the interpreter and the text to determine what such text signifies in a question-and-answer form.

Gadamer's understanding of dialogue is based on the hermeneutic perspective that describes it as a constant conversation, discussion, and communication among involved parties. The dialogue can then take place

³ Iñaki Xavier Larrauri Pertierra, "On Gadamerian Hermeneutics: Fusions of Horizons, Dialogue, and Evolution(s) within Culture as Dynamic System of Meaning," *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* 4: 4 (2021): 45-62, 49.

⁴ Erdal Yılmaz, "The Fusion of Horizons: The Possibility of a Genuine Ethical Dialogue," *South African Journal of Philosophy* (2022): 1-11, 4.

within and outside the given text. Obtaining complete understanding during dialogue would require the involved parties to approach it with openness, equality, and sincerity. The patients should not in any way feel that they are being coerced into the dialogue. They must accept the fact that the dialogue is designed to help them get professional help. The most important thing about the dialogue is its process rather than a conclusion, and it should not be rushed in an attempt to obtain faster results. Therefore, it is established in a way in which the outcomes and conclusion would help the parties improve their understanding of self and the world. According to Gadamer, the premise of any dialogue is the willingness to participate and engage in a discussion where each participant freely provides their thoughts and opinions about the subject matter.⁵ Parties must provide all participants equal rights to speak and share their opinions and ensure no hegemony in such dialogues. Participants must remain open to ideas and solutions, which enables them to enjoy the benefits of dialogues that enable them to improve their opinions about a given subject matter. Openness, equality, and sincerity are crucial aspects that enable the full participation of all parties during dialogues and can have a positive and significant impact on mental health therapies.

The logical idea of dialogue in Gadamer's Hermeneutics is that the involved parties must suspend their judgments to allow themselves to convert such judgment into question and initiate a dialogue that will solve such a question. Therefore, Gadamer develops the absolute supremacy of questioning within the dialogue. Gadamer makes considerable efforts to explain the meaning of the open and inexhaustible text in his experience account. According to Gadamer, hermeneutics' primary task is to question things. Importantly, parties to dialogue only achieve proper understanding by answering the questions posed by texts. Parties are likely to approach texts with an opinion that requires clarification or further knowledge.⁶ Therefore, parties also pose questions to the text. The dialogue then becomes a process that involves parties resolving things put into question by the text and finding solutions in the text to the questions posed by such parties. Therefore, Gadamer held that the text's meaning was relative to the question posed to or by it. As a result,

⁵ Michael A. Peters and Tina Besley, "Models of Dialogue," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 53: 7 (2019): 669–676, 672.

⁶ Adi Barak, "Fusing Horizons in Qualitative Research: Gadamer and Cultural Resonances," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 19: 3 (2020): 768–783, 774.

one text can be associated with multiple meanings that largely depend on the application's circumstances. The question-and-answer logic enables parties to extract maximum knowledge from the text. Therefore, this approach allows individuals in health professional fields to go beyond the limited scientific understanding of issues surrounding mental health and another health phenomenon.

Analyzing Gadamer's concepts of knowledge through the fusion of perspectives in a dialogue approach has led to establishing an intersubjectivity narrative. Intersubjectivity, in this case, refers to the acknowledgment that the social arena in which all human actors are important parts comprises all critical meanings. It describes existing challenges that face humans when they try to separate other people's experiences, behaviors, actions, and intentions prevalent in the life world.⁷ For instance, schizophrenic patients may denote intersubjectivity characteristics such as self-alienation, where patients feel detached from others and lose contact with one's experience of self. Psychiatric patients are more likely to express degraded intersubjectivity patterns during interactions. Characteristics of depressed individuals may jeopardize any meaningful interaction. As such, the Gadamerian perspective is needed to help professionals commit to such situations, challenge their conceptions and establish an atmosphere that allows for restoring openness, consensual trust, and a healing atmosphere. Typical dyadic interaction settings provide an opportunity for dialogue and understanding between involved parties. The Gadamerian perspective in the mental health area is relatively in its early stages. However, findings on its analysis and review can help to identify and discuss the divergent discourse forms associated with depressive symptoms in the phenomenology of distress. Consequently, such findings indicate the transformational potential linked to Gadamerian's idea of dialogue.

Beneficial Outcomes of Philosophical Understanding of Mental Disorders

Gadamer's philosophy can help mental health providers obtain better and new perspectives on depression and other forms of mental disorders. Consequently, it is possible to use the Gadamerian perspective to devel-

⁷ Adi Barak, "Fusing Horizons in Qualitative Research: Gadamer and Cultural Resonances," p.775 Barak, *Fusing Horizons*, 775.

op improved approaches to treat those disorders. It emphasizes the importance of dialogue, which is an overarching medium of human existence and understanding.⁸ The Gadamerian philosophy introduces the phenomenon of interpretation, which includes individuals approaching symbolic expressions or texts to understand and make sense of such texts and expressions. The philosophical models encourage professionals to establish opportunities for structured discussions of experiences, mental health backgrounds, and enhanced self-understanding.

Additionally, philosophical approaches can help us treat and prevent these diseases in more productive ways. The foundation of intellectual comprehension is the notion of the human being as a mechanism in which truth constantly becomes more accurate. This interpretation is founded on an ongoing conversation between consciousness and practical experience, considering how frequently our worldviews change. According to Gadamer, human perceptions are a fusion of tradition as passed on with yet to be fully appropriated history. Accordingly, the objective world does not avail the truth, and instead, the intersubjectivity process gives rise to such truth as humans subjectively relate to their world. Gadamer's perspective provides crucial insights into the phenomenon by allowing a dual process where they encounter and are confronted with such truth. The perspective's viewpoint is that humans can only learn after such truth and experiences affect them leading to inner transformation. In this sense, humans view understanding as being aware of or receiving knowledge of something from outside. The intersubjective settings have demonstrated that human beings as subjects are open to the realities and objects in which they engage. Human apprehension can be described as cognitive, conscious, emotional, and intuitive. In addition, values, emotions, and moral judgments play a crucial role in helping humans develop a greater understanding of the world around them.

Notably, the primary aim in adopting philosophical issues when dealing with mental illnesses is to enhance the understanding of critical concepts that individuals are likely to take for granted daily. The study, interpretation, and subsequent expansion of the philosophical canon's work can help to achieve such goals. Philosophical perspectives provide a shared and communicative practice that can facilitate understanding by

⁸ Janne Brammer Damsgaard and Ann Phoenix, "World of Change: Reflections within an Educational and Health Care Perspective in a Time with Covid-19," *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 68: 1 (2020): 177-182, 178.

promoting dialectic unfolding between people. The most practical form of philosophy supports a form approach involving dialogues and group activities.⁹ The philosophical approaches, particularly in groups, provide opportunities for expressing live experiences, sharing, and reflecting on mental health. Mental health patients can benefit from philosophical theorizing, group dialogue, and model-supported approaches within the more comprehensive philosophical model. The model-supported philosophical approaches enable practitioners to recognize common experiences and beliefs.

In addition, the philosophical model could help identify opportunities to challenge traditional models based on the previous labeling of cognitions, such as pathological, irrational, or mad. The approach can help to determine the meaning of an irrational belief or to respond to questions of whether irrationality is an indication of mental illness or disorders. As a result, the conversation might shift from individual instances to more general inquiries about what traits are required and sufficient for a label to be attached to those specific occurrences. The approach relieves the strain that might develop when focusing on one person's experience as the main topic of debate. It also enables us to recharacterize our experiences following a philosophical model that best accounts for their specific characteristics.

Therefore, the philosophical approach improves the capacity to understand and classify mental disorders. Such benefits extend to establishing better dimensional approaches to such classification. However, philosophers like Gadamer held a fundamental premise that the current medical and psychotherapy treatment for mental health problems was insufficient since they only focused on the biological or psychological aspects of human experience and disregarded the social and cultural dimensions of human experience.¹⁰ Other philosophers like Gillett highlighted the need for differentiation between the mind and brain when treating mental disorders. He identified the brain as a biological organ that is the material content of the mind. On the other hand, Gillett described the mind as non-biological and non-tangible, presenting non-

⁹ Sophie Stammers and Rosalind Pulvermacher, "The Value of Doing Philosophy in Mental Health Contexts," *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 23: 4 (2020): 743-752, 747.

¹⁰ Josef Bleicher. "Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics," *Contemporary Hermeneutics* (2017): 108-116.

material and narrative elements, including values, beliefs, fears, and assumptions. All living things have some form of brain, but because each organism thinks for itself, it develops different mental characteristics that are unique to it. Each person is made distinct from others by these propositional mental components. They transform a person's biological components into that person and determine how that person interprets information from others and their environment.

Practitioners can use surgery, electric shock, psychotropic drugs, and other methods to repair a physically sick brain, but strategies are quite different for a troubled or "disordered" mind. Arguably, physical therapies like surgery, electric shock, and biological chemical treatments like drugs cannot cure the problematic ideas, values, anxieties, assumptions, and other factors that make up the troubled or "disordered" mind. The process of cognition must be used to alter problematic mental information. The mind is changed by thought. Moreover, dialogue can aid with productive thinking. Additionally, a discussion partner who has received training in the art and skill of discussion can boost the therapeutic effects of conversation. At this point, counselors and psychotherapists with training are engaged. Numerous treatment outcome studies conducted over the past few decades have demonstrated that talking in counseling and psychotherapy sessions, sometimes known as "talk therapies," is the most successful treatment for both short- and long-term effects. Similar to this, Edward Erwin, in his 1997 book *Philosophy and Psychotherapy*, illustrated how and why talk therapies like counseling and psychotherapy are longer-lasting treatments for alleged mental diseases than any of the psychotropic drugs that are currently so frequently administered.¹¹ Overall, such findings describe the potential benefits of adopting philosophical approaches to treating the mind and mental illnesses or disorders.

Critical analysis of Gadamer's Hermeneutic notion of mental health

Mental health care providers have predominantly relied on conventional methods as primary strategies to unearth and treat mental illnesses. However, the high prevalence rates currently of such conditions imply that such methods remain less successful as therapeutic approaches.

¹¹ Peter Bruno Raabe, "Philosophy Revalued in Mental Healthcare," *Synthesis Philosophica* 35: 2 (2020): 379-392, 382.

Gadamer argued that introducing philosophical approaches could be crucial in addressing high prevalence rates and treating mental illness. More specifically, Gadamer's hermeneutics is the philosophical approach that encourages practitioners to prioritize dialogues in the treatment process. The approach can help mental health care providers curb psychiatric disorders by identifying such health problems as issues with the mind where past experiences, rather than the body, are identified as a significant part of the treatment. Adopting the Gadamerian approach would help the practitioners identify the importance of dialogue, communication, and understanding of the text and symbolic text. Ultimately, this would improve effectiveness in treating and curbing mental health illnesses and disorders.

First, Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics raises an important question about whether scientific frameworks and methodologies can handle complex human or patient experiences and meanings given their epistemological perspectives and methodological approaches. Second, Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is helpful because it provides a dialogical framework that promotes an interpretative viewpoint on different kinds of existence in which "otherness" and alterity are viewed as critical foils to develop and conceptually supplement or enrich morally.¹² Gadamer challenges these prevalent models in human affairs through his work in *Truth and Method*. He seems worried about the scientific models utilized in mental illnesses.¹³ In addition, hermeneutics inherently raises questions about the epistemological viewpoint. As a result, it draws attention to the fact that the interpretative component is the only basis for understanding the sophistication of human affairs and knowledge. Gadamer emphasizes the influence of language and culture on how people see the world. Since "the dialogue in which people are" guarantees that participants are expected to interact with present and previous realities, continuing discussions are necessary for humans to understand the world and themselves.

Inducing a shift in preconceptions and understanding phenomena or others without distortions requires parties to participate in a dialogue on various levels. First, it is important to accept or understand the conceptual

¹² Beata Piecychna, "Hans-Georg Gadamer's Philosophy of Understanding and Its Implications for a Model of Hermeneutical Translation Competence," *Perspectives* (2022): 1-14, 6.

¹³ Peter Bruno Raabe, *Philosophy Revalued*, 383.

schemas and biases that shape intellectual perspectives. Doing this will make it easier to identify conceptual taxonomies or practices under challenging situations. Second, encounters with "alterity" or otherness are a necessary catalyst for conceptual or ethical growth; the outcome is the contingency of what may be considered true in conceptual schemas and biases. Embracing diversity increases awareness of barriers and a range of distorted viewpoints which limit other true ideas.¹⁴ As soon as these boundaries are questioned, mental schemas develop spontaneously and shift due to interaction with what may seem alien to people. This is what Gadamer called a "fusion of horizons," where the horizons expand to make them more understandable by accepting the potential reality of different human life forms. Gadamer's philosophical approach promotes the dialogical method that enhances one's understanding of others to attain less distortion and more truthfulness - combining many perspectives on the world and those that are important to people. In other words, via dialogic interaction, one's perspectives evolve to eventually take into account the potential present in what seemed at first foreign or alien.

As it broadens its conceptual construct and scope by thinking on and creating meaningful awareness of biases, the hermeneutic concept of therapeutic mental intervention has also extended its reach into mental nursing health (MHN). Practitioners may find Gadamer's hermeneutics helpful in examining the signals of lethality, inadequacy, and fragility that human experience conveys. Hermeneutics encourages compassion and assistance for persons going through emotional frontiers to understand people's finite selves, which reveals perplexity and worry in a person. It supports the production of ethical and philosophical theoretical notions based on logical and conceptual reasoning, and analysis results from entering the hermeneutic circle through interpretational processes. The desire to change and acquire new intellectual abilities, as well as information, emotional intelligence, and personal maturity, are prerequisites for development. Gadamer effectively highlights/reveals bias in the traditional attitudes towards mental therapies, nevertheless. The inability to think about one's preconceptions is the most damning since admitting them may be very difficult, according to Gadamer, who contends that prejudices are unimportant as long as they are detected and acknowledged.

¹⁴ Tanya Sue D. Barayuga, "Gadamer and Healing," *International Journal of Science and Research* 10: 6 (2021): 78–83.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Master's Program in Philosophy Taught in English at the University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski"

General Information

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" was founded in 1888 following the best patterns of European higher education. Sofia is the capital city of the Republic of Bulgaria, which is a member of the European Union (EU). Sofia University is the highest-ranking university in Bulgaria. The MA Program in Philosophy taught in English at the University of Sofia provides instruction in all major areas of Western Philosophy, but the Master's thesis can also be written on a topic from Eastern Philosophy. The program consists of 10 mandatory courses and 2 electives, so it leaves enough leeway for the student's own preferences. The degree is recognized worldwide including in the EU/EEA and Switzerland, the USA, Canada, Russia, Turkey, China, the Indian Sub-Continent, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Courses Offered

Philosophical Method, Truth and Meaning, Philosophy of Intercultural Relations, Social Philosophy, Critical Phenomenology, Continental Philosophy, Philosophy of Culture, Logic in the Continental Tradition, Theories of Truth, Existential Dialectics, Philosophy of Subjective Action, Logic from a Phenomenological Perspective.

Faculty Members

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. There are also opportunities for distance learning.

Requirements

Bachelor's degree in any field of the 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 €16 fee is charged and an interview is held). No previous degree in philosophy is needed.

Tuition Fee

- 1) For citizens of the EU/EEA and Switzerland: €850 per school year.
- 2) For international students: €3850 per school year.

Financial Aid

- 1) EU/EEA and Swiss citizens are eligible for state scholarships carrying a 60% tuition waiver plus a monthly stipend beginning from the second semester.
- 2) American citizens are eligible for Fulbright Graduate Grants. For more information, see www.fulbright.bg. It is possible for American citizens to use sources of governmental financial assistance (please contact the Program Director for details).
- 3) Canadian students are eligible for financial aid in the form of governmental student loans from the province where they are permanent residents.
- 4) Turkish students are eligible for financial aid within the Turkish-Bulgarian Bilateral Cultural Agreement. For more information, contact the Turkish Ministry of Education..
- 5) Chinese students are eligible for financial aid within the Chinese-Bulgarian Bilateral Cultural Agreement. For more information, contact the Chinese Ministry of Education.

Application Deadlines

- To start in October: July 31.
To start in February: November 30 of the previous year.

Student Visa Matters

Sofia University in cooperation with the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science provides the necessary documents for student visa application to all eligible candidates, except those from the EU/EEA and Switzerland.

Cultural Life and Recreation

The city of Sofia is the most ancient European capital after Athens. The cost of living there is one of the lowest in Europe. As the capital of Bulgaria, Sofia features a rich cultural life. There are a number of concert halls, museums, dozens of art galleries, and many national and international cultural centers. The streets of Sofia 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 on the nearby mountain of Vitosha. More about Sofia can be found at <http://www.sofia-life.com/culture/culture.php>. You can also follow Sofianite and Bulgarian news at <http://www.novinite.com/lastx.php>.

Contact Person

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Doctoral Program in Philosophy Taught in English at the University of Sofia “St. Kliment Ohridski”

General Information

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” was founded in 1888 following the best patterns of European higher education. Sofia is the capital city of the Republic of Bulgaria, which is a member of the European Union (EU). Sofia University is the highest-ranking university in Bulgaria. The PhD Program in Philosophy taught in English at the University of Sofia provides instruction in all major areas of Western Philosophy, but the PhD thesis can also be written on a topic from Eastern Philosophy. The program consists of 6 mandatory courses and 2 electives, so it leaves enough leeway for the student’s own preferences. The degree is recognized worldwide including in the EU/EEA and Switzerland, the USA, Canada, Russia, Turkey, China, the Indian Sub-Continent, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Courses Offered

Modal Metaphysics, Mythologies of the Future: Ideology, Posthumanism, Anthropotechnics; Epistemology, Philosophy of Science, Social Philosophy, Philosophy of Projectivity, Art versus Market, Epistemology, Continental Philosophy, Language and Cultural Relativity, Philosophy of Culture, Time and History.

Requirements

Master’s degree in any field. No previous degree in philosophy is required.

Checklist

CV, two letters of recommendation, standardized tests scores are NOT required. No application fee (for citizens of EU/EEA and Switzerland a €51 fee is charged and an entrance exam is held).

Tuition Fee

- 1) For EU/EEA & Swiss students: in residence: one-time registration fee of €980
extramural: €2,440 per school year.
- 2) For non- EU/EEA & Swiss students: in residence: €4,950 per school year.
extramural: €3,300 per school year.

Other Fees

Dissertation Defense Fee (non- EU/EEA & Swiss students): €2,480.

Duration of Studies

In residence: 3 years. Extramural: 4 years. There are opportunities for online studies.

Financial Aid

- 1) EU/EEA and Swiss citizens are eligible for state scholarships carrying a monthly stipend of BGN 750.
- 2) American citizens are eligible for Fulbright Graduate Grants. For more information, see www.fulbright.bg.
- 3) Canadian students are eligible for financial aid in the form of governmental student loans from the province where they are permanent residents.
- 4) Turkish students are eligible for financial aid within the Turkish-Bulgarian Bilateral Cultural Agreement. For more information, contact the Turkish Ministry of Education..
- 5) Chinese students are eligible for financial aid within the Chinese-Bulgarian Bilateral Cultural Agreement. For more information, contact the Chinese Ministry of Education.

Application Deadlines

To start in October: April 3.

To start in February: October 31.

Student Visa Matters

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

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V. INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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