

PHILOSOPHY AND CRISIS

**RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES
TO WAYS OF LIFE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

VOLUME I

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PHILOSOPHY AND CRISIS

RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES
TO WAYS OF LIFE
IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

VOLUME I

Edited by

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With a Foreword by

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To the Memory of
George Francis McLean
(June 29, 1929 – September 6, 2016)

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Every book has a story. The story of these two volumes goes back to the International Conference on “Philosophy and Crisis: Responding to Ways of Life in the Contemporary World,” held at the University of Ioannina, Greece, on 28-30 July, 2013. The Conference was co-organized by the Sector of Philosophy of the University of Ioannina and by the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) of the Catholic University of America. The objective was to bring together over one hundred philosophy scholars from twenty-one countries all around the world so that they could discuss the much-debated, within numerous disciplines, topic of crisis –an ambitious project in many respects. At that particular Conference, held in Greece in times of financial hardship, our challenge, as speakers and participants, was to succeed in approaching the topic in a distinctively philosophical manner. Earlier versions of the essays included in this two-volume work were presented and discussed at the 2013 Ioannina conference.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to all those who made this Conference possible: the Rectorate of the University of Ioannina and its former Rector Professor Triantafyllos Albanis, the Dean of the School of Philosophy Professor Katerini Liampi, the former Head of the Department of Philosophy, Education and Psychology Professor Konstantinos Petsios, as well as the former Head of the Sector of Philosophy and now Professor Emeritus Panagiotis Noutsos. We would also like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Mrs. Panagiota G. Sioula, MA (Member of University Education Administrative and Financial Staff). Special thanks go out to The Joseph and Esther Gani Foundation represented by Mr. Napoleon Margaritis, the Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Ioannina represented by Professor Moses Elisaf and Dr. Maria Stratsani, as well as the photographer Mr. Konstantinos Ignatiadis and the music composer Mr. Dimitris Karagiorgos for giving the Conference a special artistic touch. We are also grateful to Dr. Dimitris Vartziotis, Mr. Konstantinos Zonidis, Mr. Petros Sepetas and Mrs. Helen Theochari, Mr. Nikolaos Prokos, Mr. Sotiris Ioannou, Mrs. Athina Kolionasios, Prassos Brothers, Mr. Vassilis Tsimis, and Mrs. Zeta Asikoglou.

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Foreword

Crisis and Philosophy

JOÃO J. VILA-CHÃ

Recently, I have been looking back to the experience of Ioannina, Greece, in July, 2013 and witnessing the careful development of a challenging conference dedicated to the philosophical exploration of “*crisis*.” Crisis has been of great importance for philosophy since its inception and all the more so since the famous lectures of Edmund Husserl in the early 1930s.

Let me begin by expressing gratitude to my colleagues at the philosophy department of the University of Ioannina, especially G. Maggini, H. Karatzaki and V. Solomou-Pananiolaou. With their thematic conception and organizational skills, they set the tone for an insightful experience. It was because of the sustained efforts of our colleagues in Greece that numerous intellectuals were able to come to Ioannina, not only from all over Greece, but also other parts of Europe and the rest of the world. They shared their thoughts and ideas on a topic of true relevance to philosophy and philosophers across the globe.

One of moments that stands out from my time in Ioannina was when Dr. Solomou-Pananiolaou delivered a tribute to Professor George F. McLean (1929-2016), who, despite not being able to travel to Greece, was fully involved in the preparation and the development of the project. Professor McLean died in September, 2016 and we profoundly miss him. Indeed, we are still, and will continue to be, touched by the intuitions of this great master of perpetual *aggiornamento* in both thought and action. McLean made many wonderful contributions to the enlargement of philosophical horizons which reached towards a rapprochement between philosophical discourse and human experience as such.

Each paper included in these two volumes speaks on its own to the issue of *Philosophy and Crisis*; yet, inevitably there are considerable differences going all the way back to the genesis of interest in the topics treated here. Nonetheless, our wish is that the present work will serve as a renewed point of departure in the continuing effort to keep the philosophical conversation alive. This effort will contribute to the ongoing discernment of better ways to promote the human person and human values in the world. Today, perhaps more than ever, humankind longs for major and sustainable sources of inspiration for both reflection and action. We need a philosophy that is capable of remaining a source of meaning but also a relevant platform for the search for truth and justice in these complex global times. Indeed, a work on *Philosophy and Crisis* must be thought of as a reminder of the urgency coming from so many places where philosophy continues to suffer the consequences of an unjustified, and very problematic, cultural marginalization.

We are now seeing the importance of developing, in a philosophically grounded way, the ability to work within a frame characterized by a deep hermeneutics of meaning expressed in traditional forms of wisdom. These instantiations of culture, such as rituals, bodily practices, forms of social memory, storytelling, and many other narrative processes, are present in many cultures and civilizations. However, such a hermeneutical attitude does not preclude the continuous effort in the pursuit of universal structures that grant and sustain human existence in the world.

In order to face the challenges of the experience of *crisis* in our time, we must strive for a phenomenological clarification of diverse and different manifestations of the Spirit that inhabits human cultures and traditions. The crisis we are experiencing is multidimensional and yet refers us back to the “Origin,” to the source of meaning and identity, to the ongoing discovery of the human and divine Self. We can say, therefore, that the way forward might be inseparable from a renewed search for the most authentic and sustainable forms of personal and social development within the manifold conditions of today’s world.

We need to overcome preconceptions about philosophy that in many instances still function as impediments to a correct and proper understanding of the field as both an expression of life and a discipline. Philosophy must be engaged with deep reflection on the conditions of our own *Lebenswelt*. Thus, it must be related to the socio-political conditions required by the historical process of bringing in the powerful ideals of human freedom and dignity.

Part of the role of philosophy is to clarify the important imperatives of our age. One of these is interreligious dialogue and a process for encounter among diverse cultural and civilizational frames. The very idea of dialogue between cultures and religions becomes accessible only in terms of a hermeneutical platform. Such a platform justifies the communicative exchange between different *Weltanschauungen* in the context of the rich cultural diversity of the human family. Indeed, there is a deep communality to be found in the assumption that no other discipline is better placed for demonstrating the plausibility of an authentic dialogue between cultures and civilizations than philosophy. This seems, all the more, true when we realize that we are practitioners of philosophy in a perpetual *Age of Crisis*.

The question about the possibility of an authentic interreligious dialogue must include the recognition of philosophy as the discipline of the concept, the hermeneutics of established discourse, and a way of mediation. The latter grants access to both arcane myth and other forms of expression in the human process of searching for meaning. At the base of religious experience is a kind of “universal rhetoric” that is needed in order to better identify and understand the message it conveys.

With Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricœur, we can say that without a philosophical study of the metaphoric realm, which grounds all forms of religious discourse, and indeed of all human discourse, we might never be able to understand the position of the other. The other is understood in the authenticity of his or her concrete situation as a real being-in-the-world. The achieve-

ment of mutual understanding among human beings is something that becomes truly operative only at the level of what Ricoeur referred as the living metaphor. This is the expressive form that always points towards that realm of meaning which is and remains *beyond* linguistic and conceptual forms.

It is assumed that the human subject tends to articulate personal experiences in conceptual terms, that is, in linguistic forms that configure cultural and paradigmatic ways of achieving differences. Whenever I am trying to understand the experience of the other, I use concepts that are culturally situated and carry the particularity of my own vision of the world. Philosophy, therefore, is asked to play its proper role in the process of the (self- and) mutual understanding of persons and communities, cultures, civilizations and religions. After all, without a proper conceptual framework there can be no access to the depths of human *experience*.

This collective work on *Philosophy and Crisis* proves not just the relevance of the demands implicit in the technical uses of philosophical disciplines, but also the importance of recognizing the social and political impact of the philosophical quest as such. One of the most important challenges we face today is the integration of philosophy and experience, an integration that must be conceived in an open form so that even the *mystical* dimension of our experience becomes intertwined with the experience of our own social condition of being. As Levinas would say, of being-for-others. We must continue to search for new approaches to the proper role that each sphere of human life has to play within philosophy. In today's culture, "religion" tends to have a rather divisive effect while philosophy still appears as endowed with the ability to convey a sense of convergent growth and development among individual human beings, as well as, entire communities of people.

In the cultural situation of our age, one that, perhaps, is best described as *crisis*, The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy (RVP) continues to highlight the importance of promoting the *causes of philosophy*, particularly as these are focused on the search for truth and justice within the diversity of different cultural contexts. The aim of the Council is to promote multifaceted dialogue on issues pertaining to the historical constitution of different traditions of thought and values that give shape to cultures and civilizations. Attention, therefore, must be given to not only the Western tradition, but also to the rich and diverse traditions of other continents. This is accomplished by means of a continuous dialogue among the great cultural traditions of humankind. But at the centre of this pursuit must be, I believe, the search for forms and expressions of experience and thought capable of recognizing the real value and dignity of each human person.

Focused on the challenges and the opportunities associated with the experience of *crisis*, the meeting that we attended in Ioannina was transformed by the editors into the present work. It demonstrates anew the reasonability of the belief we share in the importance of working together with many others. Hence, our wish is that these two volumes may find many readers who, while going through the contributions gathered here, may be able and willing to encounter occasions to pause and to reflect and so evaluate their own actions

as citizens, not just of this or that political commonwealth, or culture and civilization, but also as a cosmopolitan citizen of the world.

We think that philosophy should never cease to focus upon the condition of being-in-crisis as a constitutive part of our being-in-the-world. This condition cannot be separated from the adventure of achieving togetherness, of projecting into everyday reality the kind of justice and peace for which all major religions of the world strive. In a world full of difficult and problematic situations, philosophy must continue to relearn the best way to be of service to the human cause and the continuous discovery of a new and better civilization.

Introduction

In the very first pages of his ground-breaking *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (1959), Reinhart Koselleck argues that “Europe’s history has broadened; it has become world history and will run its course as that, having allowed the whole world to drift into a state of permanent crisis.”¹ In the aftermath of WWII and in the middle of the Cold War, Koselleck’s statement and subsequent analysis did not sound as a mere diagnosis. In fact, it was rather a prognostic of what was to come for Europe and the world. By intertwining Enlightenment politics with its philosophy of history, the eminent German historian pinpointed the 18th century’s blindness to what is a self-conscious state of critique which would undoubtedly include a condition of crisis, as it is in effect co-emergent with it: “‘Crisis’ as a central concept was not part of the century of criticism and moral progress. And this is altogether understandable, given that the inherent dialectic of antithetical thought served to hide the intended decision of this thought-process.”² But if the moral dualism and the historical optimism of modernity at its peak rendered invisible the inherent link between critique and crisis, late modernity renders it more than visible in many ways: we no longer participate in the spirit of moral and historical optimism of our Enlightenment predecessors, as we have been, for a long time now, more than aware of the co-belonging of modernity with the spirit and the historico-political actuality of crisis.

Nevertheless, echoes of crisis, in the sense of a crucial point in time or a state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending, were already present in Socrates’ unceasing quest for a general definition of the moral virtues or even in his fundamental question “how should one live.”³ Still, modernity seems to have provided crisis with a proper meaning for our times, giving birth to something utterly new and unprecedented: the historicity of crisis. This new understanding of crisis incorporates both annihilation and revelation. As the *momentum* or *movimentum* between two continuous states of affairs, crisis is not only destructive, but also the sign of sudden, often unexpected, flourishing. Therefore, in order to fully unfold the hermeneutics of crisis, we have to go through a wide range of themes which manifest their importance not only for philosophy’s self-understanding, but also for the way in which we understand ourselves with regard to the challenges we face in our own ways of life in times of crisis.

We usually approach the current state of crisis in terms of a problematic financial situation, which has a broader sociocultural or ideological impact on a second level of analysis. This is the mainstream approach to the crisis we

¹ R. Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1988), p. 5 [*Kritik und Krise. Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (Freiburg/München: Karl Alber, 1959)].

² *Ibid.*, p. 158.

³ Plato, *Gorgias* 492d. Cf. Plato, *Gorgias* 500c; *Republic* 352d.

have been facing within Greece, but also within Europe in general, over the last five years. To talk about crisis in Greek seems quite an easy thing to do, as κρίνειν, etymologically speaking, means to judge and to decide, and was firstly elaborated by Greek physicians, and secondly within the sphere of political-judicial action, and rhetorical deliberation.⁴ Nevertheless, the current use of the term seems to echo something quite different within the context of philosophical modernity, which has often been stigmatized by the awareness of being critical or in crisis. On a different level, the 17th and 18th centuries defined themselves as being “critical” times, that is times when *critique*—first as a judicial term and second as a philosophical one, in other words, the rational power to decide upon the course of humanity’s progress— and *crisis*, a decision regarding the humanity’s future, coincided. Soon, Enlightenment optimism was put aside, as modernity from the 19th century onwards has perceived itself solely as the consciousness of crisis. Therefore, it seems that modernity, and even more so late modernity, has reflected upon its condition as a condition of crisis, as a “critical” condition. This shift in the understanding of crisis and the disentanglement of critique and crisis often led to the weakening of philosophical reflection on what is after all a state of crisis. The latter has often been identified as a state of degeneration, decadence and, philosophically speaking, loss of meaning and nihilism. But is “crisis” synonymous with decadence and loss of meaning? In the words of French philosopher and intellectual Michel Serres, the time of a crisis is the “time of the cherries” (*le temps des cerises*),⁵ that is, the time when a fruit is ripe, the *kairos* of maturation, in Plato’s and Aristotle’s sense. Taken in this sense, a crisis conceals and at the same time reveals the *kairos* of things producing a breach, or several breaches, in the long historical process. After all, Western philosophy from its birth in Ionia until now has acted either as a counselor or as an adversary of crises of all kinds, social, political, cultural and personal. But in any case, either by defending the current status quos or by suggesting radical counter-measures to these, philosophy has greatly contributed to the prognostic and diagnostic of crises. This is the sense in which we should comprehend Hegel’s well-known maxim that philosophy can be defined as the crisis of each epoch, expressed in concepts.⁶

It is this complex semantics of “crisis,” and its historically situated juncture with philosophy, that this two-volume collection of essays intends to explore in order to generate the insight needed for the road ahead. Its aim is twofold: first, to introduce as many philosophical perspectives as possible on the topic of crisis—pragmatic, semantic and hermeneutical, normative and evaluative, religious and secular and, second, to bring forth the conceptual and historico-philosophical ramifications of the current discourse on crises—ecologi-

⁴ R. Koselleck, “Crisis,” trans. M.W. Richter, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400, pp. 358-361.

⁵ M. Serres, *Temps des crises* (Paris: Éditions le Pommier, 2009).

⁶ See indicatively G.W.F. Hegel, *The Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*, trans. and ed. W. Cerf and H.S. Harris (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1977), pp. 89, 91.

cal, financial, European or global –so as to acquaint the reader with some of the chief debates on controversies surrounding the issue. The selection of essays is, therefore, guided by the need to satisfy these objectives.

Volume One opens with three papers by Evangelos Moutsopoulos, Costas Douzinas and Panagiotis Noutsos, who each give us a prominent perspective on “crisis”: from the viewpoint of philosophy of history (Moutsopoulos), of Greece being an exemplary case for what we take to be the current European crisis (Douzinas), and also of ourselves standing before a situation of crisis in speechlessness or in a state of creative “polyphonia” (Noutsos).

Part I, “The Hermeneutics of the Crisis,” addresses the issues and concerns regarding the semantic, epistemological, and hermeneutical stakes of “crisis.” The focus is here directed to the elaboration of the philosophy-crisis continuum (Soulez), and also on the charting of some differential accounts of “crisis,” both in terms of individual and social knowledge (Pournari). Moreover, two lines of thought are developed, which link the theme of crisis to those of openness (Apostolopoulou) and disruption (Koutsoumpos).

Part II, “The Multi-Faced Aspects of the Crisis,” turns to the multiple socio-cultural contexts where crises arise: from Detroit’s current critical situation (Presbey) and the role of US African communal ethics (Osei), to a potential “Eastern solution” to the West’s horizon of crisis (Mukherjee), and hence a perspective external to its cultural and conceptual framework (N. Sinha). This part of the volume invokes the global context of change and interaction within which the current crisis should be envisaged and dealt.

In Part III, “Global Crisis, Economy, Environment,” the authors illustrate some critical pragmatic parameters of what we usually refer to as “global crisis.” This includes a determined shift from already existing ideas and pre-conceptions to a step-by-step approach to the complex dialectics of crisis. More specifically, from a pragmatic vantage point, the authors of this part undertake the challenge of shedding light on the financial (Drosos, Peonidis), and environmental (Ozoliņš, A. Sinha) implications of today’s global crisis.

Part IV, “The Moral Aspects of the Crisis,” illustrates the philosophically dense relation of crisis with morality. Hence, the authors introduce different paths of investigation into the ethical and moral implications of crisis by addressing, argumentatively, the issues of moral error (Rose), judgments of practice (Mylonaki), decision-making (Aguas), moral values (Matthopoulos and Mantzanas), and finally, the role and significance of altruism in a world of ethnic and racist separatism (Karafillis).

The inherent link of “crisis” to practical reason is further examined in Part V, “Crisis, Values and Modernity,” where a more socially-minded perspective is introduced. This is achieved as far as the co-belonging of “crisis” with bourgeois modernity is concerned (Daremas), but also with regard to modernity’s particular ideological and political instances (Blasko, Grigoriou).

The following two parts draw the philosophical issue of crisis close to specific aspects of artistic and religious discourses. This is the case for the essays presented in Part VI, “Art and Crisis, Art in Crisis,” where the authors attempt to reconstruct a discourse on and of crisis in the context of artistic

creation, more specifically, in music and painting (Vlagopoulos, Zarra, Proimos). In the area of religious experience, the authors of Part VII of the Volume, "Religion and Crisis, Religion as a Remedy to the Crisis," make a similar attempt. Questions such as the reintegrative role of faith in today's world of separatisms and religious conflict (Nizhnikov), of "mystagogia" as a formative ideal (Chițoiu), and of experiences of transcendence, such as that of Byzantine Orthodoxy (Merantzias) and of late modern New Age spirituality (Dura and Damian), are investigated.

Whereas the first volume is dedicated to multiple philosophical approaches to the theme of crisis from a systematic viewpoint, the second volume is organized thematically and defends a more historically-oriented line of argumentation. In Part VIII, "Crisis in the Ancient World," debates the terrain of crisis in the ancient world. Starting with more general accounts of the issue and with an eye to today's overarching concerns (Robinson, Karabatzaki), the chapters in this part corroborate, with varying degrees of intensity and import, the thesis that crises are not exclusive to modernity and that we can indeed philosophically problematize crisis in a pre-modern setting. This is the case for pre-Platonic (Psarros), and also for classical Greek philosophy in Plato and Aristotle (Solomou-Papanikolaou, Tezas, Stavelas), as much as for Hellenistic philosophy (Lekkas, Protopapas-Marneli).

In Part IX, "Modern and Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives on the Crisis," the investigation is further extended to modern and late modern times. In this light, a range of major thinkers, such as Spinoza (Bazac), Nietzsche (Poulakos), Spengler (Giannopoulou), Wittgenstein (Sakellariadis), and Ortega y Gasset (Eliopoulos) are studied with a close focus on the ways in which their philosophical questioning could be, and in some cases in fact is, applicable to the theme of crisis.

This range of studies on modernity and late modernity is further extended by contributions in Part X, "Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives on the Crisis: Phenomenology-Deconstruction-Virtue-Theory," which draws from three major traditions within contemporary philosophy to critically deal with the theme of crisis. To this aim, several, often unexpected parallels or crossroads are studied in the work of Hannah Arendt (Tasis), post-WWII French philosophy (Prelorentzos), Jacques Derrida (Pirovolakis), Kostas Axelos (Roumkou), and last but not least, in Alasdair MacIntyre's view of tradition and virtues (Mela).

The two parts that follow engage in two critical topics which are endowed with urgency and, often, with polemical intensity. Essays in Part XI, "Perspectives on the Current European Crisis," address several aspects of what Europeans envisage at present as a state of crisis, both financial and in terms of identity. Philosophy can serve the purpose of revisiting the question of Europe—as a financial, cultural, and political entity—and this is what the authors of this part seek to do beyond the mere polemic. Phenomenology is one of the contemporary philosophical trends that offer useful insights into the current debate on Europe's present and future (Maggini). Another course of arguments stems from questioning the rescuing morality underlying the standard-

ized solutions offered to the European crisis (da Silva). Another important issue is to question the rhetoric and imagery of Europe's nation-states within the perspective of pedagogy and the prospective formation of a common European identity (Gotovos). Furthermore, no perspective on the current European crisis would be adequate without taking into consideration the genesis of a new type of capitalism on a global, but also European, scale, which demands a revised critical stance (Cloke). This claim to critique should always be accompanied by a claim to spontaneity and humour, which could act as a counterpart in the wrongdoings of the present (Paschalis).

The critical discourse on today's Europe is further endorsed by a more topical analysis of the current Greek debt crisis in Part XII, "Greece in Crisis." Authors in this part engage in divergent courses of thought and argumentation ranging from historical accounts of national crises and their role in the formation of the Greek State (Glycofrydi-Leontsini), to more pragmatic accounts of "Greek crisis" in financial (Chryssafis) or socio-political terms (Dimitriou, Pantazakos), and last but not least, in terms of moral psychology (Theologou, Leontsini). Finally, two further studies are dedicated to the diagnosis of today's situation in Greece through the lenses of eminent Greek philosophers such as Kostas Axelos and Panagiotis Kondylis (Rantis), and intellectuals such as Christos Yannaras (Boundas).

The last part of this two-volume work embraces the initiative to include the work of young scholars, mostly Ph.D. candidates, in the philosophical debate on crisis from both systematic and historical perspectives. In these short essays, a wide range of themes are treated in a way that proves the authors' argumentative rigor and intense philosophico-historical awareness.

*Golfo Maggini, Vasiliki P. Solomou-Papanikolaou,
Helen Karabatzaki and Konstantinos D. Koskeridis*

PART I

Doing Philosophy in Times of Crisis

Crises in History: A Philosophical Approach

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The subject analyzed here is highly multidimensional, and therefore imposes complicated combinations and severe controls. Such a consideration appeals to all three generations that constitute the human substrate of contemporary societies: the ascending, the passing by and the departing generation, each one of which experiences, in its own different, but similarly feverous way, its concern about our common condition and itinerary. This is because we, by ourselves, shape tomorrow through today.

I have already envisaged this problem,¹ trying to transcend the narrow *a priori* frames² that, authoritatively and unilaterally, Vico (after Polybius),³ Bossuet (after Augustin)⁴ and Hegel (after Gerardo di Borgo San Donino and Joacin de Flores),⁵ have circumscribed, in order to insert into them the course of history, respectively as a series of recourses, as a broken line consisting of three segments and as a helicoidal circumvolution, not to take under consideration Collingwood and his followers with their insistence on the concept of historical intentionality as a subjective frame of history.⁶ I thus have had the possibility of seeking, with more ease and according to a less dogmatic method than theirs, i.e. a method consequent in regard to the nature of historical reality, and analytical as well as synthetic, a process, or rather an *a posteriori* resulting model of historical procedure, which the particular aspects of the historical course may finally confirm.

I intend to come back later to this issue. In the meantime, I deem it important to isolate a sentence from that text of mine, to which I impute a specific gravity, and on which I shall base the analysis of my conceptions. I quote "The more the historical consciousness of a society is aware of its eventual capacity to take advantage of its past, the more it is susceptible of being subject to crises."⁷ By this sentence, I defined a prolongation of the process concerning the excessive development of certain data in the field of artistic crea-

¹ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, "L'histoire comme tradition: acception et dépassement," in *La tradition, Actes du XVII^e Congrès de l'ASPLF* (Abidjan, 1977), 141-143.

² Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, "History and Science," *Stasinós* (Nicosia 1978), 119-140; E. Moutsopoulos, *The Itinerary of Mind*, Vol. 3: *Values* (Athens: Grigoris, 1977), pp. 256 ff.; E. Moutsopoulos, "La conception de l'histoire", *Neohellenica*, 1 (1970), 122-127.

³ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, "Man and History," in University of Athens, *Official Speeches, 1970-1971* (Athens, 1973), 199-213, notably p. 203.

⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁵ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, "Historismo, fenomenologismo y axiologismo en la estética de Hegel," *Atlantida*, 9 (1971), 43-52.

⁶ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, "Historiologie philosophique et philosophie de l'histoire," in *Actes du V^e Congrès International de Logique, Méthodologie et Philosophie des Sciences* (London, Ontario, 1975).

⁷ Cf. Moutsopoulos, "L'histoire comme tradition..." (cf. *supra*, n. 1).

tion,⁸ in distinction to what may be said about the field of historical creation. In the first case, one has to do with a quite confined finality, so that any excess in developing the data entails an evasion of the end development. The dynamic wealth of a work of art may be limited. But what about the unlimited wealth of history where from the historical consciousness is, in principle, capable of being unlimitedly fed? To my opinion, the importance of such a distinction for the issue in question consists in that it gives me the opportunity to relate it to the problem of crises, such as they surge in history; a problem which is now salient, since it continuously tortures us, perhaps because we navigate in an ocean of every kind of crisis.

Already, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Husserl noticed a crisis of the European sciences.⁹ In our days, we refer more and more, not only to the prominent economic crisis, but also to any kind of cultural case. Keynes' revolution in economy¹⁰ has already been surpassed, like every other revolution. What remains to be defined and understood in such an ocean of crisis is not the nature of a concrete order of crises, but that of the very idea of crisis, whose every other crisis is a specific manifestation.

The extreme consideration of such a topic would consist in seeking a "metaphysics of crisis," which has even been attempted by our contemporary thought.¹¹ My personal epistemological approach to this topic may be qualified as being inspired by a rather positive intention. Only if one can formerly understand what a crisis, any crisis is as to its nature, it will be possible to investigate the specific nature of the historical crises.

What does the term crisis mean? I shall not refer to the various dimensions of this concept, logical and other, as many as the history of philosophy and of science allow to enumerate, neither to its own history, but merely to its initial epistemological meaning, that of *discrimination*, i.e. that of a process of distinguishing, if not even the evaluation of the differences between two or more objects of the consciousness, then between two or more aspects of the same object. After Descartes and Leibniz, Bergson has definitely shown that human intellect is, by its nature, adequately armed to analyze reality in such a way as to be able to influence it and impose itself upon it, before it submits it to its own conveniences, as well as to its own activities which aim at making use of it.¹² Such analytical processes either imply or entail synthetic ones, according to which the consciousness may, beforehand or after a certain procedure, acquire a global idea of its own objectives, as well as of the convenience of its activities tending towards the accomplishment of its aims.

Further on, the term *crisis*, applied to a noetic procedure, covers not only an analytical activity of *discrimination*, but also an activity of *comparison*, and even a synthetic transgression of certain data, as Kant has shown in his

⁸ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, "The Concept of Development," *Nea Hestia*, 101 (1977), 148-154.

⁹ Cf. E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften...*, *Philosophia*, 1 (1936), 77-176; cf. *Husserliana*, Vol. 6 (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1962), pp. 1-104.

¹⁰ Cf. J.M. Keynes, *A Treatise of Probability* (London: Macmillan, 1921).

¹¹ Cf. N. Incardona, *Metafisica di una crisi* (Roma: Bocca, 1955).

¹² Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *La critique du platonisme chez Bergson* (Athens: I.P.R., 1997²).

Critique of Pure Reason. In both cases, and in order to be efficient, i.e. to be valuable,¹³ be it precisely or in general, the crisis, in its initial meaning, implies the existence of an appropriate and acceptable element, thanks to which the objects of the consciousness which are tested will also be controlled. In other words, it claims a *criterion*. Such a criterion is supposed to derive from a reduction, i.e. a minimization of the common characteristics of the object submitted to discrimination, so that it acquires a status of permanence and stability. Under these conditions, such a criticism, without becoming itself of value, becomes a measure of the qualitative evaluation. Under such a capacity, such a measure results as an instrument of the investigation of reality which, apparently, changes every time the conditions of reference of the consciousness of it are themselves subject to change. By using a criterion, the consciousness is able to control every reality, the objective one and its own as well. In addition, from what precedes, it becomes clear that there is no crisis within a consciousness as far as it does not refer to reality.

The above considerations are relevant to the epistemological aspect of the issue. However, from here on, it is imperative that the same issue be examined from its ontological aspect. In any case, the nature of the problem claims its methodical examination from both viewpoints and according to both of its dimensions. By making and determining the field of application and the mode of conceiving the double meaning of the concept of crisis and of some other concepts directly or indirectly related to it, one succeeds in taking the first and necessary step in the direction of seeking the directly determining and determinable feature which may be attributed to the network which each and every crisis constitutes for the consciousness. Either this crisis is external to it, as its object, or immanent to it, as an experienced situation. This feature is the *discontinuity*.

By this statement, I have already slipped into the metaphysical domain of my inquiry. I only need to proceed through some more methodological definitions.

The question on discontinuity¹⁴ goes back to the Eleatic school and, of course, has never stopped to intrigue philosophers and scientists alike, under various forms of dispute, even during the twentieth century: at first, with the scientific opposition between undulatory and quantum mechanics; then, with the purely epistemological opposition between Bergson and Bachelard. I do not think it would be useful to lengthen my thoughts on that issue. I alluded to it just to emphasize the importance of the concept of discontinuity as an elementary feature without which any crisis would be unthinkable. I intend to investigate (i) on the general consistence of discontinuity, and (ii) its role in the functioning of every crisis; and after a necessary methodological parenthesis, (iii) on the very procedure of the crisis, both as an object of reference

¹³ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *The Itinerary of Mind*, Vol. 3: *Values*, pp. 40-68; E. Moutsopoulos, *Phenomenology of Values* (Athens: University of Athens, 1981²), pp. 66-83.

¹⁴ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, "Getting Old. The Problem of Temporal Categories," in E. Moutsopoulos, *Philosophical Questionings*, Vol. 1: *Consciousness and Creation* (Athens, 1971), 124-155.

of the consciousness and as an experienced state, in view of (iv) a final hermeneutic consideration of its specific expression as a crisis in history.

(i) I shall define discontinuity (a) as the manifestation of an interrupted presence, be it objective or relevant to self-awareness; and (b) as another presence wedging the former one, of which it automatically differentiates the unity by dividing it into two separate phases or aspects: that of *before* and that of *after*. Neither of them is exclusively and necessarily conceivable from a spatial, temporal, or even from a spatio-temporal view point, since it is also possible that they may be conceived on a logical ground, i.e. as effects; and further on, existentially. Nonetheless, as far as crises in history are concerned, the notion of temporal depth within which they take place is necessarily taken into consideration.

The term “interrupted presence” acquires here the meaning of a radical essential mutation, and, to refer to Plato’s *Timaeus*,¹⁵ of a transition from Sameness to Otherness. The probable periodicity of such an interruption does not change its nature; it merely transposes it from the level of the *single* and the *once* to that of the *anew* and the *again*.¹⁶ In addition, this interruption, while being itself something other, is not that “other” at which, within the process in question, the “same” may terminate; it merely introduces it. This is of great importance, for it confirms, in its own way, the reduction of the elements entailed by the continuity not to two only, but to three. Such a conception of discontinuity has enormous consequences on the hermeneutic of the concept of crisis; a hermeneutic which I intend to undertake.

(ii) Consequently, the importance of discontinuity in the functionality of every crisis becomes evident, as suppressive of a former continuity, with a significant difference: that whereas discontinuity itself conserves its otherness towards both phases of the presence it interrupts, it nevertheless co-mingles with them due to the fact that it entails them, without, however, bearing them potentially in itself. Discontinuity is not an interruption *in se*; it is, I repeat, the expression, the manifestation of an interruption, and such a difference is not without a logical consequence: it also extends towards the axiological difference between a mere interruption and an essential crisis.

(iii) One is thus led to determine the crisis itself, which, instead of being identifiable as an interruption, would precisely be the very negation of any interruptions, had it not been, itself subject to successive micro-interruptions,¹⁷ so that, as such, it is a dramatic ontological negation. Hence, in this context, a crisis does not emerge due to an interruption already existing, but because a potentiality of successive interruptions is inherent within a continuity; in other words, because there is a potential menace of such interventions. The actual interruption merely entails, as I already have stated, the transition from the “same” to the “other.” The potential menace of interruption rouses

¹⁵ Cf. Plat., *Tim.*, 35 a ff; *Soph.*, 253 b-e; Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *La musique dans l’œuvre de Platon* (Paris: P.U.F., 1989²), pp. 358-360.

¹⁶ Cf. Moutsopoulos, “Getting Old” (*supra*, n. 14).

¹⁷ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, “Continuité et discontinuité,” *Parnassos*, 51 (2009), 5-10.

the menacing presence after which it dramatically seeks (with a possible effect which sometimes is even really tragic),¹⁸ in order to conserve and enrich its identity and success for itself, through this combat, instead of a *being-else*, a *more-being*. It is for this reason that a crisis is scarcely thinkable outside of a consciousness, be it individual or collective, but in any case, a consciousness of existence. Even when physics and biology denote such situations, they refer to them according to a procedure of a conceptualistic prolongation and generalization of this fact.

This is the reason why I formerly stated my conviction about the need for jointly examining the issue under both of its dimensions, the epistemological and the ontological one, and about the need of a ceaseless transfer from one to the other. In any case, the analytical scientific method has, in its turn, contributed to forwarding the specification of the problem by formulating each time, at a quantitative level, the notion of the crisis of the *critical point*, a notion which the mere synthetic philosophical research and, above all, the research that moves at a qualitative level, would, even after Leibniz, as well as after the Sophists, in antiquity, have some difficulty to determine. Nevertheless, the notion of “critical moment,” which under only certain conditions is related to the notion of “critical period,” even surreptitiously introduced into the philosophical discourse, offers itself to valorization by the latter.

I shall not examine in detail whether the notion of “critical moment,” within the frame of a crisis, corresponds to a reality or merely constitutes a schematic notional condensation of some other reality which should be conceived of as a zone subject to contractions and dilations. Besides, I refuse to repeat here what have I exposed and analyzed in details in some of my books.¹⁹ I just notice that also the reduction of this “kairic” zone to a single, minimum point is the privilege of consciousness, which is in position, during the combat it carries on for its own confirmation, to change and restructure objective data, conferring on them a meaning corresponding to the reality of its own presence.

(iv) The ground has, I think, already been efficiently cleaned out, so that an unhindered transition, towards the main aspect of the issue I am dealing with, may be possible. I have already formulated, in what has preceded, the statement that crisis, in general, is the experience of a menacing discontinuity. I shall now examine to what extent such a consideration may be applied to cases of crises in history. Two new subjects are emerging here, which I deem necessary to distinguish, so that I may indicate my position in respect to them. I therefore have, first, to dissociate the specific term “crisis in history” from the simple term “crisis” in its general meaning; and, second, to investigate whether at the level of the consciousness itself, the precise term “crisis in history” is but a pleonastic development; in other words, whether any crisis is necessarily a historical one.

¹⁸ On the difference between *dramatic* and *tragic*, cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *Aesthetic Categories* (Athens: Arsenides, 1996²), pp. 48-76.

¹⁹ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *La conscience de l'espace* (Athens: I.P.R., 1997²), pp. 79-107.

As for the first question, may I observe that the distinction between the general and the specified term resounds the prolongation a problem: that anything concerning the experience of a crisis by the consciousness may be aimed at the scientific objectification thereof? I deem that I have sufficiently dealt with it, so that, from the framework which the term “crisis in history” circumscribes, every kind of extra-conscious activity may be excluded. For example, the critical thermic point for the water to boil, does by no mean constitute the expression of a real crisis. One has to do here with an epistemological digression, unless it affects the intentionality of the scientist’s consciousness, when proceeding to an experiment.²⁰ Let me repeat it: A crisis which is not consciously experienced is not an essential one. This leaves outside of the adequate margin of the term “crisis” any scientifically stated turmoil that has no effect, at least upon the scientist’s understanding judgement.

As for the second question, that which consists in asking whether every crisis (economical, cultural etc.) can be only a historical one, I shall observe that, just as the term “historical crisis” is the product of a semantic restriction, it also admits alike a semantic amplification, so that according to the formerly accepted semantic pledges by “crisis” as well as “historical crisis,” one fundamentally means the same reality. In this sense, every crisis is a crisis of the consciousness, a crisis highly related to the continuity of existence. Nevertheless, and despite any semantic references which have been underlined, the specific term “historical crisis” has a particularly precise meaning that enables it to express a phenomenal or real blind alley during the process of a given society, with probable effects on several aspects of its future existence.

Understood under this last meaning, a historical crisis becomes an essential test to which a society that has gradually accumulated power through successive excesses or omissions, is submitted, i.e. either directly or by resounds, compressing superfluous powers impeding its normal historical survival into a unitary and consistent entity. However, as such, every society has its inherent feeblenesses whose automatic accentuation during its historical course has, as a further effect, the accumulation of elements whose provenance is due to a preceding, aimless loss of energy and which, progressively, constitute negative parameters for this society’s evolution; in other words, parameters impeding its normal development. Depending on variable circumstances, each society undergoing a test characterized as a historical crisis is obliged to come into conflict against such a function of parameters, the outcome of this conflict being almost always the strengthening of that society.

In the preceding paragraph I have willingly condensed the whole problematic of the historical crises. I now shall try to analytically distinguish the particular thematics relating to crises in history under three successive aspects: the *essential*, the *structural* and the *formal* one, before I proceed to some final interpretations and evaluations.

²⁰ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, *Kairos. La mise et l’enjeu* (Paris: Vrin, 1991), ch. “Kairos ou l’humanisation du temps,” pp. 90-93.

Of all these three aspects, a slight idea has already been given from a methodological view point through the proceeding notional and methodological investigation. However, we are even more prepared to investigate on the essence of historical crises, which, due precisely to this preparation, will preoccupy us much less extensively than that of the other parameters of the issue. Each historical crisis appears as the reaction of the historical consciousness of a society, which becomes aware of a menacing interruption of its normal and orderly course towards its self-ascertainment. Such a menace may have its cause either outside or even inside a given society. It, nevertheless, always gets intensified due to the conflict between the effects of such a society's weaknesses and the effects of its own activity that aims to intensify its presence.

In other words, at a certain moment, this society becomes aware of the incompatibility between its omissions and its aspirations. A new unforeseeable element or a network of new elements, issued for the first time or repeatedly, from inside that society, but which have been objectified to the extent that they now claim to be purely objective, tend to wedge disturbingly into the reality of the society in question, so that they alter its structure and render it, even provisionally, incapable of pursuing the normal course of its existence. The trial this society enters then consists in a struggle of rejecting this network in its totality or, at least, those of its elements which are the most dangerous and strange to its own nature, since even in the case that it had produced them itself, it had already rejected them during the preceding process of their objectification, and tries simultaneously to adopt and adapt to itself those elements which may be creatively absorbed by it, due to their adequacy to its nature.

The trial a historical crisis entails, succeeds to a sequence of preparation, which corresponds to the accumulation of data incompatible with the society in question, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, it precedes a sequence of release or decay, depending on the way in which a given society is in position to valorize to its own benefit the crisis through which it is going. In a negative case, the crisis will, of course, continue until it completely exterminates the society. It is remarkable that, although the society aims at its future restitution, it also scrutinizes its past existence in order to seek in it the criterion or the criteria which it may use to evaluate the elements it has to exclude and those it has to retain, eventually valorizing the latter. It thus becomes clear that the historical self-awareness of this society experiences a double orientation, precisely because it is the awareness of its own identity and of the need to confirm it as well.

What remains to be sought is the very sequence of the crisis. Any crisis in itself consists in a condensation and a culmination which, on its part, acts destructively, as I have already stated, but, also, simultaneously, as a favorable opportunity, i.e. differentially, as far as the historical reality of the society is concerned.

(v) From a structuralist view point, if one accepts that the structure is, in general, the relation of the essence to the form, then the extremely simplifying model I have already used and which was perhaps sufficient to characterize the ontological parameter of the problem, is now totally unfit for the research

of the historical crises structure. At this level, one cannot neglect the complexity of these crises' frameworks which constitute the foundations of historical coming to be, there is no difficulty about this point.

For the Ancient Greek thought, and for Vico as well, and for the continuators of the latter's conception of history, including Bury, Nietzsche, Spengler and Toynbee, each historical society bears within itself the seed of its own decay. Its very flourishing state, its peak, its apogee, also marks the beginning of its eclipse. In this context, a historical crisis is hidden within the society's peak, such a peak being understood as an exasperation, as a paroxysm. The manifestation of the crisis is merely delayed, so that it becomes perceptible during the sequence of decay. The only luminosity that slightly enlightens this desperately pessimistic and rather disenchanting, static conception is the probable statement that, within the same geographical area or elsewhere, another cycle of historical life is born, which will perpetuate the struggle for the existence of humankind.

According to the Hebraic originating Christian conception of the problem, which is openly dynamic, a historical crisis claims transcendent prolongations and, contadictorily, may be destructive and delivering simultaneously. The conception precisely admits the importance of the negation of the past, and its affirmation as well, but primarily accentuates the importance of this historical renovation of human societies. Essentially, the structural scheme which the *universal history of human kind*, as Bossuet,²¹ for instance, considers it, is not an ascending parabola, but a more or less a ascending broken line with intense deviations that precisely picture the succession of historical crises. As for Hegel, and partially, for Teilhard de Chardin who combines the spiritual course to the universal evolution, historical crises are bound in a structural chain which combines the circular historical course to the broken straight line one. Such crises are, for Hegel, as for Vico, clearly inherent and by no means allude to some transcendence in respect of human societies, and represent a dialectical necessity. On the contrary, for Collingwood,²² who reverts the Hegelian perspective, historical crises do not start from a universal cause, but from a subjective and personal one, so that from the person of a historical agent they spread out to a society in its whole.

Schematic and generalized as they are, these representations neglect the polyvalent character of historic reality. I would like to envisage a representation which corresponds to this character; in other words, which takes into consideration the polyphonic life of human societies, though not without having made previously a short halt at the usual attempt of categorizing history;²³ an attempt starts from Hesiod's work, but has attained huge dimensions since the nineteenth century. This categorization has been connected with the imposition of the term of historical period or era (the term of Hellenistic period, for

²¹ Cf. Moutsopoulos, *The Itinerary of Mind*, Vol. 3, ch. V, pp. 256-299.

²² Cf. Moutsopoulos, "Historiologie" (*supra*, n. 6).

²³ Cf. C. Perelmann, "Les categories en histoire," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 29 (1975), 381-392.

instance, was invented by J.G. Droysen,²⁴ just as the term of Renaissance was coined by P. Lacroix.²⁵ Such a process, however, is also connected to the concept of historical “century” or *age* (age of Pericles; of Louis XIV; of Enlightenment; Nuclear age). None of these periods corresponds to something precise. Each one of these historical categories is, in a completely different way, improper to qualify the historical object to which it refers. I think that Hegel’s influence is not at all alien to the prevalence of these categorized concepts. Hegel provides the example of this categorization by distinguishing three periods of the history of art (symbolic, classical, and romantic).²⁶ It is impossible to proceed in the direction of a more malleable conception of historical crises without having got rid, beforehand, of the tyrannical survival of such categorizations which provide the necessary foundations of these schematic structural models.

Under this condition, and also under the condition to substitute the history of the categorized philosophical systems by a history of ideas in the sector of the history of philosophy,²⁷ one is allowed to consider a historical crisis as a polyphonic event according to what I have previously stated. Each crisis is a kind of a drama implying its intensification and its catharsis. Music provides perhaps the most adequate structural representation of that kind of reality. This idea certainly astonishes, at the first glance, one who is still unaware of such a problematic. Yet, a further questioning may reinforce its representativeness. Indeed, the two respective essential characters of the historical course and of the condensation of the historical crisis envisaged as an opportune or inopportune moment, these characters being polyphonicity and dramaticity, find in the sphere of music their most totalized expression: polyphony, in that it itself constitutes a function of parameters which are born by each other, or through opposition, copulate with, and separate from each other, develop, degenerate, vanish and reappear with consequence, thus creating intensities and relaxations. As for dramaticity, it deals with the same elements which are thought of as appearing at different moments and survive until moments, different themselves, then conclude into a *stretto*, a contention of the frame within which they came into struggling with each other.

Consequently, one has to admit that the structure of historical crises is, explicitly, a “fugal” one. Without entering here into purely technical details concerning similarities and differences, I consider that the structural model I introduce secures an adequate representation of real situations which lead to historical crises and of their causes as well. Any simplifying schematization is thus avoided and the model proposed remains a functional one, without losing its plasticity and, above all, its rigorous unity.

(vi) I would like now, during the investigation of the third parameter of historical crises, the *morphological* one, to become even more concrete. This

²⁴ J.G. Droysen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, 2 vols. (Hamburg, 1836-1843).

²⁵ P. Lacroix, *Le Moyen- Âge et la Renaissance*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1848-1851).

²⁶ Cf. Moutsopoulos, “Historicisme...” (*supra*, n. 5).

²⁷ Cf. E. Moutsopoulos, “History of Philosophy as a Historical and Metahistorical Science,” *Parnassos*, 8 (1966), 367-387, pp. 367 ff.

is why I shall refer to tangible examples of historical crises which have been proved to be crises of self-awareness of societies as well. Dating back to pre-history, already the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy had been gradually completed, with intermediate stages as long as the transformation and the development of new techniques had lasted, with parallel particular survivals of precedent situations being inserted into new, through complex compensative systems of protection from the danger of excesses. One century ago, Frazer²⁸ and half a century after him, Lévi-Strauss,²⁹ starting from different points, have shown, each one in his own way, how much this crisis which extended into a spatio-temporal domain, has been materialized through forms of coexisting opposed elements. The crisis which is so much related to biological concerns was extended into some millenia due to the fact that the societies that experienced it lacked a developed historical self-awareness that could immediately allow them solve their problem. However, these same societies instinctively sought the guarantee of their identity and their continuity, thus defending themselves against the factor of the introduction of new techniques, through the conservation of elements proper to the past of each one of them.

Another major crisis which human kind has gone through was the one provoked by the advent of Christianity, and which, to my opinion, is a social crisis, and a moral crisis as well. Its historic spatio-temporal extension is due, in contrast to that of the previous one, to the developed self-consciousness of societies that experienced it. Indeed, it had been prepared for centuries, and it lasted for centuries as well. It displayed its preparatory and final stages and its opportune and inopportune resolution conditions alike. Its ideological model may be sought in other analogous reactions of the Greco-Roman world, ever since it contacted the Middle East. On the other hand, one cannot ignore that ideological superstructures which had expressed past situations of the ancient world did not delay the total domination of Christianity, whereas others facilitated and accelerated its extension.

A third major historical crisis is undoubtedly the one known under the denomination of industrial revolution, which is pluri-dimensional, since it displayed economic, social, moral, ideological and political aspects. It also had its preliminary stages which the so-called "great" history has not always considered necessary to register. Here again one observes a delay, before it was solved, and though of lesser importance, due to a more developed historical consciousness of the societies that first experienced it and to their unwillingness to reject their culture, so that they conserve at least a part of their identity. Very often, a political action accelerates, here and there, some precocious, untimely and biased solution. On the other hand, this very crisis is complicated by an ideology founded only upon the investigation of a particular society. Such an intervention is the by-product of the crisis that was further on, created by the technological revolution. In this case, the solution of the primary crisis is hindered, but, at the same time, also accelerated by its by-product, so that

²⁸ J.G. Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, 4 Vols. (London, 1910).

²⁹ Cl. Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale* (Paris, 1958).

the discontinuity is itself disrupted by several micro-disruptions and the crisis remains indefinitely unresolved. For example, to the industrial revolution, the revolution of informatics and its by-product, the ideology of globalization, complicate at an extreme degree a continuity within a discontinuity.

The examples which have been given in what preceded pertinently show the morphological specificity of each one of the respective and universally experienced crises. However, despite their differences, all of them claim the same structural consistency which echoes similar concerns of human consciousness; and despite dissimilarities, the same structural models are to be found during the micro-structural and micro-morphological analysis of a spatio-temporally historical crisis restricted. The menace of breaking the continuity of a society by the catalytic causes external to it, and its tendency to look after its own past in order to draw from it, illustrates its susceptibility to strengthening within it the certainty of its unaltered identity and its capacity to survive. For example, the longing for the complete recovery of democracy by Athens after the adventures of the Peloponnesian War, even by paying the heavy price of Socrates' death, or the restitution of the French Republic after the dramatic end of the Second Empire, are historical crises of apparently restricted extension and consequences. They, nevertheless, present forms reducible to the malleable model I depicted.

My conclusion, after having analyzed a selected series of crises, consists in a slight variation which I shall formulate in comparison with my initial statement, which related the concept of historical consciousness to that of historical crisis. Let me repeat it: "The more the historical consciousness is aware of its probable incapacity to draw from its past, the more it seems to be subject to crises." In the light of what has been said, this statement that focuses on the consciousness of apparently incompatible data, may be exposed as follows: "The more the historical consciousness is aware of its ability to draw out of its past, the more it is ready to overcome the crises which it may undergo." A society which would ignore any crisis often salutary for it, would merely be a society in slumber or on its way. It is unthinkable that the historical renewal of a society presupposes its death instead of its will to survive by assuming the continuity of its existence through the continuity of its essence, so that it achieves its greater being to which it aspires.

I would perhaps be allowed to stop at this point. However, by already referring to the complexity of the crisis which our contemporary society experiences at a universal level, be it at various degrees, and according to various circumstances, I suppose I have touched one of the major actual problems worldwide. This problematic is experienced by the university societies more intensively and more dramatically. The social historical consciousness provides the possibility not to envisage the fact of today's university crisis as an isolated or unique reality. Universities have undergone innumerable crises since the Middle Ages. What is important to understand is that the actual cri-

sis is specific. There are similarities in what concerns the so-called “gap of generations” and the degradation, if not the loss of the scientific and moral weight of the persons involved. Differences appear in the social field, due to the tendency of democratizing education. Universities, being living organisms, need to develop inside as they develop outside. Their drama consists in the fact that they asymmetrically develop in either direction, and that, consequently, they are constantly changing, thanks to half measures only.

On the other hand, vocation for specific research has been replaced by a vaguely manifested mentality of professionalism, this being a necessary consequence of the general crisis our societies undergo. Such results are issues of concern for the very further existence of universities. Two solutions seem to be attainable in order to save what is remaining to be saved of science: either an urgent creation of adequate conditions for the securing of advanced studies within universities; or degrading universities into professional schools with a parallel transfer of their purely scientific competencies to research centers. The day a third solution, combining the former ones, will be envisaged is perhaps not far from us. Universities should not be deprived of their past, but also should not remain in their present deplorable condition. They need help from every direction, from above and below; a generous help such as they had often been given in the past. Hopefully, that brilliant past of, together with the safeguards of their identity may sustain our hopes for their future. Only then, the present crisis, that is still menacing their existence, will have gone away.

Notes towards an Analytics of Resistance

COSTAS DOUZINAS

On 17 June 2011, I was invited to address a thematic assembly on direct democracy at the Syntagma square occupation by the *aganaktismenoi* (indignados) in central Athens. After the talks and following usual procedure, members of the occupation who had their number drawn came to the front to speak to the crowd of 10,000. One man in the queue was shaking and trembling with evident symptoms of stage fright before his address. He then proceeded to give an elegant talk in perfectly formed sentences and paragraphs, presenting a complete and persuasive plan for the future of the movement. “How did you do it?” I asked him later, “I thought you were going to collapse.” “This is what I feared too,” he replied nonchalantly. “When I started speaking, I was mouthing the words but someone else was speaking. A stranger inside me was dictating what to say.” Many participants in the recent protests and uprisings make similar statements. Sarah, an Egyptian, tells her mother, after spending time in Tahrir Square: “I am not myself. I am somebody new that was born today.”¹ A youth in the Athens December 2008 insurrection adds: “I had been in demos before but never participated in a riot. It was something like an initiation for me and I have to admit I felt liberated. It made me feel like a regained control of myself.”² This essay is a commentary on this “stranger in me” (a usual description of the unconscious), and forms part of a wider project which attempts to develop a radical politics for the age of resistance.³

The Age of Resistance

In an interview towards the end of his life, Michel Foucault commented that “politics has existed since the nineteenth century because of the revolution.” “Now that revolution has disappeared,” he continues, “there is a risk that politics will disappear, unless one invents another form or substitute for it.” Against the models of the Greek sage, the Jewish prophet and the Roman legislator, Foucault imagines a type of intellectual who would pose the question “whether the revolution is worth the trouble, and if so which revolution and what trouble.”⁴ If the revolution ended, what is the politics after the revolu-

¹ P. Mason, *Why It's Kicking Everywhere* (London: Verso, 2012), p. 14.

² Quoted in Y. Kallianos, “December as an Event in Greek Radical Politics,” in A. Vradis and D. Dalakoglou (eds.), *Revolt and Crisis in Greece: Between a Present Yet to Pass and a Future Still to Come* (Edinburg: AK Press, 2011), 151-166, p. 155.

³ C. Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity, 2013).

⁴ Quoted in J. Whyte, “Michel Foucault on Revolution, Neoliberalism and Rights,” in B. Golder (ed.), *Re-Reading Foucault: On Law, Power and Rights* (Abington: Glasshouse, 2013), 207-228, p. 208. Whyte and Golder have rescued Foucault's radical theory of law and rights against persistent attempts to present the late Foucault as a liberal supporter of rights.

tion? Let us examine recent forms of resistance using examples from Greece, the most advanced and successful European case of resistance. Let us start with a brief description of novel or radically renewed methods of insubordination.⁵

1. On 6 December 2008, after the police murder of Alexis Grigoropoulos, a 16-year old pupil in central Athens, a massive, spontaneous, leaderless insurrection by pupils, students, and workers brought Greece to a standstill. Rallies and marches to Parliament, Ministries and police stations were accompanied by sit-ins, street happenings, interruption of theatre performances and discussions with the audience, the raising of a banner calling for resistance on the Acropolis, the occupation of the state TV studio during the news broadcast and the iconic burning of the Christmas tree in Syntagma Square. Banks and luxury shops were attacked, some looting was reported, and several cars and some buildings were burned, but there were no casualties. The insurrection prepared the eventual resignation of the right wing government and its defeat in November 2009, which gave a huge majority to Papandreou's socialists and led to the ushering in of the neoliberal austerity measures. The similarities with the Paris *banlieues* insurrection of 2005 and 2007 and the London August 2012 riots, which also started after the death of young people following police action, were striking.

2. Athens, February 2011. While the Arab Spring was in full flow, 300 *sans papiers* immigrants from the Maghreb took refuge in Hypatia, a central Athens building, and staged a hunger strike. They had lived and worked in Greece for up to 10 years, doing the jobs the Greeks did not want to do for a fraction of the minimum wage and without social security. When the crisis struck, they were unceremoniously kicked out. After forty days, with several strikers in hospital with irreversible organ failure that could cause death, the government accepted the bulk of their demands, allowing them to stay in the country. A widespread solidarity campaign supported the *sans papiers* strikers. Their victory was seen as the first success of the anti-austerity resistance which was kicking off at the time of the strike.

3. Athens, May 2011. Following a solidarity rally with the Spanish *indignados*, men and women of all ideologies, ages and occupations, including the many unemployed, calling themselves *aganaktismenoi* occupied the Syntagma Square in Athens, opposite Parliament, and sixty other squares. Political parties and banners were discouraged, no leaders or spokespersons emerged. Daily popular assemblies and thematic meetings discussed all aspects of the political and economic situation and decided the next actions democratically. A number of working groups covered all major needs of the occupiers –food, health, security, media, entertainment, legal advice etc. The occupations were peaceful, but faced brutal police attacks. When the police finally removed the occupants in late July, the popular assemblies spread to suburbs and towns. Prime Minister Papandreou, unable to deal with the protests, resigned first in June, changing his mind after party pressure. His fate was sealed, however.

⁵ The following part is based on my *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis*.

He departed in early November, soon after people occupied the street where a military parade was about to take place and the President of the Republic had to flee. In the 2012 general elections and the 2014 European elections, the multitude of resistances adopted the radical left party Syriza as its parliamentary representation.

The multiplication and intensification of resistances can be understood through an exploration of the state of affairs to which they respond. Resistances respond to trends of globalised capitalism that have penetrated and shaped the whole world. This is why a brief exploration of the state we are in follows. It will move from the economic and social landscape of late capitalism to its biopolitical implications.

a. Postfordist Capitalism

Marx first introduced the concept of the general intellect and immaterial labour, the work and creation of the collective mind, science and technology. In Post-Industrial capitalism, immaterial production has become the major productive force. Industrial capitalism turned the concrete into abstract, the product into commodity. Post-Fordism turns thoughts, ideas and words immediately into material objects and products. The general intellect is no longer incorporated in machines, but in the lives of working people. Three consequences follow.

First, the nature of work has changed radically. Permanent work is on the way out. Part time, flexible alternate work and piecework, long periods of unemployment following short periods of work are now the rule. We must be flexible, adjustable, willing to learn, continuously improve our skills, knowledge and aptitudes. In the past, a “reserve army” of unemployed was used to push wages down. Technology, automation and the transfer of industry to the developing world have made a large number of people superfluous. They are the unemployed and unemployable, young and old, immigrants and refugees, those called “human debris,” or “no use humans.”

The second change is the extensive and violent privatisation of the remaining commons. The three commons of social life and culture, external nature and our own biological nature are systematically sold off. We must rent back from capital our common substance and our collective achievement. Everything that can be sold, will be sold and then hired back to us.

Finally, profit takes two new forms: rent for services and interest for capital. Late capitalism increasingly works through consumption funded by debt. People, companies and states must borrow to spend. Student loans and loans for personal consumption, enterprise loans and mortgages make most of us permanently indebted. Debt has become integral to life. It is not the great enemy many present, but the necessary lubricant in the economy of services. Debt as a social relation and moral concept has additional benefits for capi-

tal.⁶ The debtor is infused with guilt and forbearance; the creditor controls her conduct much more than the employer does the employee. The debtor is formally free but only if she commits her life to the mission of repayment and (moral and financial) redemption. Debt ensures the obedient conduct of the debtor, closing off possibilities of resistance. In this sense, our current predicament is not a debt crisis, but one of capital's desire of debt.

b. *Biopolitical Capitalism*

The socio-economic changes are accompanied by a new arrangement of power. Biopolitics is the exercise of power on bios, life. It extends from the depths of consciousness to the bodies and souls of the population. Population control is supplemented by technologies of self that discipline and control individual behaviour. Biopolitical capitalism does not produce mere commodities for subjects, it creates subjects. The last thirty years give us a clear picture of the complementary processes of population and individual control.

Material, social, affective, ethical and cognitive strategies are involved in this process. During periods of economic growth, working people were inserted directly into the economy through private and public debt and consumption. The indebted worker accepts that freedom of consumer choice and personal responsibility are the main criteria of success. Proliferating individual rights support this socio-economic integration. Every desire could become an entitlement, every "I want X," an "I have a right to X." But this atomisation of the population is also the Achilles' heel of late capitalism. The worker can withdraw abruptly and even violently from leading the escalating spiral of desire, satisfaction and frustration. If one of the links in the integration chain breaks, the overall psychological and ideological architecture collapses. This can happen through the sudden loss of jobs, major deterioration in conditions of life or expectations, attack on personal or national dignity, frustration of desires or promises. It may erupt after an accumulation of humiliations or in response to an event that condenses a plethora of grievances.

Southern Europe is a textbook case of debt's desire. After entry to the euro, the modernising governments promoted consumption and hedonism as the main way of linking private interests with the common good. People were treated as desiring and consuming machines. Easy and cheap loans, bribing people to transfer their savings into stocks and shares and the artificial increase of real estate values became the main instruments of economic growth, and the criterion for individual happiness and social mobility. The "obscene" father of psychoanalysis kept telling the Greeks borrow, "enjoy," "buy," live as if this is your last day. This consumer paradise of desire-satisfaction-frustration is pure nihilism.

Austerity violently reversed priorities in order to achieve the same objective of controlling populations through indebtedness and guilt. The banks'

⁶ M. Lazzarato, *The Making of the Indebted Man*, trans. J.D. Jordan [Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2011].

bailout and the increasing cost for servicing an increasingly unemployed and aging population added a huge sovereign debt to personal indebtedness. The population is now divided according to age, occupation, gender and race and radical behavioural change is imposed for the sake of “national salvation.” The politics of personal desire and pleasure turned into a strategy of saving the nation, its genetic information, by abandoning its individual members to the rigors of sin, guilt and punishment. This atomisation of the population was pursued first by the modernizing policies of supposed freedom of choice and personal responsibility through debt and consumption. Punitive austerity completes the project by turning the aggressive into the defensive individualism, the contemporary culmination of nominalism: only individuals and the Sovereign exist, confronting each other in an almost permanent state of exception. The victims of austerity are asked to adjust their behaviour to the “needs” of the nation and to be subjected to extensive controls, which aim at recovering social health. Austerity is an aggressive biopolitical correction. It covers every aspect of life, from the basics like food, electricity and clothing to health, education, social security and leisure.⁷

c. Biopolitical Law

The legal system of late capitalism has changed in two complementary ways: most areas of private activity are increasingly legalised, while public services and utilities are released from their re-distributive aims and given over to the disciplines of the market. Laws are no longer the democratic expression of sovereignty or the liberal formalization of morality, but purely utilitarian instruments of governance, frameworks for organizing private activities, reducing market uncertainties and lowering transaction costs. This is a sad remnant of the honourable tradition of the rule of law. The law is expanding, but at the price of assuming the characteristics of contemporary society, becoming open, decentred, fragmented, and nebulous.

The dynamic of modern law –and of the metaphysics of modernity– was to open a distance, occasionally minimal, between law and the order of the world, the *ought* as correction of the *is*. Law was one form of the ideal, next to the other great normative horizons, religion, nation, socialism. Now, however, law’s distance from the social order is fast disappearing in the vast expanse of law-life. In Borges’ story of the cartographers of empire, the mythical cartographers asked to produce the most accurate possible map, ended with one the same size as the territory it mapped. Similarly, the law is well on the way to replicating life in its annals. This is a law with force but without normative weight, beyond the ideological preferences of ruling elites, masquerading as scientific policies.

The dynamics of biopolitical governance determine legal strategies. In periods of economic growth, the detailed and suffocating regulation of life is accompanied by an apotheosis of individual desire, expressed in the prolifera-

⁷ A. Athanassiou, *The Crisis as a ‘State of Exception’* (Athens: Savalas, 2012).

tion of rights. When the priorities are reversed, the superficial freedom of the previous period becomes counter-productive. Police repression, extensive surveillance and the criminalization of resistance accompany an intensive effort to re-channel conduct. The repressive laws of the war of terror, now used against political dissent, and the invasive regulation of biopolitics do not contradict, but accompany and complement rights. Freedom and security, instead of being opposed, are the two sides of biopolitical neoliberalism.⁸

The stakes behind austerity are a top down re-arrangement of capitalism. Austerity has been used to reduce workers' salaries, rights and benefits, while, at the same time, ensuring the continuing profitability of capital. The European elites had decided these reforms; the debt (public in the case of Greece, private in Spain and Ireland) offered a convenient pretext for their fast and brutal imposition and moralisation. The message is that people sinned in falling for the sirens of consumerism and must be punished. In the case of Greece, Mrs. Merkel acts like Freud's cruel superego; the more you obey the more you get punished. "What does Mrs. Merkel want?" ask the Greek elites, but the lady keeps changing her tune. On some occasions, she wants Greece expelled from the euro, on others, she wants to keep the country in the Eurozone, and most often she does not tell. Like Freud's question "what does the woman want?" no clear answer is forthcoming. But, as psychoanalysis teaches us, the continuous questioning keeps desire going. The desperate attempt to divine the desires and please Mrs. Merkel, the "ego ideal" of Greek elites, keeps piling new austerity on low income and unemployed Greeks, the only people who had no part in the creation of public debt.

A Philosophy of Resistance

How can we generalise these new forms of resistance? When does resistance arise, how does it work, can it ever succeed? Michel Foucault started the analytics of power. Françoise Proust, following Foucault's seminal work, continued with an analytics of resistance.⁹ We will offer seven theses building on the work of Foucault and Proust, and relating them to contemporary instances of disobedience, insubordination and resistance.

Thesis 1: Resistance is a Physical Law of Being, Affecting Every Relationship

Resistance is physical: every force affected by another provokes a resistance, which thwarts the first without stopping it. Wherever there is power, in an intimate relationship or collectivity, in a university, company, political party or state, there is resistance. "This would be the transcendental of every resistance, whatever kind it be: resistance to power, to the state of things, to

⁸ C. Douzinas, "The Poverty of (Rights) Jurisprudence," in C. Gearty and C. Douzinas (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Human Rights Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 56-78.

⁹ F. Proust, *De la résistance* (Paris: Cerf, 1997). P. Deutscher has translated into English Proust's "Introduction" and "The Line of Resistance," both in *Hypatia*, 15 (2000), 18-37.

history; resistance to destruction, to death, to war; resistance to stupidity, to peace, to bare life.”¹⁰ The resisting force accompanies the force it resists, but also confronts, destabilises and redirects it. Resistance is, therefore, inescapable, immanent to every relation. From the moment being takes form and figure or a balance of forces stabilises itself, it encounters resistances, which irreversibly turn, twist and fissure it. As the mirror of power, resistance is a relationship, a series of interactions amongst people and things. It keeps changing the balance of forces, disturbing power asymmetries, continuously re-defining and amending the position of the participants.

Resistance is, therefore, the condition of existence of every power relationship, and not a transcendent force or violence that befalls its site of intervention from outside. From the moment power appears, resistance accompanies it and marks the beginning of a new and specific history. It is in this sense that Gilles Deleuze, commenting on Foucault, writes “the final word on power is that *resistance comes first*.”¹¹

Thesis 2: Resistances are Situated, Local, Concrete and Multiform

Resistance emerges in a concrete situation and reacts against a unique balance of forces. Resistance is local, arising on a specific site and a singular conjuncture. It is, therefore, difficult to develop universal principles of resistance, even though common trends in different sites of power may lead to similar reactions. Every situation and age creates new forms, strategies and subjects. Resistance reacts to the concrete circumstances in which it finds itself; it breaks down the basic constituents of the power constellation, analyses them and puts them together again in a different, new edifice that opposes or re-routes the earlier combination. This process feeds into power, too. The new, dissident configurations may be taken on by the counter-resisting dominant force and transfer from resistant to ruling positions.

Thesis 3: Resistance is a Mixture of Reaction and Action, Negation and Affirmation

Resistance is local and situated, it responds to a situation or reacts to an event. Reaction may turn into action, reply, retort, renewal. Reactive resistance conserves or restores a state of things which power has disturbed. Active resistance deconstructs the adversary’s arms and borrows, mimics or subverts their components. Using the enemy’s rules, it invents new rules and institutions, and occupies the space reactive resistance has cleared. When power promotes privatisation of public assets, resistance deconstructs the private/public dichotomy and promotes new forms of property, such as the commons. When power creates unemployment, resistance constructs new, cooperative, self-ruling forms of work and social activity.

¹⁰ Proust, “Introduction,” *De la resistance*, pp. 1-2.

¹¹ G. Deleuze, *Foucault* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 89.

Let us move to the current forms and strategies of resistance, and the ways in which they re-direct the balance of forces. The emerging forms react to the dominant modes of capitalist subjection: first, the expendable human or “*homines sacri*,” secondly, the bio-politically excluded, finally, the democratically disenfranchised.

The resistance of the contemporary “*homines sacri*” takes the form of *exodus* or *martyrdom*. Suicide, self-mutilation, hunger strikes, boarding the floating coffins that daily sink in the Mediterranean are characteristic responses of those treated as expendable, redundant, economically useless. The Arab Spring started with the self-immolation of Muhammad Boazizzi in Tunisia. The Athens hunger strikers, on the other hand, are the only immigrants who, against legal orthodoxy, achieved, through their collective action, a political resolution of their abject condition. In a biopolitical world, life exists as registered life; undocumented life without birth certificates and IDs, visas and work permits is not recognised. Minimum humanity is created through what the immigrants lacked: *papiers*, documents, files. To retrieve their life from this administrative void, they had to come to the threshold of death. The migrants reversed the plot of Hegel’s master and slave dialectic: by resisting their dehumanisation, they became human and free. In this sense, the *sans papiers* became martyrs, both witnesses and sacrificial victims. They confirmed something that Rousseau as much as Freud and Sartre knew: man is free to die of freedom, but only collective political action can lead to emancipation.

The uprisings of pupils, students and marginalised youth in Paris 2005, Athens 2008 and London 2012 reacted to the biopolitical combination of the injunction to consumer satisfaction and police repression. Here, the form is the *spontaneous insurrection* and *riot*, which often involves violence against property and looting. It arises after a violent event such as the killing of Alexis Grigoropoulos or Mark Duggan or after a long series of humiliations that exhausts moral patience as in the case of Boazizzi’s self-immolation. In Greece, no party planned or led the insurrections, no specific demands were put forward, no single ideology dominated. Politicians and commentators dismissed them as non-political criminality and blind violence. Alain Badiou, inadvertently copying Greek Premier Karamanlis in 2008 and British Cameron in 2012, wrote that the subject of riots is not political “composed solely of rebellion, and dominated by negation and destruction, it does not make it possible clearly to distinguish between what pertains to a partially universalizable intention and what remain confined to a rage with no purpose.”¹² The insurgents are people who exist socially but not politically. As their interests are rarely heard, accounted or represented, they must perform their existence, through the absolute negation of what exists. They did not demand anything specific, using Roman Jakobson’s “phatic expression”: they simply said “enough is enough,” “here we stand against.” Not “we claim this or that

¹² A. Badiou, *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings*, trans. G. Elliott (London & New York: Verso, 2012), p. 25.

right,” but the “right to have rights,” the right to resistance.¹³ This is politics at degree zero, a first, but inadequate political baptism, in the emergence of political subjectivity. Caught between the demands of insatiable desire and brutal repression, they performed the absolute freedom of acting out. When negation and affirmation, reaction and action cannot be synthesized, they remain opposed, with violence as the link.

Finally, *democratic experimentation* was carried out in occupations and encampments, as well as in other forms of direct democracy. Citizens have been disenfranchised by the decay of parliamentary democracy and the disappearance of serious alternatives in the rush of right wing and social democratic parties to the mythical centre. The principle of popular sovereignty that forms the foundation of many constitutions has turned into a legitimisation myth, as democratic government increasingly mutates into technocratic governance. Occupations and encampments reject corrupt politics and post-democratic governance, abandon representation and the mandating of parliamentary politics and experiment with new arrangements of political space and time. The localisation in a square creates a new fluid and open spacing of political power, while the intensity of bodily and emotional proximity, created by a common political desire, acquires the characteristics of an emergent constituent power. The Syntagma multitude was the material coming together of people in public with a common political desire: radical political change. The demos returned to its original meaning as the *plethos* in assembly.

The first Syntagma resolution pronounced that “WE are not leaving the squares before government, troika, banks, memoranda and those who exploit us have left.” This “we” contrasted to the “they” of the combined elites and acted as a constitutional performative. It spoke for the whole population, which had rejected the austerity, but had been betrayed by mainstream politicians. The productive energy of the multitude became, temporarily, a constituent assembly. It both mimicked and subverted the principle of representation and state organization. Direct democracy characterised all aspects of the occupation. An elaborate network of working groups offered a microcosm of the services of a democratic state operating under a strict axiom of equality. The Syntagma occupiers were not the suffering and victimized population of media coverage. They were a resisting and active people who put into practice direct democracy, and prefigured the necessary institutional reforms of a democracy to come.

Thesis 4: Resistance Changes Subjectivities and Constructs New Identities

Individual and collective subjectivities emerge in the interstices of relations of power. Subjects are always subjected, subjugated to the dominant forces before they become free.¹⁴ Resistances unpick and re-direct the subject. At the individual level, revolt lies at the foundation of self. For Freud, happiness

¹³ Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance...*, Ch. 6.

¹⁴ C. Douzinas, *The End of Human Rights* (Oxford: Hart, 2000), Ch. 8 and 9.

exists at the price of revolt. There is no pleasure without obstacles, prohibitions and interdictions, without law, injunctions and sanctions. The pleasure principle calls on the self to conform, to obey the law, to fit in the social order. But this accommodation to the world is accompanied like day by night by the transgression of prohibitions, the Oedipal revolt against the principle of power symbolised by father, sovereign and law. The autonomy of the individual emerges at the price of revolt. Legal and social prohibitions and injunctions open the route of revolt allowing the self to reach autonomous maturity. Revolt forms an integral part of the pleasure principle. But it is also part of the darker, timeless drive beyond the pleasure principle. The return of the repressed trauma forms part of the repertory of resistance.

Individual and collective dissident identities emerge out of acts of resistance. The tension between symbolic differentiations and hierarchies on the one hand and imaginary idealisations on the other disarticulates the psychic sense of normality. We become new subjects, the “stranger in me” emerges because my existence has misfired. When an unemployed youth realises that his condition is a symptom of the disease of the socio-economic system and not his own failure; when a *sans papiers* immigrant realises that her predicament is the symptom of a political and juridical system that divides and excludes; when a lesbian realises that the suppression of her sexuality is a symptom of a system of disciplining and controlling bodies; at that point subjects of resistance emerge. The negation following the failure of routine identities opens the road to the universality of resistance. It involves risk and perseverance, resistance is the courage of freedom.

This means, however, that one cannot become a subject of resistance simply through education or ideological training. Love and revolution come unannounced, like a miracle or an earthquake. One is hit on the head, like the blow of a *coup de foudre*; after that, nothing remains the same. Joining the uprising or the occupation, irrespective of ideological commitment, is more important than ideological pedagogy or indoctrination. A Turkish protester told me that the first time she found herself in Gezi Park, Istanbul, with her little daughter during a riot police attack with tear gas, she was paralysed with fear. Then, people pulled both mother and child back and gave them water and protective masks. Her first reaction was to push them away, unused to the caring touch of strangers. But, once she realised that people were trying to help and felt the force of solidarity, the fear left her; she came back to the occupation every evening.

Turning to our earlier examples, three forms of dissident subjectivity have emerged. First, the *martyr*, someone who, in order to exit dehumanisation and redeem existence, risks her life. Secondly, the *rioter*, for whom the uprising breaks the short circuit between insatiable desire and state violence and becomes a political baptism. Finally, the *direct democrat*, who takes over parts of her life and turns democracy from a system of representative government to a form of life.

Thesis 5: Resistance is a Fact Not an Obligation, an Is Not an Ought

Resistance does not simply apply values and principles, and does not have a predictable point of condensation and explosion. We do not resist in the name of something. It is not the idea of communism or the theory of justice that makes us take to the streets. Resistance is the bodily reaction to an overwhelming sense of injustice, the almost irrepressible response to hurt, hunger, despair. Resistance may involve a vision of justice, but this is not necessary, certainly not at the beginning.

Ideas are not the cause but the result of resistance. The ideas of justice, equality or communism are maintained or lost as a result of the existence and extent of resistance. Principles and values emerge in specific contexts as part of a resisting response to a particular configuration of power, and only later claim universal validity. For Nietzsche, morality is the absolutisation of a temporary balance of forces. In classical Greece, the *logos* was initially a philosophical weapon against the claims of elders and priests to power and authority. Christ's teachings started as part of the Jewish resistance against the Roman Empire. Early Christianity was a small and persecuted sect before turning into a global religion, assuming the character of empire. Human rights started as legal claims of Europeans excluded from political rule before becoming universal principles of legality and morality. Today, they are paradoxically both the ideology of late capitalist empire and the cry of the dissident. All normative claims start life as particular strategies of resisting a local configuration of power in a particular place and time. Parochial provenance and local encumbrance are entombed in their foundations and carry the seeds of their dissolution.

Universal values and their expression in rights exist not in some ethereal normative space of law-books and international treaties. It is only when people resist power and defend themselves that a real conception of right comes to existence. It is not the existence of rights and law that make people stand up. It is because people have stood up, and still do, to defend their dignity that rights have been created and power minimally respects them. For the ordinary person, disobedience is the deeply moral decision to break the law. It is a "dangerous freedom." In normal circumstances, morality and legality represent two different types of overlapping but not identical duty: the external duty to obey the law (in formal terms a heteronomous duty), and the internal moral responsibility that binds the self to a conception of the good (autonomy). Conflicts are usually solved in favour of law. In disobedience, the duties collide and morality takes over.¹⁵

¹⁵ C. Douzinas, "The 'Right to the Event.' The Legality and Morality of Revolution and Resistance," *Metodo: International Studies in Phenomenology and Philosophy*, 2 (2014), 151-167 (<http://www.metodo-rivista.eu/index.php/metodo/article/view/65>).

Thesis 6: Resistance and Its Subject Emerge through the Exercise of the Right to Resist

While resistance is a fact not an obligation, the right to resist is the oldest, indeed the only natural, right. A legal right is justified and enforceable will. Whether private or public, the right to property or to vote, it appears as one, in-dividual, un-divided. It claims a single source, the subject's will, a single justification, law's recognition, a single effect, the will's ability to act and shape the world. The modelling of political rights on property, however, contaminated their operation. As Hegel realized and Marx emphasised, a yawning gap separates the normative weight from empirical operation.¹⁶ Formal right, the legal subject's capacity to will, is theoretically limitless. But real people are embedded and embodied in the world of particularity. Property and normalized propriety act as quasi-transcendental preconditions, bridging the divide between formal right (the universal recognition of will) and its effective realization in the world. We are all legally free and nominally equal, unless of course we are improper men; in other words men of no property, women, colonials, or of the wrong colour, religion or sexuality.

At that point, will, the source of right, splits into two between that accepted and justified by law and a second, adopted by the dominated and the oppressed, for whom right is not about law and judges, a game they can scarcely play. It happens when men act against a system that, while claiming to represent the common good, has become an alien essence. Secondly, when an inner rebellion reacts to the widening chasm between universal vocation and particular belonging, and prepares the resisting subjectivity. The split in will and right in replicated is the resisting subject, who sees his inner rebellion, not as a personal inadequacy or failure, but as the symptom of the disease of the social order and its law. "Right Now" becomes a battle-cry, the subjective factor in a struggle, which asks to be raised to the level of the universal. It is the claim of the dissident against the abuses of power or the revolutionary against the existing order.

Right has therefore two metaphysical sources. As a claim accepted or seeking admission to the law, right is a publicly recognized will, which finds itself at peace with the world, a world made in its image and for its service. But secondly, right is a will that wills what does not exist, a will that finds its force in itself and its effect in a world not yet determined all the way to the end. This second right is founded *contra fatum*, in the perspective of an open cosmos that cannot be fully determined by (financial, political or military) might. "All the forms of freedom that are acquired or demanded, all the rights that are claimed, even concerning the things that seem to be of least importance, probably have a lost point of anchor here [...] [in a man who prefers the risk of death over the certainty of having to obey] [...] more solid and ex-

¹⁶ C. Douzinas, "Philosophy and the Right to Resistance," in C. Douzinas and C. Gearty (eds.), *The Meanings of Rights: The Philosophy and Social Theory of Human Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 85-105.

periential than 'natural rights'."¹⁷ This drive to resist eventually confronts domination and oppression, including those instituted and tolerated by the first legalized will. These two conceptions of right, or of the universal manifest the confrontation of the death drive against desire and the pleasure principle. On one side, an acceptance of the order of things raised to the dignity of general will, dresses the dominant particular with the mantle of the universal. The second universality is founded on a will created by a diagonal division of the social world, separating rulers from the ruled and the excluded. It forms an agonistic universality, emerging from the struggle of the excluded from social distribution and political representation. The excluded and disenfranchised are the only universal today in a legal and social system that proclaims incessantly its egalitarian credentials.

Thesis 7: Collective Resistance Becomes Political and May Succeed in Radically Changing the Balance of Forces When it Condenses Different Causes, a Multiplicity of Struggles and Local and Regional Complaints Bringing Them Together into a Common Place and Concurrent Time

Resistance to power exists everywhere and keeps transforming relations of power and subjectivities. Uprisings go beyond their local, situated, regional operation and limited effectiveness, however, when they are compressed in their demands and concentrated in their appearance. Take the Taksim square occupation. It started with a few ecologists defending Gezi, the last green space in central Istanbul, from bulldozers and cement. They were soon joined by many other people and groups. Secularists protesting the government's religious turn, Alevis rejecting the naming of the third Bosphorus bridge, abandoned lovers, leftists attacking the neo-liberal turn, republican supporters of the state, Europeanist modernisers, single mothers, Islamists rejecting state diktat, feminists protesting macho culture, shop assistants sacked for no good reason, gay people and lesbians who want to kiss in public, young people who grew up with their parents in prisons, pickpockets, Kurds protesting the state's attacks on language and culture, street kids, football fans, artists, low-paid families, street children, the unemployed, those who came to the square for fun, and finally those who cannot be included in any of these categories. They came from different social classes and income groups, various political ideologies and none, some with the most general of grievances, and others with specific, idiosyncratic complaints. They represented every section of the population; initially they had little in common, except for finding themselves together in the same place at the same time. Being together in a square and a park, sharing food, music and words, they were transformed from a motley crowd with many, even antagonistic, demands, into a multitude in the strictest sense of the term: a crowd with a common political desire in assembly. The squares are places of clearing and gathering, where popular will appear, sharing speech and action in a physical, not the metaphorical public sphere of

¹⁷ Foucault, *op. cit.*, p. 263, fn 30.

opinion polls. The empty squares are our monument and the promise of a democracy to come.

When the Besiktas football club fans chanted “Erdogan you are the son of a whore,” women asked them to stop because several sex workers were in the square. The fans held a meeting and agreed to stop the chant. The following day a large banner appeared: “We, the whores: Erdogan is not our son.” It was the magical moment at which different energies, ideologies and complaints turned into one common demand: “Erdogan Go.” At such points, the solidarity of the governed rises from the particularity of the struggles towards a new right that emerges in practice and brings people together into a resisting multitude. Individual disobedience and isolated acts of defiance converge and become collective resistance.

Michel Foucault, commenting on the Iranian revolution, stated that “it is a fact that people rise up, and it is through this that a subjectivity (not that of great men, but that of everyone) introduces itself into history and gives it its life. [...] It is precisely because there are such [uprisings] that human time does not take the form of evolution, but that of ‘history’.”¹⁸ As long as the protesters ask for this or that reform, this or that concession, the state can accommodate them. What the state fears is the fundamental challenge to its power by a force that can transform the relations of law and present itself as having a “right to law.” In such cases, politics becomes the “prescription of a possibility in rupture with what exists.”¹⁹ After a long period when markets and pliant governments claimed that smooth uninterrupted evolution was the future of humanity, we have again entered a time of history and of political subjectivity of everyone and anyone.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

¹⁹ A. Badiou, *Metapolitics*, trans. J. Barker (London & New York: Verso, 2005), p. 24.

“Philosophical Discourse”: “Speechless” or “Non-Judgmental” in the Face of the “Crisis”?

PANAGIOTIS NOUTSOS

It has sometimes been written that “the inadequacy of the Greek intelligentsia in the face of the crisis” entails its “speechlessness.” If this general verdict is launched by some who seek to play Marx in place of Marx, the only thing that I can counter with is the codification of the polyphonic multitude of familiar interventions with the degree of “absence of judgement,” by which they are possessed. Moreover, I am invoking Marx, who himself often countered the “Myrmidons of mediocrity.”

It is polyphonic (and not “aphonic”) that the mapping of the proposals for the creation of a “counter-proposal,” within and outside the Eurozone, appears to be, with the “younger theologians of the crisis” in paroxysm, and with the commentators portraying society at home either as a “craft union” or as a “pyramid,” with the “best people” enthroned at the “apex” and the “populists” gathering at the “base.”

Which philosophical stance does not treat this country as a “lonely vessel” in the Mediterranean? Which can discern the international, European, and domestic division of labour and the social articulations which hold it together? Which does not cultivate the illusion of a “Greek Spring”? And so, which philosophical practice has available the most “toxic gas antidotes” in the field of ideas?

Which protects us from asphyxiating gases of every kind? For, as long as the “ideologies” are still functioning, those who engage in philosophical study—whether institutionally organised or otherwise— as a production of new theoretical knowledge about our worlds and a critical examination of the old philosophy still have plenty of work to do. I mean the de-mythologisers and not the legitimators of the reality which surrounds us. The aim of the former remains to achieve the self-sufficiency of those who take part in the educational/training process, teachers and taught, and, consequently, a sufficiently documented movement towards emancipation. For this reason, the involutions of this learning process, to which the Greek term “*philosophia*” continues to give meaning, cover—it clearly does, in spite of the widespread abuse of it—the whole of reality and of its possible worlds, without being exhausted in the mechanisms of education.

On such a journey, an on-going alternation of roles is suggested. When, that is, the taught worthily occupy the position of the teachers, and even surpass them. In this way they are able to drastically reduce the power-related side of the institutions of learning, without ever eliminating it, even if they undergo a course of “sleep learning,” from whichever side one is on. In this connection, the unforeseen items which escape the normality/normativeness of the functions of this learning are likely to multiply. Obviously, for decades

now, the institutions of publicity, “conventional” or “virtual,” have gone far beyond the limits of the school sphere, regardless of whether our present-day “scholasticism” is often the product of the “*schole*” –leisure-time– and not of the “*scholeion*.”

If, in this way, I am returning to “ideology,” I would stress that “philosophies” differ from one another as to their ways of handling it and the degree of their interpenetration. It is not simply a matter of formal disjunction in which one side denies the other. Such amateurism sprouts from both sides. Because, on both sides, practices of facile navel-gazing and the decline into specially constructed, insulating pipes are favoured. Consequently, rituals are brought to light of investing in academic gowns for “authentic” protection from the cold, such as to match “authenticisms.” In any event, particularly now when the maximisation of the forms of intellectual labour are a matter of record, the institutional distribution of theoretical knowledge does not inevitably lead to an ivory tower.

The relevant competence is judged, when and if it is judged, within the specialist “academic community.” That is, within a historically shaped “community” of many individual “communities,” which recognise as their common factor their capability of exercising a critique on everybody without exception. At the same time, they do not preclude, particularly as regards social and political theory, that their validation should be derived from the arena of the alternative options of society. Otherwise, “philosophizing” would be clearly hypotonic and would perform functions like the church or the courts: with functionaries who would provocatively wear a separate tunic with which to draw attention to their “authority.”

I have engaged in “joint philosophizing” in theatres and amphitheatres, in tavernas and hotel music-rooms or at popular fairs, on beaches or in woodlands, in beds and on couches, in buses and airplanes. Just as now, with you, in this room of eight square metres, with the “*pensée unique*” of our planet in my firing-line –and other things besides. We are concerned with serious things –we are not mending *briki*, little coffee-pans, as the Greek saying goes, in this gigantic “*bricolage*.”... As to my feelings, they are mixed, if I insist upon your interpolation, hearing or reading about the “philosophy of the draft law,” or about the “philosophy of the long skirt.” As to the “philosophy of gardens,” I will not conceal the fact that I prefer it to up-market “analytical philosophy.”...

For thousands of years now, the term “philosophy,” in spite of the recent abuses which it has suffered and suffers ceaselessly, is alive and well through the multifariousness of the philosophical style, and in spite of the predictions of its “end.” “Sub-philosophers,” “deputy sub-philosophers,” or “pretenders to wisdom” attempt to convert “surprise” into a yawn, in a world which has not yet properly woken up.

From a different viewpoint, functionaries of philosophising launch themselves against what they see and hear, intuit and understand. In other words, they set aside the generalised boredom, transform the “spectacle” into a springboard for re-thinking, and, principally through an adequate understand-

ing of their “worlds,” argue for the need of a change in them. They make a theme out of both the agoraphobic performance of the functions of today’s state and of the capabilities for liberation of the being. Rooted, then, and at the same time, radicals. They are learning the world, and at the same time wish to change it. They have penetrated professionally into the fields of social work, health, and financial affairs. They are evolving into business executives, in the “mass media,” education, “consultancy,” “alternative tourism” agencies, municipal organisations, etc.

Any form of “applied philosophy” can, of course, be assimilated by the market, which makes its appearance as an irresistible network of economic, political, and cultural earthings. The same thing is likely to impel to multiplied stimuli of alternative, and sometimes subversive, activity on the part of its subjects. The signifying practices, in this case, are not one-dimensional and manipulated. Their referentiality has as a feasible limit, each time, the “otherness” caused by the degradation of the being. For this reason, it turns towards the elimination of the “normalities” which render unavoidable the controlled earthing (and not only that) of behaviours and their “systemic” arrangement. Thus, through the multifarious “schools,” both of working and of available time, philosophising continues to resist a slump into forms of “hesychastic” inactivation. Because it discovers channels to think up new practices of “maieutics,” irony, and duplication of our worlds, however much “propriety” these deal in.

Briefly put, this is a case of self-confirmation of the historical being who renews, on each occasion, the organisation of contestation and differentness. Perhaps this is the only “poetics of history” worth talking about which is not subjugated to the “end” of its object and, in a related way, of its subject, of history, and of its “shareholders.” With the only commitment from the past being an unwillingness for “philosophy” to be replaced by some briefly-burning geologism of Anglo-Saxon origin.... Even though UNESCO has found for it 18 November as a sole day of celebration; the rest of the days it celebrates for us, unsleeping and smiling, always an “antidote,” in its inn. The grandfather from Stagira says of his predecessor with the olive-presses that he showed: “ῥάδιόν ἐστι πλουτεῖν τοῖς φιλοσόφοις, ἂν βούλωνται, ἀλλ’ οὐ τοῦτ’ ἐστὶ περὶ ὃ σπουδάζουσιν... [it is easy for philosophers to be rich if they choose, but this is not what they care about].” But those who have designs on the future of philosophising target the focus of production of “antidotes.” *Cogitamus*, honourable managers! As to my good self, I can still distinguish between “authenticity” and “authority.”...

PART II

The Hermeneutics of Crisis

What Solution Could Philosophy Bring to the Crisis? The Pathology of Idealization

ANTONIA SOULEZ

There are two senses of crisis: a positive sense, allowing a transformation in the future, and a negative sense; a degradation or decline, orientating men towards chaos or death. There is, to-day, a tendency to stress a kind of decline.

1. *The Solidarity of Science with Culture That Underlies the Ethological Point, Husserl's Conception of "Crisis"*

a) A cultural conception of science such as Kuhn's one, for instance, deriving from his "relativist" theory of "paradigms," tends to submit science to the same kind of collapse as culture, and make them, science and culture, dependent upon each other, for the best or the worst. Hence, one cannot expect from a science, so understood, a form of «*Erlösung*» (salute) saving knowledge from the ship wreck of rationality. They both get drowned in the same flood. Such a diagnosis could be seen as taking the Husserlian point of view, as regards the "crisis" in the sciences, in the background.

That closed rationality of science, as a phenomenon, involved in the crisis of modern civilization, is something against which, on the contrary for Husserl, the philosopher looking towards science, should combat. That is a great idea in Husserl's conception of the "crisis": far from being the end of civilization (like Spengler thought), crisis is a conflictual moment in the "life" of Reason as such.

Escaping a pessimistic appraisal of history, Husserl indeed confirms that the crisis, as a moment, is a symptom of a deregulated course of rationality, the essence of which is to be restored in its continuity. The crisis is an accident of history, whereas the ethical vocation of rationality is to irresistibly continue its work. So far, the decays one observes are only transitory symptoms of a great ill body, which the scientist and his Reason, once reevaluated, could heal. In this situation, philosophy, as a "historical *faktum*," is in crisis, but its activity as an "idea of an infinite task," is to incarnate the consciousness of this crisis. The "European crisis is rooted in the mistake as regards a certain rationalism," its true meaning (*Krisis*). The true "rationalism" is originally a Greek one. Husserl's claim is to return to a Greek kind of rationalism, namely, as Patocka called it, "Socrates' care of the soul."

b) Husserl's plea for the life of science: What the reader retains from Husserl's ideal view is, first, the universality of the appeal to Reason in the European world of sciences, and also the fact that philosophy is the praxis par excellence on which the "life" of cultural activity fundamentally relies. "Life," here, means, not everyday life, but the tendency Husserl describes in the *Cartesian Meditations* (1929), as the very movement of aiming at the idea of sci-

entific truth as a horizon of my consciousness. Descartes is said to have missed it because he stopped too early on the road towards truth, hence the urge for Husserl to radicalize Descartes's evidence beyond the sole criterion of mathematical apodicticity.

2. Husserl's Idealistic Confidence in Reason: Is a Self-Reparation Possible?

Husserl's plea for the separation of philosophy (as an "idea of an infinite task" rooted in Greek philosophy) from culture, is the expression of a *retard de la philosophie* (J. Bouveresse): philosophy is late in its appraisal of facts. It stands behind the evolution of facts.

a) Musil's point of view: The integration of science into culture is Spengler's discourse, but as Musil has shown, it is at the expense of the method of knowledge (form and order). Like Husserl, Musil has deplored irrationalism as a failure of rationalism. Even later, in 1936, Husserl does not seem to have really paid attention to Spengler's *Decline*,¹ published in 1918 and criticized as early as in 1921. The "irrationalism" that is Husserl's target is one that stems from an excessive confidence in the natural sciences, at the expense of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. Irrationality occurs when "Europe has lost its proper rational sense of life."

On Musil's side, the point is different. Better, then, is not to "understand" the "Decline of the West" too well. Rationality is the best "sheet anchor" (in French: *planche de salut*) to escape from "The Decline...." Between the shipwreck and the plank, choose the plank! Thus, rationality should not be included in the crisis wave. Musil also condemns the cultural assimilation of the sciences with the arts and culture, that Spengler bases on analogies. His critique is methodological.² "Analogy," as understood by Spengler, amounts to a mere world of affinities, in which everything resembles everything, without any principle of distinction.

As for Neurath, who, also in the same years, wrote an *Anti-Spengler* (1921): to understand too well amounts to participating in what should be denounced. Such a "participation" blurs essential distinctions to be taken into account in a methodological epistemological kind of comparison. The comparing and the compared should remain differentiated. Aiming at Spengler's use of comparison, Wittgenstein, in one of his Remarks (in *Culture and Value*), whose affinities with Spengler have already been pointed out,³ has explicitly denounced as illegitimate and dogmatic the transfer of the characters

¹ Thanks to Golfo Maggini's suggestion, my appraisal should perhaps be nuanced in the light of an article by C. Möckel, "Krisisdiagnosen: Husserl und Spengler," *Phaenomenologische Hefter* (Neue Folge), 3 (1998), 34-60.

² See Musil's splendid essay against Spengler on "Spirit and Experience, Remarks for Readers Rescued from the *Decline of the West*" (1921); cf. *Essays*, in P. Jacottet's French trans. (Paris: Seuil, 1984).

³ By A. Janik in *Assembling Reminders* (Stockholm: Santérus Academic Press, 2006), ch. 10, p. 205.

of the prototype in comparison to the compared entity.⁴ Whatever its name or theoretical status, knowledge is this very principle of distinction that Musil wants to save, that Spengler endangers.

So far, to “resist” against Spengler’s decline is the very task of rationality, in as much as it includes a methodological device of saving the distinction between the comparing and the compared. There is no necessity to be inferred from any comparison, no *Es muss sein* that would proceed with necessity from facts. The conclusion that “it must always be so” presupposes that it was “already written.” Gilbert Ryle says the same thing against theories that echo the antique fatalism in “it was to be,”⁵ in which he sees a “menacing statement.” Against the Stoics, he writes “only conclusions can be logically inevitable, given the premises, and an avalanche is not a conclusion.” This is the core of Karl Popper’s famous criticism of modern historicism, in his *Open Society from Plato to Hegel and Marx*, putting necessity into contingency.

b) The problem: A philosophical crisis: That is why it is so important not to press too hard on the cultural aspect of science although science is part of culture. Husserl is right on this point. Science and philosophy attentive to science should, therefore, remain distanced from culture. The problem, thus, becomes: how to be part of culture without being submitted to its logic of development, if there is such a “logic...”?

It should be noted that Husserl’s *Krisis* was coming to light in 1936, before the Second World War. It means a European crisis, in so far as it witnesses a loss of the critical activity of philosophy, and its fragmentation into objectivist domains of natural science, deprived of a “life.” The lack of a living Reason is, for Husserl, the symptom of the crisis, that is the separation of being and living, and, consequently, of signifying and aiming at a horizon of objectivity (what he calls *Meinung*; in French: *visée*). This separation is something that happens to Reason itself. Ultimately, the “Krisis” is the Crisis of self-consciousness in its critical activity, when Reason has lost sight of its own telos. Hence, a “metaphysical *krach*” (Musil). It is, thus, its responsibility beyond history and its accidental course, and thereby beyond culture. Hence, “the contemporary crisis of culture, in Husserl’s terms,” M.A. Banfi writes, “appears to be a philosophical crisis.”⁶ It is up to the split Reason to heal itself from its own being split.

On the other hand, the inclusion of science into culture bounds philosophy to espouse the rise and fall of culture itself, as we have mentioned in relation to Spengler’s view. The critique of culture is exposed to such a tendency. That is Adorno’s argument against the critique of culture. Escaping the circle of participation in the crisis by “understanding” the decline of culture (Adorno’s

⁴ *Culture and Value*, cf. *Vermischte Bemerkungen*, 14-19 (1931), on Spengler’s method of comparison influenced by Goethe’s archetypal morphology.

⁵ In *Dilemmas: Tanner Lectures (1953)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), II, p. 15.

⁶ Cf. A. Banfi, philosopher from Naples, “Husserl et la crise de la pensée européenne,” in *Husserl, Cahiers de Royaumont, III* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1959), 411-427, p. 411 (Proceedings of a Colloquium held in 1957).

argument against Spengler's critique of culture), is not the right issue. Understanding the decline makes one even contribute to it.⁷

One should, therefore, avoid too strong a critique of an idealistic and universalistic conception of rationality, as it might lead, in the end, to such an inclusion. So far, it is to make us mind this slippery slope that Husserl struggled against this inclusion, by claiming the autonomy of Reason for the sake of a European ethical responsibility of science, arriving at the peak of its maturity, yet endangered by the cultural crisis as he saw it. How, then, could philosophy be immune to following the movement of the decline of culture? At what level should it stand in relation to the crisis?

c) The Pathology of Idealization: It looks as though the solution still lies in an idealization of "Life" itself on behalf of a supra-historical Reason, yet in the framework of a European conception of universality, of course, a particular conception of universality.

The idealization lies in the myth of the *telos* of Reason: Husserl's solution remains speculative. Even though the culturalization of its praxis seems to be the great danger here, Husserl is trapped into the following alternative: either philosophy should be preserved as a universal activity, or it is bound to renounce itself. If, on behalf of Reason, Husserl's ethical ideal of science sounds right, it, nonetheless, prevents us from figuring out ways of saving rationality without idealizing it.

3. *Loss of a Centre: Husserl vs Musil (J. Bouveresse)*⁸

Crisis is diagnosed as the loss of a "centre" when irrationalism pervades all, according to Husserl's view. Strangely enough, this disappearing of a "centre" is exactly what Musil observes in the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the eve of the First World War. But, for Husserl, this centre is lost, whereas for Musil, it is our condition out of which only a principle of orientation can save us from our "amorphism" and moral indifference. Maybe, he writes,⁹ instead of making history the result of great animated causes carried by great men and acting from inside, one should, rather, believe that some solution could be expected "from the periphery" (contingent indeterminate, unpredictable little details...)!

For Husserl, this decentralization affects Reason and its *telos*. Yet, for Musil, whose general diagnosis on the crisis is not very different,¹⁰ no *telos*

⁷ See "Spengler after the Decline," 1938. The "decline," ultimately for Spengler, designates the "decline of the strength to think," due to the necessary character of the course of history that the comparative morphology of civilizations is supposed to disclose. The *Decline of the West* (1918) looks like "a big storehouse, where you are offered the dried fruit the intellectual manager has swept up at little cost from the credits of the cultural bankrupt." T.W. Adorno, *Prismes* (Paris: Payot, 1986), p. 56; cf. *Prismen* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1955); the English translation is mine.

⁸ Cf. J. Bouveresse, *Les voix de l'âme et les chemins de l'esprit: Dix études sur Robert Musil* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).

⁹ Bouveresse, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

¹⁰ See J-P. Cometti on the convergence between their views on the European crisis of the sciences, in *Musil philosophe* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), p. 51, especially as regards the factuality

should ultimately motivate the orientation of Reason. It is not that Reason has lost view of the centre (The Transcendental ego), but that there is no such centre able to structure humanity by giving it an orientation. Reason is not intrinsically “orientated” by the function of a pre-existing telos, to which it would have ideally ascribed itself.

In reaction to the European Crisis, Husserl and Musil represent two very different philosophical answers. If they both rely on rationality, the difference lies in the claim of universality. What a central-European philosopher of the Austro-Hungarian Empire could experience reveals itself very differently from what a German-speaking philosopher of the idealist tradition thought about the same European crisis: a crisis of culture implying the crisis of values, of meaning and language, a crisis of modern science.

An answer is found in Franz Grillparzer’s novel (1848),¹¹ which the musical “formalist” Eduard Hanslick recommended so heartily. The story of the poor Jakob the “Musician of the Streets” shows that even the idealist, the violinist playing on behalf of the purity of the absolute sound of music (who could play “without the notes”), is finally drowned with his instrument, in the flood of the Danube (1830) that carried him away, in a disaster compared, at the very beginning of the novel, to the flood of the Viennese mob, inundating the streets.

Note about Grillparzer’s novel: 1830 is the year when economical liberalism is in full expansion, bringing to the foreground the class of rich and dominating “bourgeois,” at the expense of the poor, and leading to the almighty system of the market that had to rule the society. Hence, the illusion, the “utopia,” writes the Hungarian economist Karl Polanyi, that the market could be self-regulating. The Marxist collectivist solution to the disastrous consequences of this autonomic machinery of the market opened a new era with a class-conception entrusting the exploited workers with the task of responding to the vital needs of social protection. This is the second movement Polanyi mentions, as being the indissociable counterpart in European countries of the time, of the foolish and unmasterable, self-regulated economic market, produced by the acute need for a social protection. A movement that is now lacking, he says, in our century, which explains the disintegration of the environment, sociality, and the cultural void of to-day.¹² At the date of the novel, the

of the sciences, the objectivity of which neglects the meaning dimension of rational research. In “The German as a symptom,” Musil also says that the German believes only in facts.

¹¹ In French, translated by J. Lajarrige, *Le musicien des rues* (Paris: Éditions Jacqueline Chambon, 2000), with a foreword by Erika Tunner.

¹² Let me, here, refer to Nancy Fraser’s conclusion to her lecture delivered on the 17th of May 2013 in the FMSH Paris Conference: “Penser global...” She wrote: “In many respects, today’s crisis resembles the crisis of the 1930s, as described by Karl Polanyi in *The Great Transformation* (1944). Now, as then, a relentless push to extend and de-regulate markets in labor, nature and finance is destroying livelihoods, rupturing communities, and despoiling nature. Nevertheless, the political response today is strikingly different. In the first half of the 20th century, social struggles surrounding the crisis formed what Polanyi called a ‘double movement,’ as a broad-based, coordinated resistance formed to protect

context is that of the year 1848. Note that, later, Kafka liked to recognize himself in Jakob's character, and also his short writing "Josephine the singer." Reading the story that is also Jakob's own telling, Kafka sees it as the story of its own disappearing, a "destiny."

In chapter 6 of his book mentioned above, J. Bouveresse argues for a difference of traditions between Musil and Husserl. Musil who, rather, follows the Machian tradition directed against the Kantian idealistic tradition, and whose side is naturalistic, shows that a philosopher of nature does not necessarily fall into the trap of generalized naturalization of all so-called rational activities, at the expense of Reason itself, as Husserl, at odds with positivism, indeed believed.

4. *Universality in Question*

Jacques Bouveresse¹³ states very clearly the Musilian far-reaching critique of historical determinism. His point is that rationality projected in the order of historical facts is a "superstition." Wittgenstein said it, too. Against Husserl, he also rejected the illusory idea that philosophy could be a solution to the European crisis by founding the sciences. The difference is that, far from desperately re-iterating a Husserlian kind of wishful thinking of a philosophy solving the crisis at a speculative level in the ethnocentric name of a European (Greek) Reason, Musil, on the contrary, thought that the non-availability of a philosophy in the same years is the symptom to be interpreted, rather than the self-occultation of its telos. The absence of philosophy speaks for itself.

Irrationality, as Husserl says, is an aspect of an inner philosophical crisis, but what it shows, I think, is that, contrarily to what he assumed, the solution cannot be brought by philosophy. Philosophy, rather, shows its inability to escape irrationality, unless it renounces idealism instead of sticking to it. Its problem is the pathology of idealism, in other words, the myth of what Eugen Fink called, in the 6th Cartesian Meditation, the transcendental Spectator. Idealism, being a lost cause, has to be abandoned for another solution to the crisis.

Opposed to an idealistic conception of rationality, Musil also attacks historicist conceptions, as Popper did. Yet, Husserl did not believe in such a conception as a predetermined development of logic in History, but, rather, in the autonomic power of universalization of the Reason as an ethical *Selbstbesinnung* (notion of responsibility), which is more Kantian than Hegelian. As we know, Husserl was not so open to the historicity of history. Of course, this is not to say that he was indifferent to necessity.¹⁴

society from the ravages of the market. Today, however, neoliberalism generates no such counter-hegemonic opposition, despite intense but ephemeral outbursts, such as 'occupy' and the indignados. Thus, we lack a double movement in Polanyi's sense."

¹³ Bouveresse, *op. cit.*, p. 279; anti-historicism is equally shared by Popper and Musil.

¹⁴ His conception of the "phenomenal a priori" underlying relations between states of affairs (for instance, in the sentence "red and green cannot be together at the same place at the same time," he writes that "cannot," here, expresses a negative necessity because of a law *-loi d'essence-* of incompatibility irrigating contingency), not only could, but has ef-

To get back to Musil's critique of universality, just remember the ironic passages on the "Parallel Action," in which the search for the unifying idea that inaugurates its program, ends into the person of the General Stumm von Bordwehr, whose attitude could be "an ironic commentary of the last Husserl."¹⁵

As to the idealist tonality, Bouveresse is right to note, against the post-modernist trend of to-day, that, uttered in 1936, the *Krisis* sounds somewhat obsolete, compared to Musil's or Wittgenstein's earlier appreciations. "The very idea of a philosophical Europe is the result of a derealizing process of abstraction."¹⁶ The abstraction comes from sublimating representations, by putting representation of a fact or of an event, above the level of the fact or event, whereas representation comes, itself, from these facts or events. A kind of "disease": isn't Jakob "ill with infinite in a society that believes in finite things?"¹⁷

5. Back to "The Spectator Included" (Hans Blumenberg): The Circularity of Understanding as Participation

a) The crisis is our condition: the reversed image of finding oneself carried away in the waves. One could argue, against Husserl, that the Reason as a Spectator is already entangled into culture from the very beginning, and that, as Hans Blumenberg writes, in his *Schiffsbruch mit Zuschauer*,¹⁸ a study of metaphorology shows that the crisis is not necessarily the bad issue of a declining becoming, but the starting condition of Reason. In short, the crisis of rationality is at the very beginning rather than the result of a bad-in-itself destiny of Reason, a destiny Reason, overwhelmed by a declining culture, would have failed to understand by lack of lucidity. Hence, rather than being focused on universality as its telos, rationality could well be the understanding of the crisis as being our very-condition. Now, is the problem of rationality really consisting in the understanding of such a condition, given the so-called "destination" of Reason reflecting upon its "telos"? I doubt it. Let us first get back to this concept of the destination of Reason in light of the critique of a determinist conception of history.

fectively been a target of, for instance, the Schlickian-Wittgensteinian grammatical conception of "can" and "cannot" as regards statements. If Husserl did not advocate a determinist conception of becoming, he did embrace a conception allowing the irrigation of phenomena with laws of essence. So far, this conception puts necessity in facts, though regardless of historical considerations. His faith in laws of essence ordering facts rejoins his mythical confidence in the "autonomy" of Reason which is the sole bastion against the planned failure of modern science.

¹⁵ By anticipation. See M. Petricek's remark in "Jan Patočka et l'idée du monde naturel," in *Les Cahiers de philosophie*, 11-12 (Lille 1990-91), *Jan Patočka, le soin de l'âme*, 117-152, p. 121. Note that the volume on Patočka starts with the title expression "Naufrages" by J.-M. Besse, and E. Tassin, the co-editors. The "last Husserl" is the *Krisis*' one.

¹⁶ Bouveresse, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p 12 (in my English).

¹⁸ H. Blumenberg, *Schiffsbruch mit Zuschauer* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1979).

b) Blumenberg's motive of the entangled or engaged Spectator takes the exact opposite side from Husserl's impassive "transcendental Spectator," bound to objectify the eye of an overhanging, unsituated act of philosophy. Blumenberg has been, nonetheless, quite sensitive to Husserl's concept of *Krisis*, but, in his reevaluation of the concept of "reality," what he could not endorse and make his own is the Husserlian view of a reality as being immune to historical accidentality. That's why he deliberately gave an historical inflexion to phenomenology.¹⁹

Interestingly enough, this specific move, initiated by Blumenberg, prompts him to replace Reason with the work of art, as, he writes, art is the most dignifying refuge for this implausible Husserlian autonomy of Reason.²⁰ Note that the best example that comes to his mind is Musil's novel, and the ironic mode on which the novel mimes the scientific telling of history while it makes historical telling impossible as such.²¹ Following the reversed image of the boat entangled into the waves of an uncertain reality, one has, on the contrary, to understand that this entanglement is, as we have said, our condition. That is already Lucretius' motive: life starts with man's birth when nature expulses the baby out of the mother's body. The baby is, then, compared to the sailor rejected on the sea side. Lucretius, in the 5th book of his great poem *improba navigii ratio tum caeca jacebat* (vers 1104), deplores the condition of man's birth. Navigation shows the error of travelling. Blumenberg comments by saying that such traveling ends in self-punishment.²² Better would be, he says, to stay still on the sea-shore. Shipwreck is the metaphor for such disasters. All the 19th century was full of shipwrecks. Yet crisis and wars is not the same thing. The contrast between the *terra firma* that is supposed to represent certainty in life, and the waves or turmoil of contingency, turns into a totally different conception: the waves and turmoil are the real, and the *terra firma*, the situation of the rescued one, not of the Spectator. Rationality has now become the privilege of the survivor to the shipwreck.

Philosophy traditionally represents human navigation as an unceasing struggle against an unpredictable ocean of obstacles. The wave is "us," V. Buckhardt writes: "we are that wave we want to know." Lucretius' Spectator is seen as the opportunity for men to take a rest, at a distance from the turmoil of life, yet the opportunity not to retreat from it, but to look at the theater of

¹⁹ J.-C. Monod, "Foreword" to H. Blumenberg, *Le concept de réalité*, trans. J.-L. Schlegel (Paris: Seuil, 2012), p. 13; collected articles and discussions of the group "Poetik und Hermeneutik" translated into French.

²⁰ One will notice in passing that this process of restoring the historical dimension to phenomenology would not be possible without the so-to-speak transfer of power allowing to go from the pseudo-autonomy of Reason to the autonomy of art vis à vis reality conceived as an artefact.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

²² Blumenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 37. About Lucretius's verse in the 5th book of *De Rerum Natura* (Paris: Charpentier, 1881), pp. 354-355; Lucrèce, *De la Nature*, trad. A. Ernout (Paris: Éditions Belles Lettres, 1964), p. 87. The verse is into brackets, meaning "the deadly art of navigation was still hiding in the darkness."

the world, in other words, the ocean of matter with the disordered movement of atoms.

c) Now, is there anything like a Spectator distanced from history who would not stand still above the world?²³ Rather than a heroic conception of Reason (Husserl), as a moral faculty, we, indeed, need a kind of rationality²⁴ fitted to a *morale du résultat* (Bentham), according to which the agent has to respond now in such or such circumstances, enlightened by ethical considerations such as the ones we find in Amartya Sen's economical pragmatism, founded on the concept of "capabilities" (with Aristotle, Mill, Marx, and also Rawls' conception of distributive justice, in the background). But I am stepping out of my competencies.

The nautical metaphor could be seen as double: on one hand, it refers to the moving water and waves, on the other hand to the boat shaken by the waves. If we look for a principle of orientation (on Schopenhauer's recommendation)²⁵ as Musil does, rather than to the factor of unceasing turbulence, the conception of how to cope with the problem changes.

From Aristotle's prudence (*phronēsis*), or practical intuitive sense of possibility, to Descartes' provisory morals, and to Otto Neurath quoting the latter followed with Quine quoting Neurath's boat ("naturalizing epistemology," see further), the image of finding one's way in the turmoil is useful to express the recourse, by the social engineer, to guess, technique and a kind of skill (in Greek: *mētis*), in order to apply changes *hic et nunc*, without waiting for the implausible *kairos*, the supposedly "right moment" of the idealist philosopher. It contrasts with Husserl's heroism of Reason, as well as with Kant's so-called practical Reason, excluding all kind of guile and mischievousness.

Reminding the reader of his objections against Kant's conception of practical Reason, Schopenhauer himself suggests the nautical metaphor in order to present in a vivid manner the analogy between the art of using, in chaotic conditions, one's faculty of reason and the navigator's use of the "map, compass and the sextant." At the opposite of this technical use is the ignorance of the crew that sees only the sky and the sea, and lets itself governed.²⁶ This conception emphasizes, he says, what Cicero called *prudentia* and its influence on actions in life.

However, this "utopia" suggests, in Otto Neurath's times and worldview, a non-delayed application of technical means, a social experimentation *now*. Neurath was a war-economist sympathetic to Marxism (or more exactly to Otto Bauer's Austro-Marxism), who, in 1919, had participated in the Munich workers councils settled by the movement of socialization in Bavaria. His

²³ Echoing the call for a practical reason reevaluated; see, for instance, Schopenhauer against Kant (ref. further down).

²⁴ That rejoins what Cohn-Bendit once called "The plausible utopia" (France Culture, interviewed on his recent book, on April 12th, 2013). See the Chilean film "No," "No" to Pinochet reelection 1973, by Pablo Larrain.

²⁵ Schopenhauer disagrees with Kant's conception of the *a priori* character of the knowledge of the ethical value of actions, and thereby with what Kant calls Practical Reason.

²⁶ A. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, Book 1, n° 16.

model was conceived for a socialist strategy of reconstruction in emergency-conditions, as in war-time, to be extended to peace-time society,²⁷ and result in an administrative planned economy.

This strategy would, I think, correspond to the “second movement” as explained by Polanyi, this very kind of movement that is now lacking in our century.²⁸ His comparison of Science with the “boat” is famous. It stresses the necessity to rebuild it while staying afloat in it. According to Quine who ignores the political lesson, it represents science and philosophy in the making, together on the same boat.²⁹ Repairing the boat while sailing in deep sea means that remodeling the whole building from the start is in vain. Descartes’ *tabula rasa* (in the realm of pure thought)³⁰ should, therefore, be abandoned, in other words, the Carnapian model of protocol pure and founding sentences, at the basis of the symbolic scaffolding of unified science, Otto Neurath sees as a modern version of Descartes’ *tabula rasa*. One cannot think the pure beginning, before language, syntax and the rest.

That Musil could have met Otto Neurath is a fact that corroborates the impression the reader gets from reading the novel. Social engineering is at the heart of his great novel on the eve of the First World War, if one is ready to see the “philosophy that is contained in the novel” (as Jean-Pierre Cometti writes after Milan Kundera). Social engineering seems to have lost its noble meaning. It is strange how, among some philosophers inheriting from the encyclopedic attitude towards sciences, typical of the end of the 19th century in the German-speaking world, covering so many fields as economy, urbanism, the history of ideas, sociological and anthropological matters, there was such an endeavour towards social engineering. The development of expertizing, joined to specialization, seem to have been detrimental to the “interests of knowledge” (Habermas’ expression).

Conclusion

So far, my conclusion is that, a hundred years ago, when philosophy realized it was “ill” with idealism, the time had come, in “Vienna the red” (a social-democracy that lasted 10 years), for working out a solution, between the two-wars, in order to protect the society against the bad effects of an economy ruled solely by profit. Unfortunately, WWII put an end to what Polanyi (see

²⁷ In 1913, Otto Neurath wrote a beautiful article, almost unknown from the French public, entitled “Descartes’s Lost Wanderers in the Forest,” I have commented in various studies that have been published. In French, the reader can refer to our *Cahiers de philosophie du langage*, on “Neurath entre science et guerre,” L’Harmattan, n° 2, issue coord. by E. Nemeth, J. Sebestik and myself, dedicated to the memory to Philippe Soulez, 1996. His “boat” is a direct emanation of Descartes’ provisory morals.

²⁸ See above, my footnote in reference to Nancy Fraser.

²⁹ See, for example, his *Word and Object*.

³⁰ There are two Descartes for Neurath: a bad one, the one looking for a *tabula rasa* in pure thought, and the Descartes advising a provisory morals in the realm of action, because, Descartes wrote, “action does not wait.” Neurath disagrees with this “dualism” and considers that thought also “does not wait.”

above) calls the “second movement.” The exile achieved the failure of the diffusion of what could have stopped the economy-market that is so harmful to a human society.

Richard Rorty wrote somewhere in his *Mirror of Nature* that the absence of any place in culture, for philosophy, its radical illegitimacy, is a situation one could trace back to the Greeks. I would say that it is, on the contrary, quite a good thing, if, finding no rest where it is settled—for instance in buildings made for her like universities—, philosophy maintains its “atopic” position, as Socrates would say in his times according to Plato, at odds with institution, a good thing, therefore, if the legitimacy of its place has to be proved at each step. The Greek model to keep in mind is not so much Husserl’s interpretation of an autonomous Platonic rationality, speaking for European values above contingency, as a force emerging from unceasing turbulences, never installed forever, and moving forward, like the pilot of the boat who, endowed with what Aristotle called the “sense of the possible,” tirelessly cleaves the way through the waves. More importantly, this does not mean participating in the decline, but rather, moving with the crisis, from the inside, and without security.

Crisis and Openness

GEORGIA APOSTOLOPOULOU

1. Preliminary Remarks

In recent years, 'crisis' has belonged to the everyday vocabulary of political rhetoric and of mass media as well. It seems that 'crisis' has become the key concept of understanding our situation at the beginning of the new millennium. We are facing different kinds of crisis, such as the economic crisis, the ecological crisis, the crisis of democracy, the crisis of institutions, or the crisis of values. Almost every human order considered as an organised bundle of activities includes its own potential of crisis. Nowadays, the economic crisis is the dominant crisis, since it seizes broad sectors of economic activities and its consequences disintegrate social life as well as the life plans of citizens. Nevertheless, the exclusive use of the term to indicate the economic crisis overshadows the broad history of its meaning.¹

Crisis and critique are characteristics of modern consciousness that is convinced of the immanence of crisis, as well as of the therapeutic results of critique. Altogether, it is not certain whether crisis provokes critique or whether critique causes crisis. The words crisis and critique have as their common origin the Greek verb '*krinein*.' In fact, the term '*krisis*' means, first of all, decision, discretion, and judgement. It has also the meaning of 'crisis' in medicine, indicating the acute phase of illness, when life or death will be decided. While the meaning of '*krisis*' as judgement, as well as crisis, exists still in contemporary Greek language, crisis as erosion of an order is usual in other languages. It is plain that crisis and critique do need the '*krisis*,' the judgement of truth and falsehood, or justice and injustice.

The main point of crisis, namely of the imminent disturbance of an order, concerns social life and is conceived as crisis by persons. Thus, crisis and the consciousness of crisis are indispensable aspects of describing crisis. It seems that there are times conceived as times of crisis. For the Middle Age consciousness, the uncertain and troublesome process of history has its hidden, stable reference to the transcendent plan of history. Modern consciousness considers critique and crisis as the characteristics of the modern epoch, which concern the foundations of social life. For modern consciousness, time is secular; it is only the time of human activities that are exposed to contingency and uncertainty. The philosophy of history, however, attempted to cover this uncertainty by contending the teleology of progress. But the last century destroyed this protective illusion and manifested that contingency, uncertainty and crisis characterise social life and human history.

Even though the economic crisis we are facing nowadays seems to disin-

¹ See the article "Krise," in J. Ritter and K. Gründer (eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 4: I-K. (Basel/Stuttgart: Schwabe Verlag, 1967), col. 1236-1245.

tegrate social life and to put impediments on the life plans of citizens, the potential for human values is not exhausted and, at the same time, the openness of our shared world has not lost its meaning.

In what follows, I investigate the main aspects of this problem. Firstly, modernity is explained as a time of crisis and contradiction with reference to Hegel's view. Following that, I consider the differentiation of power as a problem of our times. I dedicate the fourth part to the issue of the openness of a shared world.

2. *Modernity and Crisis*

Developing a public discourse on crisis presupposes that society has a representative centre of its identity at its disposal. That means, however, that society has a representative centre of its rational identity. Can we define such a representative centre for the society of our times, if we take into account the differentiation of rationality in science, economy, or technology? Since its origins in ancient Greece, philosophy has vindicated such a place for itself by arguing that philosophy leads the human to conceive that a life with reason and from reason is the authentic human activity. Consequently, rational thinking and dialogue should be the elements of the broader discourse concerning social and political life within the meaningful order of the Cosmos.

This self-understanding of philosophy culminated in Hegel's philosophy of spirit. Hegel's philosophy, however, also includes a theory of human spirit and of human identity at the turn of modernity. Thus, the question is whether or not we are to take into account his consideration of the modern condition of a human that is conscious of its freedom as a personal and shared existential feature. It is plain that the strong metaphysical demands of Hegel's philosophy cannot be endorsed after Marx's economic theory, after Kierkegaard's Christian existentialism, or Nietzsche's nihilism. Anyway, whether or not we criticise and reject Hegel's consideration of the Absolute, we should still be careful about other absolute formations appearing in the society and politics of our secular times.

Hegel's philosophy of modernity is important, because it describes the achievement as well as the contradictions of modernity, which are relevant for understanding our concrete situation. Modernity is, for Hegel, the epoch of the universalism of freedom. The concept of the human is universalised, since humans are conceiving that all humans are free, that the human as human is endowed with dignity. The significance of this principle consists in the self-consciousness of being free and endowed with dignity and, at the same time, of the mutual recognition of humans as humans. This is the principle of subjectivity of the spirit and of human life. Hegel, however, argues that this principle is also the principle of the modern state.² In fact, the state is the achievement of modernity; according to its principle, it is the 'political state.'

² G.W.F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1967), p.115; cf. p. 70.

Thus, Hegel describes the principle of the state, but he leaves open the question about whether or not the principle is realised. It is plain that Hegel was so confident about the principle of freedom that he did not guess that fear is not eliminated from history. This is the lesson that we draw from history after Hegel, which does not undermine the principle of freedom, but it corroborates our consciousness of responsibility.

Even though Hegel considers freedom as the universal trend of history, he asserts that modern society includes its own contradictions. On the one hand, civil society has developed the consciousness of freedom, as well as the concept of the free activities of citizens. On the other hand, the interrelation of needs and means for covering the needs causes the 'accumulation of wealth' and 'produces rabble.'³ Hegel explains that the result is double. Firstly, the feeling of right, the dignity to live through one's own activity and work are lost. Second, working people contribute to the increase of accumulated wealth for the benefit of a few citizens. Hegel emphasises that facing this problem by means of practising charity is against the principle of civil society, namely against the feeling of self-esteem, of dignity, and of independence.⁴ Obviously, this does not mean that Hegel is against the value of charity, but it means that he does not endorse charity as a substitute for the principle of freedom, since it quasi-legitimises the contradiction. Hegel 'describes' the contradiction, but he does not offer a solution in terms of politics. Taking into account the condition of modernity, he holds that humans can fulfill their life plan in a free society as citizens of the political state.⁵ Thus, Hegel considers modernity as the epoch of a mundane crisis and describes this crisis in terms of political society. One could hardly doubt the significance of the political state in our times of crisis.

3. Crisis and Power

If we take these schematic remarks as the starting point of describing the crisis, we shall recognise some striking similarities. The crisis we are facing nowadays seems to be a crisis of the state caused by the confusion of power. The differentiation of power is so much developed that it puts aside the regulating and ruling power of the state. While the rationalisation of power was achieved through law, the differentiation of power is detached from the law, and it leads to a variety of manifest and invisible centres of power, which exert their activities over the state. The global nexus of economic interrelations, the possibility of individuals to escape taxes or the regulation of their activities, and the islands of economic privilege weaken the power of the law and of the state as well. Other centres, serving as evaluators or advisors of economic measures and activities, can abuse their dominant position and have an

³ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁵ Cf. R. Bubner, "Hegel's Political Anthropology," in G. Apostolopoulou (ed.), *History and Subjectivity in Hegel's Philosophy* (Ioannina: University of Ioannina, 1995), 95-113 (in Greek).

impact upon social life and state decisions. Let us consider how the state becomes alienated from society and how the state attempts to regulate the power of economic agents through the law.

While opinions differ on this, it is true that power is an anthropological category. Power means the ability of intervening in the course of affairs, the ability of creating objective frames of life. In fact, power arises in the human community, in the community of persons, when the individual has to exert its power over other individuals. Thus power needs Right and Law in order to be regulated as the power of humans, and not as a blind power over humans.⁶

In our times, the differentiation of power on a global level, as well as the interrelation of power beyond the states, indicates the limits of globalisation. We can understand now that globalisation does not mean the ‘worlding’ creation of a common world for all humans on the basis of freedom, of respect, and of quality of life. Or we may consider that this common world is still in process. Since history is not contemporaneous for all people, this shared world remains fragmentary. Anyway, we normally take into account the crisis of industrial and highly developed countries, such as the USA or the countries of the European Union. Even though focusing on these countries is justified, we ought not to forget countries that are not in crisis, because they have not yet achieved a level of higher economic and social development. I mean we should not forget the countries of Africa.

The economic crisis is a pragmatic-practical problem of the politicians and a problem of scientific theory. It is a problem of knowledge and not of morality. Its consequences, however, have a moral aspect, because they come in contradiction to the values of human culture. Poverty, existential uncertainty and unemployment as social phenomena threatening a broad number of citizens indicate the shortage of social responsibility on the part of the economic agents. Nevertheless, this consideration should not be interpreted as an argument supporting the illusory conception of total planning.

At the moment, society seems to remain in contradiction with its values of community. This is not true in all cases. In contrast to the official and public discourse on the economic crisis, another discourse takes place almost at the silent margins of society. It is a discourse on the values of community and of family, such as love, solidarity, charity, encouragement, hope, prudence. But it is not only a discourse; it has the form of concrete activity towards suffering people that is inspired by these values.

4. *Openness*

The rhetoric of economic crisis disguises some significant aspects of crisis in the meaning of ‘*krinein*,’ of judging, of discerning and of deciding. Philosophical anthropology stresses that the human is always in crisis, namely in situations that urge judging and deciding, because its life form is not definite,

⁶ On this issue, see H. Plessner, “Macht und menschliche Natur,” *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 5 (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981).

as it is for the other living beings of this earth. Crisis, judgement, decision, and critique are characteristics of the human situation.

Helmuth Plessner, one of the classics of philosophical anthropology, has explained that humans exist in the openness of their world, including the interior world, the world of things and the shared world of persons. The openness of the world condition of the human is connected with his/her self-consciousness as 'I' that initiates the distance towards the self. The other living beings do have a self but they are not 'I'; they stay at the self as the centre of their defined life-field. In contrast, the human as the 'I' does not exist in a defined life-field, but it exists in the threefold world condition.⁷ Thus, the life plan of the human is not defined from the very beginning. Therefore, the human has to carry out its life plan and to become what it is.

This openness indicates the contradictory freedom of the human. For, on the one hand, its world is open and offers a broad field of possibilities; on the other hand, this instability compels the human to create orders of life, which reduce the uncertainty of instability. While the creation of order corresponds to the urgent need for survival, it causes the richness of life, because the human can carry its life within culture and institutions.⁸ So, the development of human life is an activity which presupposes the judgement about the intended form of life, the creation, the reconstruction, or the new creation of order, since there is no closing order of human life.

This critical attitude towards order goes together with the self-understanding of the human, as well as with the understanding of world.⁹ Understanding concerns the development of self-identity and of communication. Nevertheless, its expression as a picture or view of the human or as a world picture has a practical significance, since it can contribute to understanding the concrete situation, the presuppositions for decision-making, or the values of our activities. Further, it can be a critical instance or a leading idea for social life; it may also inspire scientific theory. For instance, '*homo economicus*' is a narrow picture of the human, which can be advantageous for economic theory, but it does not correspond to the picture of the human as a social being.

In fact, the conception of the human is both descriptive and normative, since it indicates the human being as a living being endowed with freedom and openness. It seems that the human condition is a permanent situation of crisis, even though it is not conceived as such. There are times of stable order and times of crisis of the concrete order. Nevertheless, the consciousness of freedom, of humanity and of openness remains the indispensable power over crisis.

⁷ H. Plessner, *Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch. Gesammelte Schriften IV* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981), pp. 360 ff.

⁸ G. Apostolopoulou, "The Idea of Political Humanism," in M. Dragona-Monachou (ed.), *Political Philosophy Today* (Athens: Editions Kardamitsa, 1994), 25-34 (in Greek).

⁹ G. Apostolopoulou, "Toward a Hermeneutic Anthropology of Human Rights," in Z. Davran and S. Voss (eds.), *The Proceedings of the Twenty-First World Congress of Philosophy*, Vol. 3: *Human Rights* (Ankara: Philosophical Society of Turkey, 2007), 151-155.

Theory of Crisis and Theory of Knowledge

MARIA POURNARI

What is first required from a crisis-theory relative to the current situation is the evaluation of the most influential theses that purport to reveal crisis's causes, consequences and possible remedies.

An examination of the current economic and humanist crisis needs to focus on its objective causes and operations that contradict, among other things, individual's consciousness and social knowledge as well. In this framework, a theory of knowledge needs to correlate a theory of individual knowledge with social knowledge. Although, knowledge is intuitively identified with individual mental action, it is not quite evident how an individual mental content or process becomes a critical reproduction of the shared knowledge.¹ In what way is social knowledge different from individual knowledge? What is social epistemology? According to the analytic view, social epistemology is a branch of traditional epistemology that studies epistemic properties of individuals that arise from their relations to others, as well as epistemic properties of groups or social systems. Studying such interpersonal epistemic relations is a legitimate part of epistemology.²

Despite the insights gained through traditional social epistemology, there are still crucial questions that remain unresolved. This understanding conceives knowledge as essentially social; it is not clear, however, how concrete individuals, who construct an individual knowledge, which is by definition different from any other individual knowledge, produce social knowledge. However, it is not clear in what sense the dynamic character of knowledge is possible for contextual evidences, beliefs, and values to originate and apply in the minds of individuals alone. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to explore the relations between individual knowledge and social knowledge undertaken in social contexts of crisis. It requires a theory of knowledge in tune with the contemporary reality which fosters relevant social change. Within this framework, it reverts to one area of a dialectic Marxist theory of knowledge. This concerns the relation between the crisis-ridden nature of capitalist economy with the subjective and necessary manifestations of these objective developments at the level of social consciousness and knowledge.

¹ M. Pournari, "The Relation of Individual Knowledge with Social Context: A Critical enterprise," in N.S. Baykal, A. Ural, Z. Alica (eds.), *Eleştirel Eğitim Seçkisi* (Ankara: Pegem Akademi, 2014), 343-352.

² A. Goldman, *Pathways to Knowledge. Private and Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 139-204.

Theories of Crisis

There are some alternative explanations of the current crisis.³ The first one holds that the crisis has originated in the financial sphere, due to extremely high levels of debt, rampant speculation, a permissive monetary policy, the loosening of rules governing borrowing and lending due to deregulation, and so on. The crisis is the outcome of policy mistakes. The implication of this approach is that the crisis could have been avoided if different policies had been chosen.⁴ The question that arises is that, since crises are a recurrent and constant given of capitalism, obviously, there must be some structural reasons that prevent them from learning their past mistakes, that is, that force them to continue making these very mistakes.

A second alternative explanation of the crisis is the *underconsumption-thesis*. In this view, crises are caused by a long-term fall in wages against a rise in labour's productivity.⁵ Lower wages, it is submitted, instead of increasing the rate of profit, cause it to fall because of failed realization, first in the consumer-goods sector and, second, from the consumer-goods sector to other sectors. Therefore, according to this explanation, lower wages are, thus, the cause of the crisis.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. Marx had invalidated this thesis in the second volume of *Capital*.⁶ In Marx's times, as it is also nowadays, the crises are preceded by a period of high wages and, thus, the relatively high consumption and realisation of commodities was true. If lower wages cannot decrease the average rate of profit, they cannot be the cause of crises. If capitalism resorts to lower wages in times of depression and crisis, these wage-cuts are a counter-tendency only temporarily holding back the fall in the average rate of profit, rather than being its cause. Causes must be sought elsewhere.

Since lower wages cannot be the cause of lower profit-rates and crises, the theoretical possibility opens up of reversing the causal relation, that is, for the crisis to be the cause of lower wages. This brings us to a third alternative explanation, one that identifies the cause of crises in higher, rather than lower, wages. This is the profit-squeeze Marxist approach to crises, but, curiously, it is also the essence of the neoliberal approach to crises. According to this, the changes in the financial system that caused the speculative bubble were, in their turn, caused by the need to reduce the share of labour in the national income.⁷

Empirical refutation is important, but even more important is theoretical invalidation. Two points can be mentioned. First, profit-squeeze theory, just as

³ G. Carchedi, *Behind the Crisis: Marx's Dialectics of Value and Knowledge*, Historical Materialism Book Series, Vol. 26 (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011), pp. 131-143.

⁴ R. Blackburn, "The Subprime Crisis," *New Left Review*, 50 (2008), 63-106.

⁵ B. Ollman, *Dialectical Investigations* (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 16.

⁶ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. II (New York: International Publishers, 1967), pp. 410-411.

⁷ P. Gowan, "Crisis in the Heartland," *New Left Review*, 55 (2009), 5-29. To the contrary, for the *Monthly Review* school, the long-term wage-reduction is also a consequence rather than the cause of depression. See, J. Foster and F. Magdoff, "Financial Implosion and Stagnation. Back to Real Economy," *Monthly Review*, 60 (2008), 1-29.

the underconsumptionist conception, is a redistributive theory which, as with all similar theories, implies a constant quantity of new value produced. Then, the rate of profit decreases because it is implicitly assumed that the total value to be redistributed remains the same. However, the profit-squeezed theory cannot explain the inception of the depression and crisis because it presupposes a stagnant or decreasing production of surplus-value. Therefore it presupposes what has to be explained. As Marx claims, “nothing is more absurd [...] than to explain the fall in the rate of profit by a rise in the rate of wages.”⁸ Marx’s theory of crisis highlights the basic contradiction leading the economic crises and, consequently, falling wages and labour’s decreasing purchasing power as an attempt to halt the fall in profitability. Similar to the rise in the profit-rate, starting in the 1980s, in spite of the rising organic composition of capital, this is probably due to liberalization of the financial and capital-markets and to the great speculative boom starting around the beginning of the 1980s, which led to a much greater rise of profits in the financial than in the non-financial sector.

To sum up, both theoretical and empirical investigation has provided substantiation for the thesis that a crisis’ ultimate causes is the tendential fall in the average rate of profit of the productive sectors. Wage-movements can explain neither the crisis nor the cycle.

Nevertheless, putting internal critique aside, one should be aware of each of the views’ political and ideological ramifications. If lower wages determine crisis, higher wages are the way out of crises. And, if higher wages determine crises, lower wages are the way out of crises. Crises are, at least in principle, avoidable. If they are not avoidable, it is because “mistakes” have been made in wage, fiscal, monetary, and so on and so forth policies, or because labour has not been able to impose better work and living conditions on capital. The reformist matrix of this redistributive view is clear: if the system is reformable, a different system is not needed. However, if crises are a constant feature of capitalism, we need a theory that theorises their unavoidability, their necessity. This is exactly what the Marxist explanation does, by focusing on the decreased production of value due to technological innovations and the concomitant rising organic composition of capital as the ultimate cause of crisis. Given that this is a constant of capitalism, the necessary, constant and unavoidable way capitals compete with each other, crises are unavoidable. In the former case, the system does not tend objectively and necessarily towards crises. The possibility is created to conceptualise capitalism as a system being or tending towards growth and equilibrium. In the latter case, the system tends towards crises through the economic cycle. In the former case, the system is inherently rational. Labour is deprived of the objective, rational base for its fight. This fight becomes a pure act of voluntarism. In the latter case, the system is irrational and labour’s fight to abolish it is then both rational and the conscious expression of an objective movement, the tendency the system

⁸ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III (New York: International Publishers, 1967), p. 240.

has to supersede itself. The choice of one crisis theory rather than another is an individual one. Given the different class-content of the different theories, this choice places the individual theorist on one side rather than the other in the struggle against capitalism.

Theory of Knowledge

A crisis-theory focusing on its objective causes and operations considers, among others, how the contradictory objectivity emerges at the level of individual consciousness. Also, it requires the development of a theory of knowledge consistent with Marx's wider theoretical opus, and it may be suitable for the development of an account of those aspects left unexplored by Marx, in tune with contemporary reality, attempting, thus, to foster radical social change. One of the features of this theory would be the inquiry into the crisis-ridden nature of the capitalist economy, that it not only discerns the causes of its recurrent crises and the reasons why they must occur, irrespectively of the intentions and the behavior of the economic agents, but that it also relates the objective working of the economy to the subjectivity of the social agents, that is, to the subjective manifestations of the contradictory objective foundations of the economy. Within this framework, two areas of a Marxist theory of knowledge would be of great interest. The first one concerns the relation between the crisis-ridden nature of capitalist economy with the subjective and necessary manifestations of these objective developments at the level of social consciousness. It requires the development of a theory of individual and social knowledge.⁹

In the process of providing answers to these questions, other debated issues have to be explored, such as the problem of whether and when the production of knowledge is identified to the production of value and surplus-value. The reason is, according to a nowadays widespread notion in contemporary capitalism, that the economy rests more on knowledge-production (mental) rather than on "material" or objective one. The term "material" must be put in quotation-marks, because, all production (including mental) is to be considered as material in the sense that it is the expenditure of (real) human energy. The difference is in the outcome, that is, whether the outcome is an *objective* transformation of the reality outside us or a transformation of our perception of that reality, and in this sense, it is a mental production.

This area of research deals with the question of whether the knowledge produced under capitalist relations is suitable for application to a period of transition to a society of a different kind. An important role is ascribed to a specific type of knowledge, the natural sciences and techniques. In this connection, it should be mentioned that the theorization of the production of knowledge, both in general and in particular under capitalism, has been impaired by the acceptance of two epistemological dogmas; namely, that the mental processes (knowledge production) are independent from both body

⁹ Carchedi, *Behind the Crisis*, pp. 192-207.

and society. Orthodox-Marxist theory avoids these theoretical pitfalls, but, in its dogmatic rendition, has created some problems of its own, principally the idea (a) that knowledge-production is a reflection in our minds of a material and natural process and (b) that social knowledge is a simple summation of individual knowledge. The thesis of rejection of “reflection-theory” and the emphasis placed on the class-determination of knowledge, however, seem to run into the difficulty because classes apparently do not express necessarily a theorization of their own interests, so that knowledge, being amenable to be used by different classes, seems to be, in fact, class-neutral. These are deemed to be sufficient grounds to reject the Marxist thesis of the class-determination of knowledge. Instead of class, information or services are deemed to be the specific and characteristic features of modern societies. Accordingly, the notion of a class-divided society has been displaced by that of “information society” or “service-society.” If knowledge is not class-determined, then the working class cannot or does not necessarily produce its own view of reality and, thus, its own view of the crisis-ridden nature of this system, which, in turn, deprives the working class of the theoretical guide in its struggle against capitalism. The thesis of the class-neutrality of knowledge has, thus, devastating effects on the struggle for a radically alternative form of society.

Individual Knowledge

The distinction between concrete and abstract individuals would be the basis for a theorisation of individual and social knowledge. Individual knowledge is the view of reality from the perspective of the concrete individual. Social knowledge is the view of reality of social groups. Characterisations such as “intellectual labour” versus “manual labour” are inadequate and theoretically unfounded. Likewise for the distinction between “mental” versus “material” labour. All labour could be considered as material, because the expenditure of human energy is itself a material entity. At the same time, all labour is intellectual, because humans are not automata who act without thinking.

By introducing the notion of ‘transformation,’ we can distinguish between two types of transformation: *Objective* transformation is the transformation of objective reality outside our consciousness. *Mental* transformation is the transformation of the knowledge of objective reality or of previous knowledge. It could be thought that the objective transformation is material and the mental transformation is non-material. However, both require the expenditure of human energy, and are, thus, material processes. The opposition between material and mental labour is incorrect. For the same reason, material labour cannot be contrasted to immaterial labour. Marx does refer to “immaterial labour” only once,¹⁰ but it is clear from his opus that this should not be taken literally.

It follows that objective transformations are material transformations of a reality that lies outside us, and mental transformations are material transformations as well, occurring with learning, that is, with changes in human cog-

¹⁰ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I (New York: International Publishers, 1967), pp. 1047-1048.

tion and consciousness, both of the reality outside us and of our previous knowledge. Objective transformations are the transformations by labour-power of the means of objective transformation and of objects of objective transformation. Labour-power is the capacity to transform objective inputs. Mental transformations, or knowledge transformations, are the transformations by labour-power of knowledge contained in the labourer's labour-power, of the subjective knowledge, and of the objective knowledge, into the new knowledge. Objective knowledge is both the knowledge contained in the objective means of mental transformations and the knowledge contained in other mental producers' labour-power, inasmuch as it has not become an input of our subjective knowledge, that is, inasmuch as we have not yet known it. The knowledge contained in labour-power is both the means of mental transformation and one of the two mental objects of mental transformation. Mental transformations are the self-transformation of knowledge. The labour-power is, here, the capacity to transform knowledge. Mental transformations can be either individual or social. Individual mental transformations transform the individual knowledge and consciousness into a different individual knowledge. Thus, they transform individual subjectivities. Social mental transformations transform social knowledge, the knowledge shared by the members of a social group, into a different kind of social knowledge. They transform social subjectivities.

Hence, while individual knowledge is subjective, new individual knowledge is a mental transformation and, thus, transformation by labour-power, of subjective and objective knowledge. Since thinking is a constant process, individual knowledge is a constant process of becoming something different from what it has become. This applies also to social knowledge, knowledge shared by many concrete individuals.

From a person's or a group's perspective, the knowledge of other individuals or social groups is objective knowledge, inasmuch as that person or group does not know it. From the point of view of other persons or groups, our knowledge, inasmuch as it is unknown to them, is objective knowledge, which is transformed by them into their subjective knowledge, when they use it as an input in their production of knowledge. The moment we transform objective knowledge by making it our own, we transform into our individual or social knowledge, into our individual or social subjectivity. When we interact with other individuals, our subjective knowledge becomes part of their subjective knowledge, which then exists outside us and, from that moment on, becomes independent of our knowledge and, thus, becomes objective knowledge for us. Thus, mental transformations are a two way process: they are transformations of objective knowledge into subjective and back from subjective knowledge into objective, according to who is the producer of knowledge.

Marx distinguishes two stages in the production of knowledge, which actually correspond to two stages of mental transformation, since the production of knowledge is always the combination of mental and objective transformations. The first is observation, the socially filtered sensory perception of the real concrete. The result is the imagined concrete, a "chaotic conception of

reality," which is transformed through conception into concrete-in-thought, a more structured and articulated view of the imagined concrete. In reality, observation requires a previous conceptual framework and conception requires a previous observation. However, we can start our conception on the basis of our previous observation or vice versa.

The distinction between objective and mental transformations is only analytical. In reality, objective transformations require mental transformations and vice versa. However, in dealing with objective transformations, we disregard the mental transformations needed for them, and vice versa in dealing with mental transformations, we disregard the needed objective transformations as the first step in the analysis. Labour, and thus a labour-process, is always the combination of both types of transformation. They cannot exist independently and can realize themselves as a labour-process only conjointly and contemporaneously. But a labour-process is either an objective labour-process or a mental one, depending upon which type of transformation is determinant. The nature of this process is empirically given. Thus, in the production of a car, it is the objective aspect of the output that is empirically given and, in the production of a concert, it is the mental aspect which is empirically apparent. However, this rule is not always accurate. What appears decisive for the issue, is the social validation of the product. This social validation occurs at the moment of exchange. Thus, for example, a book is produced and exchanged primarily because of its mental content and its objective features are necessary, but subordinate to the mental content inherent in the book. Both aspects are potentially present in the outcome before the exchange, but only one realizes itself and becomes, then, a determinant aspect. We can say that the outcome of an objective labour-process is an objective commodity and that of a mental labour-process is new knowledge. But we should be aware that these are the determinant, and not the only, aspects of that outcome.

If the labour is both concrete and abstract, both concrete and abstract labour can be both mental and objective. But what is the relation between objective and mental, concrete and abstract labour? The abstract labour is not equivalent to mental labour; it is always material and is an aspect of both objective and mental labour. The same holds for concrete labour which is also always material and an aspect of both objective and mental labour. The production of knowledge, as a mental transformation, is objectively determined by objective transformations only in the case of objective labour-processes and not in the sense that mental transformations are always determined by objective transformations. At the level of society as a whole, a level of abstraction which comprises all labour-processes, both mental and objective, each labour-process is determined by the whole of the rest of society. Thinking is neither determined by being, nor is knowledge determined by material reality. Rather, each labour-process, including the production of knowledge, is materially determined, because it is determined by all other objective and mental labour-processes and, thus, by all other objective and mental transformations that are material processes. It is in this sense that the production of knowledge, besides being itself material, is materially determined.

Social Knowledge

As we have said earlier, the key to conceptualising social knowledge is provided by the distinction between concrete and abstract individuals. As a first approximation (d1), we can say that knowledge is a commonly shared subjectivity that can reproduce itself irrespective of which concrete individuals share it. This commonly shared subjectivity defines a knowledge-group, a specific group of abstract individuals. These individuals are abstract individuals because abstraction is made of their specific way of internalising and reproducing that knowledge. Thus, social knowledge can also be understood as the view of reality from the perspective of knowledge-groups.

The question is: how can concrete individuals, who produce an individual knowledge which is by definition different from any other individual knowledge, produce social knowledge? This is possible because concrete individuals undergo, from the first moment of, and throughout, their life, a process of internalization of social phenomena, and social phenomena are transformed from actually existing social phenomena into potential ones, existing in the concrete individuals' consciousness and individuality. If a certain social phenomenon is internalized by different individuals, inasmuch as different individuals internalize the same class-content, its class-content becomes the common element unifying the different consciousnesses. Subsequently, when concrete individuals engage in individual phenomena, they transfer to those individual phenomena the potential to actualize social phenomena again and, thus, the class-content inherent in those phenomena.

It is this potentiality that becomes realized if individual relations become social relations; in other words, if concrete individuals become abstract individuals on the basis of some socially relevant common features. It is for this reason that, as elements of a concrete individuals' knowledge, social phenomena are amenable to being actualized again, possibly in a different form, in a different realm of reality, and with a different class-content due to the process of determination. Knowledge is, thus, social (d2), when it can reproduce itself irrespective of which concrete individuals share it, in the specific sense that different individuals share the class-content of that knowledge.

Some individuals become a social group's intellectual representatives who do not think in isolation. On the basis of their social practice and their class-collocation, they interiorise the knowledge produced by the other members of that group and rework it to produce their own knowledge. The emergence of the representative knowledge is the result of the interaction among all members of knowledge-groups, including the intellectual representatives.

Thus, social knowledge has a realised social content, namely, the representation of the interests of a specific knowledge-group. There is no ideologically neutral knowledge. The reproduction of social knowledge is, at the same time, the transformation of social interests into a commonly shared view of reality. The formation of social knowledge is also simultaneously an ongoing attempt by each group to impose its own view upon that of other groups through the knowledge developed by the intellectual representatives, up to the point

where, possibly, the social content of that knowledge undergoes a radical change. That social knowledge has become the theoretical expression of a different group's or class's interests, so that those intellectuals become representatives of other groups. As a first approximation, social knowledge has been defined as a commonly shared subjectivity. As a second approximation, social knowledge has been defined as knowledge that can reproduce itself through the principle of substitutability, that is, irrespective of which concrete individuals share it, in the specific sense that different individuals share the class-content of that knowledge. The third and final definition is that knowledge is social when it can reproduce itself irrespective of which concrete individuals share it, in the specific sense that different individuals share its contradictory class-content, as represented by the class-content of the representative knowledge, irrespective of the specific way each concrete individual internalises and reproduces that class-content.

It follows that the process of formation of social knowledge is a specific instance of a wider process, of the struggle between the two fundamental classes: capital and labour. The two fundamental classes can be theorised at the highest level of abstraction in terms of the capitalist ownership-relation, so that labour is composed of all those who do not own the means of production. Due to the two opposite rationalities inherent in the ownership-relation, all the potential and realised phenomena manifest the contradictory social content of social beliefs and consciousnesses. Even radically antagonistic movements, for example, women, racial minorities, students, and the ecologically-focused, are, indeed, elements of labour as a class. Classes are born at the level of production (of value and surplus-value), so labour is internally fragmented by capital and made internally contradictory. Capital and productive labour are an indissoluble, dialectical unity. However, the labour ability can produce an alternative conception of reality and a dialectical class-theory of knowledge-production. This, in its turn, is a necessary precondition for the development of a theory of crisis and, thus, for a successful fight against capitalism and crisis.

Breaking Models: Crisis and the Hermeneutics of Reflective Disruption

LEONIDAS KOUTSOUMPOS

Nowadays, it is commonplace that the term *crisis* has negative connotations, like economic recession, poverty and political instability. As these lines are being printed, such aspects of crisis affect the life of many people around the world, such as, for example, citizens of Greece during the current debt crisis.¹ Without underestimating the importance that these recent difficulties play in people's everyday lives, this paper analyses a more detached, abstract and mundane notion of crisis that seeks a wider understanding of the term.

Such a broadening of the horizon can be achieved by looking back to the etymology of the term. As the word defines, every crisis is a turning point: "a vitally important or decisive stage in the progress of anything."² It is the anticipation of a decisive change that is imminent or the critical point in the course of events. The etymology of the word goes back to the ancient Greek word *κρίσις*, which derives from the Homeric verb *κρίνω*, meaning to sift, to separate, to pick out or select, and finally to decide and sometimes, interestingly enough, to interpret.³ The etymology also goes back to the Proto-Indo-European root *krei- "to sieve, discriminate, distinguish." It starts to become clear that some kind of cutting, distinguishing and separation takes place during a crisis, in its original meaning.

Having this in mind, I would like to distinguish two types of crises. The one is slow and creeping, when one can identify warnings, and the other is rapid and sudden, and thus unforeseen. Two examples that can give a quick grasp of what is at stake, but are not going to be analysed much further here, are the *2009 Greek Debt Crisis*, which is the outcome of an accumulation of reasons that have been piled up in Greek politics and world economies and, for this, some analysts anticipated its bursting, and the *2011 Great East Japan Earthquake*, which could not have been predicted, or, at least, not in the same way as the Greek Debt Crisis.

This paper deals with the second type of rapid and sudden crisis (although, as it will soon become clear, in a much smaller scale). It analyses one specific characteristic of crisis, which is the disruption that it causes in the usual flow of everyday life. The argument suggested here is that this painful stoppage has an inherent positive effect of triggering a thoughtful reflection on everydayness. This *reflective disruption* should be seen as a chance to rethink one's habits and readjust possible routes in life by breaking existing models of be-

¹ M. Lowen, "Greece's Young: Dreams on Hold as Fight for Job Looms," *BBC*, May 30, 2013, sec. "Business" (<http://bbc.co.uk/news/business-22702003>).

² "Crisis," in *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (<http://www.oed.com>).

³ R. Cunliffe, *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect* (Glasgow and Bombay: Blackie and Son Limited, 1924), p. 238.

havior. For this, it has an inseparable practical aspect of ethics. By rethinking the everydayness of life, one can react and change this way of life.

It needs to become clear, straight from the beginning, that this argument is very different from the popular view that sees crisis as an opportunity for gain (money, power, fame etc.). This view quite often quotes the Chinese etymology of the term *weiji*, consisting of two characters (危机) that can be read as 'danger' and 'opportunity.' This viewpoint has been exploited by economists and politicians around the world, causing, arguably, more crises than it has ever healed.⁴ On the contrary, the point discussed here is the structural characteristic of a sudden crisis causing some breaking or disruption which leads to reflection. In this sense, the breaking of an existing model will be described through the term '*reflective disruption*.'

In order to illustrate this argument, a case study will be used to provide empirical data for discussion. Methodologically, this will be done in the level of a micro-sociological analysis of ethnomethodology: the study of peoples' methods. I will draw this case study from a place where I am accustomed to being at home: the architectural design studio in a school of architecture. What follows is a mundane incident of everyday life from the place where architects learn how to design. The ways that people spontaneously react in moments of crisis will be examined, as well as the way that reflective disruption becomes a constituent part of handling a moment of crisis, no matter how small or trivial this is. A philosophical analysis of the whole incident and the notion of reflective disruption will follow, leading to some concluding remarks on the role that reflective disruption can play in times of large scale crisis.

An Ethnomethodological Case of Crisis: Breaking Models in Architecture

The case study that follows is a real incident documented at the School of Architecture at the University of Edinburgh and it is part of wider research that focused on education and ethics.⁵ The data gathering took place during the academic year 2005-2006. The data consists of video and audio recordings of everyday educational activities. This material was used when, afterwards, these activities were revisited in order to study specific incidents in great detail. The case study that follows has been 'translated' in detailed transcripts. Following, mainly, the transcription techniques of Conversation Analysis, the transcripts present, not only the teachers' and students' words, but

⁴ See for example USA Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice's statement: "I don't read Chinese but I am told that the Chinese character for crisis is wei-ji, which means both danger and opportunity. [...] And I think that states it very well. We'll try to maximize the opportunity." G. Kessler, "Rice Highlights Opportunities after Setbacks on Mideast Trip," *The Washington Post*, 19-1-2007, sec. "World" (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2007/01/18/AR2007011801881.html>).

⁵ L. Koutsoumpos, "Inhabiting Ethics: Educational Praxis in the Design Studio, the Music Class and the Dojo," PhD Thesis (University of Edinburgh, School of Arts, Culture and Environment, 2009) (<http://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/3294>).

they also provide additional information about the context, the time framework and overlaps, as well as some emphases (e.g. numbers in parenthesis stand for seconds of pause in speaking flow).⁶ Pictures have also been extracted from key frames of the action to illustrate the incidents and provide visual evidence of the educational activity. The detailed transcripts that have been produced reveal the complexity and plurality engulfed in these educational mundane activities.

So, let us imagine a design class at a school of architecture. It is during the first year mid-term review on a small house project. A student (Alistair) presents his work to two tutors (Bob and John) – these are pseudonyms to protect the subjects' privacy. The student has pinned his drawings on the partition walls of the design studio and he is sitting in front of the tutors, describing his design. Next to him there is a table full of models, and on a chair there is a laptop with a 3d model. The tutors and a group of students (behind the tutors) are sitting opposite Alistair. The focus of this excerpt is at the point of disruption caused during the educational process, when one of the tutors accidentally breaks the student's model.



Image 1

- Bob: Where did this form (.) come from
((B points towards the plan))
- Alistair: A:mm (1)
- B: How did you generate that (.) floor plan
- A: (1) Firstly (2)
((A turns to the other side and grasps a model))
I made (.) I wanted to have a cantilever over the thing (1) and so I originally had
((A puts the model back)) ((A turns back to the drawings and points to the plan))

⁶ Here, I have used the transcript techniques offered by Emanuel A. Schegloff, in his online transcription project "Transcript Symbols for Conversation Analysis" (<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/TranscriptionProject/page1.html>).

a square building with this projecting of it, an entirely square projection and

((makes a square with the pencil over the plan))

when I started organising rooms in (.) I:: decided that I wanted to balance this by having the same shape on the other side (.) just a kind of (0.5) creates a kind of (1.5) hhhhhhhh I'm saying kind of and I promised myself I wouldn't do that

((A exhales violently))

B: I don't mi::nd

A: No (.) I think (.) that's just a (thing)

B: What I am not understanding is (0.5) thi::s:: (2)

((B bends over and takes in his hands the model that A held just before))

A: That's the way up

((referring to the upright position in which the model should be seen))

B: At which point did we go (0.5) Hso::y:::

((makes the gesture that imitates the cutting of the knife over the model (Image 2))) ((B looks instantly at the drawing on the wall and makes a second gesture of cutting at the second angle of the building))



Image 2



Image 3

A: Yeah am (.) no that was that was just em (0.5) I was bending metals downstairs

((A turns to his drawings)) ((turns to the tutors))

at the workshop (0.75) and the angle bender wouldn't bend all the way (.)

((A gestures imitating the movement of the angle bender (Image 3)))

so I had to slight eh (.) come to this shape here(.) like this (.) I felt it

((turns to the drawings and points to an angle in his plan))

(would lead) to more interest to the design, just be (.) otherwise it would project

((gestures imitating the projected block))

a block and I didn't want to project a block=

John: =Where is this model?

J: I know but
 ((review goes on))

The mini-crisis described in the abovementioned incident is the breaking of a physical model that took place during the review. The disruption caused by the break is interesting, exactly because of the reflective attitude that it caused by referring back to a similar past event. The disruption came to interrupt a flow of dialogue in which Alistair started defending his choices, in response to Bob's question, to justify 'where did the form of the plan come from?' His answer was quite vague, without being able to communicate all of his ideas that led to the specific shape of the plan. In particular, there was a difficulty in understanding because he described his ideas on a preliminary orthogonal model, while the plan that was pinned on the wall was not orthogonal. Bob pointed this out by taking the original model and asking Alistair to explain the angles in the form. He also used the gestural metaphor of a knife (imitating at the same time the sound of cutting) that cuts the orthogonal model into its current angles. Alistair's reply focused on the fact that he could not bend the metal model, at the same time putting the blame on the metal angle-bender that "wouldn't bend all the way." Alistair, according to his words "*had to come* to this shape." When John asked to see that metal model, Bob broke the other model, that he had in his hands, interrupting the discussion about the shape of the overall plan. It is quite obvious that the breaking of the model was an accident. But this was not the first time. What could have happened during the previous breaking?

From Alistair's accusation that this was the 'second time,' we can understand that, obviously, Bob and Alistair had experienced a similar incident,⁷ where, most probably, Bob must have previously broken Alistair's model *on purpose*. This time, though, we can assume from Bob's apologetic attitude that the incident was accidental, the specific piece of the model just fell apart in Bob's hands. His apology, which is almost inaudible, says something like 'I wasn't actually wanting to...' and was interrupted by a third attack by Alistair, who says: "Last time you actually did!" Emphasising on the word 'LAST,' in order to make the reference to their previous incident even more explicit. This fact made John burst into laughter which made Bob feel that he had to emphasise once more that it was an accident by saying 'shit,' a casual expression to make the atmosphere even more relaxed, since it sounded like he was talking to himself, although he was in public.⁸

Some background context in the tribe of architectural teachers can be enlightening: breaking a model can be seen as a strategy of re-representation or

⁷ For the connection of breakdown of understanding seen as a motive to look back on the history of things, see H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Vol. II, rev. ed. (London, N.Y.: Continuum, 2004), p. 182.

⁸ There is also a notion of shame and guilt in Bob's response. According to Bernard Williams: "If guilt seems to many people morally self-sufficient, it is probably because they have a distinctive and false picture of the moral life, according to which the truly moral self is characterless." *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (London: Fontana Press/Collins, 1985), p. 94.

a way of re-structuring the existing elements of a project, in order to arrive in a new outcome. Image 5 shows such an example, where, at the left, is a student's proposal and, on the right, the model after the tutor's intervention. The above situation has rather different connotations that can be understood only through a familiarity with how delicate the situation is, the explicit interference of the teacher on the student's material work (drawings, sketches, models). Usually, the students are very much attached to the work that they produce and they cannot accept someone else's interference in it. At the same time, teachers can be notorious for adopting disparaging attitudes towards students' work, especially by writing with permanent (red) pens on finished drawings or by using the scalpel to 'improve' a model; or, even worse, by literally tearing apart 'unacceptable' drawings and breaking into pieces 'objectionable' models. Such situations often end up in *proper crisis*: students crying over the remains of their work, and tutors frustrated about the students' incompetence.

The whole incident has to be contextualized in a specific 'culture of breaking' in the design studio that is (painfully) familiar to the members of this community. In contrast, tutors in other conventional lecture-type educational processes are much less engaging with students' material work (for example, tutors in the University of Edinburgh are advised *not* to lean over the student's notes in order avoid entering their 'private space'). It is also quite common that tutors, in the latter case, go through some sort of training (e.g. Effective Tutoring) that provides such 'tips' or rules of conduct; while, in the design studio, the tutors do not go through any type of training about teaching and they are merely basing their tutelage on their experiences of the educational process, since they were students themselves. In this cultural group, 'breaking' is a disturbing (for the students), marginal practice that causes a sort of crisis in the class, but, nonetheless, it is part of the 'studio culture.'



Image 5: A model that has been torn apart by a tutor -before (left) and after (center and right)

In the case under examination, we do not see this issue happening in its possible extremes. On the contrary, the whole incident is quite amusing, not only for the fellow students, who burst into laughter while watching the incident, but also for the tutors, and even for Alistair himself. Nevertheless, the disruptive effect of the breakage of the model is still strong, since it actually interrupts the educational process. When Bob breaks the model, the dialogue that was taking place beforehand pauses and gives its place to an intervention of a reflection about the meaning of the breakage.

The interruption of the flow of dialogue towards the understanding of the shape of the floor-plan gave place to a reflection about the meaning of the model breakage. The passage from the one discussion to the other was unexpected and came suddenly with the sound of the breakage, a two-second pause and Alistair's exclamation note: "Ha, you broke it!" The shift in the dialogue was declared by a second bold statement by Alistair "That is NOT the first time!" causing the laughter of the other students who were sitting behind the camera.⁹

The amusing character of the whole incident, and especially the explicit laughter that erupts from the students and John when Bob is accused for committing the 'same crime' twice, is a revealing scene. The disruptive character of the incident is revealed through the surprise that is expressed by the laughter of the students and the tutor towards Bob. According to Buckley, "the need for surprise underlies incongruity explanations of laughter. We live in an orderly world and expect things to line up according to established patterns. When they don't we might find the incongruity amusing."¹⁰ Although surprise is not a necessary or sufficient condition for the cause of laughter, we can see how important it is for our disruptive situation of local crisis.

We can also see that the breakage of the model led to a new breakage; the disruption of the dialogue. In this latter case of breakage, the roles between the teacher and student were somehow inverted. Before the breakage, the tutors were somehow 'attacking' Alistair, asking him to justify his design decisions and rationalise his vague descriptions. During the disruption that occurred with the breakage, the roles changed, giving the opportunity for Alistair to 'attack' Bob. After the return to the 'normal' discussion about the project, John once again 'attacked' Alistair for still being unclear with his presentation. Although, here, the usage of the terms 'attack' and 'defence' are exaggerated, they describe a twist in the ambience of the dialogue that is easily noticeable by everyone. For example, it is not trivial that the students actually started laughing after Alistair 'accused' Bob, actually enjoying the reversal of the roles, with the student teaching the teacher a lesson.

Nevertheless, the inversion of the roles did not last long, since Bob's apologetic words made Alistair change his attitude from 'authoritative teacher' to 'good student,' reassuring Bob that he does not mind or that he is not bothered. By this fact, he was showing to Bob that since the last time, when Bob broke his model, he had 'learned a lesson.' Actually, despite Alistair's claim that 'he is not bothered,' this is not the case. On the contrary, one could speculate that the breaking made him upset, which could be implied by the fact that, when he made this statement, he was rubbing his nose (a classic self-adaptive gesture that, according to body language interpretations, shows the disguise of a lie).¹¹ But the important thing here is not whether or not he

⁹ Note that the whole incident was recorded on video by Alistair's fellow students.

¹⁰ F.H. Buckley, *The Morality of Laughter* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 22.

¹¹ Nevertheless, according to Dr. Peter Bull, "There is no Pinocchio's nose of lying. It doesn't mean that if you touch your nose in a certain way you are lying. And if it did peo-

learned a lesson (a fact that we can never be sure of), but that he was able to discuss and be reflective upon the breaking, even in a comical situation like this. This ‘moral lesson’ was externalised explicitly when Alistair said to Bob, ‘You taught me that,’ emphasising the word ‘taught.’ This makes clear that Alistair tried to emphasise his understanding of the previous situation as a lesson with ethical implications, since it was externalised in a reflective way.¹² In addition, in order to demonstrate the fact that he can endure the breaking of his work, he invited Bob to ‘break it even more.’

This second incident of model breakage also allowed Alistair to reflect (again) upon the past incident (which was a proper crisis) and express this reflection openly. Obviously, after the first (past) incident when Bob broke his model, Alistair must have given some thought about the whole issue and maybe he even discussed it with his classmates. The fact that he reacted immediately, when the new breakage had happened, shows that he still had feelings about it. Nevertheless, the fact that he referred to the whole thing with humour, offering a funny take on the issue, reveals his appreciation of the previous ‘moral lesson’ that he had and, in this sense, a new crisis was avoided.

Breaking Models in Philosophy: Reflective Disruption

“I put my hand, let’s say, into my pocket to take my watch out. I discover that my watch is not there; but it ought to be there; normally my watch is in my pocket. I experience a slight shock. There has been a small break in the chain of my everyday habits. [...] The break is felt as something out of the way; it arrests my attention, to a greater or a less degree.”

Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*

If we try to analyse the abovementioned ‘crisis’ in terms of philosophy, a quest for the etymology of ‘reflective disruption’ can be revealing. For accomplishing this, I shall break it down to its constituent components. ‘Disruption,’ according to *Oxford English Dictionary*, is the action of ending or bursting asunder; the violent dissolution of continuity; a forcible severance.¹³ It is related to the verb ‘rupt,’ which means to break or to nullify. It is generally a discontinuity in a flow or a process. ‘Reflection,’ on the other hand, is usually associated with the function of the mirror or, more generally, the quality of surfaces “to cast or send back (heat, cold or sound) after impact.” It also means the turning or directing on a certain course, or to bend, to curve or to fold back. But, here, I am interested in the following meaning: “to turn one’s

ple would stop doing it.” Common misconceptions about body language and its popular understanding can be seen in “Liars ‘Too Self Aware to Twitch,’” *BBC*, March 20, 2006, sec. “UK” (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4824426.stm). See also D. Morris, *The Naked Ape; A Zoologist’s Study of the Human Animal* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1967).

¹² A distinction between morality and ethics that I have elsewhere made is discussed later on; see footnote 22.

¹³ “Disruption,” in *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989²) (<http://www.oed.com>).

thoughts (back) on, to fix the mind or attention on or upon a subject; to ponder, meditate on; think of.” The adjective ‘reflective’ is the attribute of exercising thought, being meditative or thoughtful. Interestingly enough, reflection has an ethical connotation when it refers to persons, circumstances or actions, as to throw, cast, or bring blame, dishonour, credit, etc. on or upon them. “To cast a slight or imputation, reproach or blame, on or upon a person or thing; to pass a censure on.” This explicit evaluation and ‘conscious’ judgment that takes place, usually according to explicit rules, seems to form the basis of *morality*, as opposed to a rather more implicit notion of what I have elsewhere described as *ethics*.¹⁴ Here, though, my interest will focus on reflective activity that is the product of a disruption. For this, I am going to show that reflective disruption is a fundamental mechanism to produce ‘conscious’ evaluations according to explicit norms.¹⁵

After this short etymological inquiry, I will continue by examining the various possible understandings of *disruption through a common threefold character of the term* proposed by David Appelbaum.¹⁶ First of all, there is generally the *experience of being disrupted*, ‘a shock,’ ‘a break’ or a discovery similar to the feeling of when something is suddenly missing when it ought to be there (like Marcel’s watch in the opening quote). Second, there is the *disrupted*, the routine that acquires habitual and automated characteristics, since it is part of the everyday activity that has become a preoccupation about things. Thirdly, there is the *disruptor*, the incident that occupies the activity while it has stopped or paused, “clothed as arrest, ‘felt as something out of the way,’ a jolt of force that reveals the moment without giving itself away – a nontransparent event.”¹⁷

In the case of our educational example, the *experience of being disrupted* as a shock or break is caught in the consciousness in a sudden and unexpected way, mainly through the noise of the broken piece of the model. While Alistair turned back to take another model and hand it to John, he heard the breaking of the model, turned towards the broken model in Bob’s hands and stated ‘Ha, you broke it.’

The *disrupted*, here, describes a discontinuity in the flow of an already established process that forms a routine. The flow of this routine, in the case of the design studio, refers mainly to the exchange of words in the process of educating architecture. Actually, this flow stands for a form of dialogue: a dialogue of words and gestures, which is beyond a mere monologue from the side of the teacher. It was an exchange aiming to reach a common understand-

¹⁴ Koutsoumpos, “Inhabiting Ethics,” p. 133

¹⁵ Note the difference between *reflective disruption* and Shon’s term *reflection-in-action*. The former term is the reflection that follows a disruption, while the latter is the reflection that takes place during action without it being interrupted. D.A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner* (London: Temple Smith, 1983).

¹⁶ Here I use the threefold characteristics that Appelbaum uses to analyse the incident of the missing watch in the opening quote of Gabriel Marcel. See D. Appelbaum, *Disruption* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1996), p. 45.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

ing; an understanding *with*¹⁸ each other, referring to the development of the project. In this sense, the discontinuity of this flow appears to cause a temporary 'breakdown,' a malfunction of the dialogue that appears as an obstacle of the educational process. This breakdown caused a pause in the discussion about the angles of the floorplan. In this sense, the dialogue between the teacher and the student of the example was disrupted.

The *disruptor* is the newcomer. It is the new dialogue that was parenthetically inserted amidst the discussion about the shape of the walls, and given the chance to reflect about the meaning of the old breaking. Behind the humorous discussion about the previous breakage, it was an ethical education that happened exactly *within* the disruption of the educational process. The 'proper' education of the practice of architecture gave place to *the education of ethics in the practice*, which actually is (or should be) part of the overall education of the practice. The disruption that happened did not actually stop the education; the education continued, but it became an education of the ethical understanding of architectural practice.

In this sense, the disruptor functions as a bracket that parenthetically inserts an uninvited intervention, which, although not always welcomed, can be extremely useful. Similarly to the typographical mark, the bracket makes an insertion by amplifying, explaining or digressing.¹⁹ It has the opposite function to the hyphen, which is used to connect different terms and elements. On the contrary, the bracket is disruptive in the text and *allows a different, separate game to establish itself* [temporarily] in the place of the overall dominant one.²⁰ The rules of this new game are rules that, by contrast, force the revelation of the rules of the wider game. Arguably, this is one of the basic techniques of ethnomethodology, which seeks deliberate trouble-seeking situations that reveal the rules of everyday life. Garfinkel states: "Procedurally it is my preference to start with familiar scenes and ask what can be done to make trouble."²¹

The bracketing of disruption, although it defines a space, is not a closure of the educational process, but rather an opening to a wider understanding of what architecture is. The bracket of the disruption opens a metaphorical 'space,' which can accommodate reflection about the practice that was just interrupted. At the same time, it provides the necessary time to reflect again on 'the meaning of the practice' or 'what the whole thing is about.' In this sense, we can see that the disruption of the dialogue causes the explicit discussion about the meaning of the breaking of the model. As we saw in the

¹⁸ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 180.

¹⁹ Appelbaum, here, makes an explicit reference to Husserl's poetic description of brackets (*Disruption*, p. 81).

²⁰ A similar study is discussed by Baker and Jones, when they write: "The cake of academic custom and the comfort of professional habit have created a highly conventional system of teaching..." P. Baker and J. Jones, "Benign Disruption in the Classroom: A Case Study," *Teaching Sociology*, 7 (1979), 27-44, p. 29.

²¹ H. Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 37.

example, Alistair was quite relaxed and enjoyed the accidental incident by finding an opportunity to make fun of his tutors and himself. At the same time, though, we can imagine that, the first time, when Bob broke his model in purpose, Alistair must have been more anxious. That incident must have caused him much more deliberation and distress (it is not uncommon, as I already mentioned, to have students literally crying over the remains of their models or drawings, especially after or in combination with a harsh criticism).

In a quite different mode of philosophy, one can see some connections between the disruption of the flow of educational practice, as we saw in our case study, and Martin Heidegger's expression: 'a deficiency in our having-to-do with the world concernfully.'²² Disruption, in this sense, is a section of an established continuity. Arguably, this notion of disruption as breakdown has influenced much of the poststructuralist literature of the notion of 'cut' or 'coupure.' It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine this vast topic in detail.²³ Instead, I will focus on the way that Koschmann, Kuuti and Hickman²⁴ associated Heidegger's expression with the general term of 'breakdown,' since it refers to the disruption of ordinary ways of conducting our everyday activities that usually do not require our awareness, because I find it to be relevant to the notion of reflective disruption discussed here. When these non-reflective practices are disrupted, the awareness focuses, again, back to the practice, by 'lighting it up' or offering 'new views' about it.²⁵ The three abovementioned authors also explained the connection between the Heideggerian notion of breakdown and that of Leont'ev and Dewey. For Le-

²² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Oxford, UK and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1962), p. 88.

²³ Only as a hint I offer the following sources: according to Rune Mølbaek, "Lacan understands the cut as the paradoxical rupture in the flow of desire (intensity/the Real) by which the subject discovers itself in a pure distance to what it is not." Contrary to this, Deleuze defined the cut "negatively as that of which the difference, produced by the Symbolic, is thought to rob us." R.L. Mølbaek, "A Life of Variable Speeds: On Constructing a Deleuzian Psychotherapy," *Theory Psychology*, 17 (2007), 473-88, p. 482. Such understandings of the cut (apart from Heidegger's notion of breakdown) appear to originate also in Valery: "It is an extraordinary fact that we talk to ourselves and that this discourse is indispensable to us. [...] Who speaks? Who listens? It is not exactly the same person. [...] This voice can become (morbidly) a complete stranger. The existence of this speech of the self to the self is the sign of a cut. The possibility of being several is necessary for reason, but also used by it. Perhaps we take the image as other to the impulse of the mirror." P. Valery, manuscript edition (Paris: Éditions du C.N.R.S., 1918-1920), Vol. 7, p. 615. Further back the concept is found in Hegel "the piety of the children with regard to their parents is in its turn affected by the emotional contingency of their having become form themselves, or in themselves, in the form of an other who disappears so as to attain a being-for-itself and a conscience proper to itself through its separation from its source—a separation in which this source dries up" (*Phenomenology of Spirit*, VI, A, Vol. II at 24). Both the last quotes were found in: P. Legendre, "Introduction to the Theory of the Image, Narcissus and the Other in the Mirror," *Law and Critique*, 8 (1997), 3-35, pp. 13-14.

²⁴ T. Koschmann, K. Kuuti, and L. Hickman, "The Concept of Breakdown in Heidegger, Leont'ev, and Dewey and Its Implications for Education," *Mind, Culture and Activity*, 5 (1998), 25-41.

²⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, pp. 102, 104.

ont'ev, every action that is practiced long enough in a stable situation becomes a routinized operation which can, nevertheless, breakdown into its original constitutive elements in cases of unexpected reaction. Similarly, for Dewey (using Darwinian observations on living organisms), 'breakdown' appears through the fundamental concept of *disequilibrium*, a state of unbalance that motivates living organisms to action in order to re-establish the desirable stability. In all of these views the world becomes visible when some notion of function (equipment, routine, balance) is unusable, missing or in the way; when its use is disrupted, things and their relative referential relation are revealed, contrary to everyday objects, which become part of the background.

Before closing this analysis, it has to be pointed out that the presented case study shows some limitations in the possible understanding of reflective disruption. A comparison with other case studies would reveal other important characteristics of the term. For example, when the breakage came into awareness, in our case, the main emphasis was given to the notion of responsibility, as well as the blame, for the breakage and the disruption. As I have elsewhere examined, this is not always the case.²⁶ In other cases one can find examples of sympathy from the teacher; let's say, if a student would have cut his/her finger with the cutting knife. Another characteristic that could be much different was the way that the disruption was absorbed in order to return to the normal routine. In the case of the design studio, the returning was sudden and unexpected, with John coming back to the original issue of the unclear presentation. John almost interrupted the disruption in order to come back to what he thought was the main issue that they should be discussing. However, in other cases, the situation could have been absorbed more smoothly during a wider period of time. Furthermore, what is 'common' in the case of breaking models in architectural education, sometimes as a deliberate tactic by the teachers, is perceived very differently by the student who is experiencing the breakage of his work. On one hand, the disruption can be 'planned' and be part of an educational strategy, aiming to attack some preconception, while on the other, breakage is perceived in a state of surprise, and, because of this, it can hurt the student's feelings. But at the same time, this unexpected event that shakes the student's perception of the world allows for a reconfiguration of the game that has already being established as a routine. As Appelbaum notes: "Disruption anticipated, prelabeled, and watched for, is disruption that cannot wound"²⁷ or, at least, it does not hurt as much as the first time, as we can see from this particular incident.²⁸

Finally, a remark should be made about the means used to handle and resolve the disruption in this case. Here, the whole issue was dealt with by talk-

²⁶ See Koutsoumpos, "Inhabiting Ethics."

²⁷ Appelbaum, *Disruption*, p. 19.

²⁸ See also the difference between the proverb 'Accidents happen' and Freud's suggestion that there is no such thing as an accident, meaning that every slippage of the language reveals something about the self. See, for example, ch. 8 (entitled "Erroneously Carried Out Actions") of S. Freud, A. Tyson, and J. Strachey, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (London: Ernest Benn, 1966).

ing about the meaning of the breakage. All the way from the announcement of the disruption ‘Ha, you broke it!’ until the sudden return to the normal practice ‘Can you see that we cannot communicate through...,’ the issue was dealt with through externalising speech (verbalising): speaking out and talking over. However, in other cases, one can see that everything could have been dealt with silently. But of course, silence does not mean lack of expression whatsoever. Far from that, a rich expression of feelings like care and sympathy can be communicated through merely a network of gestures that can deal with very complex situations of disruption and crisis.

Concluding Remarks

This paper distinguished between two types of crisis: the slow and creeping one, in contrast to the rapid and sudden. By focusing on the latter case, it analysed one fundamental characteristic of this type of crisis, that is the *reflective disruption* to which it unavoidably leads. The paper presented a small and mundane incident of everyday life, and showed the various levels of understanding that reflective disruption can have, both in terms of the micro-sociological analysis of ethnomethodology and in terms of the wide view that philosophy offers. In both cases, what was highlighted was that, being struck by a rapid incident, a gap is created that involuntarily fills with reflection about the ‘normal’ course of things.

Reflective disruption is an opening of the possibilities to rethink what the ‘whole thing is about.’ It is a way of coping with the unexpected situations that break the everydayness of thought, learning and adapting. It transforms experience through reflection of one’s actions and, for this, it can lead to creative tension. And, despite the fact that it is a theoretical endeavor, it can motivate one towards a practical change of life.²⁹

But can this small, humorous incident (which is hardly a crisis) compare to a large scale, complex event like the *2011 Great East Japan Earthquake*? Obviously, the asimilarities are numerous and perplexed. Still, though it should start to become clear that behind the tragedy of loss of human lives, beyond the material catastrophes and the huge destabilization that such a crisis can cause, the very basic core of *reflective disruption* remains the same. It is there as part of the process of grief and mourning that an individual and a society has to go through, in order to come out again standing. Japanese writer Hideo Furukawa describes very eloquently: “Many people did not see it [the earthquake] as a chance to learn and obtain something really important. They started pretending ‘nothing has changed,’ and it was too early. The tragedy was doubled or tripled by how and how people reacted without having

²⁹ Note Gadamer’s words: “I hate all theory that does not grow out of practice.” H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 8: *Kunst als Aussage* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1993), p. 374; cf. N. Davey, “Gadamer’s Aesthetics,” in E.N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2011 Edition) (<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2011/entries/gadamer-aesthetics/>).

time to think.”³⁰ The disruptive character of any rapid and sudden crisis allows for the challenging of the customary view of the world. Apart from revealing the limitations of our world, it gives the possibility for change towards the Other, which is not present, and, for this, obvious, beforehand. In this sense, the mundane study presented here can actually be of help in drawing of some conclusions about the overall cases of crisis.

The presence of reflective disruption in large scale crisis can also be seen in the case of Yoshitomo Nara, a renowned contemporary artist in Japan, who found himself devastated by the deadly earthquake and tsunami that destroyed much of his hometown, an hour beforehand, from the epicenter in Fukushima. Nara felt that doing art after such a catastrophe was rather pointless and superficial and, for more than a year, he avoided his studio, volunteering with quake-related relief groups. Nara says: “I became unable to draw. I guess everyone in Japan went through the same kind of emotional experience: I was so depressed that I couldn’t help feeling that what I’d been doing was totally meaningless and useless. No one needs art in an extreme situation, after all.”³¹ Nara felt that he needed a reboot. Changing the medium of his art helped him to make a new start, so he started working on huge clay models. “I just wanted to put all my energy into hand-thinking, and I began to work on a massive lump of clay to make bronze sculptures. It helped: I accordingly recovered my hands for painting through this process.”³² He also decided to go back to the school where he had studied fine art, but, this time, neither as a student, nor as teacher. He just resided in the school, having access to the studios and he started working again next to the young students. Doing this for six months transformed his life: “It’s weird to admit this because I’m already an adult, but I feel I’ve just grown up,”³³ Nara admits.

Furthermore, our understanding of the type of crisis which is slow and creeping can be enhanced from the rapid and sudden one. In contrast to the disruptive character of the latter, the former has a fundamental characteristic which is the disability to discern its various steps, since there is no sudden breakdown that allows reflective disruption to take place. It, rather, assimilates to a constant, slippery fall that drags one into a murky depth. Arguably, the current situation of Greek Debt crisis (during the writing of this paper) shows that Greek society has frozen, unable to understand the Gordian knot that it has in front of its very eyes. Shall the crisis come to an end through a similarly slow process of restructuring, or shall a new Alexander the Great show up to cut the knot at once? This is something to find out in the following years.

Nevertheless, learning from the disruptive character of the first type of crisis, one cannot help but think of a fictitious scenario about the second: what if

³⁰ H. Furukawa, “An Interview with Yoshitomo Nara,” trans. S. Okamoto, *Asymptote* (<http://www.asymptotejournal.com/article.php?cat=Interview&id=26>).

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ K. Crow, “A Japanese Artist Finds New Life A Year After the Quake,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 11, 2012 (<http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2012/03/11/a-japanese-artist-finds-new-life-a-year-after-the-quake/>).

each single citizen would take a deep breath, stand up, and pay close attention to one of the numerous and indistinguishable steps of the fall? This would disrupt his everydayness and would trigger reflection. Such an attitude could reconsider the course of things, and undoubtedly challenge the long standing and unquestionable ideologies of our times. It would create a possible opening towards a fair world and against a foreclosed society.

PART III

The Multi-Faced Aspects of Crisis

How the Selfishness Ethics and Ideology of Ayn Rand Have Undermined American Socio-Economic Stability: Analysis and Prescription from an African Communal Ethics Perspective

JOSEPH OSEI

“Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times [...] that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils.”¹

Introduction

Contemporary socio-political philosophers and philosophers of culture should not fail to note that attempts by the US President, Barack Obama, to deal with “The Great Recession” and to mitigate the socioeconomic inequalities he inherited in 2009. However, his efforts have been met with strong skepticism and opposition from political conservatives and ideological libertarians.² They accuse the President of attempting to transform the US into a European-style socialist state through economic redistribution, considered a violation of their rights to private property guaranteed by the US Constitution.

This ideological conflict should be of philosophical interest to contemporary socio-political philosophers and philosophers of culture in particular, given that it calls us to question important cultural values associated with conservatism and challenges us to critically examine libertarianism as a social philosophy. This examination might help to find a sustainable solution to the ongoing crisis.

Responding to this challenge, this paper argues that economic redistribution is not always wrong, as assumed by Ayn Rand, Ludwig Von Mises, John Hoppers, Robert Nozick, and other popular defenders of conservative ideologies and libertarianism. The paper also argues that the ongoing economic crisis in the US with repercussions in Europe fueled by the growing socio-economic gaps etc., call for a philosophical intervention in the form of a well-considered, ethically sound and rational economic redistribution model.³ Further, it is argued that the traditional ethics and economic practices of the Akans of Ghana –presumed as a paradigm case for traditional African communitarian ethics– is a suitable case study for showing how socio-economic gaps could be prevented or mitigated through communitarian ethics emphasizing collective wellbeing, the virtues of compassion, reciprocity, and contributive justice, as a complement to distributive justice.

¹ N. Mandela, ‘Speech on Poverty,’ BBC News, Feb. 3, 2005.

² *Time Magazine*, 177 (2011), p. 26.

³ *Time Magazine*, 175 (2010), p. 30.

Section I: Conceptual Analyses

Three related concepts: Communitarianism, Communitarian Ethics, and Contributive Justice are analyzed in this section, in anticipation of the discussion in subsequent sections. The process involves articulating the similarities and the differences between African and Western perspectives.

A. What Is Communitarianism?

'Communitarianism' (from the African perspective) is the worldview in which the existence and value of the community are perceived to be more important than that of the individual member.⁴ Within the African conceptual scheme or worldview, the community is both ontologically and epistemologically prior to that of the individual. This means that, whereas personhood is defined in Western metaphysics in terms of rationality, will, memory or a similar static quality, it is defined in African metaphysics in terms of the community.⁵ In the now famous idiom of Professor J.K. Mbiti, the African view of the person is best expressed as, "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am."⁶ Similarly, the Akans express this in a proverb that states "Ye wo nipa to oman m," literally meaning that a person is born into a community and not the other way round. In other words, personhood is meaningless in the absence of community. In the words of the renowned Ghanaian anthropologist, Bishop K. Sarpong, "A cultureless person is a contradiction in terms. [...] The person is born into an existing culture. There is nothing he can do about it."⁷ Both Africans and Westerners may claim to be living in communities, but, whereas the African sense of community is rightly depicted as organic, the Western sense is rather in-organic; meaning it is just a collection or association of individuals coming together to form a society to protect and to promote their individual and rational self-interests, as noted in Western social contract theories including those of Rousseau, Hobbes, Locke, Mill, and John Rawls.⁸

Thus, whereas the African worldview moves from the ontology of society to individuals, the Western worldview moves from individuals to society. The ethical implications of this African worldview are worth exploring next.

⁴ D.A. Masolo, "Communitarianism: An African Perspective," in *The Proceedings of the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy "Paideia: Philosophy Educating Humanity,"* Vol. 12: S. Dawson and T. Iwasawan (eds.), *Intercultural Philosophy* (Bowling Green, OH: Philosophy Documentation Center, Bowling Green State University, 2001), 209-228.

⁵ I.A. Menkiti, "Person and Community in African Traditional Thought," in R.A. Wright (ed.), *African Philosophy: An Introduction* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1984), 171-181, p.172.

⁶ J. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophies* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1970), p. 141.

⁷ P.K. Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* (Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974), Intro.

⁸ J.P. Sterba, *Contemporary Social and Political Philosophy: A Multicultural Perspective* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2001), p. 109.

B. What Is Communitarian Ethics?

Given the above conceptions of African and Western worldviews regarding the relation of the individual to society or the collective, it should come as no surprise that their ethical beliefs and practices would also differ. Generally, priority is given to individual rights over their duties to the community or society within the Western understanding of society.

Accordingly, individual rights, in the Western context, are not merely antecedent to society; they are also the *raison d'être* or justification for the existence of society. The only or primary function of any legitimate government, as articulated especially by Western conservatives and libertarians, is the protection and defense of individual rights. Although the ethical aspect of the African worldview includes individual rights, they are considered secondary to the duties of the individual to society. As Menkiti puts it,

“In the African understanding, priority is given to the duties the individual owes to the collectivity and their rights, whatever these may be are seen as secondary to the exercise of their duties....”⁹

African ethics is, therefore, properly conceived of as communitarian in the sense that it is aimed primarily, though not exclusively, at protecting and promoting the wellbeing of the community of which one is a member. This conception is best articulated by Akan Philosopher, Professor Kwame Gyekye, who maintains,

“In African morality, there is an unrelenting pre-occupation with human welfare. What is morally good is that which brings about – or is supposed, expected, or known to bring about– human wellbeing. In a society that thrives on harmonious social relationships, what is morally good is what promotes social welfare, solidarity, and harmony in human relationships.”¹⁰

The wellbeing or prosperity of the individual is, therefore, regarded as dependent on the wellbeing of the community. In short, the individual cannot prosper unless the society prospers, implying that the good of the individual is a function of the good of the society concerned.

The distinction between African and Western ethics is best represented in the work of another Akan and Oxford educated philosopher, Dr. Ben Oguah. Reflecting on the traditional ethos of the Fantse, a subset of Akans of Ghana, he states, “The Fantse system of ethics is essentially anti-egoistic, [where] egoism is the ethical theory that each individual should seek his own good and not the good of his neighbor.”¹¹ Similarly, Oguah dismisses the Western mentality that states, “Each one for himself and God for us all” as both selfish and self-destructive. The Fantse, on the other hand, rejects egoism because “the *summum bonum* (or the highest good) of their moral philosophy is not

⁹ Menkiti, “Person and Community in African Traditional Thought,” p. 180.

¹⁰ K. Gyekye, *Essays on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (Philadelphia: Temple State University Press, 1995).

¹¹ B. Oguah, “African and Western Philosophy: A Comparative Study,” in Wright (ed.), *African Philosophy*, 213-225, p. 220.

individual happiness, but “the welfare of the society as a whole.”¹² What he says of the Fantse is equally true of other Akans, and, by plausible extension, true of all traditional African societies.

For the African, therefore, an action, behavior, or policy is considered good only if it maximizes the wellbeing of the community, while indirectly benefiting individuals within it. Conversely, selfishness and other acts of omission or commission that undermine the wellbeing of others or the community as a whole are considered evil. These and similar moral teachings are reinforced with several maxims, taboos, songs, and Ananse (or spider) stories, in which the selfishness of Ananse, the clever but immoral protagonist, always leads to unbearable hardships and humiliation to him as a lesson for everyone.

Given their potential for deterrence, the need for such precepts becomes urgent, especially in times of economic hardships when the temptation to seek one’s wellbeing at the expense of others or the community becomes very intense. Consequently, kindness, sharing, compassion, hospitality, reciprocity, and solidarity are stressed, in such times, with maxims to the effect that each person is his brother’s keeper. The rich and powerful are particularly reminded with targeted maxims such as “Se wamma wo yonko antwa nkron a, wo nso wontwa du.” “If you do not allow or make it possible for your neighbor to reach nine, you can never reach ten.”¹³

Further, virtues such as sharing, reciprocity, hospitality and solidarity are stressed with maxims within communitarian ethics to the effect that selfishness is not only a vice, but also dangerous to the stability and peace within the community and in its relations with other communities. This explains why, in spite of the abject poverty, there are hardly any homeless and hungry people in traditional Akan societies and hospitality continues to be practiced commonly in spite of Western egoistic influences, and unbridled capitalism for over 400 years. That explains why, in 1983, when over one million Ghanaian immigrants in Nigeria were deported at short notice back to Ghana, the International Red Cross, UNHCR, Catholic Relief, Oxfam and other NGO’s, who brought tents, blankets, food and medicine etc., in anticipation of a humanitarian disaster in Accra experienced this pleasant surprise: there were no homeless or hungry deportees for their shelters or food. Virtually all of the deportees, mostly Akans, had gone back to their respective hometowns or had been picked up by members of their extended families or hometown ethnic communities residing in the Accra area.

C. What Is Contributive Justice?

The idea that everyone ought to contribute their fair share toward the burdens and challenges of their society is by no means a novel concept, but, as far as I know, the term ‘Contributive Justice’ has not been used in Professional or Applied Ethics, nor in Social or Political Philosophy discourse; and one looks

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 220.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

in vain for it in any Dictionary of Philosophy, Encyclopedia of Philosophy, or even in any Encyclopedia of Ethics. The concept is implicit in the objection Socrates raised in response to the suggestion from his friends that, if he desires to escape from the unfair punishment imposed by the state of Athens, they would help him to escape. Socrates rejected their suggestion, arguing that, for all the benefits he had received from the state, including security, education, and the opportunity to educate the youth, he owed the state a reciprocal duty of obedience to the states' laws, even if the law was bad or had been misapplied as in his case. To do otherwise, he argued, would be unjust, as he would be undermining instead of contributing his fair share to justice in the state. The concept is also implicit in the first part of the Communist maxim articulated by Karl Marx: "From each according to his means, to each according to his needs."¹⁴ The idea is also presented in the New Testament, where Christ states, in Luke's Gospel, "To whom much is given, much will be expected."¹⁵ Although the concept is not new, it occurred to me as I was researching for a public lecture on Occupy Wall Street that the common goal of the protestors, like those of Marx and Jesus, falls under the term 'Contributive Justice.' I was then tempted to take credit for being the first to introduce the term to public discourse. Further research, however, revealed that I was not the first; it had been introduced to public discourse at a public lecture in Canada in 2010 by the Italian economist Stefano Zamagni:

"Contributive justice is the responsibility each of us has to contribute to civil society, and to our collective wellbeing. [...] It matches a person's obligations with his or her capabilities and role in society."¹⁶

Evidently, contributive justice is not the same as distributive justice. However, no theory of justice as fairness can be complete without Contributive Justice, since justice as fairness requires, not only fairness in distribution, but also fairness in contribution to common resources for preventing as well as alleviating debts and other burdens on society. Thanks to Milton Friedman, corporations and CEO's in free markets have no moral qualms for not contributing their fair share to society, since he argues that businesses or corporations have no social obligation beyond maximizing profit for their shareholders.¹⁷ It was for this and other aspects of his economic theory that Friedman was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1970.

Though they might not necessarily use the term 'Contributive Justice,' the demands of the political activists associated with Occupy Wall Street and similar groups in Canada, the US and Europe represent nothing short of Contributive Justice. Their motto at their website reads, "To end the greed and corruption of the wealthiest 1 percent of America" and similar injustices.¹⁸

¹⁴ K. Marx, *Communist Manifesto* (Perking: Foreign Language Press, 1981).

¹⁵ Luke 12:48.

¹⁶ S. Zagmani, "Cooperative Enterprise: Facing the Challenge of Globalization," University of Victoria, Canada, "Distinguished Speaker's Series" (June 16, 2010).

¹⁷ M. Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits," *The New York Times Magazine* (September 13, 1970).

¹⁸ Occupy Wall Street (2011).

They are demanding that the top 1% of the economic ladder or the billionaires and millionaires who have benefited most from the system by virtue of Republican deregulation, tax-cuts for the rich, and trickle-down economic policies and political corruption, among other things, now pay their fair share of taxes to address the nation's deficits and other obligations. The protestors have been inspired by the widening socio-economic gap, the fierce opposition from Tea Party Republicans against Obama's pro-middle class and pro-poor policies, and also by fair-minded rich people such as the billionaire Warren Buffet, who admits that many rich people like him have not been paying their fair share of taxes.¹⁹

Section II: The Role of Randian Selfishness and Libertarianism in the Crises

Although it would be both inaccurate and unfair to blame the ongoing socio-economic crises in the US on any single individual, there is incontrovertible evidence to show that the ethics and ideology of extreme selfishness and individualistic ideas popularized by Ayn Rand have played a significant role in the process leading to the crisis. The evidence can be seen through her numerous literature, movies like *Atlas Shrugged*, the print and electronic media including the web, and through many conservative philosophers, media elites, as well as some prominent conservative and libertarian philosophers influenced by her ethics and ideology of selfishness and rugged individualism.

A. Influence of Ayn Rand and the Moral Objectivists

Ayn Rand, the ex-Communist Russian-born philosopher and artist who migrated to the US in 1926, could not have imagined the potential impact of her views on Americans from the 1960's, on the 21st century. According to a joint survey conducted by the Library of Congress and the Book of the Month Club, *Atlas Shrugged* is the second most influential book for Americans today after the Bible. Her faithful disciples in the US –the so-called 'Moral Objectivists'– have been vigorously promoting selfishness as a virtue through their vibrant websites, public lectures, and classrooms, as well as youth seminars and social media. Rand denounces even such long-held Judeo-Christian and Western philosophical virtues as 'altruism' and 'self-sacrifice' for others as irrational ethics, while upholding and promoting selfishness as the only rational or objective form of morality. Any ethical system that asks you to sacrifice your own interest for the interest of others or the wellbeing of your society, she argues, is not only inhumane but also irrational. Selfishness or egoism, she explains, will never ask you to exchange your self-interest which is a greater value, for the interest of others which is a lesser value.

"Therefore selfishness is the only morality that is conducive to human life, personal happiness, and social harmony. It is the only moral code that provides an objective foundation for the protection

¹⁹ J. Stein, "Who Speaks for the 1%?," *Time Magazine* (October 31, 2011), p. 19.

of individual rights –and thus for the establishment and maintenance of a fully free, fully civilized society.”²⁰

Many moral philosophers, including Professor James Rachels of the University of Alabama, attempted to correct Ayn Rand and her adherents for confusing ‘rational self-interest,’ which is a virtue (consistent with cooperation with others) with ‘selfishness,’ which is a vice that implies excluding or undermining others’ interest.²¹ Similar attempts to correct her and her adherents by another outstanding moral philosopher, James P. Sterba of Notre Dame University, have borne little or no fruit.²² Instead of denouncing her conceptual confusion and moral ‘heresy,’ many scholars, including philosophers, economists and politicians, have adopted her ideas and transmitted them uncritically to students or applied them in national policy formulation and decision-making, and have, thus, facilitated their negative impact on the US economy and partisan politics.

In 1987, *The New York Times* referred to Ayn Rand as the Reagan administration’s “novelist laureate.” Despite Rand’s untraditionally Republican stance as a pro-choice atheist, the political figures who cite Rand as an influence on their public views are most often conservative Christians, libertarians, and members of the Republican Party. On the 100th anniversary of President Reagan’s birth, McLaurin, the producer of the film version of *Atlas Shrugged*, said:

“I can think of no current film more deserving of the inaugural award as we mark the 100th anniversary of President Reagan’s birth and reflect on the ideals that not only influenced Ronald Reagan but an entire generation as *Atlas Shrugged*.”²³

Explaining why they chose this film, the Director said that it highlights the principles of individual responsibility, optimism, and freedom. Further, he claimed, “the novel shaped President Ronald Reagan’s personal, professional and political life.”²⁴ The influence on the conservative and libertarian minds has been so massive that it has been called a “revolution,” as seen in the title of a book, written by two of adherents, *Free Market Revolution*, after Ayn Rand’s Ideas Caricatured Big Government. This popular book was published with the support of The Ayn Rand Institute in 2012.²⁵

During the 2009 protest marches by the Tea Party against Obama’s financial bailouts and the proposed Healthcare Reform etc., some of the protesters were seen on national TV displaying huge posters reading: “I am John Galt”; the hero in Rand’s *Atlas Shrugged* who was opposed to any form of govern-

²⁰ A. Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* (New York: Random House, 1957).

²¹ J. Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009).

²² On the “Libertarian Justification of the Welfare State,” see J.P.A. Sterba (ed.), *Morality in Practice* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2004⁷).

²³ K. Anderberg, “Atlas Shrugged Movie Honored with Ronald Reagan Great Communicator Award,” May 10, 2011.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Y. Brook and D. Watkins, *Free Market Revolution: How Ayn Rand’s Ideas Can End Big Government* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

ment assistance to the poor. Most of the rest advocated, above all other values, liberty and constitutionally-limited government, just like Ayn Rand and her followers.

The list of Ayn Rand's prominent admirers or followers includes recent Republican presidential candidates for the 2012 election and other leading Republicans. Another is Paul Ryan, the presidential candidate who later became Mitt Romney's running-mate. He boasts about being responsible for drafting four conservative pro-business and pro tax-cuts-for-the-rich budgets, with little or no room for the working class and welfare beneficiaries. He brags publicly about how much his ideas have been influenced by Ayn Rand:

"I grew up reading Ayn Rand, and it taught me quite a bit about who I am and what my value systems are, and what my beliefs are. It inspired me so much that it's required reading in my office for all my interns and my staff. We start with *Atlas Shrugged*. People tell me I need to start with *The Fountainhead* then go to *Atlas Shrugged* [laughter]. There's a big debate about that. We go to *Fountainhead*, but then we move on, and we require Mises and Hayek as well."²⁶

Another Ayn Rand follower is Supreme Court Justice, Clarence Thomas, noted for his opposition to Affirmative Action that has benefited him and thousands of other African Americans like him to transcend their socio-economic circumstances. The ex-Fed Chairman Allan Greenspan, who served almost 20 years from 1987 to 2006 under three Republican presidents, Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr., has been well-known and praised or discredited as the brain behind the conservative economic policies, including 'the trickle-down economics' and anti-working class interest, tax-cuts for the rich and other conservation pro-rich policies partly responsible for the Wall Street bubble and the great economic recession. What most people may not know is that Allan Greenspan also admits Ayn Rand's influence on his philosophy. Greenspan states in his own book, *The Age of Turbulence*, "Ayn Rand became a stabilizing force in my life." He goes further to explain that it had not taken long for them to have "a meeting of the minds –mostly my mind meeting hers'– and in the fifties and early sixties, I became a regular at the weekly gatherings at her apartment."²⁷

This list of Ayn Rand's adherents is by no means exhaustive. But it is enough to show that her influence has been not only among conservative movie goers and readers of her numerous novels, but more so, among the top politicians, statesmen and public economists in the country, since at least the early 1970's.

²⁶ P. Ryan, *The Huffington Post* "The Internet News, Blogs, Video Community," 2005.

²⁷ A. Greenspan, *The Age of Turbulence: Adventures in a New World* (New York: Penguin, 2007), pp. 51-53.

B. The Ideological Influence of Mises Foundation

The Austrian economist Ludwig Von Mises did not only read Rand's books, but was so impressed with some of her ideas and attacks on the masses that he wrote, in praise of Rand:

“You have the courage to tell the masses what no politician told them: You are inferior and all the improvements in your condition which you take for granted you owe to the efforts of men who are better than you.”²⁸

Mises views, as this quote illustrates, are not only disrespectful of the masses and the poor, but are also racist within the US context, where the vast majority of the poor, for obvious reasons, happen to be Blacks. Yet his exclusivist ethical and ultra-right political ideology continues to influence the American public through educational foundations or centers such as The Mises Institute and Foundation based at Auburn University, Alabama. This Institute and similar ones in the nation have been some of the less-known but powerful weapons undermining progressive social policies aimed at benefiting the poor and the needy through welfare, education, and even health care, especially among racial or ethnic minorities. Mises Institute scholars advocate laissez faire or unfettered free markets and extreme individual rights, as well as minimal government, arguing, “they are necessary for the defense of liberty.”²⁹

The one-time presidential candidate Pat J. Buchanan, also noted for these and similar extreme right-wing views, is among the past laureates of this ideological institute. Another laureate of the Mises institute is Congressman and 2012 Republican primary candidate Ron Paul, known for his opposition to almost every form of federal relief, including Affirmative Action, educational grants or financial aid, welfare, bailouts, food stamps, and even relief for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. He told a *Time*'s reporter, “When I discovered people like Mises, to me they were geniuses.”³⁰ His son, Senator Rand Paul shares similar views on hampering the social and economic progress of minorities.

C. Influence on Mainstream Philosopher John Hospers

The possibility for extremist views to penetrate mainstream philosophical thought and practice is usually limited, given the critical or self-reflective nature of philosophy as a second-order discipline. The extremist ideologies of both Ayn Rand and Mises, however, found a powerful channel through the well-known mainstream American philosopher, John Hospers. His biographer Daniel Sayani explains that, when Dr. Hospers was young, the popular view within his family and the country was that government was an interference

²⁸ Mises to Rand, letter dated Jan. 23, 1958, in J.G. Huilsman, *Mises: The Last Knight of Liberalism* (Auburn, AL: The Ludwig Von Mises Institute, 2007), p. 996.

²⁹ See www.aynrand.com.

³⁰ *Time Magazine* (September 5, 2011), p. 45.

with freedom and prosperity. He, however, defended the opposing view and remained a Democrat until he met Ayn Rand in 1960, while attending a Conference of the emerging Libertarian Movement in New York. After several meetings with Ayn Rand, she got him to read her main book, *Atlas Shrugged*, which Hospers claimed first opened his eyes to libertarian political thought. Rand also introduced Hospers to Mises, who also gave Hospers copies of his books extolling the values of extreme libertarianism and Republicanism.³¹

In *Atlas Shrugged*, Ayn Rand divides society into looters and non-looters. The looters are proponents of high taxation, big labor, government ownership, government planning, regulation, and redistribution, while the non-looters are inventors, successful business creators or the superrich.³² Comparing government taxation of the rich for unemployment benefits and similar assistance for the poor and needy to theft, he states, “The theft of your money by a robber is not justified by the fact that the robber used it to help his injured mother.”³³ The terms “robbery” and “theft” are Hospers’ synonymous expressions for what Ayn Rand calls “looting.”

This background information provides the explanation for why such an otherwise mainstream philosopher could defend extreme individualist views and state *inter alia*, “any tax collected by the government beyond what is necessary for individual protection and national defense is robbery.”³⁴

D. Influence on Harvard Professor Robert Nozick

The Harvard Professor of Philosophy, Robert Nozick, was showing interest in Left Wing ideology and socialism until he encountered libertarian defenders of capitalism, including F.A. Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, and Ayn Rand. The encounter with Ayn Rand eventually led Nozick to renounce those views, and “to shift his philosophical focus away from the technical issues in analytic philosophy and toward political theory.”³⁵ This shift resulted in his main publication, *State, Anarchy, and Utopia*,³⁶ which, ultimately, made him the champion of the conservative movement in the mid-1970’s to 80’s, and an admired defender of libertarianism against the onslaught of liberalism unleashed by John Rawls’ *Theory of Justice* (1971). Hitherto, Rawls’ theory had been enjoying unquestioned national and international acclaim as, by far, not only the greatest work in social and political philosophy since Plato, but also as the greatest defense of liberal philosophy and liberal policies ever.

³¹ D. Sayani, “Philosopher and Champion of Liberty Dr. John Hospers Dead at 93,” *New American* (June 11, 2011) (<https://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/biography/item/113-philosopher-and-champion-of-liberty-dr-john-hospers-dead-at-93>).

³² E.W. Younkens (ed.), *Ayn Rand’s Atlas Shrugged: A Philosophical and Literary Companion* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

³³ J. Hospers, “The Libertarian Manifesto,” in Sterba (ed.), *Morality in Practice*, 23-31, p. 24.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ “Robert Nozick,” in the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (www.iep.utm.edu).

³⁶ R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

Nozick's main argument against Rawls' theory is that Rawls' theory unjustly requires economic redistribution from the rich to the benefit of the poor. Rawls' theory, he concluded, is therefore unjust, since it violates the rights of the rich who are (presumably) entitled to their wealth, given his three principles of 'Justice as Entitlement: Justice in Acquisition, Justice in Transfer, and Justice in (actual or aspirational) Rectification.'³⁷ Nozick also maintained that the right to private property cannot be overridden on any moral ground by the state to meet the needs of the poor or other needy people through a graduated income tax system, because the right not to be taxed to help the needy is more or less an absolute right.³⁸ Like Ayn Rand and John Hospers, Nozick maintains, "Taxation of earnings from labor is on par with forced labor."³⁹ Further, Emmett Barcalow, author of *Justice, Equality, and Rights*, points out the Randian influence on Nozick's philosophy when he observes: "For example, Nozick states that taxing people to pay for government programs they don't want is equivalent to forcing them to work for the government or for others."⁴⁰

What Nozick and like-minded libertarians fail to acknowledge, according to Barcalow, is that the decisions taken for graduated-income tax to help the unemployed, underemployed, the handicapped, and other needy people to meet their basic needs for food, medicine, housing, and basic education etc., were not taken by dictators or absolute monarchs. They are decisions taken through the legitimate democratic processes in their own state or government, which involves them either directly or indirectly through their elected representatives. Consequently, their counter-argument to the right of the government to tax them commits the fallacy of False Analogy. The government, through the IRS, is only asking them to pay what has been agreed upon, constitutionally or democratically, through representatives they have directly or indirectly elected by their own votes. Government tax policy in a democracy like the US, therefore, cannot be analogous to stealing their money or to coercing them, like armed robbers, to give up their money. Calling a legal tax "theft" is not just a rhetorical dysphemism that seeks to mislead people; the underlying argument must be charged with the Straw Man Fallacy.

The scope of Ayn Rand's influence through the media, politicians, economists and philosophers is hard to measure. However, from the foregoing discussion, it is clear that no thorough and objective explanation for the 'Great Recession' and the growing socio-economic gap in the US can be offered without reference to the impact of her ideas, as well as to those she influenced.

Section III: Distortions of Protestant Ethics

Economic historians, including Max Weber and Christopher Dawson, have identified the Protestant Ethic among the significant factors for the growth of

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

³⁸ E. Barcalow, *Justice, Equality & Rights* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2004), pp. 133-137.

³⁹ Nozick, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

⁴⁰ Barcalow, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

capital and the success of the Industrial Revolution.⁴¹ It helped to mitigate the existing socio-economic gap in Europe by promoting more savings, less spending, and charity towards the poor. Subsequently, it made possible the rapid 18th century development of Europe, followed by that of America.

Unfortunately, not only is Protestantism in decline in Europe, the Protestant Ethic is no longer the paradigm ethic among Christian preachers and theologians even in the US and Africa. The paradigm has shifted in favor of speculative eschatology about the Second Coming of Christ among US Evangelicals and fundamentalists, as seen in the frenzy for the *Left Behind* books and movie series,⁴² and the so-called Prosperity Gospel.⁴³ Their emphasis is more on individual accumulation of wealth and excessive spending on luxuries and vacations as proof of God's blessings than on significant sacrifices beyond minimal charity to help the poor. For example, the Black Republican Party candidate in the 2012 presidential election, Herman Cain, began to soar in the Republican pools when he publicly stated, "If you are not rich and you are not working, blame yourself."⁴⁴ One might be tempted to dismiss this observation as a post hoc fallacy; except that blaming the poor for their condition, instead of the unjust socio-economic system is a major sub-thesis within the Ayn Rand selfishness ideology.

Section IV: Akan/African Communitarian Principles for Mitigating Socio-Economic Gaps

The ethical system of the Akans of Ghana, West Africa, represents a paradigm case of African traditional communalistic ethics. It emphasizes principles of reciprocity, mutual help, compassion for the needy—especially strangers—, respect for others and their rights, distributive justice, and contributive justice as defined in Section A above and discussed below.

A. Contributive Justice for Maximum Fairness

Akans teach and practice contributive justice principles as a complement to distributive justice. The aim is to ensure that no one, rich or poor, royal or commoner, gets away with failing to contribute their fair share toward the common good. Contributive justice is a fundamental moral principle in Akan Traditional Ethics and is applied toward many different communal efforts, as the following examples demonstrate:

1) Contributive Justice and the Akan Tax System: Contributive justice is evident in their graduated income tax system. Akans believe in the fairness of graduated income tax and practice it, and this is routinely reflected in their

⁴¹ C. Dawson, *Religion and The Rise of Western Culture* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1950).

⁴² *Newsweek* (May, 2004).

⁴³ K. Asamoah-Gyedu, "Reshaping Sub-Sahara African Christianity," *Media Development*, 52 (2005), 17-21.

⁴⁴ www.CNN.org, Tuesday, October 18, 2011.

fund-raising activities for any communal project. So, for example, when taxes are due, the Asantehene (the most powerful traditional ruler among the Asante, and other Akan groups in Ghana) ensures that his top executives and paramount chiefs pay higher taxes than their subordinate chiefs, who also pay higher than the elders representing individual clans and families. Members of the royal family, nobles, and the well-to-do are strongly warned against refusing to contribute their fair share toward the needs of their communities with this maxim: “Odehyee anko a, akoo dwane; meaning, “If the royal fails to fight in a battle, his subject runs away.”

In justifying this method of taxation, Akans appeal to the Argument from Analogy based on the uniqueness of each finger and their corresponding functions. They argue that, since our ten fingers are not the same and have different functions as determined by their unique heights, positions, strengths, and dexterity etc., it is unjust to expect the ring finger to perform the role naturally suited for the thumb. Similarly, it would be unfair to ask the rich to pay less than their fair share, just as it is unfair to ask the poor to pay the same amount as the rich. In effect, Akan traditional philosophers agree with Christ’s maxim: “To whom much is given, much will be expected.”⁴⁵

2) Contributive Justice in Marshaling Resources for Wars, Emergencies, and Development: Akans’ commitment to the Principle of Contributive Justice is also evident in how they marshal human and material resources for urgent and important projects. These include contributions towards inter-ethnic wars, emergencies, and communal labor for town and village development projects such as building schools, hospitals, roads and market places. While those who excel in sacrificial giving are publicly honored as an encouragement to others, free-riders are directly or indirectly censured by public shame, as deterrence against indifference or contributive injustice.

Within the Akan ethos, the Principle of Contributive Justice is given priority over the Principle of Distributive Justice. The rationale is that distributive justice becomes necessary only where resources are limited. So, if contributive justice succeeds in producing enough resources for everyone concerned, including the greediest and the neediest persons, there would be no need for implementing distributive justice policies.

B. Distributive Justice for Maximum Fairness

Long before John Rawls’ *Theory of Justice*, Akan elders were cognizant of factors like human rationality, our (predominant) self-interest, and the need for a distributive mechanism that ensures fairness by a method that is functionally equivalent to putting on ‘a veil of ignorance.’ One example is evident in the rationale and the method of disbursing yams, grains of salt or rice among Akan women, or meat as part of a communal meal among the youth. The maxim guiding the disburser is this: *Kyadee ntu bi*; meaning literally, “The one who disburses any X cannot choose any portion.” The explanation

⁴⁵ Luke 12:48.

or justification is that the disburser, unlike the others, does not make a choice since this person has to wait till all others have chosen their portions to take what is left-over. Therefore, not knowing which portion will be left for him/her in the end, he is compelled out of rational self-interest to be as accurate, objective, and as impartial as possible in disbursing X. His condition is, therefore, analogous to the rational actors who decide on principles of justice behind the veil of ignorance in ‘The Original Position’ that Rawls articulates so well in his theory of justice as fairness.⁴⁶

Following the examples of Akan elders, American authorities, and others in analogous positions, will be well-advised to present rewards to those who voluntarily and unselfishly practice distributive justice as fairness at public functions and through mass media, to reinforce this important ethical principle. Among other important outcomes, the living condition of the least advantaged in society will be better even if incomes are unequal, since the poor can expect to benefit from the graduated income system that ensures that the government will have adequate resources to assist needy members of society in meeting their basic needs, including food, health, shelter, and basic education.

Section V: Reinforced Communalistic Virtues

Contemporary child psychologists and moral education experts have confirmed what Aristotelian moral philosophers and traditional Akan parents and educators have long known and applied in child moral education and crime prevention: that it is not enough to provide the child with a list of do’s and don’ts, but that it is more important to train the child, through a system of rewards and punishments to inspire good habits that eventually lead to the formation of virtuous character.

A. Part of Early Childhood Education

Akan moral educators, like Aristotle, recognize the problem of *akrasia* or incontinence; the problem of knowing that X is right and yet not being able to do X, and continuing to do Y, which one knows to be wrong. Contemporary moral psychology has not only confirmed the reality of this problem, but has also corroborated the moral thesis that, without character training in their formative years, the youth tend to become extremely vulnerable to the problem of *akrasia*.⁴⁷ Through analysis or proverbs, maxims, puzzles and Ananse stories etc., Akan children are trained in moral and intellectual virtues. These include critical thinking and effective decision-making skills, after due deliberation consistent with what virtuous persons would normally do or avoid. Consequently, Akan youth presumably are better prepared against temptations and extremist behaviors than their counterparts in other cultures or societies that do not stress virtuous character formation in the formative years of their youth.

⁴⁶ Rawls, *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ G. Ainslie, “Picoeconomics” (<http://www.picoeconomics.com>).

B. Public Shame as Deterrence

It is now also known that court fines and short-term imprisonments are not enough to deter gangs from violent crimes or the Martha Stewards and the Raj Rajaratnams of the business world from insider-trading, and other acts of selfishness, greed, and corruption. Rajaratnam as a Wall Street hedge fund tycoon was fined over \$63 million in penalties recently.⁴⁸ Without any sweat, he paid it in full within two weeks. His sentence of 11 years, although consistent with the sentencing guideline for such crimes, is likely to be reduced on appeal and by 'good behavior' in prison, and, therefore, is unlikely to deter people of his type who pride themselves in risk-taking.

Moral psychologists are beginning to recognize what traditional Akan moral 'experts' have known for centuries, that the most effective instruments for deterrence for many people are not necessarily court fines or prison terms, but the sense of shame that accompanies their arrest, trials, and sentencing. This is particularly true if the offender is shamed publicly within their respective communities –with no blue dots or jamming squares on TV screens to help them hide their humiliated faces, especially from people who know them. Emory University psychologist and theologian, Professor Charles Hackett (1997) has called for a paradigm shift from guilt to honor-shaming in fighting crime and other antisocial behavior, because:

“[The criminals] aren't motivated by guilt; they are driven by shame. The shame of failing a gang initiation [for example] has a far greater impact on a youth's behavior than time in jail. They will do anything to avoid letting the gang down.”⁴⁹

The often frantic and futile efforts to hide their faces from the camera and the public are also significant. Such efforts unintentionally reveal that, in spite of their selfishness, they still have a sense of community within them; for, unless they had some sense of community in their hearts or minds, they would not care to be exposed publicly.

Cultivating a sense of shame and self-discipline are some of the benefits of Virtue Ethics as taught and practiced within Akan Traditional and Aristotelian ethical systems. Given these recent studies in moral psychology and philosophical ethics therefore, Akans have every good reason to reinforce the teaching and practice of communalistic virtue ethics, and to recommend them for America and other countries or cultures dealing with selfishness, greed, corruption and unmitigated socio-economic gaps.

Section VI: Discussion of Opposing Views

The discussion of opposing views, at this stage, will provide additional insight into the nature of Akan Communitarian Ethics and why it should be part of

⁴⁸ “Intimate Ties Revealed in Emails,” *Huffington Post* (06/22/2012).

⁴⁹ Quoted in L. Allgood, “Shame May Be a Powerful Deterrent to Crime, Antisocial Acts,” *Emory Report*, 50 (1997).

the solution to the ongoing economic crises and its social consequences, and for preventing similar ones in the future. For example some critics might wonder:

A. Is This not a Turn to Communism or Socialism?

Critics who think the recommendation for integrating some aspects of communalistic ethics into American culture is a call to communism or socialism. However honest their intentions, they wrongly assume that communalism is equivalent to communism or socialism. Unlike these ideologies or socio-political philosophies, African communalism is consistent with individual rights – including the right to private property.⁵⁰ Akan ethics maintains that having a need for X does not entitle one to X, if X is another person's private property, including food. The Akan argument in defense of private property is “Dee adee wo no na odie, nnye dee ekom de no.”⁵¹ In other words, it is the owner of property X who has the right to consume it, but not the hungry. The owner may be asked to share X with the hungry out of compassion, but cannot be forced or coerced by society to give X away, with the exception of emergency situations that call for overriding private rights. The Akan traditional courts will readily adjudicate and impose sanctions against such unethical and illegal behavior for deterrence and will aim for the protection of individual rights and dignity, as well as for the protection of their incentive for hard work.

B. Will it Work?

Critics might also legitimately ask: “What makes you think that any aspect of Akan Communitarian Ethics will work to prevent or correct the widening socio-economic gap in the US when John Rawls' *Theory of Justice as Fairness* has failed to prevent or mitigate such a gap?” The early John Rawls' Difference Principle, published in 1971, had a loophole that was not recognized or discovered by the early Rawls or his critics in the 70's or 80's. In more recent years, however, the loophole has been identified and covered or minimized with the help of his critics and colleagues, Amarta Sen and Nussbaum. For example, the mature Rawls now states: regarding the second part of the Difference Principle:

“What (2a) does not permit is a change in social and economic institutions that makes life better for those who are already well off but does nothing for those who are already disadvantaged, or makes their life worse.”⁵²

This kind of loophole is certainly among the main issues to which the Occupy Wall Street Protest Movement has been reacting. Such loopholes help

⁵⁰ Gyekye, *Essays on African Philosophy*.

⁵¹ J. Osei, *Ethical Issues in Third World Development: A Philosophy of Social Change* (Lewis Town, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2011), p. 187.

⁵² J. Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (Harvard University Press, 2001).

the superrich get away with minimal or no tax burdens. As a correction, Martha Nussbaum has maintained that the concern of the Difference Principle should include raising the wellbeing of the least advantaged in light of substantial freedoms and incorporating it into Rawls' first principle, The Principle of Liberty. What is needed, in her view, is "a commitment by citizens and governments to a threshold of real opportunities below which no human being should fall, if she is able to rise above it."⁵³ Amartya Sen also argues that the liberties in Rawls' Principle of Equal Liberty, if they are to be meaningful at all, should be capabilities or substantial freedoms.⁵⁴ This is explained in terms of real opportunities based on natural and developed potentialities through education or training. Additional support will be (nonpartisan) governmentally-supported institutions that will enable political deliberation and planning over one's own life, and for the nation and others.

Another limitation of Rawls' Principle of Liberty from the communitarian ethics standpoint has been identified by Alasdair MacIntyre in his *After Virtue*. MacIntyre criticizes both Rawls and Rawls' chief critic, Robert Nozick, and the Lockean tradition for their over-emphasis on the right of the individual to the common good of the community and the absence of Virtue Ethics arguing, "it is only within the community that the individual's virtuous and fair contribution to their shared vision can become the basis for the concept of justice." For MacIntyre, therefore, justice cannot be defined without reference to the community and the communitarian virtues nurtured within it. Justice bred in a communitarian ethics, then, is rewarding of the virtuous activity that enhances the common good of man, the social animal.⁵⁵

His emphasis on virtue ethics within a communitarian ethos should be welcomed as a significant contribution for bridging the ideological gap between extreme statism and extreme (rugged) individualism. A communitarian ethics, then, should be seen as effective for not only helping to identify what is missing within the American ethos, but also for contributing towards an ideal socio-economic synthesis.

The hope that the synthesis will work is evident in how much the American public generally appreciate their leaders for their public communitarian ethical claims. These famous claims include: "Ask not what your country can do for you, instead, ask what you can do for your country";⁵⁶ "It takes a village to raise a child";⁵⁷ One thing I know, "'We are all in this together' is better than 'You are on your own'."⁵⁸ President Obama introduced himself to the world of politics saying, "There is not a white America and a black America,

⁵³ M. Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁵⁴ A. Sen, *Development as Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁵⁵ A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), pp. 232-233.

⁵⁶ J.F. Kennedy, "Inaugural Address Draft," Presidential Office Files, January 17, 1961.

⁵⁷ H. Clinton, "It Takes Village to Raise a Child."

⁵⁸ B. Clinton, The Democratic National Convention (DNC), 2012.

there is the United States of America.” In his nomination acceptance speech as President for the second term, he also stated:

“As Americans, we insist on personal responsibility, and we celebrate individual initiative [...] free enterprise. [...] (But) we’re not entitled to success. We have to earn it [...]. We also believe in something called ‘citizenship,’ a word at the very heart of our founding, a word at the very essence of our democracy, the idea that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations.”⁵⁹

While the average American citizen may not know that such ideas are representations of the communitarian ethos or worldview of their leaders, as pragmatics, they will welcome such changes, provided they significantly mitigate the gap and thereby make their society more stable, progressive, and more beneficial and just or fair for all.

Conclusion

The importance of finding communal ethics principles and strategies to prevent or minimize widening socio-economic gaps, as discussed in the foregoing, should not be lost on countries or cultures currently dealing with such gaps. Neither should it be lost on those that are not currently experiencing such gaps. For, as the wise Akan elders have warned, “If you hear that your neighbor’s beard is on fire, you should run and fetch water to protect your own.” Admittedly, Rev Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. articulates the maxim better when he states, “An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”⁶⁰ Similarly, when South Africa’s beloved ex-president, Nelson Mandela, was asked why he had come out of retirement to London to address the Conference of Ministers on ‘The Campaign to End Poverty in the Developing World’ he said:

“Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils. [...] As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, none of us can truly rest.”⁶¹

Mandela’s call to action is not limited to statesmen and politicians. It extends to all contemporary philosophers and other concerned intellectuals who believe in the transformative potential of communitarian ethics –which includes principles of reciprocity, compassion, and contributive justice– to make a significant contribution toward preventing or mitigating massive poverty and obscene inequity through rational and fair methods of economic redistribution.

⁵⁹ B. Obama, “Nomination Acceptance Speech,” DNC, Charlotte NPR Transcript, June 9, 2012.

⁶⁰ M.L. King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” April 16, 1963.

⁶¹ Mandela, “Speech on Poverty.”

Crisis, Dispossession, and Activism to Reclaim Detroit

GAIL M. PRESBEY

The theme of a 2013 gathering of philosophers at Ioannina, Greece, was “Crisis,” and certainly there are reasons to focus upon that theme. The Greek economy and political system were under strain. While the government implemented austerity measures, Greek citizens took to the streets to defend their jobs, pensions, and way of life. At the same time, in Detroit, city services were drastically cut. The city had to apply for a federal grant to hire back some of the fire fighters it had laid off due to budget constraints. Schools were being closed as an unelected Emergency Manager (and he appointed by the state’s Governor) took over the purse strings and decision making of the city schools. Since then, the Emergency Manager of Detroit had the city declare bankruptcy, and Judge Rhodes agreed with the plan to reduce the city’s debt by giving the largest creditors vast landholdings in the city, in exchange for forgiveness of some of the debt.

Many Detroiters took to the streets to protest their dispossession.¹ But the concept of “crisis” is sometimes used and abused by capitalist opportunists and political manipulators, who see, in peoples’ temporary paralysis and confusion during a crisis, an opportunity for quick gains. “Crisis” can, therefore, be problematic. Yes, it can be an “opportunity” as the popular saying goes, but for whom?

In their recent book, Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou discuss the concept of dispossession in all its complexity, in the context of enforced austerity measures in Europe and a global Occupy movement.² Such reflections on dispossession are relevant to understanding the Israeli takeover of Palestinian lands and Palestinian acts of resistance, the landless peasant movements in Brazil and other parts of Latin America (El Movimiento Sin Tierra), and many other movements throughout the world. In the United States, discussion of dispossession clearly applies to the immigrant and border crisis on the U.S. and Mexico border. But, in this paper, I will use their reflections as a springboard for analysis of the imposition of an Emergency Manager on the City of Detroit and the subsequent bankruptcy hearings for the city, which, along with the mortgage and foreclosure crisis, and now recent water shut-offs, have resulted in dispossessing the poorest of the poor from their modest possessions. However, Detroit is also the scene of a robust response, as people take to the streets in acts of solidarity to demand their city back. As Athena and Butler caution, activists should not fall into reinforcing the disastrous concept of per-

¹ See G. Presbey, “Globalization and the Crisis in Detroit,” *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 15 (2015), 261-277.

² J. Butler and A. Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity, 2013).

sonhood reinforced by possession. There are other ways of engaging with each other politically to forge a common cause that escape the negative aspects of “possession.”

Athena Athanasiou starts out the book’s discussion with a careful critique of the concept of the “liberal self,” understood as autonomous and impermeable. Instead, we humans have a fundamental dependency upon one another. This dependence can leave us open to pain and injury, but it can also enable us to do much if we can coordinate our efforts with others (2). Judith Butler agrees with this critique, and points out that the concept of “dispossession” clarifies how we actually depend on others in a sustained social world, that in fact the self is social (4). These ideas are not new; Aristotle referred to humans as political (or social) animals, and pointed out that humans organized themselves into social units in order, not only to survive bodily, but to thrive and find human fulfillment. Contemporary communitarians like Alisdair MacIntyre also have explained that acknowledging our vulnerability to injury, and our dependence on each other, is a necessary step in our taking stock of reality and our insight into what it means to be human.³

Athanasiou explains that all of our lives have some precarity; we are all exposed to dangers of injury, violence, and indebtedness. However, in our contemporary world with systemic racism, the logic of dispossession is mapped onto our bodies (18-19). Butler confirms Athena’s point with reference to Orlando Patterson’s study of the “social death” involved in slavery, as well as Achille Mbembe’s discussion of those left to die through negligence, or Ruth Wilson Gilmore’s study of those (as in California’s African American and Latino youths who struggle with unemployment, and end up disproportionately in prison) who must live with a higher risk of mortality (19). She adds that this notion of “precarity” is aimed at a certain population or demographic, which is told that it has no choice but to become acclimatized to insecurity. Such persons receive the message that they are expendable or are fully abandoned. They have a damaged sense of their future, and are more likely to experience illness, or even mortality (43).

Unfortunately, it is all too easy to find examples of this kind of treatment of Detroiters and of other African American city populations in Michigan. Infant mortality among African Americans in the state is very high. Life expectancy is dramatically lower for African Americans. The incinerator located in Detroit brings with it higher asthma rates for Detroit’s children. It is easier, both financially and socially, for white Michiganders to move out of African-American majority cities and neighborhoods to places with lower crime and violence rates. White populations, thereby, for the most part insulate themselves from the levels of precarity experienced in the cities and neighborhoods. But, even if white Michiganders move into Detroit, in search of art, music, culture, or the new housing developments there, they may still be able to insulate themselves by concentrating on living in and recreating in the are-

³ A. MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (The Paul Carus Lectures) (Chicago: Open Court, 2001).

as of the city given inordinate resources, such as more policing, better working street lights, and more grocery stores.

But not all white Americans coming to Detroit do so to seek out the insular experience. Some come especially to be in solidarity with those struggling to survive. These (often young) people seek out the neighborhoods where they, to a great extent willingly, share in the precarity of their neighbors –although, due to being citizens, they may not fear being taken out of their beds in the middle of the night by ICE agents as are some of their neighbors. Some of these new Detroiters come to grow food and community, and to grow food through growing community, and vice versa. They care about their neighbors' kids and do not want them to be gobbled up by a prison industrial complex. Judith Butler calls this “being solicited out of oneself,” and she sees it described in the philosophical works of Maurice Blanchot and Emmanuel Levinas (71).

Whether we find them in the cities or the suburbs, and whatever race they may be, Butler and Athanasiou caution us not to capitulate to current narrow ideas of the “good life” that revolve around “property ownership, commodity fetishism, consumer excitement, securitarian regimes, national belonging, bourgeois self-fashioning, and bio-political normalcy” (30-31). In other words, if one owns or rents a condominium guarded by a private security firm, with fences and alarm systems, in a neighborhood with close access to shopping, dining, and entertainment choices, while asserting a middle class patriotic gender-conforming identity, the real “good life” might still elude you.

How can we understand the bodies of protestors moving themselves to a position of blockading the business of dispossession? Such bodies, Butler notes, clearly have some kind of “presence,” and Athanasiou adds that such political activism makes “present” a hidden, or taken-for-granted, normative and hegemonic understanding of person, property, and propriety (14-15). Athanasiou gives as an example Rosa Parks, who refused to move out of her bus seat, and, thereby, resisted the neoliberal assignment of her to a precarious place (that is, as African American, she might at any moment have to give up her seat on the bus to a white person) (21-22). But both Athanasiou and Butler are careful to ensure that such acts of presence are not interpreted as acts of agency of an independent self, cut off from and not beholden to others. It will be self-defeating to try to counter dispossession by asserting robust possession in the individualist vein (33-37). And, they do not want metaphors of “movement” to marginalize those who are not able-bodied.

Baxter Jones has been wheelchair-bound since he suffered an auto accident in 2005. But that has not stopped him from being active in the Occupy Detroit Movement, as well as a member of their Eviction Defense Committee. He, himself, lost his house after his injury led to the loss of his job.⁴ More recently, he was one of 19 people who blockaded the entrance to Homrich, a company that had won a \$5.7 million contract to shut off the water to houses that were in arrears of paying their bills. The group of blockaders included

⁴ “Baxter Jones,” “Voices from Detroit: Life Without Water,” *Circle of Blue*.

folks of many different backgrounds, all committed to ensuring that all Detroiters received water they needed for hygiene and health. Over 18,000 families had their water turned off. While the Water Department insists that three-fourths of these families had water restored within 48 hours, that leaves many people with a lack of services. Many face large bills for service and little way to pay. In some cases, responsible, rent-paying tenants suffer as unresponsive landlords leave bills unpaid. In other cases, the Water Department's own records are faulty, and they were, for the most part, unreachable. Those who did reach them were told that payment "plans" were only available to those who paid at least a third of their bill in cash up front. There was no relief for those who had no way to pay.

Those who gathered to engage in civil disobedience at Homrich explained their rationale for choosing that site. They asked, why did the Emergency Manager decide to solve the seeming insolvency of the Water Department by hiring a company whose only capacity was to shut off the water to individual residences? After all, the forty largest businesses owed more to the Water Department than all of the rest of the residences did. But the Emergency Manager did not contract with any company who had the ability to collect from those corporate accounts. Rather, they contracted with a company that aimed at those who lived in poverty. Homrich and the Water Department emphasized that Homrich workers did not only turn off people's water, but their job was also to turn water back on (and, thus, they charged protestors with prohibiting their workers from turning people's water back on). This was surely a ploy to paint the protestors in a bad light. In reality, those who protested did so to help others who needed water, and so, with their own bodies, they tried to prevent a disaster.

Many involved invoked the memory of Charity Hicks, a mother who had resisted the shut off of her home's water, noting that she had not been properly notified by the Water Department. Police arrested her for obstructing the process of her water being shut off. Charity Hicks was someone who could get angry, but she was also someone who emphasized the importance of finding motivation to action in one's love of people, not anger. She channeled her energy for societal change by traveling to New York City as part of an effort to draw the U.N.'s attention to the water shut-offs.⁵ Activists convinced U.N. workers that the shut-offs were a violation of people's human rights. Tragically, while in New York City, Charity Hicks was knocked unconscious, and then died, due to a hit and run driver.⁶

Back in 1962, C.B. Macpherson's study of "possessive individualism" of the European Enlightenment (especially as articulated in Hobbes and Locke) showed how concepts of full personhood were based on the white male who was a property owner. In fact, if there was no property, there was no "individ-

⁵ M. Lukács, "Detroit's Water War: a tap shut-off that could impact 300,000 people," *The Guardian*, June 25, 2014 (<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/true-north/2014/jun/25/detroits-water-war-a-tap-shut-off-that-could-impact-300000-people>).

⁶ "Remembering Charity Hicks, Fallen Water Warrior," *Earth First Journal/Newswire*, July 12, 2014 (<http://earthfirstjournal.org/newswire/2014/07/12/remembering-charity-hicks-fallen-water-warrior/>).

ual,” Butler notes. Frank Cunningham has recently re-introduced Macpherson’s insights with our current moment in history in mind. Since his article, written in 2000, Cunningham has explained that Macpherson was critical of encouraging people to consider themselves as “owners” of their “powers.” This ontological understanding of self is at the core of capitalism’s possessive-individualist ontology. After all, inequalities constrain work choices. But, if I conceive of myself as possessing the right to freely exchange my work power for wages, the coercion involved in constraining circumstances is out of view. However, Macpherson did not advocate communitarianism, because he did not conceive of people belonging to discrete communities. Rather, he was an advocate of developmental individualism (instead of possessive individualism). According to Cunningham, Macpherson’s neo-Aristotelian ethic was that everyone should receive the resources they need to develop and exercise their powers. That means we each would have a right to expect others to help us to develop and exercise those powers, and that, reciprocally, we should help others to develop and exercise their powers as well. He called this view developmental individualism, in contrast to possessive individualism, which had as its emphasis the right to exclude others from the use of some property, and emphasized negative liberty, that is, freedom from obligation.⁷

In the context of Dewey and American Philosophy, James Albrecht elucidates a perspective on the self, similar to that of Cunningham and Macpherson. Albrecht describes this nuanced position of “individualism,” understood as inherent relationality. The “self,” according to William James, Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Dewey and Ralph Ellison, can only be understood in relation to community. As Albrecht explains, the pluralist metaphysics of James and Dewey, convinced that the classical liberal idea of the self is false, understands experience as the result of mutually transforming interactions, contingent and in flux. The relational concept of self makes sense of the need for our engaging in collective efforts of reform.⁸

And now, what about global crisis? Because, indeed, as William Robinson states, “We face a global crisis that is unprecedented in terms of its magnitude, its global reach, the extent of ecological degradation and social deterioration, and the scale and means of global violence.”⁹ With fears of collapse and/or social control looming, certainly our global capitalist world is, as Robinson says, unstable and crisis-prone. And yet, capitalist companies are known to use “crisis” to reinforce their control and/or to seize an opportunity for vast profits.¹⁰ And so, to a certain extent, we must remain calm and cool-headed in

⁷ F. Cunningham, “Democratic Theory and Racist Ontology,” *Social Identities*, 6 (2000), 463-82, esp. pp. 465 and 474-75.

⁸ J.M. Albrecht, *Reconstructing Individualism: A Pragmatic Tradition from Emerson to Ellison* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).

⁹ W.I. Robinson, *Global Capitalism and the Crisis of Humanity* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 1.

¹⁰ See, for example, N. Gunerwardena and M. Schuller (eds.), *Capitalizing on Catastrophe: Neoliberal Strategies in Disaster Reconstruction* (Lanham, MD: Altamira/Rowman and Littlefield, 2008).

a crisis, and see the larger picture and the long term, so that we do not get frightened into making rash decisions.

Robinson thinks the current crisis in global capitalism is due to overaccumulation; that is, that world markets cannot absorb the products being produced by the world's workers and businesses. The reason for that underconsumption is the downward pressure on people's wages and the high unemployment which leaves so many people in our world unable to buy even their own necessities, let alone other consumer goods, since the recent economic crises. There is an inability or unwillingness of the current global economy and governments to incorporate the needs and wishes of the majority of humanity, who want meaningful work and human flourishing, and this leads, as well, to a social crisis.¹¹ This crisis is misdiagnosed as a problem of the U.S. government's unwillingness to do what it takes to ensure all of its' citizens' flourishing. According to Robinson, the U.S. government's actions show it to be a pawn of global "casino" capitalism. For example, ever since financial deregulation, global elites impact the world's economy in a predatory way, by growing the "speculation" economy instead of the productive economy.¹² In fact, current real estate practices, coupled with racism, have led to growing wealth gaps between white and black Americans, with banks recouping their losses while individuals are unable to save their homes from foreclosure.¹³

Detroit was fortunate to have a philosopher dedicated to pondering the deeply entrenched problems of the city. Grace Lee Boggs, who, after having received her Ph.D. in Philosophy from Bryn Mawr in 1940, pursued her interests in politics and justice, and came to Detroit where she married Jimmy Boggs, and the two of them devoted their lives to building community.¹⁴ She founded the Boggs Center, or more fully, the James and Grace Lee Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership (<http://boggscenter.org/>). This organization is tireless in both its activism to change the city, as well as in its incessant interrogation and discussion of the daily unfolding of the people's challenges and struggles in the city. But Boggs did not see herself merely as a problem solver. She wanted to build community, and nurture the individuals who make up that community. Boggs recently passed away at age 100 on October 5, 2015.

Many of the new programs springing up in Detroit started as ideas in the Boggs Center, or were directly or indirectly influenced by its philosophy of

¹¹ Robinson, p. 5.

¹² W. Robinson, "The Crisis of Global Capitalism," in M. Konings (ed.), *The Great Credit Crash* (London: Verso, 2010).

¹³ D. DeSilver, "Black incomes are up, but wealth isn't," PEW Research Center, August 30th, 2013 (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/08/30/black-incomes-are-up-but-wealth-isnt/>).

¹⁴ For more, see G.M. Presbey, "Portrait of a Contemporary American Revolutionary: Grace Lee Boggs," *Radical Philosophy Review*, 17 (2014), 477-485, a review of G. Lee Boggs, *The Next American Revolution: Sustainable Activism for the Twenty-First Century* (2011) and Film, *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs*. Director: Grace Lee, LeeLee films, 2013.

societal transformation. But there are also a lot of independent players and not all of the projects can be attributed to Boggs herself or the Boggs Center. There is always a question of funding for start-up costs for projects. Shall the self-reliance movement rely on its own sources for start-up money? Or can it take contributions from the government or private foundations? If it takes money from others, how will these start-up projects be able to protect themselves from the undue influence of the donors in the shaping and running of its programs?

Let's first look at education. Detroit Summer, which has run for many years, was a direct project of the Boggs Center. The idea was to have youth engage in learning activities through coordinating volunteer teachers in the summer, and, thereby, to avoid the "summer slump" which happens to all students. This is much worse for low income students, when they lack educational opportunities in the summer. In the summer of 2012, their programs were sponsored by The Youth Connection, which is a local nonprofit, and funded by the National Summer Learning Association.¹⁵

Now, the Boggs Center is incubating another educational project, the Boggs Educational Center Charter School. This is an interesting development, because, for a long time, activists involved with the Boggs Center were against charter schools as alternatives to the public school system, arguing that charter schools were, for the most part, corporations that had profit as their goal. They lured the best students away from the public school system, leaving the public schools with an unruly and underachieving student body that would be neglected. Also, charter schools did not have to pay unionized faculty who had job security like those in Detroit Public Schools, meaning that teachers could be underpaid so that the charter school could make profits. Despite this criticism of charter schools, the public school situation in Detroit seems mired in problems. The few schools that served as promising alternatives to business as usual, such as Catherine Ferguson Academy (which had a thriving urban gardens program for its pregnant and young mothers), were radically altered, or closed altogether, under the Emergency Manager law.

In this context, the Boggs Educational Center decided to take advantage of procedures for setting up charter schools in order to open a school of its own, based on the pedagogy of John Dewey and Paolo Freire. Young teachers, disillusioned with the Detroit Public Schools or unemployed, became teachers in a school that uses radical pedagogy (boggseducationalcenter.org/). In a city with 47 percent functional illiteracy, where three-quarters of the youth do not graduate high school, and with a city having faced a \$300 million deficit (in 2009), these dedicated teachers decided to open a school devoted to "nurture-[ing] creative, critical thinkers who are empowered to contribute to the well-being of their communities."¹⁶ Community will be the students' classroom,

¹⁵ D. Sands, "Detroit Summer Learning Connection Creates Clearinghouse for Summer Youth Programs," *HuffPost Detroit*, (www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/24/detroit-summer-learning-connection-youth-program-camp_n_1543679.html).

¹⁶ Mission Statement, Boggs Educational Center (<http://boggseducationalcenter.org/mission-and-principles>).

the founders of this school assert. They call it “place based education.” Literacy will not just be measured by tests, since literacy is “a skill that goes beyond competence in reading and writing and includes media, technology, and even our emotions.” This ability to communicate in all these ways will overcome the muteness our society exercises when it comes to youth of color. The project team for starting the school consisted of Julia Putnam, who attended Detroit Summer as a teenager in 1992 and is a writer, Amanda Rosman, who uses her law background to help the school get chartered, and Marisol Teachworth, an activist and ESOL teacher. The school opened in the Fall of 2013, and completed its first year of teaching, not without some challenges, but, overall, it has worked well and has now been in operation for three years.¹⁷

The Boggs Center has given a lot of support to the urban garden movement in Detroit. Given the high unemployment rates and lack of nutrition, as well as the available vacant land, the urban gardening movement has taken off in Detroit. For example, Brightmoor, an area in Northwest Detroit to which many interested in urban gardening have moved, has 7,737 houses, down 1,602 units from 1990. It has an eleven percent vacancy rate of standing houses. Almost half of houses in Brightmoor are financed with subprime mortgages, and almost half of Brightmoor residents pay more than thirty percent of their income for housing.¹⁸ However, those interested in urban gardening on vacant lots have not been allowed to buy more than one adjacent lot, since the city government will only sell to those who say that they will build in-fill housing. So, farmers squat on land that they do not own, which falls short of sustainable standards.

At the same time that the city drags its feet when it comes to passing legislation or engaging in practices to encourage urban gardens, in a park, downtown private funders have created, from a torn-down historic building, Lafayette Greens, funded by Compuware and designed by Kenneth Weikal Landscape Architecture, a downtown city block re-creating a Disneyland-style mock urban garden, at least tipping its hat to the idea that Detroit is becoming famous for its urban gardening movement.¹⁹ One of the newest and very beautiful parks in Detroit, the development of the riverfront, was likewise funded by private donors. The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy gets donations from individuals and corporations.

¹⁷ See a series of stories on the new school. Z. Rosen, “Making an Education Vision Real in Detroit,” *State of Opportunity*, Michigan Radio, 20-6-2014 (<http://stateofopportunity.michiganradio.org/post/making-education-vision-real-detroit>); Z. Rosen, “Order in the classroom! New school works to craft a meaningful discipline policy that works,” *State of Opportunity*, Michigan Radio, 16-10-2013 (<http://stateofopportunity.michiganradio.org/post/order-classroom-new-school-works-craft-meaningful-discipline-policy-works>).

¹⁸ “A Basic Community Profile: Brightmoor” (<http://ssw.umich.edu/public/currentprojects/goodneighborhoods/BrightmoorBasicCommProfFinal.pdf>).

¹⁹ J. Helms-Day, “Lafayette Greens Urban Garden is Blooming in Downtown Detroit,” 29-8-2011 (www.examiner.com/article/lafayette-greens-urban-garden-is-blooming-downtown-detroit).

The project of getting people together at the grassroots, knowing each other, finding strength in leaning on each other, finding confidence to challenge the status quo that is tearing communities apart –that is the activism that is ongoing in Detroit.

Philosophy and Crisis: An Eastern Solution

ASHA MUKHERJEE

Introduction

Philosophers have addressed the crisis at almost every juncture of thought, though different crises may have been of varying natures. In the 19th century, Europe has faced a crisis in the sense that Western history, which was developed on the foundation of thousands of years, that is, its culture, religion, philosophy and arts, was collapsing. The ground on which human existence depended was totally shaken and the being of human existence became meaningless. The crisis was indeed a crisis of Western Reason, the unchallengeable faith in Western Reason as the principle of reality and the ultimate criterion for philosophical inquiry. Marx also saw, as a necessary consequence of the control of Western Reason, the alienation of humans from themselves in the process of mass industrialization.

It is accepted by almost everyone that crisis originated as an inbuilt feature of the Western concept of Reason. If this is acceptable, then the simple way out would be to work out a way to come out of the Western concept of Reason. A number of attempts have been made by different Western thinkers in last three centuries, especially by French thinkers, but most of them are found to be unsatisfactory. Without going into the details of these attempts, I raise the question of whether the crisis is really European, as Husserl has discussed. If it is European, then, by implication, we may draw a conclusion that the rest of the globe does not have any crisis. Or, even if it has, it is not the same crisis which Europe has. But, if the crisis is a universal crisis, then we need to address it more seriously and find out the roots of the crisis before we try to solve or avoid it. We try to look at the Eastern concept of Reason to solve the crisis, especially using K.C. Bhattacharya's ideas and propose an Advaitin solution agreeing with Daya Krishna, who uses a well-known phrase from Sartre and says:

“All Western cultures have been reduced to the status of ‘objects’ by being looked upon, that is, observed and studied by Western scholars in terms of Western concepts and categories that are treated not as culture-bound but universal in character. In a deep and radical sense, therefore, it is only the West that has subtly arrogated to itself the status of subject-hood in the cognitive enterprise and reduced all others to the status of objects.”¹

¹ D. Krishna, “Comparative Philosophy: What It Is and What It Ought To Be,” in N. Bhushan, J.L. Garfield and D. Raveh (eds.), *Contrary Thinking: Selected Essays of Daya Krishna* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2011), 59-67, p. 63.

The Crisis of Western Reason and Its Foundation

European nihilism in the nineteenth century was an explicit cry for the futility of Western Reason. The foundation for Western philosophy, culture, religion and arts, which was developed for thousands of years, was collapsing and shaken. Human existence became meaningless and questionable. Freedom to everything and of nothing is the will to desire everything and abandon everything at the same time – “nothing is true, so everything is allowed!” This crisis was indeed about Western Reason. Nietzsche named it the “logic of decay and disruption.” Philosophy and academic life became meaningless, theology was destroyed, and everything was taken up by science, technology, trade, business, and political and economic enslavement without any future vision, and with a lack of morality. The twentieth century was mostly devoted to confronting nihilism and denying Western Reason along with its history, without any grand plan. The main question was how to overcome nothingness, which was born out of the crisis of the death of the Christian God, and Nietzsche tried to overcome this by replacing it with “the will to power.” In 1910, Tolstoy saw the limitations of European civilization; it not only destroyed itself but also poisoned Africa, India, China and Japan through the science and technologies of Western Reason. Indian scientist C. K. Raju has discussed in detail how Western Reason along with its history has poisoned India. He holds responsible the Western education system, prevalent in India since colonization, which has four characteristic features: scientific illiteracy, a “Trust the West” attitude, the idea that the West is superior in all respects and hence must be imitated, and a bypassing of the critical examination (for example, alternative philosophies) that makes people culturally blind by teaching them to avoid contact with all “other” knowledge and views, as it is contaminated.²

It was the assumption of European reason that reality and new knowledge were separated and need to be brought together into a unity. An object is always an object in relation to a subject. Being is supposed to be objective when it is a matter of inter-subjectivity. The subject is the agent or the “Self” who knows the Being, and the Being is the object of knowledge. Reason plays the role of distinguishing between subject and object. Once it is distinguished by reason, it is also to be unified, as Hegel has shown, by negating it again and again. The question is how we can transcend the object–subject distinction, and also Reason which negates again and again. This is precisely the question Kalidas Bhattacharya (KDB) is asking and trying to solve by using the wisdom from classical systems of Indian philosophy in his philosophical framework to get away from the crisis of Western Reason. Western Reason taught us that the distinctions are absolute, but they are not absolute. Nihilism resulted from distinctions and mistaking Nothing for Being. As long as we believe that reason is the sole means to approach reality, nihilism is going to stay, but if we can find out other ways of being one with reality,

² C.K. Raju, “Escaping Western Superstitions,” talk at the BHU international seminar on Transcultural Asian Modernities.

where there is no subject–object distinction, then perhaps we can find a way to solve the crisis of Western Reason.

French post-modernists have attempted alternative ways to approach the philosophy of crisis by confronting and overcoming the tyranny of reason as nihilism. Edmond Husserl, Max Scheler, Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, all had witnessed World War I. Husserl's *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* and Heidegger's *Being and Time* were reactions to the crises, intended to look for meaning in concrete individual human existence and its fate in the face of these crises, while experiencing the world of actual life. In the 20th century, Henri Bergson, Max Scheler and many others were against objectification and the materialization of reality; reality was not closed but *open* by its own being. It is primarily due to the veil of reason that reality is covered and closed to us. But, due to the overwhelming power of Reason and its history, Scheler, too, could not pursue his novel mission to overcome European Nihilism. Heidegger, in 1923, wrote to one of his students, Karl Lowith:

“For several semesters, the following words of van Gogh have been haunting me,

I felt with all my power that the history of humanity is just like a grain of wheat. What would be the matter even if that grain were not planted to grow and bloom? It will be grounded and will become bread. The very one that is not grounded is pitiful!”³

World War II ended with two atomic bombs blasting in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as if they were the “ghosts of Western Reason.” German cities and culture were destroyed, universities were closed, but French philosophers like Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, through their phenomenology and existential philosophy, raised crucial questions of body and embodiment. Michel Bouvard maintains that Europe will be rejuvenated by Asia through new sciences and technologies, presupposing that Asia does not have the Western Reason. The question is “is or was there any crisis in Indian Philosophy” and how and by whom was it responded? This is an extremely important and crucial question, but I would not discuss this here, although this also has been felt by Indian minds and philosophers especially during the past two centuries. They also have responded to the crisis. In this paper, I would basically concentrate on the European Crisis, which is primarily the result of Western Reason, and how its alternative was suggested by illustrious Indian minds –Krishna Chandra Bhattacharyya (KCB) and his son Kalidas Bhattacharyya (KDB). We cannot deny or ignore Western Reason, and yet we want to explore philosophical approaches to be liberated by crisis so that we can “experience and be in tune with” primordial reality without much use of Western Reason. It is with this intention that we look at KCB and KDB's philosophical contributions.

³ E. Shimomissé, “The Crisis of Philosophy and the Philosophy of Crisis” (1992) (http://www.csudh.edu/phenom_studies/crisis.htm).

The Transmission Crisis and an Eastern Solution

The Crisis of Reason, which was faced by Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries, is faced by many Asian countries today with the far reaching impact of Western education and globalization.

One can get some idea of the impact of Western Reason on Indian Philosophy by the following passage written in 1960:

“Indian philosophers of last sixty years have almost enjoyed the same background of Western philosophy as their contemporaries in the West with additional advantage of a fairly good grounding in Indian philosophy which their opposite members in the West almost completely lacked. Yet, all the new movements in philosophical thought in this century have originated in the West. Isn't it a cause for reflection that Indian Mind did not respond in creative manner to its philosophic encounter with the West? [...] If the older generation was a pale reflection of Oxford and Cambridge at the turn of century, the younger seems no better. It prides itself as much on being Moorean, Russellian, or Wittgensteinian as its predecessors did on being Bradleyan, Hegelian or Kantian. And if someone has gone to Germany –well, he is a Husserlian or Heideggerian, if such barbarisms be permitted.”⁴

But KCB is considered by all as an exception with a fair idea of originality, as a “difficult” thinker to grasp, and often “unintelligible” with a difficult style. But his illustrious son Kalidas Bhattacharyya develops KCB's ideas with a much more simple style, without losing the originality and rigor of the content. KCB argues for subject and object both as questionable fact without being able to assert their unity or dualism. He rejects the universalism of reason or of religion:

“It is sometimes forgotten by the advocates of universalism that the so-called universalism of reason or of religion is only in the making and cannot be appealed to as an actually established code of universal principles. What is universal is only the spirit, the loyalty to our ideals and the openness to other ideals, the determination not to reject them if they are found within our ideals and not to accept them till they are so found.”⁵

Unlike Kant, he never believed that modern science is the ultimate epistemic paradigm. He claims that philosophy gives no information. “Metaphysics, or more generally, philosophy including logic and epistemology, is not only not actual knowledge, but is not even literal thought.”⁶ He (KCB) has a

⁴ D. Krishna, “The Philosophy of K.C. Bhattacharyya,” *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, 26 (1960), 137-149, pp. 137-138.

⁵ K.C. Bhattacharyya, “Swaraj in Ideas,” *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, 20 (1954-55), 103-114.

⁶ K.C. Bhattacharyya, “The Concept of Absolute and Its Alternative Forms,” in G. Bhattacharyya (ed.), *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. II (New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, rpt. 1993), p. 101.

“unique notion of ‘demand’ with which he links up epistemology with axiology in an unprecedented manner in the history of thought.”⁷

There are four grades of Theoretic consciousness: Empirical, Objective, Subjective and Transcendental. Philosophy, according to KCB, deals with the last three, the content of pure thought is objective, subjective and transcendental attitudes.⁸ While discussing the subject object relation, he explains that it could be of three ways; unconstituted by consciousness (subject), or constituted by consciousness, or, along with consciousness, constituting some kind of unity, and they are found in knowing, willing and feeling. The idea of the Absolute is a demand in the sense that there is a kind of unintelligibility in all three modes of relatedness, and the contradictory character is displayed in knowing, willing and feeling, where philosophy alone arises in the sense that it is closely related to content, yet independent of it, but unity is not identity. These contradictory characteristics demand to be resolved. The demand for resolution suggests the direction in which it is to be sought. But the directions are different for knowing, or willing and feeling. And so, the idea of Alternative Absolutes demanding to be realized arises in KCB.

Kalidas Bhattacharya’s book *Alternative Standpoints in Philosophy* was published in 1953, but did not draw much attention until 1979, and has been out of print as it was burnt in some accident only after a few years of publication. His main contention is simple but of extreme significance. He finds conjunction problematic. Most of the problems, including those of knowledge, can be solved if conjunction is not valid, as it leads to incompatibility. Knowledge is always knowledge of something –of an object– and this “of” is not of identity, like the *city of Kolkata* or the *city of Chicago*, but of the object, being known, and is a close unity between them. The relation between self-consciousness and consciousness of the object is of exclusion. Thus, we find the close unity of the two terms, and yet they are opposed to each other. The usual solution suggested by most of the Western philosophers has been either the absolute reality of the subject, or the absolute reality of the object, or the denial that there is any opposition between the two. And there has also been a movement from epistemological objectivity to metaphysical objectivity, suggested by Descartes and Kant. All of these solutions lead to antagonism and exclusiveness in one way or the other. To put it more precisely, the fundamental question for KDB is “can we conceive a unity of elements which is opposite of each other?” KDB’s answer is a big “yes” which he calls the “Logic of Alternatives.” He argues that disjunction is such a unity –united and yet opposite to each other. The difficulties occur only because all of the philosophers thought that unity could only be of the conjunction type. But, if this were true, there would have been no unities.

Reality is given to us, but only through knowledge do we know the reality. How does knowledge take place? In the “knowledge situation,” the knowledge is apprehended in the subjective, and the object in the objective attitude.

⁷ Krishna, “The Philosophy of K.C. Bhattacharyya,” p. 140.

⁸ Bhattacharyya, “Swaraj in Ideas,” p. 102.

The subjective attitude is withdrawal into subjectivity. This withdrawal has to be withdrawal from something, and this something is the object. Withdrawal is rejection and negation in a wider sense. Rejection implies a refusal to unity, so in knowledge of the object, there is refusal to unity. And yet the strongest of all things is that they have formed a unity, knowledge of the object is a fact in which the two contradictories have formed a unity. How could this impossible thing take place? This is the fundamental problem which he calls “the problem of knowledge,” which has been the concern for the whole of his life. Usually, “knowledge of the object” consists in either reducing subjectivity to the object, or the object to subjectivity. The items united in “knowledge of the object” are antagonistic. Subjective knowledge is a contradiction. Again, the subjectivity and objectivity do not stand apart—they are united. This unity is also as evident as the subject and the object. This unity cannot be conjunctive, as suggested by Hegel, and normally understood. If it is taken conjunctively, it would exclude each other being contradictory. Therefore, it is not conjunctive, but it does not imply that it is not unity at all. There is another form of unity; the *unity of alternatives*, a unity which, as opposed to the conjunctive type, may be called *disjunctive*, and is expressed in the form either A or B. KDB argues extensively that knowledge-object unity can be looked at from this disjunctive point of view, and he takes pains to show that all philosophers who admitted both the contradiction and the unity between the knowledge and the object have actually taken the unity as disjunctive, though none of them have clearly stated so. The nature of disjunctive unity definitely has some kind of togetherness. But togetherness of two alternatives is different from ordinary togetherness. It “means that both cannot be real *together*.”⁹ Again,

“A disjunctive judgment is not merely the thought of one alternative *plus* the thought of another, it is rather a *unitary* thought of the two alternatives. It is not merely thought of A and the thought of B, it is thought of AB, where A and B are the alternatives.... The whole thing is a single unitary thought, though it involves two thoughts.”¹⁰

We also find a kind of closeness between disjunctive unity and knowledge and object. Just as in a disjunctive judgment a negative supposal is predicated on a positive one, the relation between alternatives is like “on the table an inkpot is absent.” The table is characterized by the absence of the inkpot, so one disjunction is asserted by negating or rejecting the other alternative. It is claimed by KDB that the unity formed between a positive and a negative is more intimate than the unity between two positives. By disjunction, what is meant here is that each member is alternatively real, which means that, along with the rejection of one alternative on the basis of the other, there is, at the same time, admission of the existence of its possible alternatives, and in that admission, the other alternative stands alternatively rejected.

⁹ K. Bhattacharyya, *Alternative Standpoints in Philosophy* (Calcutta: Das Gupta and Co., 1953), p. 137.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 138-139.

In relation between the two elements in the disjunctive judgment is the fact that the negation of each alternative is predicated on the other. In a disjunctive judgment, we find unity of incompatible realities, though alternatively. If A is real, B has to be rejected, but this B is also alternatively real if A is rejected. In case of disjunctive unity of knowledge and object, it means that, if knowledge is real, object is rejected and, alternatively, if the object is real, the knowledge has to be rejected. We cannot have knowledge and object at the same time. Thus, in a disjunctive judgment, there is a disjunctive unity of alternatives –subjective and objective attitudes are alternatives forming a disjunctive unity. Each attitude is valid but only alternatively. The objectivist and subjectivist philosophies can both be constructed, and are valid, but alternatively. Both are real from a trans-disjunctive togethering of alternatives, and there is no reason to prefer one view as a more intelligible account of the knowledge situation than the other. Actual, philosophy, which is triter than this, is either from the subjective or from the objective point of view, not from both. Idealism and objectivism are such alternative systems, each is absolutely valid on its own ideology, and the ultimate logic is alternation. This view he calls “Alternative Absolutism –each is absolute, but alternatively.”¹¹

Conclusion

It is argued that all of the problems of knowledge can be solved if the conjunction is not valid, or there was no incompatibility. Conjunction is always problematic and leads to incompatibility. Disjunction, either as exclusive or inclusive, always gives a wider perspective to solve the problems, a unity of oppositions. Knowledge is always knowledge of something, of an object, and this “of” is not of identity like the “*city of Calcutta*,” but of the object, and of the fact of being known and of a close unity between them. In knowledge, either the subject knows the subject-self, becomes conscious of itself, or knows the object, becomes conscious of the object; but, in both cases, the relation is of exclusion, leading to the crisis of reason. But often we do not realize that, in both cases, there is a close unity of two terms although they are opposed to each other. How can this be explained? The usual solutions in philosophy have been either accepting the absolute reality of the subject (Idealism), or of the object (realism), or denying that there is any opposition between the two (dialectical attitudes). Kant and Descartes made a move from epistemological objectivity to metaphysical objectivity and, therefore, could not provide a satisfactory solution.

Can we conceive of a unity of elements which are in mutual opposition to each other? KDB’s answer is “yes.” And he shows that disjunction is such a unity. It is unity, and yet maintains this opposition each of the other. The difficulties occur only because all the philosophers thought that unity could be of the conjunction type, but if it was true then there would have been no unities. We can note the similarities with KCB, his father. Togetherness of unrelated

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

or undifferentiated elements is exhibited, not by conjunctive relation, but by the disjunctive unity of opposites, as found in disjunctive judgment itself. Disjunctive judgment suggests that there is no reason to prefer either of the disjunctions and that both are to be asserted, but only alternatively.¹² These three logical alternatives, the subjective, the objective and the dialectical attitudes of reality, each is further marked by one or the other of our conscious functions of knowing, feeling and willing. In our subjective attitude, it is knowing which predominates, in objective, it is feeling, in dialectical attitude it is willing: this gives rise to three kinds of philosophy; subjectivism, objectivism and absolutism. Each is valid, but only alternatively. KCB spoke of the absolute as alternatively of three forms; truth, freedom and value, assimilating with the alternation of knowing, feeling and willing respectively.

However, for KDB, 'Truth' and 'Absolute' were synonymous. In all of his later writings, he emphasized that Truth (Absolute) has to be formulated in different, alternative ways, equally good or bad, equally valid or invalid, equally true or false. Where there is no preferential treatment among these alternatives, there is thus absolute alternation between them; A or B, A may reject B or B may reject A. But when KDB explains with examples, he uses two words; "reject" and "ignore." In my view, this he does with the purpose, as KDB has a preference for subjective and transcendental; "The objective attitude merely ignores the subjective," not in a position to 'reject' the surplus of subjectivity, which is the source of transcendental freedom. KDB, in his late stage, realizes that the "Logic of Alternatives" entails the rejection of the alternative view. "One has to identify himself with one or the other of the different alternative ideologies –for all of them cannot be accepted."¹³ Our attitude towards other alternative possibilities will be mere acceptance of their plausibility. KDB, in his later work in Bengali *Bhartiya Samskriti O Anekanta Vedanta*, works out the distinction between acceptance or "admitting a legitimate possibility" –*asvikrta grahana* (a weak sense of acceptance) and side by side "acceptance as commitment" – *svikrta grahana* (a stronger sense of acceptance). He argues here for an apparently paradoxical view, that one can be committed to more than one fundamental philosophy, and he takes pain to relate and develop a richer concept of freedom, this *svikrta grahana* could not be accommodated in his logic of alternatives. KDB writes:

"alternation is intelligible only at the transcendental level. [...] At the level of nature, the level, i.e., of our normal daily life, there is no question of alternation [...] disjunction at the level of nature is always provisional; it is only at the transcendental level (at any of its sub-levels) that alternation can be, and often is, final disjunction."¹⁴

¹² K. Bhattacharyya, *Fundamentals of K.C. Bhattacharyya's Philosophy* (Calcutta: Saraswat Library, 1975).

¹³ K. Bhattacharyya, *Alternative Standpoints in Philosophy*, pp. 154-155.

¹⁴ K. Bhattacharya, "My Reactions," in D. Krishna (ed.), *The Philosophy of Kalidas Bhattacharyya* (Pune: Indian Philosophical Quarterly Publications, 1985), pp. 168-169.

At the lowest level, one has negative freedom—“freedom from....” The naturalist accounts of freedom are of this kind, and a higher level is reached by transcending nature; a provisional reality of nature or even ‘the natural’ could be a *mode* of the transcendental itself. Within the transcendental, KDB admits to many levels. The point conceived by both Bhattacharyyas is the novel idea in the history of ideas. Kant and Husserl stop at the primal stage of transcendence. Even Advaita-Vedantins, the champions of transcendentalism in Indian Philosophy, stop at a point beyond which further transcendence is possible, according to KDB. Freedom, as opposed to negative freedom, begins at the level of transcendence. One just stands conscious of one’s status as a free, conscious being but not in the additional sense of consciously doing anything else or knowing anything else. The Advaita-Vadantins or the Mahayana-Buddhists offer this kind of truncated freedom, but for KDB the positive freedom is “freedom to....” “Freedom to ...,” in the full-blooded sense, is achieved at the level higher than the truncated freedom; “a free attitude to everything in the world, it is free integral embrace all through; pure consciousness as pure act.” Philosophy, epistemology, and logic, all are meta-level studies and alternative possibilities. One may experience the absolute meta-level as silence; either thinning non-stop withdrawals or as a self-contained state. The second alternative is the alternative of whole hearted commitment; all at the same time, as in “freedom to....” The third epistemic alternative is “the different philosophies are the final alternatives and there is no ulterior unitary grand pedestal from where one could view these philosophies as alternatives,” the fourth is, “that at one and the same time one stands actually committed to all of these philosophies.”

The last two grand alternatives “offer themselves only to be rejected, but why we cannot say.” (It rejects the disjunctive unity of alternation, perhaps.) It needs to be all inclusive and, again and again, alternation at every stage, leading to further transcendence and further alternation, leading to “absolute positive freedom.” This Freedom to Everything and of nothing is the willing to everything and rejecting everything at the same time. Here, we find an extremely suggestive clue to the new solution to our problems, which are discussed in this paper.

Crisis of Post-Modernity: Nature and Remedy

NEELIMA SINHA

Introduction

The present era, termed as the 'Post-Modern era,' supported by positive sciences and modern technology, is experiencing a dynamic social, economic and political force, which lifts humans out of many fears and uncertainties from the primitive past and more recent medieval prejudices. However, the 'solid gains' are not enough, as these achievements have challenged, and are constantly challenging, the credentials of human belief and their applications in the areas of moral, religious, social, economic and other fields of life. This situation lands man in new and more gnawing fear and uncertainty. I view this fear and uncertainty as the most miserable crisis of this post-modern era.

To proceed, I would like to examine, first of all, two basic concepts of 'Crisis' and 'Post-Modernity.'

Crisis

'Crisis' (from the Greek term '*krisis*'), as per its dictionary meaning, is a time of great danger, difficulty or confusion when problems must be solved and important decisions must be made.¹ In its most popular meaning, 'crisis' is an event or situation of a complex system which is unstable and dangerous, or expected to lead an individual, group, community, or whole society to an unstable and dangerous situation.

'Crisis' has the following defining characteristics:

1. Crisis is an event or situation of complex systems. Simple systems do not enter crises. We can speak about a crisis of moral values, an economic or political crisis, but not a motor crisis.

2. It is, usually, understood that Crises occur abruptly, with little or no warning. These are surprising or unexpected.

However, this is a wrong notion. Of course, we find various natural crises; those are inherently unpredictable (volcanic eruptions, tsunami, etc.), but the nature always sends some signals for these 'unexpected events,' albeit the human being is still developing its sense to understand the warnings.

3. Crises bring a sudden change in the present situation. It is usually perceived that crises are deemed to be negative changes in the security, economic, political, societal, or environmental affairs. These lead towards the destruction of a positive phenomenon. These are a threat for the existence of a particular group or society and its important goals.

¹ "Crisis," in *Oxford English Dictionary*.

But there are scholars who hold that the vast or sudden change caused by a crisis is ultimately very positive or productive. According to Venette, Crisis is a process of transformation where the old system can no longer be maintained.²

4. Crisis needs an immediate and vast change in the old system.

5. Crisis occurs due to poor functioning or mal-functioning. Hence, crisis is not a 'total collapse' of a particular system, but it is an indication for change in a system or function. Crisis indicates that a system is still functioning, but not in proper manner.

6. But, at the same time, it is very difficult to decide that what type of change is required because change in entire old situation is neither possible nor accessible. In that 'bundle of situations,' there may be at least a few situations which must be preserved for growth, progress and various other reasons, hence, a total or radical change in the present situation would not be possible, at least not all at once.

7. Crisis occurs due to malfunction, hence there must be reasons for this malfunction or poor functioning.

8. Hence, to save the group or community an immediate remedy is required.

There are, mainly, two types of crises: (a) Physical Crises, (b) Crises in thought process.

Usually, scholars deal with crises as 'Physical Phenomena,' and make two groups of crises, named 'Natural Crises' and 'Man-made Crises.' It is thought that natural crises occur in nature due to nature's own course, and man has almost 'no control' over these events (e.g., volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, etc.) while man-made crises occur due to human efforts. But the environmentalists know that most of the crises that we face are created by human beings. Usually, we do wrong things for right reasons, e.g., we make dams on rivers for the sake of development, which may result in (and often results in) flood. The effect of our inability to attend to the likely results of our actions can result in crisis. Hence, it is a difficult task to make a water-tight-compartment between 'natural' and 'man-made crises.' However, it may be said that man-made crises are crises which occurred due to the thought process of human beings, creating chaos-like condition in the outer world.

Without entering this debate of whether each and every crisis is directly or indirectly man-made, we can assume that at least the most fatal crises of present day are somehow resultant of the thought process of human beings. Again, this may be a subject of vast debate over whether crises are mere a 'physical phenomenon' or whether these may be treated as 'non-physical' too; but, without entering even this debate, this paper will enter into a discussion over 'crises in our thought process' or 'the crises occurred by/occurring in our thought process' during the present era, which are termed as 'crises of post-modernity.'

Thus, to understand the problem, we shall have to examine the trends of 'Post-Modernity.'

² S.J. Venette, *Risk Communication in a High Reliability Organization: APHIS PPQ's inclusion of risk in decision making* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Pro-quest Information and Learning, 2003).

Post-Modernity

There are various meanings of the term 'Post-Modernity.' Sometimes, it refers 'post-modern philosophy,' sometimes 'post-modern art and culture,' but generally it is used to describe the economic and cultural state or condition of society which is said to exist after 'modernity.'

As a time frame, post-modernity, for a group of scholars, starts with the end of the Second World War, while a few others argue that post-modernity took place during the last two decades of 20th century. There is a group which opines that the last decade of last century witnessed the 'end of post-modernity' and that the present era may be named as the 'post-post-modern era.' However, even those who term present era as the 'post-modern era' admit that there is a remarkable difference between the last decade of 20th century and the first decade of 21st century. Hence, without entering the dispute to distinguish, we may divide the 'era of post-modernity' into two broader heads of 'early post modernity' and 'later post-modernity.'

Being students of philosophy, we are not much concerned with the time frame of 'modernity' or 'post modernity'; rather, we shall focus on the characteristic features of 'modernity' and 'post-modernity.'

Let us consider first, 'What is post-modernity?' Etymologically, 'post-modernity' is an era which starts 'after the era of modernity' or 'after the modern-era.' Sometimes, post-modernity is portrait as a 'reaction against modernity.' Then, questions arise: 'what is the modern era?' and 'what are its characteristic features?'

'Modernity,' which represents a large and dense current of thought, emerged during the period of Renaissance in Europe, having individualism, Mechanism, transform-ism, and Rationalism at its core. It refutes custom or tradition, history, stagnation, dogmas (and, derivatively, beliefs and faiths too), and all set norms of medieval European society. In Europe, modernity refers a post-medieval historical period which moves from feudalism towards capitalism, from religious fundamentalism towards secularism, from farming towards industrialization, from dogmas towards rationalism. Rationalism, empiricism, Marxism and existentialism are the most important European philosophical thoughts of the modern era.

'Modernity' is characterized by 'progress,' 'industrialization,' 'rationality,' 'Marxism,' and 'colonialism.' 'Nationalism' is a reaction against 'colonies' and is a characteristic feature of early post-modernity, while 'globalization' is a slogan and program introduced during the 'later post-modern era.'

These trends of modernity were not restricted to Europe or the West; rather, due to the British and other European Empires, they spread over the other parts of the globe, effecting the cultures and the social-economic-political set-ups of the regions, especially those of the European colonies. Thus, modernity occupied a huge space on the globe.

But, parallel to those, these 'other parts of the globe,' which embraced modernity either willingly or non-willingly, have their own culture, custom and philosophy; hence, the 'modernity' got a 'vivid-face' in amalgamation

with local factors. This amalgamation gives a clumsy face to modernity, having radically opposed colors and contradictory objectives.

The 'modern era' was distinguished as an 'era of science,' while the post-modern-era is described as 'an era of technology.' As technology demands a strong unified effort towards a definite goal, it compels an aspirant to eliminate each and everything which is not useful for his/her own interest. This sort of 'pragmatism' converts each and everything into a 'useful commodity,' destroying human values, individual relationships and the emotional life of a human being. It is true that 'man is a rational animal,' but this 'rationality' cannot be explained only in terms of 'reason.' 'Rationality' always demands a balance attitude between 'reason' and 'emotion,' which distinguishes a man from a machine like computer, and any other 'living being.'

This sort of pragmatism destroys the age-long institutions of 'marriage' and 'family,' resulting in the problems of single parenting, neglected parents, fatal individualism, loneliness, and so on. Not only that, as human personality is an integrated force of three factors –knowledge, action and emotion– this destruction of family and emotional life of the human being gives birth to split-personality and many other psychological disorders.

Globalization is the latest program of this post-modern era. It is claimed that the latest communication and information technology is webbing a global community, which makes countries members of the global village. Globalization appears to be a useful axiom of the post-Marxist world. It can be translated into deregulation and privatization, causing the rapid growth of trade, investment and capital markets which are tying countries together. Thus, Globalization is mainly a program having economic growth as its sole theme. Now it has been well-observed that globalization has opened a door for economic growth and enhancing financial prosperity for a particular class and some of the particular countries of this 'global village,' but, at the same time, it frustrates the deprived or 'less-having' mass. It could not be doubted that this 'global village' has an uneven face and soul on various fronts of its structure (e.g. education, finance, sovereignty, culture, health, environment, ecology, etc.); it is a great challenge for globalization to provide 'equal opportunity' to all. Hence, the 'program of globalization' seems to be turned into the 'program of inequality and injustice,' giving birth to religious, cultural, political and other types of terrorism on one hand, and, on the other, the excessive thrust for 'wealth and economic growth,' causing 'corruption' as a global phenomenon.³

The Remedy: The Philosophy of Total Vision

These days, the entire world and all of humanity is constantly facing various threats to its existence, such as war, terrorism, environmental disasters caused

³ R.C. Sinha, "Globalization: An Axiological Analysis," in N. Sinha and A.K. Srivastava (eds.), *Ethics at the Core of Globalization* (Bodh-Gaya, India: Department of Philosophy, Magadh University, 2009).

by environmental imbalance, decaying family and social values, etc. The philosophy of total vision, which paves the path of freedom and fearlessness, provides a man the strength, not only to bear these miseries, but it also gives him strength to fight against these evils.

There are two great pillars upon which all human well-being and human progress rest: firstly, the inner world of the human being, and secondly, the outer world in which a man is bound to live. Though modern sciences, which claim to be the most powerful tool of human progress, deal with both aspects of human life, the inner self as well as the outer world of man, by its own method of scientific analysis, these studies and efforts are still to get a better result, as the modern man appears to be more self-centred, more harassed and more frustrated.

In this peculiar situation, the Vedic philosophy of ancient India provides a comprehensive tool to overcome these crises of the post-modern age. The *Upaniṣad-s*,⁴ the most developed and well-known concluding part of *Veda-s*, developed, ages ago, the art of living⁵ named as ‘*adhyātma-vidyā*,’ which reconciles the inner world of man and the phenomenal world of out-side. According to *Vedānta philosophy*, the inner world of the human being, or any living being, is neither merely a part of his physical body (as portrayed by modern psychology) nor is it totally different from this phenomenal or outer world. Indeed, according to *Vedānta* philosophy, the entire universe is pervaded by one and only one spiritual power, known as ‘*ātman*’ (the self). The *vidyā* and *avidyā* (knowledge and ignorance), *ātman* and *anātman* (self and non-self), *Brahman* and *jagat* (the Ultimate Reality and the phenomenal world) are not different, but are basically one and non-dual. The partial view, or the *avidyā*, presents the partial world-view which portrays the world in diversity, but the *Brahman-Vidyā*, or the ‘proper knowledge,’ presents the world in its totality, where all opposition and contradictions emerge into oneness. The *brahma-vidyā*, spiritual in nature, is known as ‘*adhāyātma-vidyā*’ or ‘spiritual-science.’

The *Mundakopaniṣad* classifies knowledge into two broad heads of *aparā vidyā* and *parā vidyā*.⁶ The *aparā vidyā* contains the knowledge of this mundane world, acquired by all of the means as stated in modern epistemology.⁷ All disciplines of human knowledge, either be it physical sciences like physics, chemistry, etc. or mental sciences like psychology, and even all studies

⁴ For a brief Introduction of *Upaniṣad*, see N. Sinha, “Crisis of Modern Era and the Philosophy of Total Vision (*samyak-jñāna*),” in S.N. Dwivedi, B.R. Singh (eds.), *Vedic Heritage of Global Harmony And Peace in Modern Context* [New Delhi, India: D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd., 2012].

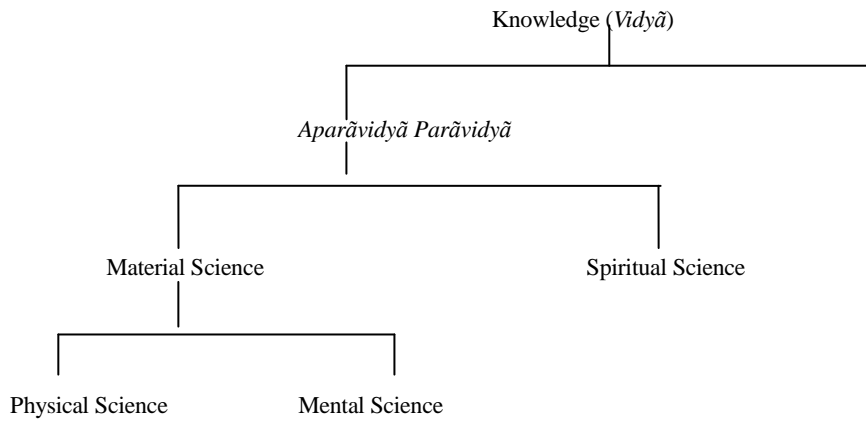
⁵ Compare: ‘How one should live’ –Socrates.

⁶ *Mundakopaniṣad* 1/4.

⁷ W.P. Montague, *The Ways of Knowing* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1925); S. Satprakashananda, *Methods of Knowledge: According to Advaita Vedanta*, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1965); D.M. Datta, *The Six Ways of Knowing* (Calcutta, India: Calcutta University Press, 1960). N. Sinha, *Bharatiya Jnana-Mimamsa* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2004).

about religion and all the knowledge displayed in *Upaniṣad* or *veda* are placed under the head of *aparā vidyā*.⁸ This *aparā vidyā* may be classified under two heads of material science and spiritual science. Further this 'material science' is sub-divided into two more heads: 1) 'physical science,' or sciences which deal with the world of outer experience in which a man is, or for that matter all beings are, bound to live, and: 2) 'mental science,' which deals with the inner world of man, or, for that matter, of the entirety of living beings (e.g. Psychology). The spiritual science contains all of the knowledge displayed in religion, but it does not restrict itself to religion only.

This classification can better be shown by the graph given below:



The Spiritual Science has its own method, different from material science. It is the method, not the subject matter, by which spiritual Science is distinguished from material science. From its very beginning, human knowledge adopted two ways of thinking: Reason-based Method, and Mystical Method. Spiritual Science, though it is said to be more dependent on mysticism, restricted itself neither to the reasoning nor to mere mysticism. Though it starts with reasoning, it crosses the boundary of reasoning and sense experience. This method of Spiritual Science is well versed in the *Upaniṣad*: "from whence words, and all the senses including reason fails to reach."⁹ Spiritual Science or *adhyātma Vidyā* crosses the bar. This Spiritual Science has great utility even in the phenomenal world, as it is based on a principle that the entire world is an expression or manifestation of one, and only one, 'Reality,' which is pure Existence (*sat*), pure Consciousness (*cit*), and, pure Bliss (*ānanda*) –The *Saccidānanda*. Obviously, the method of Spiritual Science is applicable in the very spell of life, and even beyond it.

A clear cut line of demarcation can be drawn between Material Science and Spiritual Science. The Material Science starts with sense-experience; it deals, only, with the problems of this phenomenal world, which is a subject of sense experience. Sense experience is the source and limit of these sciences.

⁸ *Mundaka* 1/5.

⁹ "yato vāco nivartante aprāpya mansā saha," *Taitaria* 2/4.

Adopting the method of analysis, it divides the world into small spheres and uses it to see the things in its particularity. On the other hand, the Spiritual Science has a 'total vision.' It looks the things in 'totality.' The *Upaniṣad-s* teach about *vidyā* and *avidyā*.¹⁰ 'To see things in their particularity' is called '*avidyā*' and to see them in their real nature, that is to say, in totality, is called '*vidyā*'. It is further stated that a person who knows the world in its totality acquires deathlessness, *amṛtatva*, as he knows the real nature of the Self, its immortality.¹¹ This *amṛtatva* gives birth to *abhaya*, fearlessness, the strength to fight against evils.

Modern Science is constantly searching for the unity between the diverse areas of experience, as well as the areas beyond it. This is the reason for which a scientific theory is considered to be more successful, which is applicable to the vaster area of human experience or beyond it. The *Upaniṣad-s* succeeded to resolve the problem, as they find a single and un-dual reality running beneath these diversities, as stated in the *Vṛguvalli* of *Taitariyopaniṣad*. Elucidating this Upanisadic idea, Swami Vivekananda says, "There is really no difference between matter, mind and spirit. They are only different phases of experiencing the one. This very world is seen by the five senses as matter, by the very wicked as hell, by the good as heaven, and by the perfect as Good."¹² How does this miracle take place? Swami Vivekananda argues,

"Just as the (other) mind or the modern European mind, wants to find solution of life and of all the sacred problems of being by searching into the external world, so also did our forefathers; and just the European failed, they failed also. But the western people never made a move more, they remained there; they failed in the search for the solution of the greater problem of life and death in the external world, and there they remain stranded. Our forefathers also found it impossible, but were bolder in declaring the utter helplessness of the sense to find the solution. [...] There are various sentences which declare the utter helplessness of the senses, but they did not stop there; they fell back upon the internal nature of the man, they went to get the answer from their own sole, they became introspective; they gave up external nature as a failure, as nothing could be done there, as no hope, no answer, could be found; they discover that dull, dead matter would not give them truth, and they fell back upon the shining sole of man, and there the answer was found."¹³

This spiritual science advocates for '*samyak-jñāna*,' or 'total vision,' hence, this spiritual science provides a tool for the development of the total-vision or *samyak-jñāna*. The philosophy of *samyak-jñāna* presents a comprehensive view of life, a vision for non-dualism, where the difference between

¹⁰ *Śwetāswataropaniṣad* 5/11.

¹¹ *Īsopaniṣad* 9-11.

¹² S. Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. V (Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1946⁷), p. 272.

¹³ S. Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. III (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1962⁸), pp. 330-331.

self and non-self is abolished, and man gets freedom from his narrowness and wicked ego. With the development of this total vision, one knows the real nature of the self. The development of this total vision overcomes the various crises of present era, like war, corruption and terrorism. On the other hand, the awakening of this total-vision exhilarates the forces of social harmony and world peace.

It is often argued that *Ísopanişad* is a religious concept pertaining to ancient Hinduism, and it has nothing to do with the recent developments of the modern and so called 'secular world.' It is misconceived also that this 'Spiritual Science' is speculative in nature and has no practical utility. To overcome these misconceptions, one should ponder over the following verse of the *Ísopanişad*:

"He who restricts himself to *avidyā* (knowledge of the empirical world) is wandering in the dark, but one who denies this world of appearance is wandering in darkest."¹⁴

Upanişad-s consider the world as *māyā*, but this *māyā* is not an illusion. *Māyā* is mere a statement about the facts which are seen in the world around us. It refers the inner contradictions involved in our experience of world and in our knowledge of it. These contradictions will remain, so long as we remain at the sensate level, so long as we fail to take into account the *ātman*, the self behind the non-self, the one behind many. Yet all of our experiences and knowledge in the sphere of *māyā* are experiences and knowledge of *ātman* coming through the sense organs; hence, they are not illusory, but true.

Indeed, this spiritual science moves in two directions: 1) the direction towards the physical world, and; 2) the direction towards the meta-physical world. Running towards its first direction, it crosses through all of the material sciences and collects all of them with in its arena by its own method. Ascending towards its second goal, the revelation of the Ultimate Reality, it dissolves itself in mysticism. Hence, it provides, successfully, a tool or method for the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality, as well as how to deal with the practical problems of daily life.

This method of Spiritual Science is well displayed in the method adopted in the *Veda and Upanişad*. The *Veda and Upanişad*, on the one hand, contain the ancient Indian theories which are more admired in the areas of modern Physics, Chemistry, Maths, Medical Science and so on, and, on the other hand, *Veda and Upanişad* are found to be more relevant and useful for mental healing. Indeed, *Veda and Upanişad* are religious as well as philosophical texts. As religious texts, they discover the truth of the inner world, and as philosophical texts, these synthesize the science of the inner world with other sciences of the outer world, to present a unified vision of total reality. The *Veda-s and Upanişad-s* do not speak of any 'supernatural element,' rather they speak of a 'super- sensual revelation.'

The term 'Total-Vision' is primarily coined by Swami Vivekananda, which is, somehow, a translation for the word '*samyak-jñāna*,' variously used in In-

¹⁴ "andham tamah pravişanti yah avidyāmupāsate."

dian philosophy from its very beginning. The traditional epistemology, be it Indian or Western, distinguishes between proper or scientific knowledge and the knowledge acquired by a common man in his daily life for the sake of his practical purpose. Philosophy, though usually it does not dare to disregard this 'day-to-day knowledge of a common man,' is always indulged in the search of 'proper knowledge,' which may satisfy the human intellect and may help him to progress towards a higher goal. The Indian philosophy, which has a major goal to provide the human being freedom from the miseries of life by means of spirituality, divides all disciplines of knowledge into two classes: 'proper knowledge' and mere 'knowledge.' The '*samyak-jñāna*' is the term used there for 'proper knowledge' for which Swami Vivekananda coined the term 'Total-Vision.'

The vision to understand the world in its totality is called 'total-vision.' As it is stated in the *Upaniṣad*, there are five stages of consciousness: the physical body (*annamaya kośa*), the vital-force (*prāṇamaya kośa*), the mental or the inner world (*manomaya kośa*), the conscious stage (*vijñānamayakośa*), and the full bliss (*ānandamaya kośa*).¹⁵ These five states are the manifestation of one and only-one, non-dual Reality, the *Sacchidānanda Brahman*, the pure existence, the pure consciousness, the full bliss. To see all of these sheaths (*kośa*), all of the diversities, in its real nature, as the manifestation of the one and unified Reality, this *Sacchidānanda* is called the 'total vision.' *Adhyatma vidyā* provides a method by which one can acquire 'Total Vision.' The *Guru*, which acquires, in Indian tradition, the place of God, shows a person the path of total vision. This process is well demonstrated in *Yama-Naciketa samvāda* (dialogues) of *Kaṭhapaniṣad*.

When a man acquires this total vision, he attains the Ultimate Freedom (*mokṣa*) and the fearlessness (the *abhaya*). There are three types of Freedom: the freedom from physical evils, the freedom from mental bondage, and the freedom from intellectual hindrance. Freedom (*mokṣa*) and fearlessness (*abhaya*) are two key words taught by *Upaniṣad*, which makes a man eligible to fight with all of the evils of the world. Swami Vivekananda says,

"... strength is what the *Upaniṣad* speak to me from every page. This is the one great thing to remember, it has been the one great lesson I have been taught in my life. Strength, it says, strength, O man, be not weak. 'Are there no human weaknesses?' –Says man. 'There are,' say the *Upaniṣad-s*, 'but will more weakness heal them, would you try to wash dirt with dirt? Will sin cure sin, weakness cure weakness.' [...] Ay, it is the only literature in the world where you find the word '*abhih*,' 'fearless,' used again and again; in no other scripture in the world in this adjective applied either to God or to man. [...] And the *Upaniṣad-s* are the great mine of strength. Therein lays strength enough to invigorate the whole world. The whole world can be vivified, made strong, energized through them. They will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the

¹⁵ *Taittiriopaniṣad, Bhrguwalli.*

miserable, and the down-trodden of all races, all creeds, all sects, to stand on their feet and be free. Freedom –physical freedom, mental freedom and spiritual freedom– are the watch words of the *Upaniṣad-s*.¹⁶

These two terms –‘*mokṣa*’ and ‘*abhaya*’ are ethical terms. Ethics is a concept which has its meaning in the context of society.¹⁷ The society, or even the world of which a person is part, is a word of change and death. A man has craving for eternity and deathlessness. The craving, and its satisfaction, is the Ultimate goal of a philosophy, and also for a religion. Vedic philosophy and religion provides a solution to this problem. For this purpose, it provides two paths of ‘*pravṛtti*’ (action) and ‘*nivṛtti*’ (going out of the action). The path of action or *pravṛtti* gives ‘*abhudaya*,’ social welfare, through the efficient control and manipulation of the physical, political, economic, and the entire social environment, while the *nivṛtti* ensures ‘*niḥśreyasa*,’ spiritual freedom through an equally efficient control and manipulation of the world and the inner life.

The ‘*pravṛtti*’ and ‘*nivṛtti*,’ the personal perfection and the social well-being, the inner spiritual world and the outer phenomenal world; though these appear to be the opponents of each other, in fact are the supplements of each other. Both of them are the two sides of a single coin. When the total vision arises, this duality or the ‘perpetual conflict’ vanishes and a man becomes ‘the knower.’ This unique feature of total vision is clearly explained by *Jagad Guru Samkarācārya* in the very opening paragraph of his commentary on *Srimad Bhāgavad Gīta*:

“Two fold is the dharma as taught by the Vedas, one characterised by the *pravṛtti* (action) and the other characterised by *nivṛtti* (inaction). Both together constitute the stabilizing factor of the world, and the two causes of the *abhudaya* (worldly welfare) and *niḥśreyasa* (spiritual freedom) of all beings.”¹⁸

Conclusion

The present millennium, which is termed as the ‘Post-Modern Era,’ though it claims to run a multi-dimensional program for human development, is basically an economic program, having the concept of the ‘Global-Village’ at its core. This programme of ‘Globalization,’ at a glance, looks like the Indian concept of ‘*vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*’ (let the entire world be a family), but, indeed, it is different from it. It gives birth to various ethical problems due to its materialistic vision. At present, we have no option but to accept it; but this wind of Globalization, flowing over the world, must have a more value-oriented face. It must be more anthropocentric, more altruistic, and must be spir-

¹⁶ Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. III, pp. 237-38.

¹⁷ A.R. Lacy, *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976).

¹⁸ “*Dwividho hi vedokto dharmah, pravṛttilakṣaṇo nivṛttilakṣaṇaṣca kāraṇam, prānīnamsakṣad abhudyaniḥśreyasahetuh.*”

itual. The teaching contained in following passage may give a right direction to this economic programme:

“*sri*, wealth, is the product of intelligent labour; it comes from the efficient yoking of knowledge to productive enterprise; and it does not come by any other means, magical or mystical. Pure science is knowledge, *Lucifera*; when it flows into the applied field of invention and discovery and develops technological efficiency, it becomes wealth and power, *fructifera*. This is the only source of material wealth for man, and on his freedom from want and fear in external world. But freedom from want and fear in the external field of life does not constitute the totality of his welfare. Disintegration, or want of integration, in his inner life will turn his external success in defeats. Hence, to make his *sri*, wealth, flow into true *vijay*, victory, he must take the help of the science and technique of religion to obtain knowledge and mastery of his inner environment; thus only can he achieve total victory over want and fear. This is the true welfare of man, *paramşreyah*. And a society of such men and women will be a society where justice and moral evolution, *dhruva niti*, will reign supreme and steady.”¹⁹

Although it is true that the humans of the present millennium have learnt much from history, that history is a victim of deconstruction (Jacques Derrida). True, humans have acquired much of their development, but this narrow development has thrown humans into the reign of frustration, terror and uncertainty. Thus, humanity needs a constant spiritual counselling, the counselling of this Spiritual Science, which is neither the intellectual property of India, nor an ‘ethnic verse.’ The philosophy provided by *Veda* and *Upaniṣad* is a *Sanātana Dharma*; ‘the way of life’ (*dharma*) suggested for ever (*sanātana*).

¹⁹ S. Ranganathananda, *The Message of Upaniṣad* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1971²), p.153.

PART IV

Global Crisis, Economy, Environment

Markets, Commons and the Dystopia of “Spontaneous Order”

DENIS G. DROSOS

The notion of “spontaneous order,” the *mot d’ordre* of neoliberalism after Hayek’s *Constitution of Liberty*, is a concept originally coined by Michael Polanyi. As opposed to constructed order (taxis), spontaneous order (kosmos) is supposed, by Hayek, to denote the social order produced by the market alone, without any government-directed plan or corrective intervention.¹

Hayek’s notion of “spontaneous order” is presented by him as having its roots in the Scottish Enlightenment.² Indeed, the sources of such an idea can be traced back to Mandeville’s paradox of private vices turned into public benefits,³ and to Adam Smith’s critical reformulation of it into what he called “unintended consequences.” Yet, in the transition from Adam Smith’s “unintended consequences” to Hayek’s “spontaneous order,” there is a missing link. Actually it was Michael Polanyi who first coined this notion. Hayek, although there is clear evidence that he was acquainted with Polanyi’s work, has never acknowledged his indebtedness to him.⁴ Nevertheless, Polanyi, with no influence from the Scottish Enlightenment whatsoever, has made use

¹ F.A. Hayek, *Law, Legislation and Liberty: A New Statement of the Liberal Principles of Justice and Political Economy*, Vol. 1: *Rules and Order* (London, Melbourne and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), pp. 37, 156, fn 8, 9.

² F.A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp.160-161; F.A. Hayek, *Individualism and Economic Order* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), pp. 33-56; F.A. Hayek, *The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of Socialism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 143-147.

³ B. de Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Public Benefits*, in two volumes (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988). See also F.A. Hayek, “Dr Bernard Mandeville,” in *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1978), 249-266.

⁴ The theory of “spontaneous order” is exposed for the first time in M. Polanyi’s earlier works: *Science, Faith, and Society* (1946; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964) and *The Logic of Liberty* (1951; rpt. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1998). In his later work [mainly, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); *The Tacit Dimension*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966) and *Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976)] the term is not used any more, but the notion remains tacitly at work. On this issue see S. Jacobs, “Michael Polanyi and Spontaneous Order, 1941-1951,” *Tradition and Discovery: The Polanyi Society Periodical*, 24 (1997/1998), 14-28, and S. Jacobs, “Michael Polanyi’s Theory of Spontaneous Orders,” *Review of Austrian Economics*, 11 (1999), 111-127. For a classical alternative approach, attributing the paternity of “spontaneous order” to Hayek, see R. Hamowy, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Theory of Spontaneous Order* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987). For an account of the genealogy of the term, see N. Barry, “The Tradition of Spontaneous Order,” *Literature of Liberty*, 5 (1982), 7-58. See also C. Smith, *Adam Smith’s Political Philosophy: The Invisible Hand and Spontaneous Order* (London: Routledge, 2006).

of the device of “spontaneous order” in a way, from which Hayek’s usage silently but distinctively departs. Dealing with the problem of whether scientific knowledge and research should or not be independent from political overall aims, Polanyi defends the freedom and independence of the scientific process, and claims that scientific communities should be given the freedom to commit themselves to their particular research interests. This would result, so he claims, in a spontaneous process of the mutual fertilization of ideas and knowledge, which would result in an unplanned benefit for society at large. Such development is not conceived as limited to scientific research alone, but it is applicable to many fields of social activities, such as the production of common law, the free market exchanges, and the formation of languages.

Three very important premises are distinctive of this conception: 1) *Persuasion* is crucial; spontaneity is not conceived as an automatic passive mechanism, but entails the active endeavor of the participants to formulate arguments and persuade the other members of the communities. Scientists are obliged to formulate their hypotheses in convincing arguments exposed to public scrutiny, critique and verification. Lawyers are obliged to provide foundations for their judgments, based on the interpretation of precedents. Producers are obliged to persuade consumers that their commodities meet their needs, in a context of a perfect competition, etc. It is worth noting that such processes of persuasion are akin to and even form the keystone of Smith’s conception of sympathy. 2) *Society* at large is never conceived as a “spontaneous order” in itself. For Polanyi, there is rather a pluralism of “spontaneous orders” at work in free society, together with other instances of orders that are not spontaneous. What is at stake for Polanyi is to show that a totally planned society would be detrimental both to individual freedom and to the search for truth. To put it in other words, the overall commitment of society to a predetermined common claim of truth would be at risk to result in a tyranny, inhibiting the free intercourse of plural “spontaneous orders.” Yet, he never seems to suggest that a model of overall “spontaneous order,” forged at the image of the marketplace, for instance, should be an eligible self-sufficient alternative to a planned model. Nothing could guarantee that partial and peripheral spontaneous *orders* would necessarily result in an overall social spontaneous order.⁵ 3) Polanyi introduces a distinction between *private* and *public* freedom. Private freedom refers to the free pursuit of individuals’ free chosen aims, irrespectively of their being beneficial or not to society, while public freedom refers to the conscious commitment of individuals to public values and ideals aiming towards a free society. The latter relies on the moral responsibility of all citizens, and their commitment to what Polanyi refers to as “spiritual realities.”⁶

⁵ M. Polanyi never seems to conceive of society as whole as a spontaneous order; he never mention a spontaneous order *of* society, limiting his interest in spontaneous orders *in* society (law, science, production in a free market). See Jacobs, “Michael Polanyi and Spontaneous Order, 1941-1951,” p. 22.

⁶ This distinction is introduced in the essay “The Growth of Thought in Society,” *Economica*, 8 (1941), 428-456, p. 428. Public freedom is more characteristic of liberal societies

Interestingly, while ignoring the Scottish Enlightenment tradition, Polanyi provides a scheme of society where free markets alone cannot guarantee the felicitous outcome of a general harmony and order, being just one of the partial spontaneous orders at work. Society is not to be conceived at the model of markets, and not all selfish attitudes are to be tolerated or, even less, vindicated, as a vehicle of public benefits. Public responsibility is imperatively required, and this is not a mechanic outcome of the spontaneity of the markets. The latter could not and should not be considered as *the* general model for any social bond tying society together. Polanyi seems to put his finger on the awkward problem of spontaneous and not spontaneous orders –or markets and commons⁷– working together in a tense, and even crisis-ridden, cohabitation.

Hayek, on the other hand, promotes a vision of the free society conceived as a “spontaneous order” in itself. The keystone of such a conception is modeled on the market place and catallaxy,⁸ as the general social bond. As “money is one of the greatest instruments of freedom ever invented by man,”⁹ any social relation between free people is reduced to catallaxy. Any other bond mediating, correcting or regulating catallaxy would be a falsification of free-

and implies that all members of society act on belief in “mental objects” such as truth, justice, and love of humanity. Public liberty is meant to set limits on irresponsible private liberties. Whereas Polanyi initially appears to locate public liberty in ‘spontaneous orders,’ he later seems to move to a more comprehensive understanding of ideal objects (and corresponding public liberties) as extended in the wider society and not being confined to spontaneous orders. M. Polanyi, “Foundations of Academic Freedom,” *The Australian Journal of Science*, 11 (1949), 107-115; rpt. in *The Logic of Liberty* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951). On the deployment of Polanyi’s ideas on this issue, see Jacobs, “Michael Polanyi and Spontaneous Order, 1941-1951,” p. 21.

⁷ Such thing as a pure, and unmixed “market society” historically has never existed. Markets are everywhere mediated by historically constituted forms of commons. By the conventional notion ‘commons’ I mean, all the range of social relations, not totally reducible to marketisation. Markets have always been functioning mediated, limited or animated by social forms such as politics, familial ties, cultures, traditions, languages, values, religions, manners, morals, knowledges and even alternative forms of production and exchange, and mostly political institutions and civil and civic relations. Such relations are not immune to marketisation, and the borderline between marketised and non-marketised sphere is perpetually subject to changes. Such changes are never indisputable and never without leaving a heterogeneous remainder of non-marketised relations. Even market itself cannot work without a set of rules and regulations, the implementation and observance of which is a political issue. It would be an illusion akin to totalitarian rather than to liberal thinking, to imagine that all plurality of social forms could, or even worst, *should* be reduced to a uniform canon, be it a religious doctrine, a planification project, or even the ‘pure’ market order. For a good illustration of this, see the seminal work by M. Polanyi’s older brother K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, debunking the myth of ‘self-regulating’ markets, and pointing out the irreducibility of society into market. K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001). See esp. Part Two: “Rise and Fall of Market Economy; I. Satanic Mill,” *Ibid.*, pp. 35-135.

⁸ Hayek, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, Vol. 2: *The Mirage of Social Justice*, pp. 108-109, 185; fn 4.

⁹ F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 67.

dom, a remnant of “tribal ethics,”¹⁰ an offspring of “constructivism”¹¹ leading to serfdom and totalitarianism. Any sense of commons should be extinguished and eliminated, so that markets alone should be the one and only regulator of social order. Such an order is named by the Greek word *Kosmos*, as opposed to any other non-spontaneous order, named also by the Greek word *Taxis*, which is tantamount to unfreedom.¹² When it comes to ethics, morality is reduced to a functional supplement of the catallaxy system.¹³ It would be inaccurate to see Hayek’s vision at his nominal value, as “the only” alternative to a completely planned and collectivist economy. Such a system could be considered, for so many reasons, as ineligible and obsolete, without having to adhere to Hayek’s principles. Hayek’s real enemy is any social arrangement intermingling with *pure* catallaxy, whether consciously intended or even spontaneous. In a really pluralistic system of overlapping spontaneous *orders*, one could easily imagine spontaneous practices coming from the sphere of the ‘commons,’ not reducible to the logic of, or even inventing alternatives to, the free market. Hayek is adamant in condemning such eventualities, as marks of spontaneous “tribal ethics.” Such practices should be cautiously prevented and severely oppressed. Thus, it is not spontaneity against constructivism, but a particular model of spontaneity (that of the markets) against any other mode of sociability, spontaneous or not, at which Hayek aims. This attitude seems to ironically account for his deliberate, as much as awkward for a champion of liberty, recourse to a series of authoritative, anything but “spontaneous” administrative regulations for the safeguarding of his cherished freedom of the markets.¹⁴ We can detect in Hayek’s conception of “spontaneous order” the

¹⁰ Hayek, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, Vol. 1, pp. 133, 147.

¹¹ F.A. Hayek, *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 3-22.

¹² “Attempts to ‘correct’ the order of the market lead to its destruction” (Hayek, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, Vol. 2, p.142).

¹³ “A system of morals also must produce a functional order, capable of maintaining the apparatus of civilization which it presupposes” (Hayek, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, Vol. 2, p. 98). Such system of rules should be accepted “without question” (*Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 105). As there is no room for any conception of rules on a basis wider than that produced by the market order, “the test of ‘universalizability’ applied to any one rule will amount to a test of compatibility of the whole system of accepted rules...” (*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 28).

¹⁴ See Hayek’s suggestions for a constitutional reform, in Hayek, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, Vol. 3: *The Political Order of a Free People*, pp. 113-149. The idea is that “... the powers of the majority must be limited.” This is the logical outcome of the definition of competition: “Competition is, after all, always a process in which a small number makes it necessary for larger numbers to do what they do not like, be it to work harder, to change habits, or to devote a degree of attention, continuous application, or regularity to their work which without competition would not be needed” (*Ibid.*, p.77). Thus, not surprisingly, “In a society in which the spirit of enterprise has not yet spread, the majority has power to prohibit whatever it dislikes, it is most unlikely that it will allow competition to arise” (*Ibid.*, p. 77). This results in a distrust of democracy. “I doubt whether a functioning market has ever newly arisen under an unlimited democracy, and it seems likely that unlimited democracy will destroy it where it has grown up” (*Ibid.*, p. 77). Very telling has been his speech in Chile, during Pinochet’s dictatorship, in favor of authoritarian regimes protecting markets’

marks of an ambitious, radical and all-embracing theory, with *quasi*-totalitarian pretensions. As Hayek claims the heritage of Adam Smith, one is entitled to check his conception of “spontaneous order” against the background of a theory articulated two centuries before him in a totally different context.

Mandeville has put forward the idea that human industry could thrive and the economy could flourish, when individual action is fueled by selfish passions rather than by moral concerns for the public interest. Using the parable of a hive, Mandeville meant to show that humans do not need (no more than bees) to be moved by lofty moral motives, so that the outcome of their economic actions may be beneficial to the whole society. Challenging his contemporaries' efforts to reconcile private interests and virtues, Mandeville argued that, in a commercial society, traditional morality was made redundant, if not detrimental to both economic improvement and social order. To put it bluntly, Mandeville's ambivalent irony cut through the Gordian knot of early modernity; if public benefit is reduced to economic flourishing, then the best way to achieve this is to let private vanity go unimpeded to stimulate human actions.

Mandeville's paradox has proved very intriguing and inspiring for the thinkers of the Scottish Enlightenment. Adam Smith in particular gave it a nuanced reception. Deconstructing Mandeville's paradox, Smith tried to divorce the idea of economic “spontaneity” from the idea of moral redundancy.

To put it as briefly as we can, in his *Wealth of Nations* (WN), Smith draws a sketch of a self-regulated exchange economy. In a commercial society with an extended division of labour, everyone acts as a commodity producer, and earns his living by satisfying the needs of others, while his main concern is his own interest. Thus, an unintended order is produced, *via* the interplay of impersonal forces of the market. In this way, a virtuous circle of competition, allocation of resources, increase of industry and productivity, and cheapening of commodities, results to the benefit of all, the lower ranks of society included. Thus far, Hayek's claims to A. Smith's legacy seem to be vindicated and justified. But if we look at the big image, things begin to change. The target of Smith's criticism was not, and historically could not be, neither a system of planned economy, nor a mixed economy regulated by any principles of social justice. What his target really was, is stated explicitly by him. An entire book (IV) of the WN is dedicated to the critique of the “Mercantile System.” What is the “Mercantile System” and what is wrong with it, according to Smith? In theory, the mercantilist doctrine maintained that the wealth of a nation consisted in the amount of gold possessed by it. In practice, this system consisted in the monopolization of entire sectors of the economy by great companies, assisted by government policies. What was obnoxious to A. Smith's eyes, was the concentration of economic power in few hands, and its political counterpart, the subordination of the government to the particular interests of the

liberties better than democracies, *El Mercurio*, San Diago, Chile 19 Avril, 1981 [cited by R. Cristi, *Le libéralisme conservateur: Trois essais sur Schmitt, Hayek et Hegel* (Paris: Éditions Kimé, 1993), p. 12].

monopolies. Against this hideous combination of private rapaciousness and public corruption, Smith articulates his idea of a “system of natural liberty,” based on unimpeded economic competition and impartial government at the service of commerce, and not of particular shopkeepers.¹⁵

Furthermore, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (TMS), Smith addresses a severe critique against Mandeville’s idea that improvement in commerce is necessarily fueled by individual vice. Smith provides a new understanding of morality, based on an unending process of mutual recognition, moral judgment and accountability, through sympathy. Any agent is at the same time a spectator of the conduct of others and of his own. Moved by his/her desire to gain the approbation of others –which, for Smith, is one of the strongest desires of human nature¹⁶– any agent is interested in moderating his/her natural preference for him/herself and is engaged in a kind of “bargaining,” searching for compromises that would accommodate his/her self-love *and* the recognition of others, by benefiting them. Through this “commerce of sympathy”¹⁷ and mutual moral judgment, the idea of an impartial spectator is formed, a kind of imaginary higher tribunal of moral judgment, an “inmate of the breast,”¹⁸ to whom any actor is accountable. By this interplay of persuasion, imagination and self-command, a set of moral standards is established, and inductively the rules of justice are produced.¹⁹ Thus, A. Smith provides an

¹⁵ A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* [*The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, Vol. II, ed. R.H. Campbell and A. S. Skinner (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund., 1981)], Book IV, vii.c.63.

¹⁶ A.L. Macfie, *The Individual in Society: Papers on Adam Smith* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967), p. 75.

¹⁷ This felicitous expression was coined by E. Heath, “The Commerce of Sympathy: Adam Smith on the Emergence of Morals,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 33 (1995), 447-466.

¹⁸ A. Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* [*The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, Vol. I, ed. D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund., 1982)], Book III, iii. Compare this to Hayek’s encomium to Mandeville, in Hayek, *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas*, Ch. 15: “Dr Bernard Mandeville.”

¹⁹ Furthermore, the moral agents are not to contented to gain the approbation and the praise of other, but they are stimulated to become praiseworthy: “The love and admiration which we naturally conceive for those whose character and conduct we approve of, necessarily dispose us to desire to become ourselves the objects of the like agreeable sentiments, and to be as amiable and as admirable as those whom we love and admire the most. Emulation, the anxious desire that we ourselves should excel, is originally founded in our admiration of the excellence of others. Neither can we be satisfied with being merely admired for what other people are admired. We must at least believe ourselves to be admirable for what they are admirable. But, in order to attain this satisfaction, we must become the impartial spectators of our own character and conduct” (Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Book III.2.3). Regardless of whether this process results in producing unintended consequences compatible with free market order, it certainly is not reducible to a preconceived system of rules meant to be functional to such an order. Thus moral agents are not conceived as trapped in a selfish pursuit of vanity satisfaction, resulting in a conformism, but they could and should be engaged in a virtuous circle of moral development. Although this process is not dictated by any authority, it is open to wider moral values and is not reduci-

account of moral development, which may be compatible with, but not reducible to the market relations. This is not a set of *a priori* constructed rules for the smooth function of the "spontaneous" market order, but a parallel, complex process of moral development, where spontaneity results into normativity and so on. It is noteworthy that such "moral order" is not reducible to the "market order," as it is built on a continuum of intersubjective intercourse, in which agents are engaged both *qua* merchants and *qua* persons. In a civilized society of independent and propertied individuals, it is not just *markets*, but also *commons* that are partly organized and regulated through the workings of sympathy. Persuasion, imagination, and self-command entail and reform what is indivisibly common: language, values, moral standards.

Smith seems to provide a modern understanding of moral community, on the basis of mutual recognition between independent individuals, unlike the traditional community, based on pre-established hierarchies and bonds of dependence. Moreover, Smith seems to ascribe great importance to the agent's moral and intellectual competencies, as a requirement for his project of natural liberty. That is why, in the so called "alienation passage,"²⁰ he suggests a public education system as a remedy for the growing incapacity of the bulk of working mankind, doing the same repetitive, mechanical movements all day, as a means to practice their imagination, to engage in dialogue, and to partake in sympathetic moral sentiments. *Commercial* society is vindicated as a *civilized* society (the terms being used interchangeably), in the measure that economic improvement is attended by moral development of independent and responsible individuals. We cannot fully understand this Smithian *proviso*, unless we realize the nature of its economic context; simple, *real* commodity production, based on private property, where each individual relates to the others both as commodity owner and as moral agent.

Summing up, Smith's "unintended consequences" was a complex conception of sociability, entailing an elaborated moral theory. The context of Smith's unplanned social order (his "system of natural liberty") entails:

- a) a commercial society, before industrial revolution i.e. a society where individuals related to each other as merchants exchanging *real* commodities (goods and services) of equal value, serving each others' needs;
- b) that the agents of economic exchanges are the very moral agents, i.e. they are natural persons related to each other both economically and morally;
- c) that monopolies of economic and political power are to be eliminated, and perfect competition prevails;
- d) that shared uncommodifiable goods and services, such as education, culture, intelligence, are to be safeguarded by the state, so that every member shall be intellectually and morally capable to partake on an equal basis in an

ble to a mere market order functionalism. For a deployment of this idea, see D.G. Drosos, "Impartial spectatorship and moral community in Adam Smith's vision of the Enlightenment," *The Adam Smith Review*, 7 (2014), 81-95.

²⁰ Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Book II, V.i.f. 50.

overall process of checking his/her selfishness, through sympathizing with others;

e) that both spontaneous and intended corrective process are engaged, aiming towards the general welfare and permitting moral development.

Not a single one of such preconditions is met in Hayek's conception of "spontaneous order":

a) in modern post neoliberal counter-revolution economy, under the reign of financial and banking capital, commodified financial products rather than *real* commodities are produced and exchanged;

b) exchange takes place between impersonalized corporations and not individual persons, and morality is reduced to the rules of the legal system;

c) markets are monopolized, where giant firms have privileged access to the government's decision making and regulation;

d) any concern for the public's moral and intellectual education of the lower ranks is severely ruled out as unacceptable encroachments upon the supposedly free function of the markets;

e) while "spontaneous order" is the cherished war cry of neoliberal rhetoric, its policies are imposed *via* a ferocious and unprecedented government interventionism, entailing a tremendous concentration of power in the executive arm, and disrespecting any sense of democratic, social, or moral balance.²¹

Against this background, Hayek's ideal of "spontaneous order" seems to get entangled in a vicious circle of fatal contradictions. While demonizing the "public sector," the latter turns to actually functioning as a mechanism of redistribution of resources in favor of banking, hedge funds, and all sorts of virtual economy services. While spontaneity of market forces and individual initiative is eulogized, the "barriers of entry" and the "barriers of exit" in economic activity never were raised so high; at the same time, all anti-trust policies protecting competition are banned.²² Instead of liberal and "spontaneous" allocation of resources, safeguarded by non-interventionist government policies, what we see in reality is a kind of restoration of mercantilism, which has been the main target of A. Smith's critique. It sounds ironic to call such a state of affairs a "laissez-faire" policy. What is more, no kind of "order" seems to result from this regime; the speculative bubbles of the virtual economy render the global economic system more vulnerable and crisis-ridden than ever. Even more, the prevailing anti-crisis policies are very revealing of the limits of the neoliberal regime. The ultimate ratio of such "there-is-no-alterna-

²¹ Over-trusting the market self-balancing automatism, and reducing all social relations to one and only principle, results into an aversion not only for social justice, but even for democracy. Democracy (and not state mechanism) is an obstacle to the unimpeded workings of the markets. See, on this issue, C. Crouch, *Post-Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity, 2004); D. Rodrick, *The Globalization Paradox: Why Global Markets, States and Democracy Can't Coexist* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2011); C. Smith and T. Miers, *Democracy and the Fall of the West* (Exeter, U.K.: Imprint Academic, 2011).

²² For an analysis providing rich empirical evidence against the alleged spontaneousness of the markets, see H.-J. Chang, *23 Things They Don't Tell You About Capitalism* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2012).

tive" policies seems to be the salvation of a bankrupt financial sector, through state interventionism.²³ And, while both the dismantling of the welfare state and the defamation of any concern about social justice are not unexpected, being the deliberate targets both in theory and in practice, what is more interesting is that even the principle of individual property itself is jeopardized, and very often openly disregarded. This is evidenced in cases of fiscal 'emergency' (as it is actually the case in Southern Europe), when real estate property is overtaxed, and, as a result, a considerable population of homeowners run the risk of becoming homeless, after having been jobless. Thus, while taxation is *in principle* blamed as an unfair interference in the working of markets, *in actu* taxation turns out to be a salutary measure, whenever the government is called to rescue the "too -big-to-fail" banks from bankruptcy, i.e. from the free working of the laws of the market.²⁴

Ironically enough, neoliberal dogmatism is at odds with a crucial dimension of A. Smith's legacy, i.e. his moderate synthesis of individual freedom in commercial society, balanced by civilized sociability, never totally reduced to market exchange, and perpetually evolving through a dynamic nexus of inter-subjective and open morality. Neoliberalism has the traits of a radical ideology, aiming at purifying social reality from any moral, political and constitutional instances not conformable to its ideal. It is a predicament of all radical ideologies to have recourse to self-defeating practices in their ambition to construct reality according to their principles. After the failure of collectivism, it was the turn of neoliberal radicalism to contradict its principles in the face of such a stubborn thing as facts. The lip service to spontaneity only makes the contradiction even more flagrant.

Against this background, the dilemma of "markets vs state" turns out to sound misleading, and the real line of confrontation seems to be "financial corporations and state vs commons."²⁵

It could be argued that we should not blame Hayek's theory for the vicissitudes of economic reality. Such a line of defense, nevertheless, would be no

²³ On this issue, see the excellent analysis of Y. Varufakis, *The Global Minotaur: America, the True Origins of the Financial Crisis and the Future of the World Economy* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2013).

²⁴ I rely on a series of critical accounts, by eminent economists, of such policies, inspired by neoliberal ideology. Among others, see J.E. Stiglitz, "Too Big to Fail or Too Big to Save? Examining the Systemic Threats of Large Financial Institutions," Testimony for the Joint Economic Committee hearing, April 21, 2009, Washington, D.C.; J.E. Stiglitz, "The Current Economic Crisis and Lessons for Economic Theory," *Eastern Economic Journal*, 35 (2009), 281-296; P. Krugman, *The Conscience of a Liberal* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2009); M. Chossudovsky and A.G. Marshall (eds.), *The Global Economic Crisis: The Great Depression of the XXI Century* (Montreal: Global Research, 2010).

²⁵ For an analysis why is it outdated and misleading to treat neoliberalism as an enemy of the state, see Colin Crouch, *The Strange Non-Death of Neo-Liberalism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity, 2011). On the fallacy of identifying markets with freedom and state with unfreedom, and the inherent relation of markets with regulation and coercion, see B. Harcourt, *The Illusion of Free Markets: Punishment and the Myth of Natural Order* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

more convincing than the outdated pro-Soviet apologetics: “the theory is perfect but there are some “weaknesses” in the application.” Social ideas have an anchoring in real historical context; otherwise they are just mind games. And the narrative of “spontaneous order” –a genuine offspring of a century of ideologies– has a totally different meaning in such different contexts such as 18th century Scotland and 21st century Wall Street economics. In the latter case, neither “spontaneity” nor any “order” sound as anything but as euphemisms, mystifying a wasteland of dystopia.

The resulting economic disorder is commonly attended by social disintegration and a permanent moral crisis, which is less reminiscent of the Smithian dream of a system of natural liberty, than of the Hobbesian nightmare of *bellum omnium contra omnes*.

The Dirty Hands Problem in a Democratic Context

FILIMON PEONIDIS

An Old Idea

Not many people outside of philosophical circles would count the dirty hands problem among the causes of major political and moral crises. Nevertheless, as I shall argue here, there are good reasons for it to become a matter of serious public deliberation in a modern democratic polity. It would be convenient to approach the dirty hands problem within the context of an old and influential line of thought that can be exemplified as follows: being heavily involved in politics (including democratic politics) and, in particular, serving in high office implies the loss or the compromise of one's moral integrity.

Plato in *Socrates's Apology* gave first a bold statement of it:

“And please do not get angry if I tell you the truth. The fact is that there is no person on earth whose life will be spared by you or by any other majority, if he is genuinely opposed to many injustices and unlawful acts, and tries to prevent their occurrence in our city. Rather, anyone who truly fights for what is just, if he is going to survive for even a short time, must act in a private capacity rather than a public one” (31d-32a).¹

In this passage, Socrates holds that a righteous person should stay out of politics if he wants to remain righteous, or even alive. His admonition concerns democratic politics, but not the ideal form of government Plato described in the *Republic*. Philosopher-kings do not run the danger of losing their souls or their lives just by exercising political power. For Plato, even the noble lies they are occasionally led to disseminate do not seem to blemish their impeccable moral record (414b 8 - 415d 2).

A modern version of the same idea is stated in Max Weber's famous lecture *Politics as a Vocation*, first published in 1918.

“Anyone who seeks the salvation of his soul and that of others does not seek it through politics, since politics faces quite different tasks, tasks that can only be accomplished with the use of force. The genius, or the demon, of politics lives in an inner tension with the God of love as well as with the Christian God as institutionalized in the Christian churches, and it is a tension that can erupt at any time into an insoluble conflict.”²

¹ Plato, *Defence of Socrates, Euthyphro, Crito*, trans., intro. and notes D. Gallop (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

² M. Weber, *The Vocation Lectures: “Science as a Vocation”–“Politics as a Vocation,”* ed. and intro. D. Owen & T.B. Strong, trans. R. Livingstone (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004), p. 90.

Here, the loss of integrity is expressed in Christian terms, as suggested by the references to the soul and the Christian God. The idea is that a politician cannot resort to the use of force and at the same time aspire to be a good Christian.

A third version of it appears in Jean Paul Sartre's stage play *The Dirty Hands*, which came out in 1948. In a crucial passage, Heoderer, the head of an imaginary communist party, addresses Hugo, a younger idealistic comrade who openly questions him, as follows:

"Purity is an idea for a yogi or a monk. You intellectuals and bourgeois anarchists use it as a pretext for doing nothing. To do nothing, to remain motionless, arms at your sides, wearing kid gloves. Well, I have dirty hands. Right up to the elbows. I've plunged them in filth and blood. But what do you hope? Do you think you can govern innocently?"³

What Heoderer says, and to which Socrates and Weber would possibly concur, is that you cannot exercise political power and remain morally innocent. Innocence, justice and a good Christian conscience are admirable traits but they are for the politically idle.

The Idea Revisited

This idea requires further elaboration. Why are those in power likely to compromise or forfeit their moral integrity, while those who stay out of politics do not run this danger or, at least, they run it to a lesser degree?

One can distinguish two modern answers, which refer to two distinct morally alarming situations.

According to the first, governors are more prone to corruption than the governed. Corruption occurs when bearers of political or public power give priority to the satisfaction of their personal interests or of the interests of those who are close to them, at the expense of the discharging of the duties and the obligations associated with their office. It can be argued that those in power are able to harm or benefit large numbers of people, that they deal with huge sums of money, that they can bend the rules or pull the strings more easily than ordinary folks, that they are accorded a great deal of publicity and so forth. Thus, the argument goes, it is very likely for them to yield to the temptation to use their powers, capacities and privileges for their own gain or benefit. That is why they run the danger of easily compromising or forfeiting their moral integrity.

Corruption is undoubtedly a severe social and political problem, since it defies rule of law, gives rise to serious injustices and undermines democratic self-government. However, it is not a problem for moral philosophy, given that there is a consensus that corruption as a social practice is morally blameworthy. It is a form of callous selfishness or depravity applied to the public

³ J.-P. Sartre, *No Exit and Three Other Plays*, trans. S. Gilbert and L. Abel (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), pp. 223-224.

sphere. The real problem is not how to condemn it or to show why it is wrong—these can be easily done—but how to fight it. This is not moral philosophy's main concern. What matters most concerning the suppression of corruption is to design and pay deference to institutions in order to prevent it, and to have efficient law-enforcing authorities to combat it.⁴

Yet, corruption is not the only reason for losing one's moral integrity. According to a different approach, *bearers of political and state power sometimes have to make decisions, which, although they are supposed to serve widely shared collective goals, their implementation requires the use of morally reprehensible means that no one would tolerate in ordinary life situations.*⁵ In contrast to the more widespread cases of corruption, dirty-handed politicians and functionaries do not act motivated by self-interest, but, rather, end up doing things that are morally wrong, despite the fact that they intend to promote public ends which their citizens endorse. The problem seems unavoidable, since it does not arise from a possibly controllable personal disposition such as greed or ambition, but from the very structure of the situations with which politicians must deal.⁶ Most of these situations are usually understood as generating dilemmas, the best possible solution of which requires politicians to perform acts that would be out of bounds for ordinary folks.

However, it is not only the victims of political leaders who suffer. The fact that politicians or other state officials often have to be involved in serious wrongdoing to bring about widely shared collective ends has a negative effect on their moral integrity. If this term, as Susan Mendus notes, means "standing by one's most fundamental commitments," then "a person who loses or sacrifices integrity will feel both that he has abandoned the values he stands for and that he has associated with evil."⁷ Actually, in the case of the well-intentioned politician or functionary, the necessity of doing evil to achieve a good or at least desirable state of affairs for her own people is a constant source of moral guilt. Although her intentions are noble, she has to get her hands dirty,

⁴ Ancient Greek democrats were aware of these dangers. Among the measures they took to minimize them were the delegation of judicial power to large citizen bodies that could not be easily bribed, the establishment of short terms for all officials along with an obligation to give a public account of their proceedings, and the implementation of a rotation system, which allowed all citizens to alternate in crucial political posts. See, among many others, P.J. Euben, "Corruption," in T. Ball, J. Farr and R.L. Hanson (eds.), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 220-246; K. Conover, "Thinking Through Political Corruption: The View from Athens," *Buffalo Law Review*, 62 (2014), 69-117.

⁵ I do not consider the case of a leader who pursues a goal not shared by her people through morally reprehensible means as a dirty hands situation. This appears to be a clear-cut instance of abuse of power.

⁶ It should be noted, however, that these bearers of political and state power and their followers may not be motivated by greed, vengefulness or pure malice but they are often self-deceived into believing that morally questionable means they use will in fact bring about much appreciated ends they desire to. On the relation between self-deception and wrongdoing see L. Thomas, "Self-Deception as the Handmaiden of Evil," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 36 (2012), 53-61.

⁷ S. Mendus, *Politics and Morality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity, 2009), p. 36.

and this cannot but leave a stain on her moral conscience. There is roughly a plausible description of the *dirty hands* problem, first formulated by Michael Walzer⁸ in 1973, which came to strengthen the views of those believing that political morality can never reach the level of purity of private morality. From here on, I will focus exclusively on an assessment of the dirty hands problem.

Undoubtedly, there are efforts to deal with this problem within the frame of normative ethics, but this line of thought is not very promising, not because of philosophers' inability to put forward elaborate arguments, but for the simple reason that philosophical moral theories are not popular with the general public, and this is unlikely to change in the short run. Philosophers of different persuasions might come up with sophisticated solutions to the problem. Certain utilitarians are expected to urge politicians to do what will have the best possible consequences for the greatest number and live happily with it. Alternatively, deontologists could possibly argue that certain decisions made by politicians are right regardless of their consequences. Philosophical objections notwithstanding, however, we cannot expect ordinary folks to embrace utilitarianism or any other philosophical moral theory. Making one's hands dirty is a public problem with tremendous repercussions for significant numbers of individuals, and it must be approached in a manner the body politic could understand and possibly endorse.

To avoid any misunderstanding, I do not assume, here, that moral philosophy has nothing substantial to contribute to the issue examined. On the contrary, I find Kai Nielsen's suggestion "[w]hen we know that there are several evils, not all of which can be avoided, we should always go for the lesser evil, but *what* the lesser evil is can be determined on the scene and contextually"⁹ extremely helpful for someone who cannot but get her hands dirty.

However, what interests me most is a host of questions that are relevant to the dirty hands problem but cannot be properly answered by moral philosophy. Who should be involved in crucial political decision-making, dealing with dirty hands situations? Should there be any institutional constraints on the use of evil means to achieve desirable collective ends? How should a polity react if it realizes that its leaders or high-ranking officials have badly handled a dirty hands situation? These are questions belonging to the realm of political philosophy.¹⁰

Along these lines, I propose to situate the problem in question in a democratic context and offer some thoughts as to whether it is more easily avoidable or controllable when political power is shared by the many. It should be

⁸ M. Walzer, "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 2 (1973), 160-180.

⁹ K. Nielsen, "There is No Dilemma of Dirty Hands," in I. Primoratz (ed.) *Politics and Morality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 20-37, p. 35.

¹⁰ I take also for granted that simple expressions of regret or sorrow for reprehensible actions or omissions politicians think inevitable do not amount to a satisfactory solution of the dirty hands problem. The crucial issue here is how these actions that have so many spillover effects are to be avoided, not how their perpetrators feel about them. Cf. D. Runciman, *Politics* (London: Profile Books, 2014), pp. 33-47.

noted that this is not the usual approach. Reading Machiavelli, Weber, or even Walzer, one forms the impression that dignitaries resemble lonely Shakespearean heroes yielding to an unavoidable fate.¹¹ However, things could be different in democratic politics.

Historical Examples

Before moving to my own proposal, I shall mention two examples, one from ancient times¹² and one from the recent U.S. political history, where democracies did eventually manage to deal in a morally successful manner (and without relying on a comprehensive moral theory) with dirty hands situations, although they did not use this name to describe them.

In 427 BC, during the first phase of the Peloponnesian War, the island of Mytilene revolted against Athens. This event enraged Athenians, as they saw it as an act of gross ingratitude on the part of the islanders. The Athenian military force that was eventually sent managed to suppress the rebellion and capture its leaders. Then the assembly was convened to decide the form of punishment that should be inflicted on the Mytilenians. The verdict was harsh even by the standards of the ancient world: all male adults should be put to death and the remaining population should be sold in the slave markets. However, the next day many citizens started feeling uneasy with their decision and having second thoughts, since it was thought to be “cruel and monstrous to destroy a whole city instead of merely those who were guilty” (Thuc. Γ 36 4-5). Thus, they held a second meeting to discuss the case again.

Thucydides gave us an account of the debate that took place between the well-known demagogue Cleon and an ordinary citizen called Diodotus. Cleon urged the assembly to stick to its previous decision, putting forward a variety of arguments, one of which is directly relevant to the issue discussed here.

“If these people had a right to secede, it would follow that you are wrong in exercising dominion. But if, right or wrong, you are still resolved to maintain it, then you must punish these people in defiance of equity as your interests require; or else you must give up your empire and in discreet safety practice the fine virtues you preach.” (Γ 40 4-5).¹³

¹¹ This line of thought also ignores the possibility of intervening with the conditions that allow or even provide important decision-makers with incentives to get their hands dirty. Cf. Coady’s point that “Machiavellian thinking has a tendency to obscure the fact that the background to political life is itself a fit subject for moral scrutiny and structural change, especially when it is that background itself that contributes to the alleged need for dirty hands.” C.A.J. Coady, *Messy Morality: The Challenge of Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008), p. 89.

¹² For an account of the dirty hands problem in ancient times which does not mention the debate concerning the fate of Mytilenians, see J.M. Parrish, *Paradoxes of Political Ethics: From Dirty Hands to the Invisible Hand* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Part One.

¹³ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Vol. II: Books 3-4, trans. C.F. Smith (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920).

What he actually said to his fellow-citizens was that, if they desire to pursue the prevailing collective goal of maintaining supremacy and control over their allies, they should act in disregard of the principles of fairness (*παρὰ τὸ εἰκόσ*). Otherwise, they should abandon their claim to supremacy, opt for isolationism and be happy with the display of certain public moral attitudes while risking nothing. In other words, he told them that they were facing a dirty hands situation where wrongdoing was in his view unavoidable.

However, Diodotus was of a different mind, since he held that committing such a gross injustice was not necessary for securing the Athenians' privileged status among their allies. His main arguments were that the Mytilenians had a right to secede and, more importantly, that such a cruel policy would not deter potential defectors. The reason is that if democratic citizens in other cities become convinced that death awaits them, even if they do not take part in a rebellion against Athens, they would be most willing to side with seceding oligarchs to increase their chances to survive.

The assembly was persuaded by Diototus's arguments by a narrow margin, and decided to recall its previous decision and punish only the ringleaders of the rebellion.

The second example concerns the role of the publication of the Pentagon Papers in the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.¹⁴ In 1967, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara ordered the writing of a history of the Vietnam War from 1945 to 1967. The work was completed two years later by a group of analysts who were granted access to inside information, but it was not published because it had been classified "Top-secret – Sensitive." However, in 1971, one of the analysts involved in this project, Daniel Ellsberg, gave the greatest part of this work to *The New York Times*, which started publishing excerpts from it. It was revealed that the American people had been systematically deceived by their governments, that policymakers were displaying an arrogant refusal to face reality and, worst of all, that they kept on sacrificing young Americans, not to win the war, but to avoid a humiliating defeat. In Ellsberg's words "there was in Vietnam a whole set of what amounted to institutional 'anti-learning' mechanisms working to preserve and guarantee unadaptive and unsuccessful behavior."¹⁵ From the point of view adopted here, U.S. authorities, like the Athenians twenty-five centuries ago, decided to get their hands dirty to secure their supremacy in the international scene. As is well known, the publication of these documents and the reactions it sparked contributed, among many other factors, to the changing of public opinion that eventually led the Nixon administration to end U.S. military involvement in Vietnam in 1973.

¹⁴ For a brief account of the events, see J.T. Correll, "The Pentagon Papers," *Air Force Magazine*, 90 (2007).

¹⁵ D. Ellsberg, *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers* (New York: Penguin, 2003), p. 192.

Suggestions

Presumably, by citing two examples, one cannot maintain that democracies always, or most of the time, have done their best to avoid the dirty hands problem or to make up for the wrongdoing that it implies. On many occasions, the Athenians treated their defecting allies with extreme cruelty, ruthlessness and ferocity. In modern times, the atomic bombings of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 constitute a clear example of easily succumbing to the dire logic of a dirty hands situation, with terrible repercussions that still haunt us. The Truman administration was aware of the destructive potential of nuclear weapons, and it appears that it never gave any serious consideration to other options, such as making a demonstration to Japan's leaders of what these bombs were capable of doing.¹⁶ One could also add more recent examples, such as the Iran-Contra affair or certain rights and due process violations in the fight against terrorism.

My claim is rather different. I believe that, if they really desire so, advanced democracies have the *potential* to avoid the dirty hands problem to a certain extent or to mitigate the harmful consequences ensuing from endorsing its basic structure. Their success is conditional upon acknowledging that this is a morally challenging issue that has to be dealt with seriously and responsibly within the public sphere, as well as upon the endorsement of the principle that serious wrongdoing cannot be condoned as a means to achieve desirable collective goals. This presupposes a change in many democratic people's attitude to turn a blind eye to dirty hands situations and easily forgive those responsible for their occurrence, if the benefits accruing to them are tangible enough.

In particular, I maintain that, through constitutional provisions and ordinary legislation, a liberal democracy, which enjoys a long tradition of respecting human rights and the rule of law, can prohibit the use of certain morally appalling means (murder, torture, blackmail, certain forms of lying and deception etc.) that are likely to be used by the authorities to achieve morally justifiable public ends.¹⁷ Thus, public officials will be prevented from getting their hands dirty, irrespective of the collective goals that are at stake. In addition, it can develop a robust *in bello* morality, since warfare generates a huge variety of dirty hands situations. There is no doubt that setting public rules of this type is not an easy task. However, the formation of an overwhelming consensus among the body politic on the inadmissibility of certain means, which does not need to depend on the prevalence of a comprehensive moral theory, is a first step that needs to be taken.

¹⁶ J. Glover, *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 105-106.

¹⁷ These prohibitions can gather public support once the public is convinced that things can easily get out of hand if authorities are allowed to resort to these appalling means even in cases of supreme emergency. Cf. Coady (*op. cit.*, pp. 86-91) who speaks about the dangers of abuse and corruption.

Nevertheless, the problem cannot be entirely solved through legislation for two reasons: (a) Conscientious officials may be absolutely convinced that on certain rare occasions, the achievement of public goals of the utmost importance will outweigh the harm done by the use of the prohibited means. (b) It is reasonable to believe that no legislative body can determine in advance all future dirty hands situations that are likely to occur and legislate accordingly.¹⁸

As far as the first issue is concerned, democracies can cultivate a certain public ethos, which would lead officials who have dirtied their hands to admit their deeds publicly and be prepared to face the consequences.¹⁹ This does not mean that the harm done will be avoided, but at least justice will be served.

Regarding the second issue, it can be argued that:

(i) *In pluralistic democracies the more citizens are engaged in decision-making procedures pertaining to (not legally regulated) dirty hands situations, the more there may be who refuse to dirty their hands or who have second thoughts after the decision is made.* The reason underling this assumption is the epistemic superiority of democracy, an idea that goes back to Aristotle who argued that a deliberating multitude makes better decisions compared to one person or a small group with superior intellectual qualities. Today, there are various sophisticated theories about the wisdom of the crowds, but it seems that one necessary condition for achieving its epistemic superiority is to have genuine deliberation among differently minded people. One can assume that larger bodies, such as a parliament or another assembly, will make morally better decisions concerning the handling of dirty hands situations, provided that the debate takes place within a normative framework where the view that the end always justifies the means is not the prevailing one.²⁰

(ii) *In a pluralistic democracy, where a wrong decision pertaining to a (not-legally regulated) dirty hands situation is taken by a handful of officials who act in secrecy, it is likely to be disputed and possibly rebuked in case it receives wide publicity.* Publicity, supported by a constitutionally entrenched right to free speech, allows the expression of critical and dissenting views.²¹ If citizens realize that they, or a segment of them, are the victims of the authori-

¹⁸ For instance, the manner U.S. law enforcement agencies recruit and treat the informants they use to apprehend drug traffickers constitutes a novel dirty-hands situation that recently drew public attention. See R. Walker, "The Trouble with Using Police Informants in the US," *BBC News Magazine*, 27 March 2013 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-21939453>).

¹⁹ To put it differently, public officials should be accustomed to view such transgressions only as acts of *civil disobedience*. The contrast between this honest and open approach and the current widespread tendency of dirty-hands politicians and functionaries to be secretive in their dealings, to try to stick to their positions of power at any cost and to rely heavily on associates and political friends to rescue them or take a bullet for them is more than obvious.

²⁰ See for recent discussions F. Peonidis, *Democracy as Popular Sovereignty* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013), pp. 7-9 and H. Landemore and J. Elster (eds.), *Collective Wisdom: Principles and Mechanisms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

²¹ For an early robust defense of publicity, see J. Bentham, *Political Tactics*, ed. M. James, C. Blamires and C. Pease-Watkin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), pp. 29-44.

ties' wrongdoing, they will do something to change their plight or to make the authorities answerable to them. But, even if the victim is someone else, such as a foreign people, similar reactions can be provoked. In the Vietnam War, the victims were the American electorate, the military personnel and the Vietnamese people.

It should be stressed once more that there is no assurance that the people will always react in the above-specified manner. Nonetheless, if people start pressing for more publicity and for genuine wide deliberation over crucial political issues, it is highly probable that dirty hands situations –occasional failures notwithstanding– will overall be better handled than they are handled in authoritarian regimes or in democracies authoritatively ruled by elected elites.²²

The dirty hands problem cannot be entirely eliminated and, as it has been suggested, it can provoke serious political and social crises. However, it is my view that its placement and discussion within a democratic context could, under a jointly necessary set of conditions that have yet to be obtained, make it lose much of its sting, and allow us to minimize its harmful consequences that affect perpetrators and victims alike.²³

²² It is clear that the conception of democracy that is presupposed in my argument gives substantial powers of deliberation and decision-making to ordinary citizens. As has been aptly remarked, “the democracy/dirty hands connection is only sustainable given a highly truncated, narrow, elitist version of democracy.” D.P. Shugarman, “Democratic Dirty Hands?,” in P. Rynard and D.P. Shugarman (eds.), *Cruelty and Deception: The Controversy Over Dirty Hands in Politics* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000), 229-249, p. 244. However, this level of citizen participation has not yet been achieved in most advanced democracies.

²³ I have benefited from the critical comments of two anonymous referees.

Global Values and Combatting Global Crises

JĀNIS T. OZOLIŅŠ

Introduction

Although there are many other crises, there are four crises that the world faces that we wish to address, and these are economic, demographic, secular and social. The economic crisis is, to some extent, well known, since, in the past five years or so, people everywhere have become accustomed to hearing about the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and its effects on markets and economies around the world. The world is still struggling with its aftermath, and, in many places, as austerity measures bite deep, the human cost is significant, as people lose their jobs and livelihoods. The second crisis is a demographic one, though it is by no means uniform globally. Plummeting birth rates, as well as increasingly aging populations in the West and also in Asia, will affect the ability of nations to maintain the economic prosperity that is required to support the greater number of old people. Raising the retirement age is not a complete solution since not everyone will be able to continue to work and the increasing demand for health services will create significant financial burdens on governments. Whether aging populations will be as much of a burden on the community as it is predicted to be is arguable, but, nevertheless, the demographic crisis is one that needs to be taken seriously. The third crisis, which we have called secular, is the increasing evidence of hostility, especially in the Western world, towards religion. While it is particularly virulent in the West, it is by no means restricted to the West, as the idea that religion is a private matter that should never be manifested in the public sphere is taking root, with few exceptions,¹ around the world. Secularity, which purports to be neutral in relation to religion, seeks to eliminate all references to religion and religious values in the public sphere, claiming that the diversity of religious faith in the community means that agreement can only be reached with respect to public matters if religious views are bracketed out from discussion of them. This is a significant crisis because, while preaching tolerance of all views, secularism at its most aggressive is intolerant of religion. This results in the religious voice being denied a hearing in the public arena, and entails the loss of a significant perspective in the consideration of the many social and political problems facing nations. The fourth crisis is related to the third, but is independent of it. The social crisis arises largely in the West, but is not restricted to it, and concerns the rise of individualism and the focus on individual rights, as opposed to recognizing that human beings are social animals. Liberalism or, in its more radical form, libertarianism, holds that individual auton-

¹ The exceptions would be in the Muslim world, where religion is not separated from the State. Probably the only truly theocratic states are Iran and Saudi Arabia. Vatican City could also be considered a theocracy.

omy is absolute and so individual needs take precedence over any other needs, provided that these do no harm to others. In practice, however, this means that individuals are almost unchallengeable in the claiming of rights. For example, a number of new rights have arisen that would not have been considered subject to rights claims in the past, such as the claim that individuals have the right to die at a time of their choosing, gay couples have a right to marriage and prospective parents have a right to select the sex of their child. The difficulty is that the claiming of many new rights leads, not to liberty for all, but, rather, to intolerance and totalitarianism, because the focus is on what is good for the individual, not for the community. Rights thus become simply subjective claims that are asserted, and since there is no genuine attempt at rational argument, such claims are sustained only by ignoring opposing views. This leads to intolerance of opposing views and, where the individuals have political power, the imposition of their will. A possible cause of this is the misconstrual of freedom as freedom from constraint, rather than understanding it as a freedom to choose the constraints under which one lives.

It may be objected that the four crises chosen are selective and so give priority to problems which, though important, are not as significant for human beings and indeed the whole planet as, for example, environmental crises. Environmental crises include such matters as climate change (which generally means global warming), the destruction of forests, the extinction of species, genetically modified foods, the loss of drinkable fresh water and the depletion of non-renewable resources. There can be no doubt that environmental crises are also deserving of consideration and it is acknowledged that the destruction of the physical environment would result in the annihilation of the human species as well as of life itself. The other four crises would no longer be relevant if the physical environment on which human beings depend is destroyed. The environmental crisis is deserving of treatment on its own and it would not be possible to do justice to it here. Climate change and global warming alone have generated much debate, not just scientifically, but from a philosophical point of view. Much remains to be said. While the environmental crises are significant and also need attention, the four selected crises remain to be addressed.

None of these crises are disconnected. We have already alluded to the connections between crises three and four, but all the crises can be shown to be connected to one another. Environmental crises are not disconnected from human activity, since the depletion of non-renewable resources is clearly linked with their consumption by human beings. Similarly, human economic activity has a direct effect on the degradation of the environment and brings about the extinction of species, as forest land is cleared and species have less habitat in which to live. The demographic crisis is also linked to the economic crisis, since the declining population can be linked to the lack of support for families, while the rise of the claim that people have a right to die could be linked to the economic costs of supporting an ageing population that requires significant health care resources. The economic crisis is linked to the rise of secularism, since it replaces a religious view of the aims of economic activity with

one which absolutizes profit. Instead of economic activity being for the greater glory of God through human fulfilment directed to the common good, it is directed to an abstract pursuit of profit for its own sake. God is replaced by profit as the end of human activity. While the pursuit of profit in order to provide investors with a return is offered as its justification, the creation of more and more abstract financial products suggests that profit derived from these is also abstract. Moreover, human beings are no longer motivated by religious beliefs to treat their neighbours as themselves and so to take care to be fair in their business dealings, but by a slavish and irrational belief in the market as providing a just distribution of the goods of economic activity. This relieves individuals from having to take any responsibility for their actions, since it is the will of the market that decides what an equitable distribution for the common good is. This also connects to a view about the near absolute right to property that is a hallmark of libertarianism and which is a symptom of the fourth crisis. Although libertarianism preaches tolerance and autonomy, since each individual is entitled to pursue his or her own individual good, in practice, this means intolerance of any viewpoint that proposes restrictions on autonomy and argues for a common good to which all are subject. The right to property is restricted, since the distribution of wealth is to be regulated. Religions which argue for the common good cannot be tolerated, since they oppose the libertarian view. It is evident that the four crises are interconnected.

In this paper, we can provide only the barest of sketches of the four crises and likewise what is suggested as a way forward is similarly only able to be sketched. In each case, what is suggested is a shift to values that propose that the aim of human activity is always human flourishing and that, for each individual, this aim is communal. The reminder that human activity is essentially moral is a contribution that the philosopher is equipped to make. Once the shift in values is accepted, in each case of crisis, there are specialists, such as economists, demographers, social scientists and others better equipped to propose solutions than philosophers. We shall proceed by providing a brief account of each crisis and some ways in which they could be addressed. It will be apparent that the position adopted will be a communitarian one in which religion is accorded a place alongside secularism. The analysis, therefore, is from the perspective of a particular position, which, broadly speaking, could be labelled a classical Aristotelian Thomistic position. We do not intend to argue for this position, but to show that the adoption of its values leads to a different perspective of the four crises. This in itself has value in analyzing the four crises.

Economic Crisis

The Global Financial Crisis (GFC) is well known to most people in the world and, as its name suggests, was global in its effects, even though it originated in the United States. We do not propose to go over old ground, since it is now some time since the GFC first manifested itself with the collapse of a number of major banks, financial institutions and enterprises, the best known of which

was Lehman Brothers, which filed for bankruptcy in 2008. Financial institutions and industries (such as the car industry) globally had to be supported through government subsidies that ran into many hundreds of billions of American dollars. These were initiated because allowing major financial institutions, such as Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, to collapse completely would be financially disastrous for, not only the U.S. economy, but also the rest of the world. In the United States, the bail-out package called the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) provided up to \$700 billion (USD). In the intervening period since the announcement of the package in October of 2008 and its closure two years later, the actual amount spent by the United States Federal Government was much smaller, as some of the funds were used to purchase assets and some of the money was repaid. The overall actual cost to the U.S. government is difficult to estimate, as market fluctuations in the value of assets and different ways of assessing the value of assets give different results.²

Recent turmoil in European countries, such as Ireland and Greece, in the aftermath of the GFC, illustrates the problems that a lack of regulation of the market can cause. Economies across Europe, as well as elsewhere, continue to struggle and there are fears that major European economies such as those of Spain and Italy could also be in trouble. In all cases, a common denominator has been that debt has risen while the value of assets to cover the debt has fallen, creating a financial crisis. Just as in the United States, Spain's debt crisis was generated by a housing boom that resulted in many people taking on debt that they could either barely manage or cannot manage at all, resulting in defaults.³ In the case of Greece, the level of debt reached 170% of the GDP in 2011.⁴ If financial resources have been committed to housing, it is evident that there is less for other financial activity and so other goods cannot be purchased. This, then, has flow on effects as other parts of the economy stagnate and lead to corporations looking at ways of achieving cost savings. Generally this will be in the direction of cutting labour costs, which, in turn, leads to a spiral of unemployment and further lack of spending capacity, until the economy is brought to the brink of collapse. Where the government has already been living beyond its means by spending more than it takes in taxes, as a result of a slowing economy there are fewer taxes to be gathered and the only option remaining (apart from continuing to rack up debt) is to make large cuts to its own spending.⁵

In analyzing the causes of the GFC and the ethics of those who were involved in the financial dealings which brought on the financial disaster, an important question is the consideration of the purposes of the market. The conventional response is that the market exists in order to create profits from

² B. Webel, *Troubled Asset Relief Program: Implementation and Status*, CRS Report for Congress (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2012).

³ S. Griffiths-Jones, J.A. Ocampo, and J.E. Stiglitz, *Time for a Visible Hand: Lessons from the 2008 World Financial Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁴ See http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_ws2_1_22/04/2013_495122.

⁵ Another option is to print more money, as the United States has been able to do. This is a dangerous strategy, however, as it can lead to significant inflation.

various economic activities. This is understandable when we think of various kinds of businesses run by ordinary people who need to make a profit in order to make a living. Making a living, however, seems to be a much more modest activity than making a profit. Making a living can be pursued through a variety of callings and will include providing services and labour. Generally, we think of those in trades and professions as making a living, but shopkeepers and those who trade in goods also strive to make a living through buying and selling various commodities. In order to do this, they need to buy goods at a lower price than that at which they sell them, thus having a sufficient margin between the two in order to be able to support themselves and their families. Profit is necessary in order that the trader make a living. Similarly, in a variety of other activities, profit is necessary in order to provide the necessities of life for oneself and one's dependents. This will also mean sufficient means for a full life that allows for leisure and communal activities. The farmer in his field and manufacturer in her factory labour in order to grow food or make goods, such as clothes, that they then sell to others and so are able to support themselves. This is obvious and there are no startling new observations in this. The problem, however, arises when the aim is not profit to make a living, but where profit is pursued for its own sake alone. Productive activity, in which individuals exchange what they have grown or made with each other at a just price, contributes to the common good and to the good of the community. Here, however, the value that underlies economic activity is not profit, but the common good.

A fair price is one in which both parties are satisfied that they have received a just return in the exchange. That is, the buyer believes he has paid what the goods are worth, and the seller believes she has sold the goods at a price which covers her outlays, expenses and has a profit margin that enables her to make a living. This is, understandably, somewhat subjective, and so we have the market which allegedly provides a mechanism to ensure that prices are fair by adjusting them according to supply and demand, and to competition. The seller cannot charge too much, since the buyer can go to someone else, and supply and demand ensures that a balance is struck between the number of goods that are manufactured and those that are needed. Ideally, the market provides the conditions under which both buyer and seller are satisfied that their transaction is fair to both parties.

It is clear, however, that an unregulated market is far from being the "invisible hand" that ensures that neither buyer nor seller is exploited. The market does not act in an ideal world, since neither buyers nor sellers operate in a world where there is free competition between sellers to offer the best price and, in addition, a world in which supply as well as demand can be manipulated. Diamonds, for example, are stockpiled in order to keep prices artificially high.⁶ Advertizing is an important tool in the manipulation of demand, so that creating a desire for diamond rings, for instance, ensures a ready market

⁶ See, for example, M. Hart, *Diamond: A Journey to the Heart of an Obsession* (New York: Walker Publishing Company, 2001), pp. 138ff.

for diamonds and, if the supply is kept in check, prices can be kept high to ensure maximum profitability. On the other side of the coin, supermarkets have been well known to use their buying power to force suppliers to lower their prices.⁷ Though two examples do not make the case, there are numerous other examples that can be found of supply and demand being artificially regulated in order to maximize prices or minimize costs. The operation of the market is premised on both buyer and seller acting in a self-interested manner and this provides the mechanism by which fair prices are determined. Unfortunately, the assumption that the market acts as an invisible regulator that cannot itself be manipulated is manifestly false, given the ability of both sellers and buyers to create conditions that favour them in the setting of prices.

There are two fundamental differences between what is described here and what occurs in financial markets where financial institutions trade in financial products. Firstly, though profit might have some vestigial connection to the idea of making a living, because it is about making money from money, it is only concerned with profit for its own sake. Successful trading simply means increased profit for oneself. There is no concern about whether a price is fair or whether the buyer to whom we have sold is satisfied or not. It is assumed that she, too, will wish to make a profit and will sell to someone else at a profit. Secondly, the situation when we trade in financial products does not appear to be anything like the very basic and naïve account of the market. The idea that Adam Smith's "invisible hand" will regulate the market so that it will result in a fair distribution of wealth is implausible.

The Global Financial Crisis not only caused the collapse of some very large and respected companies, but affected the lives of a great many ordinary people. Beginning with those who were enticed to apply for loans that they could not afford to repay, and ending with those who had money in superannuation or pension funds who saw their life savings disappear, the GFC affected nearly everyone. If the market economy always acts for the good of human beings, then it is fairly clear that it did not do so this time, unless, somehow, it is possible to argue that the pain and suffering of the poor, the working and middle classes was for the greater common good. Unfortunately, the unregulated market economy is not directed towards the common good, but to profit and, hence, is not at all concerned with the common good, understood as providing everyone with a just share of what is created by the productive labour of each working person. As Locke opines, wealth is created through productive labour.⁸ Classically, capital by itself creates nothing unless

⁷ B. Hurst, "Supermarkets Buying Power or Bully Power?," *justfood.com*, 18-4-2005, (<http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?action=interpret&id=GALE|A131614611&v=2.1&u=acuni&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w&authCount=1>).

⁸ J. Locke, *Of Civil Government*, Ch. 5: "On Property," in *Two Treatises of Government and an Essay Concerning Toleration*, ed. I. Shapiro (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

it is coupled with labour. Aristotle agrees, decrying charging interest in order to make money from money.⁹

While the complexity of modern economics makes the task of finding solutions difficult, it is evident that a recognition of the fact that the market and economic activity operates for the benefit of all people, would be a major reorientation in values. The capitalist needs the labourer, as much as the labourer needs capitalist; both have a vested interest in the success of whatever enterprise in which they are engaged. This suggests that the true aim of economic activity is not profit, but the common good. Thus, a broader view of economic activity, focused not on the mere pursuit of profit, but on the well-being of all, would require a valuing of the common good ahead of profit, and therefore a fundamental reorientation of the market. The implication is that profit is at the service of the common good and is not an end in itself. This will require that the market is regulated in such a way that its basic aim is to ensure that it serves the common good. The details of such a reorientation, however, remain to be developed, though Bernard Lonergan, in his economic work, has provided an analysis of what this would look like.¹⁰

Demographic Crisis

Though not directly related, the GFC also brought into view the second crisis, which has two elements. Firstly, particularly in the West, but not restricted to it, are the falling birth rates in many European countries, as well as in other parts of the world. The global population is projected to continue to grow, but it is evident that it is slowing and more recent demographic projections suggest that the world's population will begin to decline within the next 70 years. The second part of the crisis is the aging of the world's population. Put together, in many countries there is not only a declining birth rate, but, because of increasing survival rates, an aging population. This means that, in a very short time, within the next 50 years, the number of workers available to support the aged will have declined.¹¹ Though this in itself may turn out to be not the major difficulty that it seems to be thought it will be,¹² there is, neverthe-

⁹ Aristotle, *The Politics*, Book I, Ch. 10, trans. T.A. Sinclair, rev. T.J. Saunders, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992).

¹⁰ B.J.F. Lonergan, *For a New Political Economy*, in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, Vol. 21, ed. P.J. McShane (ca. 1942; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); and B.J.F. Lonergan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, Vol. 15, ed. F.G. Lawrence, P.H. Byrne, and C.C. Hefting Jr. (1944; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

¹¹ Pritchett and Viarengo argue that Europe is headed towards a demographic "fiscal cliff," where the number of workers providing resources for those not working, such as the elderly, becomes too small to support them. L. Pritchett and M. Viarengo, "Why Demographic Suicide? The Puzzles of European Fertility," *Population and Development Review*, 38 (2012), Supplement, 55-71, p. 63.

¹² See, for example, Nancy J. Altman, who argues that there has been a decline in the ratio of workers to retirees over a period of time from 16:1 in 1950 to 4:1 currently, with no ill effects. This is because what is required is that the amount of wealth generated has to be

less, an obvious effect on the economy that will be experienced. The ramifications of declining birth rates and rising life expectancies are complex and it is difficult to predict their outcomes. Nevertheless, it is a crisis, particularly for countries that are projected to see their populations considerably reduced.

It is evident already that, in the developed world, population decline has been compensated by a shift to more a technology-based industry that does not rely heavily on a cheap labour force to produce goods. For example, much of the world's textile industry can now be found in Asia, where the cost of labour is much less than in the developed world. Likewise, China's economic growth has been largely built on its enormous labour resources, and the same may be seen, though not to the same extent, in India. Other countries, especially in Africa, with growing populations, may well provide the impetus for economic growth, while more developed nations seek to maintain their prosperity through technological innovation and scientific breakthroughs. Concentration on specialized areas requiring highly trained individuals would seem to be the way forward for countries with declining populations but highly developed education and research systems.

Though the economic problems associated with demographic decline seem to be capable of reaching a solution, a more pressing problem will be the provision of high quality health care for the aging population. It is evident that older people are much heavier users of health care services than young people and the question of the allocation of health care resources arises. This ranges from the drugs required by the elderly to keep various diseases at bay, to surgery such as hip replacements and finally to palliative care. In addition, there is the need to provide services such as visits by nurses and other health workers in their homes, as well as such basic necessities as cleaning and the cooking of meals. Some of these latter services are able to be provided for by the children of the elderly or other younger relatives, but, in many cases, they cannot. Most importantly, the elderly need companionship and the sense of belonging to the community to which they have contributed. This becomes difficult if the regions in which they live have fewer and fewer residents.

Associated with a declining population is the gradual emptying of rural areas, with younger people leaving to find work in larger population centres, leaving the elderly to maintain services in small towns. With the decline in the number of people, small industries and businesses are also forced to close, so that there are fewer options for those young people who might have wanted to remain. The overall effect is that, with fewer places of employment, young people who wish to remain are faced with unemployment, or, at best, under-employment. The situation for rural communities is very difficult.¹³

sufficient to support the retired population and this does not depend on the ratio of workers to retirees. This seems to be right, but it does also depend on economic growth. N.J. Altman, *The Battle for Social Security: From FDR's Vision to Bush's Gamble* (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley and Sons, 2005).

¹³ See, for example, T. Champion, and J. Shepherd, "Demographic Change in Rural England," in P. Lowe and L. Speakman (eds.), *The Ageing Countryside: The Growing Older Population of Rural England* (London: Age Concern England, 2006); N. Glasgow and

There are numerous reasons offered for the declining birth rates in most of the world and it is not our intention to discuss these. It suffices to say that European governments, as well as other governments, have begun to recognize the importance of arresting declining birth rates by providing incentives for women to have more children. Whether this is sufficient or whether there needs to be more family friendly policies adopted remains to be seen.

Encouraging immigration of skilled migrants is another means of increasing the population of those in younger age groups, though this may have significant ramifications on a country's sense of identity. For example, a small country could rapidly lose its character and have its language and culture destroyed by a large influx of immigrants with a different language and culture. For large traditionally immigrant nations such as the United States, Canada and Australia, this is likely to be less of a problem, but tensions still arise between immigrants and more established citizens.

Dealing with the demographic crisis also demands a change in values. The importance of family is well recognized in Confucian cultures and within the Judeo-Christian tradition, amongst others. Filial piety is a key virtue, and the fourth commandment in the Decalogue enjoins us to honour our father and mother. Governments appear to recognize that the family is the cornerstone of the State, but seem reluctant to embrace policies which actively support families. For many young people, embarking on family life comes at great economic cost, as it is well-nigh impossible to support a family without two wages. A realization that the future of the community and the State depends on nurturing its children requires a re-orientation from liberal individualism to communitarianism. As a consequence, better ways to redistribute wealth to provide the requisite support for families need to be found.

Similarly, dealing with the aging population also requires a change to a more communitarian understanding of the relationships between the aged members of society and younger members. Provided that they are able to remain healthy, the elderly are able to remain productive members of the community long after they have retired. The conception of them as burdens on working age individuals is false; many provide unpaid childcare for their children, as well as financial support. Others lead productive and busy lives as volunteer workers for charities and support for community organizations. A more inclusive understanding of the dynamics of the community, as provided by a communitarian ethics, will help in minimizing the effects of the demographic crisis.

The Crisis of Secularism

Taylor, in his seminal work, describes three forms of secularism: the first involves the separation of Church and State, so that politics is practiced devoid of any connection to religion, the second sense is the absence of religion in

D.L. Brown, "Rural Ageing the United States: Trends and Contexts," *Journal of Rural Studies*, 28 (2012), 422-431.

the public sphere, and the third is the sense in which belief in God is one option among many. In the second sense, the absence of religion in the public sphere is the result of the falling away of religious practice and belief, so that people no longer attend religious services and births, deaths and marriages are no longer occasions for celebrations involving religious ceremonies. This is certainly observable in much of Western society. In the third form of secularization, a form of humanism, in which there is no further end than human flourishing, emerges and provides an alternative to religion, so that religious belief becomes a particular choice.¹⁴ In this third sense, according to Taylor, there is, despite the absence of a belief in God, a sense of the significance of leading life to the full. Although he is right to point to the deep longings in human hearts for human excellence as characteristic of all human beings, because there are different belief and value systems leading to different consequences for believers and non-believers, adherence to religious beliefs seems to be threatening to non-believers. The vitriolic outpourings of, amongst others, Richard Dawkins, for example, provide some experiential evidence of this hostility.

Whatever the reasons for it, there is now an open animosity in many Western countries to religion and the values that it professes. This is evidenced in the persecution of the Christian Church, most commonly the Catholic Church, in the press and public media. Intolerance of a contrary view about so-called gay marriage, for example, is shrilly expressed and the possibility of rational debate is impossible. Similarly, there is little tolerance of Christian –or indeed any religious faith’s– views on matters such as abortion and euthanasia. The Christian church is routinely derided for holding to its beliefs. Views opposed to those found in the media are dismissed as out of step with the modern age. Religious views, it is asserted, have no place in the public arena. This makes it difficult to engage in discourse, since, in the secular public forum, it is held that it is impossible if one of the discussants insists on basing his or her arguments on values and beliefs that are supported by religious convictions.

We have not so far made an attempt to indicate what could be meant by the public square, since it is evident that this can have several meanings. Firstly, it is clear that one of the chief publics for any religion will be its own adherents. Thus, we can expect that pronouncements by the Pope, for example, will be listened to by many who profess the Roman Catholic faith. Muslims will listen to the statements of their Imams, Jews will listen to their Rabbis. Secondly, another audience will be provided by members of other religions who will also reflect on what is said by the leaders of different faiths, as their statements will also provide guidance on a variety of public issues. Interreligious dialogue is an important means of sharing common views, as well as different ones, amongst believers. This becomes especially important in secular societies that are hostile to all forms of religion, since a united front on an issue still carries some weight in its consideration. Other religions will also

¹⁴ C. Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 1-3.

look to other religious communities for support in the practice of their own faith. Hence, one public square is provided by a particular faith community and another, an enlarged one, is provided by adherents of other religions. A third public square will be formed by the widest social and political class. In general, when we speak of the public square, it is the widest and most general audience about which we are speaking. It is in this widest audience that the greatest variety of values and beliefs will be found, and the most trenchant criticisms of religious positions on various moral questions. It is in the widest public square that there will be least understanding of a religious position on any issue.

More broadly, it should also be recognized, as MacIntyre has pointed out, that there may be no common public sphere which shares a common understanding of the conceptual basis on which particular evaluations of global and local issues are made and on which discussion can centre, let alone in a particular faith, such as the Christian one. The reason for this is that there is no educated public which shares a common history, tradition or values.¹⁵ This will mean that any discussion of important issues cannot take place because the audience will not have sufficient apprehension, if any, of the concepts being used to elaborate a particular position to be able to understand the argument. What happens, instead of rational debate, says MacIntyre, is that opposing parties engage in assertion and counter-assertion, as well as negotiation and bargaining, with the result that the outcome is usually determined by a political elite.¹⁶ Decisions are made, not through rational argument, but through persuasion, manipulation of opinion and, in the final analysis, through the use of power. Another problem to which MacIntyre alludes is that the general public no longer have a sufficient breadth of education to be able to grasp the implications of the information that is being marshalled in support of particular points of view. Hence, arguments about the role of human beings in global climate change and what needs to be done to reduce the impact of human activities on the environment are little understood. Arguments, for example, for a Carbon Tax, which has been introduced in some countries, such as Australia, are hardly comprehended by reasonably educated people, let alone the general public.¹⁷ The same applies to debates about other controversial issues, which are marked, not by sophisticated debate, but by manipulation of public opinion.

One such controversial issue is so-called gay marriage. In most countries, marriage is defined as between a man and a woman, and is understood as the

¹⁵ See, for example, A. MacIntyre and J. Dunne, "Alasdair MacIntyre on Education: In Dialogue with Joseph Dunne," *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 36 (2002), 1-19; A. MacIntyre, "The Idea of an Educated Public," in G. Haydon (ed.), *Education and Values: The Richard Peters Lectures* (London: University of London, Institute of Education, 1987), 15-36.

¹⁶ MacIntyre and Dunne, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁷ It could also be argued that they are little understood by even educated elites. The effect of the tax in Australia on the reduction of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere over a period of time will be miniscule. This is not to argue that human beings ought not to be more mindful of how they look after the environment.

public acknowledgement and communal support of the commitment that the couples are making to each other. It is established as an institution, established for the nurture and protection of the children which are the product of that union. Intimacy between a man and a woman in a marriage has both a unitive function and procreative function. It is established as the cornerstone of community with these twin purposes. Arguments, if any are mounted, for gay marriage fail to recognize these twin purposes, concentrating solely on the unitive dimension. Rational argument is avoided and, instead, fictitious statistics are quoted claiming overwhelming support for gay marriage. Little actual evidence is provided.

As an antidote to secularism, philosophy is an important weapon because of its ability to be, to some extent, independent of religious or theological positions. That it is not entirely free from a theological position is captured by Austin Farrer's claim that most people, whether they are willing to admit it or not, subscribe to some kind of crypto-theism.¹⁸ This is because, whatever philosophical stance a person takes on various questions of importance, it will have its roots in the metaphysical principles which he or she accepts. Farrer's claim is that invariably these metaphysical principles will appeal to some idea of the Absolute or the transcendent and this can be used to lead persons to a conception of God. Whether Farrer is right about this or not, what is central is the ability of philosophy to provide a common space in which discourse can take place in the public arena and its unique ability to appeal to the canons of rationality. An important element in this, however, is not to hide the metaphysical presuppositions nor the values from which arguments begin. That is, though arguments for any position have to begin in a common space, this does not mean that the beliefs and values to which persons are committed are somehow to be ignored. An argument cannot be fully understood unless its presuppositions are also laid bare.

Religious viewpoints are not irrational, since it can be easily shown that every position, whether religious or not, is based on metaphysical principles. Indeed, Christianity has always claimed that it is based on the twin pillars of faith and reason. These are inseparable and, as Aquinas says, without reason we cannot be sure that what is held by faith is true. There is only one truth.¹⁹ If this is the case, then, provided that interlocutors are genuine in seeking debate about controversial matters, they will be prepared to listen to and dialogue with religious positions. The difficulty, however, is that opposition to religious points of view tend to be irrational.

The idea that debate in the public square has to be conducted with respect for all persons and in a spirit of openness is not new. Habermas, in his work on discourse ethics, has attempted to enunciate the requirements for genuine dialogue. Respect for persons is not simply a matter of politely listening to

¹⁸ A. Farrer, *Finite and Infinite: A Philosophical Essay* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1959), p. 10.

¹⁹ Aquinas says that all of what is true is one. See T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benzinger Bros., 1948; republished New York: Christian Classics, 1981), I, Q.16, Art. 6.

another, and then ignoring what he or she says, but engaging in rational argument. Arguments from a religious point of view can be at least as rational as any from a secular point of view and, if we take respect for persons seriously, we need to be prepared to engage with religious perspectives. What is crucial is that, if we are to live as a community, we need to establish the boundaries of what we hold in common and where we differ. In doing so, we are better able to reach, if not consensus, at least an understanding of the issues that divide us.

Social Crisis

Although it is difficult to generalize across all countries, since they will exhibit a diverse range of social structures, in those countries which profess to be liberal and democratic, there is a marked rise in totalitarianism when it comes to being tolerant of diverse viewpoints. This is not say that what is favoured is totalitarian government, rather, that there is a censoring of what it is permissible to say in public and what it is not. As we have already seen in relation to the crisis of secularism, the religious point of view is decried as not being appropriate in the public arena. Despite claims of value tolerance, the opposite is observed, and not of the kind intolerance traditionally discussed by philosophers, such as how far a liberal democratic state can 'tolerate,' in the name of democracy, groups who believe in the destruction of the democratic state. The kind of intolerance observed is the refusal to acknowledge that, on some issues, there are other equally legitimate points of view. In some instances, power or populism is used to silence opponents of what is held to be the majority liberal point of view. Normally, the majority view is also taken to be the enlightened and progressive one that upholds the autonomy of individuals. Moreover, where the professed majority view is in fact not the majority view, spurious statistics will be quoted at every opportunity that claim that the view being supported is the majority view. We have already mentioned this in relation to gay marriage, but the same tactic is also used in support of euthanasia. No tactic is left idle in the quest to impose a particular view.²⁰

It is evident that not all countries in the West, in particular, have the same social structures, nor have they the same understanding of democracy. Although all could be considered, in some broad sense, liberal, some are more communitarianism than others. Some countries, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, value liberty and freedom over equality, and so tolerate high levels of income inequality, but as a result, also appear to be sanguine about high levels of poverty. The United States, for instance, is a nation with a significant disparity of income between the highest and lowest levels. Other countries, with a social market orientation, such as Germany, Italy, France, and Belgium, are more concerned with equality, and are willing to regulate

²⁰ It is not uncommon for both sides of a position to accuse each other of the tactics described here. If this is so, it makes it more urgent to ensure that there is a proper use of statistics and honesty in argument.

the levels of income so that there is less difference between income levels.²¹ Nevertheless, the same kind of intolerance of what are seen as non-progressive, non-enlightened positions on social issues also appear. Political correctness, which is the public face of intolerance, appears to have taken hold in Western European countries as much as in the United States and the United Kingdom; perhaps even more so, on some issues.

In non-Western countries, social crisis takes a different form and is the result of different kinds of pressure. For example, in China, corruption at various levels is difficult to control, and threatens social cohesion and civic harmony. Economic growth, despite policies designed to spread its benefits, has not been able to be distributed as fairly as it might be and the government faces a challenging task to distribute the goods of growth. Rising expectations of a growing middle class are also producing stresses and there are tensions as greater individual freedoms are sought by the younger generations. Unfortunately, the younger generations are not taking enough interest in their roles as citizens and so corrupt officials continue to thrive. In India, the caste system makes it difficult for the implementation of social policies that will improve the lives of women and children. Corruption is also a problem. The lack of tolerance in these countries takes a different form and is not the same as that in Western countries, though it can be expected that, as non-Western countries develop, they may also find themselves dealing with similar levels of intolerance in the name, paradoxically, of liberty and freedom. Our comments will be restricted to the problems arising in Western countries.

Contrary to the view of most commentators, it is not conservative politics which, as it is contended, leads to totalitarianism, but the liberal left, which seeks to eliminate all opposition to its position on various issues.²² The most obvious issues involve climate change (or global warming), so-called gay marriage, racism, euthanasia and abortion. Each of these issues requires serious debate and it is not our intent to do this here, but only to point out that it is not the so-called conservative side of politics –and here we can include such institutions as the Catholic Church– that seeks to eliminate discussion, but the politically correct left. Of course, it is abundantly obvious that a conservative position tends to want to maintain the status quo on most issues, and so can be judged to be constraining and repressive, but this in itself is not illegitimate. What would be illegitimate would be the suppression of alternative points of view so that they cannot be expressed. Political correctness is one means that

²¹ A. Green and J.-G. Janmaat, *Regimes of Social Cohesion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), pp. 134-163.

²² Zafirovski, for example, argues that it is conservative politics in the United States which seeks to repress and to constrain human rights and cites a number of authors, such as Talcott Parsons, Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer, Zygmunt Baumann, in support of the position that it is conservative politics that seeks to constrain and limit individual freedoms. While it might be true that conservatism seeks to limit freedoms, the liberal left, it is argued, seeks to suppress debate entirely. M. Zafirovski, “‘Libertarianism’ and the Social Idea of Liberty: Neo-conservatism’s ‘Libertarian’ Claims Reconsidered,” *Social Epistemology*, 25 (2011), 183-209.

can be used very effectively to silence any discussion of a difficult issue by deeming any alternative to the prescribed view on it as unthinkable. On the matter of climate change and global warming, for example, the evidence is not straightforward, nor is it clear to what extent human beings contribute to it. Prudentially, even if the extent of human contributions to global warming is unknown, it would be sensible to limit the extent to which human activity affects the temperature of the planet. One way of tackling this is to limit carbon emissions, but this is not the only environmental problem that needs to be addressed. It is important that human beings live in harmony with their environment and take seriously their stewardship of the earth, but this means that debate about how we minimize our effect on the environment should be wide ranging and not limited to one issue. Political correctness also affects debate about so-called gay marriage, an issue that, as we indicated previously, is cast as being about equality. This issue cannot be debated, since, for its proponents, there is no debate to be had. It is taken to be self-evident that marriage laws should be changed to accommodate same sex couples. Opposition is simply shouted down or ignored. In France, legislation was enacted to change the law, despite significant public opposition being voiced.

Racism is another issue on which political correctness prevents discussion. Another recent example was an incident in which a 13 year old girl called an Aboriginal footballer, Adam Goodes, an ape. Despite her later apology, this was taken to be a racist slur.²³ Later, a sports commentator and President of the Collingwood football club, Eddie McGuire, against whom, Goodes team, the Swans, were playing also apologized for the racist slur. Unfortunately, following this apology, he himself on his radio program jokingly suggested that Goodes could be a candidate for advertising the new movie *King Kong* (about a very large ape that terrorizes New York). This latter indiscretion made world headlines.²⁴ There is no doubt that, following the furor caused by the taunt by the 13 year old, it was a remarkably insensitive remark to make. What is problematic is that there was no debate about what constitutes racism, nor why calling an Aboriginal footballer an ape, was more offensive than calling a white Caucasian footballer an ape. If it is more offensive, then this in itself could be a form of racism. There could be no debate because what constituted racism was self-evident and did not require discussion, but rather a redoubling of corrective education in schools to prevent further instances of racism. While there is no disagreement with seeking to eliminate racism, it is the lack of open discussion of what constitutes genuine racism and what is simply mindless name calling that is to be deplored and it is political correctness which suppresses proper discussion.

The examples briefly discussed point to the rise of intolerance in the name of tolerance. Here, we have accused the liberal left of being responsible for

²³ See the report by M. Windley in *Herald-Sun*, May 25, 2013 (www.heraldsun.com.au/sport/afl/adam-goodes-gutted-after-13-year-old-girls-racial-slur-who-called-the-sydney-champion-today-to-apologise/story-fni5fan7-1226650256245).

²⁴ See the report in *The Guardian* by O. Laughland and H. Davidson, May 29, 2013 (www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2013/may/29/eddie-mcguire-adam-goodes-remarks).

this, but it may be that it is equally the conservative right who are at fault. The lack of proper discussion and the rise of intolerance of opposing views is, however, a major crisis within society. The antidote to intolerance is more difficult to find. Education and encouraging civility within the community is perhaps one means of combatting intolerance. The recognition that there is more than one way of considering controversial questions is important, as well as is respect for our opponents. Compromise is not always possible, but tensions between differing views are not always unproductive. In all cases, reason should be the guiding principle that structures debate.

We argue that a change to a more communitarian understanding of ourselves and our place in society is needed. This suggests that, in the global context, while we are not advocating the adoption of global values, nevertheless, a sense of solidarity with one another is needed if we are to value and respect each other. Intolerance and a lack of respect for views that differ from our own have to be countered by a realization that, in the case of all crises, an honest search for truth is required. If we are to have any chance of making headway in tackling the crises we have identified, a seismic shift in values is needed. Political correctness needs to be seen for what it is –intolerance and a blindness to that intolerance.

Conclusion

We have identified four crises that the world, perhaps more particularly, the Western world, faces. These were characterized as economic, demographic, secularist and social. It was proposed that the first crisis could be handled by a reorientation of the aim of the market towards the common good, the second, by the adoption of more family friendly policies, the third, by a recognition of the legitimacy of the religious viewpoint in the public square, and the fourth, by encouraging rational debate and open discussion. These are, none of them, particularly novel suggestions, but the crises themselves, taken together, require acting in concert, as well as the commitment to working alongside a diversity of views, each of which is of value.

In order to do this, a more communitarian understanding of our place within the world is required, one that understands that no individual can truly be herself or himself without relationships with others. This means a recognition of the social nature of human beings and that our identities are formed through our interactions with others. The first crisis, the economic crisis, did not happen because people were greedy or stupid, though it cannot be denied that these were contributing factors. It happened because various individuals did not consider their actions sufficiently in relation to others. A myopic concentration on profit led to it becoming the focus of all activity, forgetting that economics exists to serve all human beings, not just shareholders. It exists to serve not just shareholders, but all stakeholders, as more than just the employees, managers and owners of corporations, are affected by the decisions and actions that they take. The recent announcement in Australia by the Ford Motor Company that it will cease manufacturing cars in Broadmeadows and

Geelong (both in the State of Victoria) will affect, not just the Ford factory workers, but all of those who supply parts, those who provided lunches and others wider afield. In particular, it will devastate the Geelong community.²⁵ It is not just Ford's profits that are affected, but a much broader community. To combat the concentration on profits, a change in values is required towards a consideration of the common good.

The demographic crisis is also a result of individuals being forced to delay having children or not having them at all, because they do not have sufficient support from either families or communities to be able to confidently begin their own families. There are myriad reasons why people are no longer having children, but one of them is that, in a society which values individualism above all else, there is not enough support for couples to raise children. It is self-evident that a community will eventually disappear if it does not reproduce itself, hence it is imperative that an environment conducive to family life should be supported. This requires a re-orientation of what is most valued in a society from individualism to communitarianism. Once again, we need to see a shift in values.

A more inclusive society, oriented towards the community, will also go some distance in easing the differences which an individualistic, secular society exacerbates. While communitarianism itself does not assume a religious viewpoint, because it is inclusive, it encourages an understanding of the values and attitudes of others. Education has a key role to play in helping to construct a society which has a broad understanding of the values and beliefs of different religions and of the importance of the inclusion of all people in rational debate in the public arena. A more communitarian society recognizes the significance of the need to respect all persons and the potential contribution that they can make to the common good. This will include religious persons and their contributions.

Communitarianism also has a role to play in the easing of the social crisis. We can concede that there are large differences between the positions of conservatives and liberals on nearly every issue, but recognition of merit in an opponent's position is enhanced if each is able to value the other's position. This will be so if neither dogmatically insists on the truth of his or her position, but is willing to admit that no one perspective is ever able to see the whole truth. Humility in the face of the mystery of existence and of the complexity of human life is an attitude which goes some way to prevent intolerance and political correctness. Communitarianism is oriented towards the other and so to listening carefully to the views of others. Individualism is too self-absorbed and insistent on its own voice being heard and, to the extent to which a community is oriented towards listening to the other, it will be less inclined to political correctness.

The case for the importance of a more communitarian-oriented community as a step towards dealing with the four crises remains to be detailed. What

²⁵ See ABC Report (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-05-23/ford-to-close-geelong-and-broadmeadows-plants/4707960>).

we have provided here is the merest of sketches and is largely suggestive. What is clear, however, is that the adoption of values more consistent with communitarianism is required. These need not mean that we have to find global values with which all will agree, but it does mean that we need to look more deeply for the values which foster solidarity, respect for persons, rational debate and care for one another. These will be found in every culture and tradition, though they will not always be recognizable to everyone. The identified four crises are serious and there are others that we did not consider. If we are committed to addressing them (and others), then the change in values is an important first step in galvanizing the will to work together for the common good.

Environmental Crisis: Challenges and Strategies to Achieve Sustainable Development

ASHOK KUMAR SINHA

Introduction: 'Environment' means a surrounding in which the external conditions influence the development or growth of people, animals or plants, providing living or working conditions, etc.

The earth is a unique planet of the solar system, as it has favorable conditions for the evolution and survival of various forms of life. Oxygen surrounds the earth with the layer of air, which is essential for all forms of life.

Thus, the environment in which a man lives consists of a physical, or non-living, environment and a biological, or living, environment. A change in physical environment brings about a change in biological environment.

Natural Resources: Rocks, minerals, soils, rivers and other water bodies, plants, air and animals are the gifts of nature or natural endowments. They become resources only when man locates them, or finds a use for them, or proposes to use them.

Challenges: Man has destroyed or damaged natural resources badly for his desires and needs, causing environmental degradation or crisis which is a matter of deep concern round the world, which have affected and also attracted the attention of every nation of the world. Global warming, the depletion of the ozone layer, environmental pollution, climatic changes, earthquakes, floods, droughts, cyclones, volcanic eruption, over-urbanization and the growth of the population, rapid industrialization, etc., are some of the major challenges within the environmental crisis.

Crisis: Development and economic growth activities are also responsible for environmental crisis. Thus, crisis is a phenomenon which leads to a dangerous situation, affecting an individual, group, society, or the entire community.

Sustainable Development: Hence, sustainability in the development and planning process should be a permanent objective, because development is also essential. A balance between the economic goals and ecology is the need of the hour.

Strategies: A proper and effective environmental management policy is essential for the upgrading of our environment, and for the survival of our civilization.

Objectives: The objective of this paper is to discuss the environmental crisis, such as natural hazards and disaster, in the form of challenges and strategies to meet these challenges, with a focus on sustainable development outcomes.

Environmental Crisis: Whether caused by natural processes or human factors, those events or accidents are called extreme events which occur very rarely, and aggravate the natural environmental processes to cause disaster for human society, such as tectonic movements leading to earthquake and volcanic eruption, continued dry conditions leading to prolonged droughts, floods, at-

mospheric disturbances, the collision of celestial bodies, etc. Environmental hazards are those extreme events either of natural or of man-induced causes, which exceed the tolerable magnitude within or beyond certain time limits, make adjustment difficult, and result in catastrophic losses of property, income and lives. These create environmental crises.

For this, alternative terms like environmental stresses and environmental disaster are also used, in one way or another, to deal with the extreme events, whether natural or man-induced. But, actually, they are not same, and it may be said that hazards are generally taken to be the process, both natural and anthropogenic, which cause an accident and an extreme event or danger, whereas 'disaster' is a sudden, adverse or unfortunate extreme event which causes great damage to human beings and their property, as well as to plants and animals, disaster occurs rapidly, instantaneously and indiscriminately. Hence, in short, it can be said that environmental hazards are the processes whereas the environmental disasters are the results or responses of environmental hazards. The intensity of environmental disasters is always weighed in terms of the quantum of damages done to the human society. The hazardous environmental process always creates extreme events, but not all extreme events become disasters. These may become disasters only when they adversely affect human society.

Environmental Challenges: Natural hazards and disasters are normally divided into two broad categories on the basis of their main causative factors, which are known as environmental challenges. They are:

1. *Natural Hazards and Disaster:* It is further subdivided into the following two categories:

- (A) Planetary hazards and disasters.
- (B) Extra-terrestrial, or extra-planetary, hazards and disasters.
- (A) Planetary hazards and disasters. It again falls in two sub types viz.
 - (i) Terrestrial or Endogenous hazards which include volcanic eruption, earthquakes and landslides.
 - (ii) Atmospheric or Exogamous hazards; they also have two types:
 - (a) Abnormal or infrequent events which include cyclones, lighting and hailstorms.
 - (b) Cumulative Atmospheric hazards and disasters result in floods, droughts, cold waves and heat waves.
- (B) Extra-terrestrial or extra-planetary hazards and disasters. This category includes the catastrophic disasters caused by the collision between the earth and foreign bodies such as asteroids, meteoroids and comets.

2. *Man-Induced Hazards and Disasters:* This may also be divided into the following three sub-categories:

- (A) Physical hazards and disasters, including earthquakes, land-slides and soil erosion.
- (B) Chemical hazards and disasters, occurring due to release of toxic chemicals and nuclear explosion.
- (C) Biological hazards and disasters, including population explosion and eutrophication, etc.

According to the report of the United Nations Disasters Relief Coordination (UNDRO), about 90% of all of the reported natural hazards and disasters occur in developing countries or third world countries. It may be because of the fact that most of the developing countries are located in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world, where atmospheric processes very often cause numerous natural hazards and disasters, such as floods, droughts, forest fires and, of course, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and cyclones, wherein the last three are also more prevalent in other parts of the world.

Rapid growth or urbanization, industrial expansion, agricultural development, population growth, the construction of high water reservoirs, and social development are continuously accelerating the frequency and magnitude of natural hazards and disasters in developing countries. These developing countries more or less chronically suffer from disaster. In a sense, they live with disaster. The achievement of development programs has often been destroyed and their future plans halted because funds had to be diverted to relief and recovery activities. It is true that a single disaster can strike a nation's social infrastructure, damaging its feedback system to an irrecoverable extent.

There are numerous known and unknown, natural and man-induced causes for the above mentioned environmental hazards and disasters. However, a brief account of their causes, effects, and distribution is being presented here one by one, taking some important events out of them.

(I) *Earthquakes*: An earthquake is a major demonstration of the tectonic forces caused by endogenic thermal conditions of the interior of the earth. An earthquake is a motion of the ground's surface, ranging from a faint tremor to a wild motion capable of shaking buildings apart and causing gaping fissures to open in the ground. The form of energy of an earthquake is that of wave motion, transmitted through the surface layer of the earth in widening circles from a point of sudden energy release, called the focus. The magnitude or intensity of energy released by an earthquake is measured by the Richter scale. Another scale of the measurement of the degree of destructiveness or intensity of an earthquake is the Marcella scale.

The place of the origin of an earthquake is called the 'focus,' which is always hidden inside the earth, but the depth of which varies from place to place. The place on the ground's surface, that records the seismic waves for the first time is called 'epicenter.' These different types of wave lengths are recorded with the help of an instrument such as a 'seismograph' or a 'seismometer' at the epicenter.

Causes: Earthquakes are caused due to disequilibrium in any part of the crust of the earth. A number of causes have been assigned to cause disequilibrium in the earth's crust, such as volcanic eruptions, faulting and folding, up warping and down warping, hydrostatic pressure of man-made water bodies like reservoirs and lakes, and, of late, the plate movements.

Distribution: The world distribution of earthquakes includes the Circum Pacific Belt, or Ring of Fire, surrounding the Pacific Ocean. The Mid-Continental Belt also represents epicenters located along the Alpine-Himalayan chains of Eurasia and northern Africa and epicenters of the East African fault zone. The

Mid-Atlantic Belt represents the earthquakes located along the Mid-Atlantic Ridges and its off-shoots.

Effects: An earthquake becomes hazardous or disastrous only when it strikes a populated area. The direct and indirect disastrous effects of earthquakes include the deformation of ground surfaces, the damage and destruction of human structures such as buildings, rails, roads, bridges, dams, factories, the destruction of towns and cities, the loss of human and animal lives and property, violent fires, landslides, floods, disturbances in electricity and the water supply, and in ground water conditions, etc.

(II) *Volcanic Eruption:* It is another example of natural terrestrial hazards, but, unlike earthquakes, volcanoes are both hazards/disasters and boons to human beings. Certainly, they destroy human settlements and agricultural frames, kill people and animals and destroy human properties, bring short climatic and environmental changes through their explosive central eruption, and spread hot gaseous and liquid lavas coming out of fissure flows. However, they also provide rich soils from agricultural purposes. Sometimes, in the beginning of the explosive force with smoke clouds, ashes and rock fragments thrown into the air cause loud sounds and earthquakes.

Causes: The water on the surface of the earth seeps into the interior through many cracks and fissures. When the water gets into contact with hot lava, it is dissolved in the latter. When this lava crystallizes, the dissolved water is freed with high temperature and pressure. When this water, in the form of steam, escapes out of the many holes, an explosion is caused. Later on, the lava also comes out of the holes.

The lava in the interior of the earth is subjected to a great pressure which does not allow it to melt. When organic action affects the earth's surface, the sedimentary rocks rise in folds. The pressure on the lava is reduced at places which are zones of weakness. At these places, the lava is melted due to the reduction of pressure over it and it rises up, which results in the explosion out of the fissures. That is why volcanoes are found close to fold mountain ranges. Some scholars are also of the opinion that there are radioactive particles within the earth for which fragmentation also helps to generate heat and pressure. Movements of the plates along the Benioff zones are also considered as one of the main causes of volcanic eruptions. Volcanoes have been classified in various categories, which are based upon activities and types of explosion and ejected materials.

The material which is emitted out of volcanoes forms many types of land forms, which are also economically important.

Distribution: Like earthquakes, the spatial distribution of volcanoes over the globe is well marked and well understood because volcanoes are found in a well-defined belt or zone. Like earthquake belts, there are also three major belts, or zones, of volcanoes. They are the Circum-Pacific Belt, or Pacific Ring of Fire, the Mid-Continental Belt of the Alpine Mountain Chains, and the Mediterranean Sea and Fault Zone of Eastern Africa. The Mid-Oceanic Ridge Belt includes volcanoes mainly along the mid-Atlantic ridge.

Effects: Volcanic eruptions cause heavy damage to human lives and property through the advancing hot lavas, through the fallout of volcanic materials, through the destruction to human structures, such as buildings, factories, roads, rails and airports, dams, bridges and reservoirs, through the fires caused by hot lava, through the floods in the rivers, and through the climatic and environmental changes they cause. The formation of Tsunamis and Jökulhlaup damage standing crops and vegetation, too. The occurrence of landslides is also possible.

Atmospheric or Exogenous Hazards: The atmospheric hazards are related to weather and climatic extreme events. The atmospheric environmental natural hazards are caused by atmospheric processes which originate from within the atmosphere and, hence, those natural hazards are also called as Exogenous Natural Hazards. The extreme weather and climatic events may be divided into two main groups:

(i) Abnormal and infrequent events which last for a very short time, such as tropical cyclones (typhoons, tornadoes and hurricanes), severe lightning and fires.

(ii) Events which prevail for a prolonged period of time. Such events become hazards through cumulative effects such as droughts and floods, heat waves, cold waves etc.

(III) *Tropical Cyclones:* Tropical cyclones representing closed low pressure systems generally having a diameter of about 650 kilometers, having high wind speeds of 180 km to 400 km or more per hour, are among the most powerful, destructive, dangerous and deadly atmospheric storms on the planet earth. These are called 'Hurricanes' in the north Atlantic Ocean (mainly in the Caribbean Sea and the Southeastern U.S.A.), 'Typhoons' in the North Pacific Ocean, mainly in the China Sea, Eastern and Southern coasts of China and areas of India, and are called 'Willy Willy' in Australia.

Tropical cyclones become more disastrous natural hazards because of their high wind speed, high tidal surges, high rainfall intensity, very low atmospheric pressure causing unusual rises in the sea level, and their persistence for several days, or, say, about one week.

Causes: In low atmospheric pressure regions, cyclones are caused. Bjerknes' opinion in connection with cyclogenesis is that the confrontation of air masses is like the confrontation of armies at war. Hence, he called the contact area of the two air masses a 'front.' He explained his hypothesis on the basis of polar fronts formed by the cold air masses coming from the north polar area, circulating in a counter-clockwise direction, and the warm air masses coming from the south and circulating in clockwise direction.

The occurrences of tropical cyclones are rhythmic in nature because they are restricted to certain seasons of a year and this varies from one region to another.

Distribution: There are six major regions in the world which are responsible for the origin of tropical cyclones. They are the West Indies, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, the Western North Pacific Ocean including the Philippines Islands, the China Sea and Japanese Islands, the Arabian Sea and

the Bay of Bengal, the Eastern Pacific Coastal Region off of Mexico and Central America and the South Indian Ocean off of Madagascar, and the Western South Pacific Ocean, in the region of Samoa and Fiji Island, and the east north coast of Australia.

Effects: The total cumulative effects of high velocities of wind, torrential rainfall and the transgression of sea water on to the coastal land become so enormous that the cyclone causes havoc in the affected area and, thus, tremendous losses of human lives and property are the ultimate result of such atmospheric deluges. The 'storm surge' or 'tidal surge' refers to the unusual rise in sea-level caused by very low atmospheric pressure and the stress of the strong gusty winds on the sea surface. These storm surges or tidal surges, when coinciding with high tides, are further intensified and, after intruding into the coastal land, cause the widespread inundation of the coastal area, and great damages to human lives and property. It can destroy buildings, transport systems, water and power supply systems, and it can cause the disruption of communication systems, the destruction of agricultural crops, domestic and wild animals, natural vegetation, private and public institutions, and so on.

Cumulative Atmospheric Hazards: This includes those events which are caused due to the cumulative effects of weather events, which can be prolonged for longer periods of time, ranging from a few weeks to several years, depending upon the nature of the weather events. These long events may result in floods and droughts.

(IV) *Flood:* Flood simply means the inundation of an extensive land area with water for several days in continuation. In fact, flood is an attribute of the physical environment and, thus, is a component of the hydrological cycle of a drainage basin. Flood is a natural phenomenon and is a response to rainfall, but it becomes a hazard when it causes colossal loss to human lives and property. Floods are also aggravated by human activities and, thus, flood hazard is both a natural as well as a man-induced or, rather, a man-accentuated, phenomenon.

Causes: Natural factors of floods are prolonged, high intensity rainfall, meandering courses of rivers, extensive flood plains, breaks in slope in the long profiles of the rivers, i.e. a sudden change in the channel gradient at the intervening zones of foothill slope of the mountains and/or the plains, the blocking of the free flow of the rivers because of enormous debris provided by landslides and due to volcanic eruption, or merely the nature of river valleys and channels, etc. Anthropogenic activities, such as building activity and eventual urbanization, manipulate channels through the diversion of the river's course, through the construction of bridges, barrages and reservoirs, through agricultural practices, deforestation, land use changes, etc., all caused by man.

Distribution: About 3.5% of the total geographical areas of the world are covered by flood plains which house about 16.5% of the total population of the world. The most notorious rivers of the world, in terms of devastating floods and resultant damage to natural environmental loss and loss of human lives and property, are the Ganga and its major tributaries, such as the Yamuna, the Ramaganga, the Gomati, the Ghaghara, the Gandak, the Kosi, the Damodar,

etc. (in northern India), the Brahmaputra (in north-east India), the deltaic segments of the Mahanadi, the Krishna, the Godavari, the Tapti, the Narmada, the Luni, the Mahi, etc. (all in India), the Mississippi and the Missouri of the U.S.A., the Yangtze and the Yellow of China, the Irrawadi or Myanmar, the Indus of Pakistan, the Niger of Nigeria, the Po of Italy, the Euphrates and the Tigris of Iraq, etc.

Effects: Enormous volumes of water and their consequent inundations in flood areas cause, specially in settlement areas, great loss of human lives and property, crops, plants and animals, the destruction of weak shelters, bridges, rails, roads, massive erosion, large scale riparian decay along the river bank, the shifting of channels and even of river course, the silting of beds, the deposition of sands, silts and clay in the flood plains, etc., which pose a serious threat to human society, to the distribution of water and the electrical supply, to the communication system and to the spread of epidemic diseases. But floods are not always hazards; rather, these are also boons because these bring rich, fertile alluvial soils each time and, thus, increase agricultural productivity.

(V) *Droughts:* Droughts are more deadly natural environmental hazards, because these are directly related to water, one of the three basic requirements of any form of life (water, air and food), and are indirectly related to food because crops and other plants and animals exclusively depend upon water. Droughts resulting from the accumulative effects of water scarcity cause extensive and enormous damage to agricultural and natural vegetation and, therefore, cause famine and the starvation of the human and animal populations of the regions concerned. It clearly involves an acute shortage of water for a long period, mostly due to deficiency in normal rainfall.

Causes: Droughts occur due to the variability of rainfall, a delay in the onset or an early withdrawal of a monsoon, a duration of breaks in the monsoon season and a real difference in the persistence of monsoons, the over-utilization and harnessing of ground water resources, the inability to harness, recharge and store rain water, as well as the substitution of cash crops in place of cereals, deforestation, etc.

Distribution: Drought-prone areas are the Sahel region of Africa, extending between hot and dry desert areas of the Sahara in the north and the Savanna region in the south and running from the western part of Africa through Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Uganda, and Ethiopia in the east. It is also called the Sub-Saharan Region. The drought zone of the Sahel is a tropical grassland and is characterized by a Feast or Famine climate. Drought is a very common natural phenomenon in Australia, with widespread spatial coverage.

In India, there are certain well defined tracts of droughts. These are:

- (a) The desert and the semi-arid regions with proximately 0.6 million sq. km. This area forms a rectangle from Ahmedabad to Kanpur on one side and Kanpur to Jalandhar on the other.
- (b) The regions lying east of the Western Ghats up to a width of 300 km. They mostly include the rain shadow area.

- (c) Other pockets of drought lie in several part of India, such as Tirunelveli district, south of the Vaigai River, the Coimbatore area, the Saurashtra and Kutch regions, the Mirzapur plateau, the Palamau and Nawada districts, regions of Bihar, the Purulia district of West Bengal, and Kalahandi region of Orrissa.

Effects: Droughts affect all types of life-forms in the biosphere ecosystem, because both plants and animals directly depend on water. Any shortage in the water supply adversely affects them. Thus, the impacts of prolonged droughts include ecological, economic, demographic and political aspects. Prolonged drought conditions in a given region change the biotic component of the natural ecosystem.

(VI) *Extra Planetary/Terrestrial Hazards or Disasters:* The catastrophic disasters caused by collisions between the earth and foreign bodies such as asteroids, meteoroids and comets are called extra planetary or extraterrestrial disasters or hazards.

Causes: This is possible due to the shifts in the earth's axis of rotation, which causes catastrophic disasters affecting the earth. The geoidal shifts have also been assigned to extraterrestrial and terrestrial causes, such as the rapid rate at which the polar ice caps are melting, which may upset the rotation of the earth and produce instability.

Distribution: Possible on any part of the globe or from any part of space. In the past history of the earth, there are evidences of 120 such cases of collisions.

Effects: Shift in the earth's axis of rotation are possible, which may affect human beings, including emissions of enormous volumes of dusts, tidal waves in the oceans, shock waves, hurricanes, craters on the earth's surface and rapid changes in the sea level, whereas climate change, biological extinctions, volcanism and cataclysmic landform changes are also possible.

(VII) *Man-Induced Hazards and Disasters:* Any environmental degradation induced by man becomes hazardous and disastrous when it assumes alarming proportion, and/or causes irreparable loss to human society.

Causes: These may be caused through a variety of human activities, both of intentional and unintentional character.

Distribution: It is possible anywhere where man is present, but the following are few important events of the world: The earthquake of 1931 in Greece due to Marathon Dam constructed in 1929, the start of earth tremors since 1936 around Hoover Dam of U.S.A. due to creation of Mead Lake in 1935, the earthquake of Koyna (Maharashtra, India) of 1967 due to the construction of the Koyna reservoir in 1962, etc. A marine disaster was created due to the leakage of 100,000 tons of crude oil from the huge oil tanker, which struck the Spanish coast near the port of La Coruna and exploded on May, 12, 1976, killing most of the sea organisms. Other examples are the disaster of the nuclear installation of Chernobyl (USSR), the Bhopal Gas tragedy of Union Carbide factory in India in 1984, the dropping of atom bombs on the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan by the U.S.A. in 1945 that affected millions of Japanese population, etc.

Effects: These fall into three categories: *Physical*, such as earthquakes, landslides and accelerated rate of soil erosion, *Chemical*, such as the release of toxic chemicals, dumping and exposure at later dates of toxic chemicals, nuclear explosions, the leakage of crude oil from oil tankers into the oceanic water, etc., and *Biological*, such as population explosion and eutrophication, etc.

There is an instantaneous response in humans to help each other during the time of disaster. The social response to disasters is largely determined by the communications of media men, such as newspaper reporters. Thus, communications are of crucial importance in the assessment and reduction of disasters.

Strategies for Disaster Reduction and Management: The reduction of natural hazards and disasters and their management involves a provision for immediate relief measures to disaster-affected people, the prediction of hazards and disasters and measures of adjustment to natural hazards/disasters.

At first there should be a correct picture of the nature and magnitude of the disaster. Very often, the new media report their own misconception instead of reporting the real events. This is not done deliberately. The international communities should respond to the official requests of the concerned government only.

Priorities must be decided upon before undertaking the remedial and relief measures. Relief measures must be concentrated in the high density areas of the affected locality. Special rescue tools, communication equipment, heavy machines to remove debris, water pumps, cement, and technicians are more important than drugs and doctors, because the health dangers after disasters are predominantly environmental in character and not medical.

The management of natural hazards involves disaster research and disaster predictions. The predictions of natural hazards may be made in areas prone to a particular natural hazard, in terms of frequency, recurrence intervals, magnitude and dimensions of events, and the nature of their causative factors. Satellite and remote sensing are also supplying important information concerned with weather conditions, and physical and environmental factors can be utilized in disaster management.

The mapping and monitoring of natural hazards and disasters, and of global changes in environmental conditions, are very important aspects of disaster management. This requires in-depth study of hazard-prone areas at global, regional and local levels. The International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and other organization have launched several research programs to study the environmental changes caused by human activities and natural disasters, in terms of the mechanisms involved in the genesis of such disasters, their monitoring and their mitigation. These types of studies are very much helpful in the management of disasters.

Disaster research for the reduction and mitigation of natural hazards includes the study of the contributing factors and mechanisms of natural hazards and disasters, the identification and classification of both hazards' and disasters' potential, and the generation of a vast database which includes the mapping of physical components of the ecosystem, such as bedrock and surfi-

cial geology, soils, water resources and land use, and cultural components, such as the density of the human population, the population's distribution, its transportation and communication systems, food, water and health facilities, and administrative facilities such as police and military. The significant aspect of natural disaster research is to prepare 'Terrain Risk Area' on the basis of remote sensing, engineering and electronic tools and techniques.

Education on disasters plays an important role in the program of disaster reduction. Education must be broad based and must reach everyone including the scientists, the engineers, and the policy and decision makers, as well as the general public through popular media, such as newspapers, radio and television broadcasts, poster displays and documentary films. In most of the countries, the responsibility to inform the public about the impending hazards and disasters lies with the governments and, thus, researchers and scientists must educate the decision makers, like administrators and police, through the following steps:

- (i) To raise awareness about the hazards and disasters among decision makers and general public, and to train the decision makers to handle the situations created by disasters.
- (ii) To provide information about the possible disaster well in advance.
- (iii) To provide risk and vulnerability maps.
- (iv) To persuade the people to improve the standard of construction so as to escape the disasters.
- (v) To explain the disaster reduction techniques, etc. The Geographic Information System (GIS) and Aerospace Surveys Map help considerably in the natural disasters reduction and management program, GIS and Aerospace surveys help in the disasters management in the following way:
 - (a) By providing detailed maps of the problems areas.
 - (b) By providing historic information gathered from local people to researchers to better model the frequency and magnitude of events in an area.
 - (c) By providing a planning framework for local politicians.
 - (d) By providing disaster reduction planning based on past experience of the disaster, and awareness of the disaster among the public.

In disasters management, the adjustments of human populations to natural hazards and disasters are essential, which include changes in the attitudes and perception of individuals, society, and institutions towards natural hazards and disasters, increased awareness of natural hazards and disasters, provisions for really and timely warnings of natural hazards and disasters, land use planning by identifying and demarcating disaster-prone areas and discouraging the people to settle in such areas, provisions for compensation of losses of lives and property through insurance schemes so that people may prepare to evacuate their homes, villages and cities in the wake of timely warnings of possible hazards and disasters in a particular area, and other such provisions for disaster preparedness, etc.

In any form of management, the organizational structure plays an important role. In disaster management, the co-operation between the government and the people is a key factor. Therefore, the organizational structure should be designed in such a manner that the government agencies and common people can support and co-operate with each other. Various organizations starting from national, state, district, panchayat, and village levels, should be formed to combat the hazards and disasters. These organizations should include persons befitting to a particular level. An Organization at a *National level* should include: the Prime Minister, the Union Minister, the leader of the opposition, and five experts of disaster management; at a *State level*: the Chief Minister, the Minister, the leader of opposition, experts, the Army Chief of that region, etc.; at a *District level*: the Collector, the Superintendent of Police and the Chief Officer-in-Charge of various district departments of the government; at a *Panchayat level*, the Sarpanch and the Executive Member, the B.D.O. and other Government members, and the Officer-in-charge of that area; at a *Village level*: two experienced senior citizens of the village, two women, five young executives, two members each from the ST/SC, etc.

The objective of these organizations for disasters management is to integrate both government agencies and common people together and to bring them on to one platform for the optimization of the disaster management program.

Apart from these organizations, the government can create a specific Ministry for Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction. This Ministry would be responsible for the relief, rescue, rehabilitation, and reconstruction program during the pre- and post-disaster period. The state governments can have a similar type of ministry, too.

Each organization mentioned above should have its own fund to be utilized for disaster management, and under no circumstances should this fund be transferred to any other fund, or be utilized for any purpose other than disaster management. And, above all, a strong will, rare courage and intellect, true dedication and honesty are essential for any type of disaster management. *Sustainable Development*: Considering the above mentioned facts, it can be said that with the pace of development and man's wrong activities, the natural resources are becoming less damaged or about to come to an end, which is also causing environmental crisis. This is a big question of survival for the future generations to come.

The answer to the above question is certainly sustainable development, which, according to World Commission on Environment and Development is "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." It denotes the state of resources that can be maintained indefinitely. The expanding human population has imposed excessive pressure on the natural resources. If the current practice of utilizing natural resources continues, the future generation will have less chance of getting sufficient food to eat, space to live in and pure air to breathe.

The Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (3-R) approach emphasizes minimization of resource use, using them again and again instead of passing the resource on

to the waste stream, and recycling the materials helps in achieving the goals of sustainability. It reduces pressure on our resources as well as reducing waste generation and pollution.

Ancient India always had an environmentally sensitive philosophy. No country, perhaps, lays as much emphasis on environmental ethics as Indian ethics. Man is taught to live in harmony with nature and to recognize that divinity prevails in all elements, including plants and animals. Mahatma Gandhi's sayings and life style are signposts for sustainable environmental development through human service, ahinsa (non-violence), sarvodya (uplifting of all), self-realization, etc. These thoughts are of immense importance for sustainable development, which is also the need of the hour to save our resourceful environment for our future generations.

PART V

The Moral Aspects of Crisis

Crisis, Moral Errors and History

DAVID EDWARD ROSE

Introduction

In this paper, I intend to investigate the specific nature of moral crisis and whether or not a moral crisis is, strongly, different in kind from a moral disagreement or, more weakly, a special case of moral disagreement. A moral conflict is a disagreement about the truth of a statement or an assertion, and its resolution will not necessarily (but may) involve normative and practical consequences: a change in law, social institutions or individual behaviour. Intuitively, crisis is initially comprehended as a crucial or decisive temporal moment which is unstable and is characterized by a conflict awaiting resolution that will result in a critical revision of central values. Crisis, one may suppose, differs from simple moral disagreement because of the urgency of its resolution. It is not just disagreement, it is an urgent disagreement, in that it is a demand that can quite quickly spill over into political action. The resolution of a moral crisis, whether it be different in kind from or a special subset of moral disagreement, may well lead to normative and practical consequences.

Characterizing the Nature of Moral Crisis

Crises are nearly always material or historical facts, such as the demand by women for the vote pre-1918 (in the UK), and the lobbying for the Abortion Act of 1967. In both of these cases, customary or traditional values were pitted against “progressive” or rational reasons and the moral demand was accompanied by political action (protest, disobedience, violence). Had the demand been made historically earlier, it is not uncontroversial to assume that it would have been silenced; that is, it would not have counted as a demand, because the interests it expressed had no “rational” correlative in the dominant moral language. What they said would not have counted as words. So, the women who demanded a vote were seen as “hysterical” or “unnatural” and, therefore, “unreasonable” and “irrational,” until the culture of reason could accept their demand as intelligible (in the UK around the turn of the 20th century).¹ And such denial of the demands of the women would have been supported by conventional meanings of the social fabric (it is natural for women to occupy the home) and more sophisticated metaphysical positions (the religious separation of gendered duties).

¹ Langton sees this as a true cultural problem as concerns contemporary feminism. The voice of women is “silenced” because their assertions are not considered assertions at all, but the statements of the deluded, the emotional, the hysterical and so on. See R. Langton, *Sexual Solipsism: Philosophical Essays on Pornography and Objectification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), ch. 1.

However, at the same time, moral crises are distinguished by the protester's voice harmonizing with deeper central values of a culture. The demands are not so easily silenced as those of the hysterical and the idiosyncratic. Crises are interesting because the demand made cannot be easily dismissed by the dominant moral discourse, because the crisis reveals a conflict at the heart of the language. With both examples above, the emergence of the rationality of the values of liberty and equality comes into conflict with the wider moral language that supports them. The demand for the right to vote made an appeal to central values, equality and liberty, which come into conflict with the traditional metaphysical and religious commitments of the culture. Oddly, though, those very values of equality and liberty were founded in and extrapolated from that very particular moral tradition. Equally so in the case of abortion whereby reproductive technological advances, egalitarian policies and the secularization of society mean women have, for the first time, a demand to take their own bodies as self-owned. Here, the values of autonomy and private property are also, to a large extent, derived from a specific moral tradition.²

Crisis, it seems, reveals the broken nature of moral culture and occurs when that language is in need of revision. It is distinguished from other moral problems in that its resolution is characterized by urgency and the willingness of the agents to risk for their demands to be met. Compare the movements for female suffrage with the moral problem of assisted suicide. If the government were to enforce a law against assisted suicide, one may well disagree and assert that it rests on moral error, but be unwilling to use political action to demand that politicians recognize their error. The conflict is just not urgent enough to demand political action in the case of disagreement. Moral crises, on the other hand, are very much characterized by the need to resolve them practically as well as theoretically, and such disagreements are often accompanied by political and practical action.

Let us take two steps back here to dissect the nature of moral disagreements which are best understood as crises. A disagreement in moral discourse is characterized by a conflict between individuals or groups who claim that "it is right to X," in contradiction of others. So, "it is right for women to have the right to vote" and "it is right that women do not have the right to vote." It is assumed that, like science, such questions are susceptible to resolution and are not, like desires or preferences, arational. To reduce the question to a conflict of preferences and not reasons is to make it akin to two agents arguing over whether cheese is delicious or not. Such conflicts can only be resolved through force and coercion, not reason, and ultimately undermine an appropriate understanding of moral discourse.

Moral crisis is therefore akin to moral disagreement in that there exists a felt conflict between the shared values of a culture. As has been mentioned,

² The development of moral discourse here alluded to only implicitly is probably best compared to MacIntyre's discussion of traditions. I believe his characterization owes much to Hegel as does the idea of progress which motivates my own understanding. I do not have space, unfortunately, to argue for it directly in this essay. See A. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988), ch. 18.

the values of equality and liberty which ground the demand for universal suffrage are the very values of the tradition which they oppose. The traditional interpretation of these values and the progressive interpretation of the values of a culture are in opposition, so one could describe the rational axiology of a culture as conflicted.

Over and above a simple moral disagreement, a moral crisis seems to be very much historically situated. The disagreement over whether lying is ever permissible is ahistorical. However, had women demanded the vote in the sixteenth century, their claim would have been unintelligible at the level of the dominant public, rational culture due to its incoherence with deeply shared metaphysical, religious and ethical commitments. In the twentieth century, the demand for the vote was intelligible because it harmonizes with rational values that were shared: equality, liberty and a new cultural fabric that grounds these values (the secular, industrial world). The claim is grounded in values that are undeniable to the opponents of the claimant; the participants now speak the same moral language and, hence, the progressive interlocutor has to be recognized as a moral partner. They are recognized as equal, rational participants in discourse.

Finally, to fully separate crises from mere disagreement, it is pertinent to identify the difference in urgency as concerns its resolution. When Ronald Dworkin wrote about pornography, he was concerned with free speech, and pornography was not a problem, as it was a minority issue.³ Society was able to tolerate a few perverts for the sake of free speech and equality of moral concern. However, as Langton has pointed out, pornography has become pervasive in our culture, and its objectification of agents is keenly and widely felt.⁴ Everyone now has access to pornography, and a resolution to the moral problem of pornography is demanded because to ignore it, to sweep it under the carpet, exacerbates the conflict and begins to ferment a possible violent outcome. Perhaps because of this urgency, crisis, as apart from conflict, is often accompanied by or instigates political violence. Issues such as the testing of five year olds in school or the issues surrounding assisted suicide, do not beget violence because tolerance and compromise can be accommodated. However, abortion, and the equality of genders, races and minorities often result in civil disobedience and direct action.⁵

³ R. Dworkin, "Is There a Right to Pornography?," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 30 (1981), 177-212.

⁴ R. Langton, *Sexual Solipsism: Philosophical Essays on Pornography and Objectification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), ch. 6-7.

⁵ There is an interesting aspect to this violence that links it with the issue of recognition. Hegel believes that recognition is a long drawn out historical struggle which begins either with individual violent conduct or war between states. And it is interesting to note how, prior to violent acts, silencing of other participants is the norm, and yet a violent demand results in recognition because the agent is prepared to risk his or her life for the sake of a value, thus displaying the Hegelian requirement for rational action. (One feels Emily Davison throwing herself in front of the King's horse in 1913 is a paradigm example.) See G. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

To summarize, a moral crisis is (i) a conflict between moral reasons in which (ii) both participants appeal to recognized elements and values of a shared moral culture; but it differs from a moral disagreement in that (iii) its resolution is urgent.

Conflict and Error

One assumes that, of the two opposing participants in a rational conflict, one or both are in error. The aim of moral discourse has always been conceived as, on one level, the rational negation of erroneous assumptions and arguments. Given the ahistorical, universalist and monist nature of modern ethics, such crises are seen as a species of one of three errors.

One, the error concerns a conflict of interests with moral obligations. Some putative moral reasons are not reasons at all, but are only apparently rational. Instead, they are preferences, interests and desires, and the language which sets them up as reasons is nothing but ideology. When a demand is made by the interests of some agents against the moral obligations of all agents, then there is a simple conflict between reason and desire. So, the ruling males believe they have reasons for not extending votes to women, but these are just masks for their own interests. The moral language of such cultures, the language one must speak to be rational, is revealed to be ideological in the sense that it expresses the interests of a class or group exclusively and in isolation from society as a whole.⁶ Rational discourse will reveal which are real reasons and which are mere expressions of interests.

Two, the error arises from badly articulated problems, but problems which are ultimately reducible to core moral values. With abortion, we recognize that historical and traditional principles of the sanctity of life muddy the discursive water, and we really need a full blown rights theory and a proper metaphysics that assigns or denies personhood to the foetus. Once we have the appropriate language and concepts, the conflict will supposedly disappear.

Three, the error is the result of a conceptual or metaphysical error. Reasons have a proper language which is universal and required for the rational expression of reasons. Conflict can be due to the bad articulation and framing of a problem in imprecise and ambiguous language. In other words, because ethics is itself ahistorical and universal, crises must belong to the temporal world of change and, hence, incorporate some sort of error. So, for example, seeing the foetus as a soul is an ontological error that has normative consequences for the rational discussion of the permissibility of termination.

In all three cases, moral discourse seeks to bracket off the historical nature of these conflicts, rendering it insignificant to the actual debate. Crises, though, arise when there is a need for the revision and reinterpretation of a

1977), 178-183; and G. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), §351R.

⁶ F. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. F. Golffing (London: Doubleday, 1956) and K. Marx, *The German Ideology*, trans. S. Ryazanskaya (New York: Prometheus Books, 1998).

community's central values. The value of moral crises may well be in their contribution to the project of thinking, as they seemingly function as a motor of historical-ethical revisionism (as was the case with equality in the suffrage demand and liberty in the abortion demand). Ethical crises may occur when the very concepts of our ethical reasoning are in need of revision, and not just our articulation and expression of them. Crises seem to involve a need to develop one's moral language and so are significantly different from simple moral disagreement.

The nature of modern moral philosophy is apparently an obstruction to conferring the appropriate status on moral crises, though. One needs an ethical theory which is sensitive to these understandings, yet one which resists the urge to fall into a simple historical relativism whereby moral language is relative to the historical culture which grounds it. Most modern ethical theories are not.

Historicism of Moral Language

The elements, reasons and values of our moral language are primarily constituted as a cultural *a priori*. These values are imposed by a subject on his or her experience in order to make the experience intelligible.⁷ These values are, for the most part, coexistent and plural. One can respect another's autonomy whilst maximizing overall utility or welfare, but sometimes they will conflict. Sometimes, it is impossible to be consistent or even to be faithful to all of our values at once; there is only so much "social space" in our society. Sometimes, the values will relate to each other illogically and oddly due to their historical manifestations. Sometimes, new moral problems will often bring into stark relief those background values which inform our judgements and force us to re-interrogate them as grounds to our moral judgements. Novel ethical issues will force us to evaluate the substantial manifestations of equality, liberty and other procedural values or even, at a lower level, substantial, historical values. So, for example, abortion is a real moral issue in a society where medical technology (where cost is minimized and safety maximized), religious traditions (the traditional Christian echo which places the quickening at conception unlike the Muslim faith) and women's material equality (women make decisions for themselves) collide to raise the problem of re-evaluating the concept of the liberty of a specific group in a tradition that has for a long time silenced them. To look at the problem divorced from these understandings is to corrupt what is actually at stake. Moral crises are *shot through* with historicity. For Hegel, such moral problems are motors of history and he thinks this is what allows us to perfect our moral discourse.

Hegel prescribes objective determinations of the will from one's social and cultural identity.⁸ He realizes that the nature of the good cannot be created

⁷ I shall not argue for this thesis here. For a discussion and argument, please refer to D.E. Rose, *The Ethics and Politics of Pornography* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), ch. 6.

⁸ What follows is a very succinct summary of Hegel's ethical thought as it appears in the pages of *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*.

from the abstract thinking of the mind consistent with universal norms. Instead, the moral subject must begin from existing moral values and institutions, because his constraint of objectivity involves the idea that the good must be intelligible to the judgements of his cultural peers. Recognition of the rightness of his action is necessary for him to be treated as a free agent. Those values the agent finds himself thrown into are those that make rational moral thinking possible and are, then, the ground of his own evaluation and the starting point of his own revisionary project.

Moral thinking is a socially immanent enterprise. The substantial understanding of others, as derived from their social identity and also of oneself, is the objective freedom of the agent. The objective freedom of an agent is the institutions, moral values, social fabric, roles, civil, economic and political structures, and so on, that guarantee his or her identification as a subject of his or her own deeds and his or her recognition as a moral agent (and not as an animal, a very young child, a slave and so on). So, for example, capitalism, the family and the Christian tradition are all forms of objective freedom: they assign roles and duties that determine how we behave in certain situations and, in behaving in accordance with their dictates (or, at times, violating them), we are able to be, and also be understood as, a moral agent. Such objective determinations will differ from age to age, area to area and, as it is constituted by various concatenations of class, geography, age and so on, from person to person.

One simplified way to understand Hegelian ethics is as a one-dimensional relativism: a moral assertion is true or false relative to a system and code of values, goods and rules institutionalized in a community. Even given the erroneous nature of such an interpretation of Hegel (Hegel is not a relativist), such a position has immediate problematic consequences. First, the reason why pornography, abortion, euthanasia and environmentalism are widely discussed is because there exists no agreed consensus on such issues. Moral crises present themselves as problems to be solved because there is no such agreement nor easy way to convince those who would espouse contrary statements (as there is when we talk about the wrongness of breaking promises and of harming people without good reason, even if we disagree on moral theories, metaphysics, politics and religion!). Second, relativism –simply because there is no shared consensus– would have nothing to say about such issues and would be quietist in ilk. ‘Wait for a standard consensus to form and then cohere with it,’ is a rather uninspiring moral philosophy. Third, there would be no way to make inter-cultural (as opposed to intra-cultural) evaluations: I can criticize those like me, but I cannot criticize those unlike me as they operate under different values and norms, and are products of a different history.

For these reasons, relativism is hugely unappealing, but, as I have already said, Hegel is no relativist. Moral judgements are not transcendental, nor products of *a priori* thinking, nor even laws consistent with the science of human nature. They are contingent, products of an historical tradition, and cut across the politics, social values and economics of a particular community. However, there is a further story to be told. Hegel has two axes of evaluation

to apply. To the question, 'Is X good or right?' the first dimension (the cultural constraint) is to see whether the statement coheres with the centrally agreed and rational values of the culture to which the statement is presented, the social and moral fabric of the agent's culture. The second axis (the autonomy constraint) asks whether the existence of the institution, practice or creed maintains, supports or reproduces a state of affairs that inhibits or supports the procedural requirements of modern moral discussion, that is autonomy, independence and equality. A society with an institution of slavery is worse than one which does not have such an institution on this model. Of course, it rests with the superior culture to explain why, to bring the other culture into line with its thinking and such a task is historical and not merely rational: the words require the economic reforms, the aid and the educational system that would support them. And such an enlightenment needs to be self-realized and not through an operation of putative moral force.⁹

Hegel expresses these with two terms of art: the agent's *objective freedom* consists in his or her institutional identities, social roles, traditional values and economic, material existence. The question, then, is why Hegel understands these objective determinations of one's identity as a liberation or a freedom. These roles and values make possible the agent's moral, rational action: they define what is intelligible, and what is to be admired and admonished. *Subjective freedom* is the freedom to act in accordance with or to break with the principles and requirements of one's objective freedom and to satisfy one's own personal projects, desires, interests and so on. The agent's subjective freedom is the capacity of the agent to achieve what he or she sees as a worthwhile project or a valuable life within the limits of the values and requirements of objective freedom. So, not only does the agent ask whether or not his or her action is appropriate to the expectations of his or her peers, but also whether the expectations of his or her peers are appropriate to him or her. The agent asks himself or herself if he or she feels at home in such a culture, whether his or her individuality can be adequately respected in such a culture with all of its traditions and values. Moral language, its concepts and topics, is a form of objective freedom.

Morally good reasons are those that are justified by the interpersonal values of a culture, and those in which the subject can find their own autonomy and equality respected through the expression of their own freely chosen projects and aspirations. Yet, this still may not be enough, because human beings immersed in culture can be coerced into believing that they are at home in roles which do not violate the procedural limits of moral discourse, but may still be morally problematic. Human sacrifice, whereby the victim has won the honour of being sacrificed in open competition with all members of the community, seems to be one such case. Therefore, we require one last limit on possible interpretations of the requirements of moral behaviour. There are values which are operative in our practical reason that appeal to one's identity,

⁹ Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, § 57A.

not only as a member of a specific class, nor only as a member of a specific society nor people, but also and above these as a member of the human race.

Modern moral philosophy is often challenged by its attempt to obfuscate the distinction between obligatory and supererogatory actions, or its requirements being too demanding, or its demand for disinterestedness. Moral requirements must be tempered by the integrity of the agent, his or her own projects and needs, and ultimately his or her nature, that is the interests in self-preservation and a happy life, but they are given sense through the objective freedom of moral language. Moral language is an aspect of objective freedom: my personal, subjective freedom can be increased or decreased by the institutions of education in my culture, but also so by the language available to me and the reasons such language embodies. A culture with a substantial and robust understanding of autonomy is better for the individual than one with an opaque and ambiguous understanding of it.

We can now, on the basis of the brief outline of Hegel's social ethical approach, describe three axes of moral interpretation. The objective freedom of moral language is required for the freedom and rationality of the individual, but it has to meet these requirements:

1. its concepts and practices can be justified to others in terms of publicly shared values (the cultural constraint);
2. the personal roles and practices it prescribes do not violate the basic needs which ground the development of all human societies and generate human association (the minimal naturalism constraint);
3. the subject is able to express his or her personal individuality as an ongoing project which has been freely endorsed and chosen and is respected by others. The subject is able to feel at home in a culture where personal integrity as an individual, expressed as his or her autonomy and recognized via respect from others, is possible (the autonomy constraint).

Moral crises occur when either (2) or (3) is made impossible for an individual. The impossibility is not just an incoherence, but a simultaneous urgency for change. However, instead of moral language being rejected, one finds that the individuals and groups can make an appeal to (a), but so can their opponents; as is the case with slavery or human sacrifice. Hence, (1) is not to be rejected, but to be refined by the norm of coherence. (1) has to cohere with the demands of (2) and (3) to be a form of objective freedom. Female suffrage shows how the idea of a self who is autonomous and free, and hence has a right to participate in government, is a requirement of the modern self, yet comes into conflict with institutions of familial hierarchy. The problem with abortion is the demand that women as well as men are entitled to control over their own natures and bodies, in line with the demand for autonomy.

One can now begin to understand this in terms of Marx's concept of ideology. An ideology is the self-understanding of a group or class who sees itself as having interests in isolation and separate from the aims of society as a whole.¹⁰ With a moral language, it is justified as a form of objective freedom,

¹⁰ Marx, *The German Ideology*, pp. 34-43.

yet when we recognize ourselves as agents with interests that are separate from those interests which are permissible and coherent with the moral language of our age, and yet these interests are coherent with emergent or other values, and hence demand attention. This cannot be subjective or idiosyncratic because they must be expressed in terms which can be grounded in some part of the moral culture. The language of the demand cannot be wholly other, otherwise it is not a crisis.

Conclusion

Moral crises occur at the level of a culture's moral language. Either concepts are not yet available for the articulation of the problem or the substantial cultural idiom is inconsistent with the values of that culture. So, one may not be able to understand the need for autonomy (as the Ancient Greeks did not), or the understanding of equality (an equality of an ontological distinction) is unable to resolve demands from subjects who are not covered by its understanding. Such crises reflect a failure of a culture's moral language. When the agent cannot feel at home in a culture's moral language, it is because the obligations and requirements of that language are incoherent with or violate either other interests and needs rational to the culture as a whole, or the obligations frustrate the naturalist personal integrity of the agent. At such a point, the language of a culture is incoherent and in demand of revision. We do not know what moral norms require until we work them out through historical struggle.

For example, abortion becomes a pertinent moral issue when the demand by women for the self-ownership of their bodies and their projects, which is consistent with modernity's central values, comes into conflict with the traditional basis of moral language, the Christian tradition. The crisis is only felt when there is enough surplus wealth and women in employment, such that the need for self-ownership of one's body becomes a felt need, rather than a theoretical nicety. The resolution of the demand will be the emergence of new moral terms and concepts. Moral crises are not the protest of the unreasonable or the irrational, but are the immanent voice of those who seek what the moral culture promises. Thus, a true moral crisis occurs when the group subject cannot feel at home in the moral language of their culture.¹¹ Examples would include the Suffragettes, animal rights activists, environmentalists and anti-capitalists. All of these groups for a "we" subject and articulate their claims in terms of values shared by the dominant moral majority. So, the anti-capitalists, for example, appeal to the need for personal autonomy, which was the supposed justification of private property by the liberal tradition (and Hegel himself). They cannot just be silenced or termed irrational.

¹¹ It must be a group. Luther and Socrates are idiosyncratic and unique. They are what Hegel calls world historical individuals. They basically appear when moral discourse has broken down completely, not when it is need of revision. A group is important for crisis because one requires others, even a small minority, to recognize the rationality of one's claims and to share them against the moral majority.

All that has been shown here is that it may be a mistake to reduce moral crises to conceptual errors or simple moral conflicts. They are a specific phenomenon and one that allows us to refine our moral language and make moral progress. They are, therefore, significant.

Judgments of Practice and Ways of Life

EVGENIA MYLONAKI

In Greece, the current crisis has disrupted many things, among them, the way we talk about *what we do*. Before the crisis, we would say: “We do not pay a visit without bearing gifts,” “We help those in need,” “We support our children even when they are old enough to support themselves,” “We are hospitable to foreigners,” “We go on strike when our working conditions demand it,” “We do not pay for our education and our healthcare,” “We talk about politics in public,” “We do not put up with fascism,” etc. After the global financial crisis hit Greece, the means of sustaining such practices began to fall apart. A fair number of people no longer can afford the etiquette of gift bearing. Most parents cannot support their adult children. Workers can no longer afford to go on strike. Universities and hospitals have been forced to introduce fees in their public services. Citizens can no longer assume a shared background of democratic thinking that will allow them to talk openly about politics. A Nazi party has been voted into parliament, etc.

As expected, the disruption of these practices tends to render obsolete the above descriptions of *what we do*. This is not the end. The disruption in our practices has also brought about a disruption in the very way we describe *what we do*. It is as if a silence fell on *our way* of describing *what we do*; like snow falls on street noise. We have not just stopped talking about what is going on, one will contest. Surely, we are not silent in this sense. On the contrary, we constantly talk about it, but it seems that all that is going on now is the disruption. The silence is not a lacuna in the describing, but a notice of the disruption of what used to be describable. Thus, it is not what replaces the spoken word, but what falls on it and covers it. To be more precise, in Greece today, there is a particular sense in which we no longer talk about *what we do*. It is in this sense that we talk about *the crisis*.

In what follows, I will attempt to make sense of this particular disruption; the disruption in *the way* of describing *what we do*.¹ To do this, I will move along the lines of the following trajectory.

First, I will sketch an account of the way we talk about *what we do*, or else, about our practices. I will suggest that thought of our practices is thought of the way we live along the lines of thought of life as such. Thought of life, Michael Thompson argues in his groundbreaking *Life and Action*,² has its own logic; a logic delineated in terms of what he calls *natural-historical judgments*. Roughly speaking, these are expressed in general sentences of the form “The S does/is/has/etc. A”; as for instance, “The Beluga whale travels

¹ What this *we* refers to is a question I shall purposefully leave unanswered until the end of this paper.

² M. Thompson, *Life and Action: Elementary Structures of Practice and Practical Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008).

for about 1.5 miles during a dive.” In the first part of this paper, I will suggest that our judgments of our practices should be understood along the lines of natural-historical judgments; i.e. as descriptions of the form of life that humans live.

To echo Donald Davidson’s celebrated article,³ one might think that these judgments give us no more than the social-conceptual scheme which organizes the natural-empirical content of our life. The reason, one might think, is that, in fact, individual people go on living, even in the face of the radical disruption of their practices. How, one will ask, can I explain this, if I assume that judgments of practice are mere representations of the logical form of human life? In the final part of this paper, I will attempt to answer this challenge. To do so, I will revert to Jonathan Lear’s *Radical Hope*⁴ in order to illustrate how, when the judgments that make sense of our shared social practices are disrupted, what breaks down is our life. In Lear’s choice of words, when the nexus of our practices falls apart, there is a sense in which we can say that *nothing happens*. And yet, I will try to show that I can explain the possibility of individuals going on living in the face of the radical disruption of their practices, without abandoning the belief that living is not something that is available to us independently of the way we live.

1. *Thought of Our Life*

As I said above, before the crisis we would say things like: “We do not pay a visit without bearing gifts,” “We help those in need,” “We support our children even when they are old enough to support themselves,” “We are hospitable to foreigners,” “We go on strike when our working conditions demand it,” “We don’t pay for our education and our healthcare,” “We talk about politics in public,” “We do not put up with fascism,” etc. In this section, I will try to bring forth the distinctive logical structure of these judgments; that is, the distinctive way in which subject and predicate are held together in the nexus of these judgments.

One thing we may notice about these judgments –*judgments of practice*, from now on– is that they may be transcribed into judgments like the following: “It does not look good to pay a visit without bearing gifts,” “It is our duty to help those in need,” “To be a good parent is to support one’s children even when they are old enough to support themselves,” “It is noble to treat a foreigner finely,” “Workers have the right to strike,” “Free education and healthcare is a requirement of justice,” “Talking openly about politics is an end in itself,” etc. That is, in these cases, instead of talking about *what we do*, we could have talked about what is one’s duty (or unconditional obligation), what is a requirement of etiquette, what is part of one’s practical identity, what is a

³ D. Davidson, “On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme,” *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, 47 (1974), 5-20.

⁴ J. Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006).

requirement of virtue, what constitutes a right, how a thick value is realized, and, finally, what one's (infinite) ends here and now are. These and similar concepts draw from different corners of ongoing moral philosophical discussions, but, at some point or another, most of them have been posited as the source of the most fundamental demands with which an individual is faced. That is, on some conceptions, the source of the most fundamental demands with which an individual is faced is a principle of unconditional requirement;⁵ on others, it is a principle of instrumental requirement;⁶ on others, it is one's conception of oneself as a bearer of a practical identity;⁷ on others, it is one's socially and culturally shaped conceptions of excellence;⁸ on others, it is an area of obligations and liberties that arises out of the confrontation of one person *qua* person with another;⁹ on yet others, it is a battery of conceptions of goodness or rightness that essentially involve descriptions of how things actually are in the world,¹⁰ and, on others, it is the capacity of the agent to set for herself (infinite) ends.¹¹ A rich and vast literature surrounds each of the foregoing topics, and proponents of the respective views delve into complex and interesting debates with their opponents. In what follows, I will not go into these discussions.

I will, instead, be content to note that the judgments of practice are what judgments of *various* sorts of normativity may be transcribed to, even though they themselves do not contain any explicitly normative vocabulary. Nothing in the superficial grammatical structure of judgments of practice betrays any hint of normativity. In fact, grammatically speaking, these judgments are entirely non-normative, one would think; they simply describe what happens to be the case. As we saw above, explicitly normative judgments are easily transcribable into them. Could there be something special in the logical structure of the judgments of practice, something that explains the fact that explicitly normative statements may be transcribed into them, even though they themselves have none of the grammatically recognizable normative elements? In what follows, I will pursue this hypothesis by examining some features of the structure of these judgments.

The first thing to note about the structure of the judgments of practice is that the subject is in the first plural. "We help out our children..." "We go on strike..." (Of course, we could have said *we who live the life of Greeks*, but this would not have changed things dramatically. Of course, we predicate

⁵ See, for instance, some of the Kantians in practical philosophy.

⁶ See, for instance, some of the Humeans in practical philosophy.

⁷ C.M. Korsgaard, *Self-Constitution. Agency, Identity and Integrity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁸ See, for instance, some of the neo-Aristotelians in practical philosophy.

⁹ See, for instance, some of the so-called Right Libertarians, such as R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), but also some of the Left-Libertarians, such as M. Otsuka, "Saving Lives, Moral Theories and the Claims of Individuals," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 34 (2006), 109-135.

¹⁰ B. Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2006).

¹¹ S. Rödl, *Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).

things of *those who live the life of Greeks*, but it is written in these judgments that those who indeed live the life of Greeks have, themselves, access to these judgments; i.e., can say things like “*We who live the life of Greeks...*” Hence it is that I take the “*We do/are/have S*” to be the form of these judgments). The judgments seem perfectly ordinary, and yet there is a difficulty in spelling out what it is which this “*we*” refers to. For instance, that when we say that we go on strike when the working conditions demand it, we say something about the public and private sector workers in Greece. Notice that we do not refer to *all* the public and private sector workers. Even when successful strikes were genuinely possible in Greece, strikes were usually not 100% successful. It was very rarely true that *all* public and private sector workers went on strike in Greece, but it was nevertheless true to say that “*We go on strike when the working conditions demand it.*”

One could suggest that the *we* nevertheless refers to *most* individuals of a certain class that also fall under the predicate. Thus, one could say that, when it still made sense to say “*We talk about politics openly in public,*” the *we* referred to most of us who live the life of Greeks. Thus, there would be nothing special in the structure of these judgments. Even this much is not true. It would be naive, if not absurd, to assume that, when it made sense to say “*We talk about politics openly in public,*” the *we* referred to what *most* Greeks were doing at the time of the utterance. Of course, we talked about politics in public, but was there ever *a particular* time at which *most* of us were doing so? If there was, is this what our judgments are supposed to capture? The answer is no, and the reason comes out if we reflect on a certain feature of the predicate of these judgments: Judgments of practice connect a subject in the first plural pronoun with a predicate in *the simple present tense*. We say “*We help out our children...*,” “*We go on strike...*,” and the predicate in the present tense here does not pick out an activity that is performed at or throughout a particular time. Rather, the predicate picks out a *unity* of particular activities, which, in turn, are taking place at or throughout particular times.

The predicate picking out the unity of particular activities is not situated in time in the same way that these particular activities are. For example, when things were still non-critical in Greece we would say things like the following: “*We do not pay for our education and our healthcare, and so I did not pay for my daughter's college education last year*”; or, “*I will not pay for my son's surgery next fall, we do not pay for our education and healthcare*”; or, “*I am not paying for my tertiary education as we speak because we do not pay for our education and healthcare*”; “*I did not pay for my daughter's college education last year*”; “*I will not pay for my son's surgery next fall*”; “*I am not paying for my tertiary education.*” The *I*-judgments here are judgments of activities which extend or are placed in time in a way that is different than the way our judgments of practice are. The activities predicated of the *I* in the *I*-judgments are linked with their subject in time in a way that allows us to ask the question *when*, and receive an answer that places the activity at issue in a particular point in or period of time. I say “*I am not paying for my tertiary education,*” and I am speaking of an activity that started at some particular

point in time, will end at some particular point in time, and is extending throughout a particular period of time. In the case of these *I*-judgments, the connection between the subject and the predicate is a connection that holds either *at* a particular point in time, or *for* a particular period of time. We may say that the activities thus represented are individual time-specific activities.

In the case of judgments of practice, the connection between the subject and the predicate is a connection that holds together in a unity a manifold of activities. Thus, the connection between subject and predicate in judgments of practice is general over time and agents. That is, an indefinite number of individual time-specific activities fall under both the subject and the predicate of the judgment of practice. Now, the specific way these activities fall under both the subject and the predicate of the judgment of practice is seen in the examples above: “We do not pay for our education and our healthcare, *and so* I did not pay for my daughter’s college education last year”; or, “I will not pay for my son’s surgery next fall, *you see* we do not pay for our education and healthcare”; or, “I am not paying for my tertiary education as we speak *because* we do not pay for our education and healthcare.” In the first example, what the agent is about to do is represented as the *conclusion of reasoning* that starts from the thought of *what we do*. In the second case, what the agent did is represented as *understood in light of what we do*. In the third case, *what we do* is represented as *the agent’s reason* for what she is doing. In these examples, we see that individual time-specific activities fall under the general predication of our judgments of practice in the sense that they are explained by these time-general predications. These time-general predications explain in the sense that they give the agent’s (syllogistically representable) reasons for engaging in these individual time-specific activities.

Before I continue with a problem, let me pause to sum up what has happened so far. We said that our judgments of practice are what explicitly normative judgments may be transcribed to, and yet they themselves do not seem to contain any explicitly normative vocabulary. We sought to explain this fact by positing a hypothesis. The hypothesis was that there must be something distinctive in the logical structure of judgments of practice that explains the distinctive normative power they have. We set out to explore this hypothesis. The first thing we noted about the structure of these judgments was that these judgments are general (the first person *plural* is in the position of the subject), but that the generality in question is neither universal (for the relevant set of individuals each time) nor statistical. In our attempt to offer evidence for this, we noted another feature of these judgments, i.e. that their predicate is in the simple present tense. We took this to signify that the predicate in judgments of practice is general, in the sense that it gives unity to a manifold of activities. We then asked what the sense might be in which a manifold of activities might be united by the general predicate in our judgments of practice and we noted another feature of these judgments. That is, that what we *do* is connected with what we *are/were/will be doing*, as explanans is to explanandum, and, what is more, in the way that the reason giving explanans is connected to the reason bearing explanandum.

Let me now continue with a problem. We started our quest for an explanation of the distinctive logical structure of judgments of practice, and we ended up with something that characterizes our judgments *and* the explicitly normative judgments alike. After all, the explicitly normative judgments may be taken as *expanda* of individual time-specific actions. Why assume that there is anything special in our judgments of practice, then? Why not assume that our judgments of practice are no more than fallen or corrupt forms of the explicitly normative judgments?

In what follows, I will argue that the reason that we should not assume this is that there is something distinctive in the way that our judgments of practice explain our individual time-specific activities. Our judgments of practice explain our individual time-specific activities by showing that our practices are actualized in the individual time-specific activities they explain, in the same way that generalities about life are actualized in the individual living behavior that they explain. This is to say that the judgments of practice are distinctive *qua* judgments, because they fall under the genus of representations of life, in which the individual falls under the general in a very distinctive way. In the following section, I will try to clarify this way by saying a bit more about the representation of life in general.

2. *Thought of Life*

Let me start this section with a brief preliminary note. It might seem awfully wrong, to begin with, to say that thought of practices is not governed by the same logic as thought of other things. Thought just is thought, one might think, and the laws of thought pertain to it *qua* thought, and not *qua* thought about this or that particular subject matter. This argument puts together two notions that should be kept separate: content and subject matter. The laws of thought pertain to it *qua* thought independently of the *content*, but not necessarily independently of the *subject matter*. As Frege, for instance, showed, thought of a concept is governed by different rules of inference than thought of an object. When, for instance, the issue is thought of an object, it is irrelevant to the logical form whether it is of *this* or *that* object that the thought is about. The content of the thought cannot affect the logical form of the thought. The subject matter can. The claim here, then, is that, when our thought turns to our practices, it is not governed by the same rules that govern our thought about other things.¹² I suggested above that thought of our practices is distinctive in that it is, in the first instance, thought of our life; and thought of our life has a distinctive logical structure, in so far as it is thought of life. That is, in thought of life, subject and predicate are linked together in the nexus of the judgment in a distinctive way. In what follows, I will follow

¹² As Michael Thompson puts the same point “Thought *as thought*, takes a quite special turn when it is thought of the living – a turn *of the same kind* as that noticed by Frege in the transition from thought on an object to thought of a concept, from *Aristotle is wise* to *The wise are few*” (Thompson, *Life and Action*, p. 27).

the lead of Michael Thompson in explicating the logical structure of thought of life. This will ultimately help with the question of the previous section: i.e. what it means to say that our judgments of practice are a species of representations of life.

The distinctive logical structure of thought of life is reflected in what Michael Thompson calls *natural-historical judgments*. These are general judgments of the form “The S is/does/have/etc. A.” To take a concrete example, when we talk about the life of the beluga whale, we say things like the following: “The beluga whale is a small, toothed whale that is white as an adult,” “The beluga whale holds its breath underwater for up to 15 to 20 minutes,” “The Beluga whale travels for about 1.5 miles during a dive,” “The beluga whale lives in frigid Arctic and sub-Arctic waters,” “The beluga whale has a life expectancy of 25-30 years,” “The beluga whale carries its baby for about 14-15 months,” etc.

These judgments, like our judgments of practice, have a generality that is not reducible to either universal or statistical generality. Thus, when we judge of the beluga whale that it travels for about 1.5 miles during a dive, we do not judge of every x, that if x is a beluga whale then x travels for about 1.5 miles during a dive. Surely, there are plenty of beluga whales which travel much less than that during their many dives. The truth of the judgment that “The Beluga whale travels for about 1.5 miles during a dive” is not thereby threatened. The generality of natural-historical judgments is not statistical either. When we say that “The beluga whale has a life expectancy of 25-30 years,” we do not necessarily talk of what happens to most beluga whales. In fact, it is possible that, during certain times, most beluga whales are killed by hunters before they reach anywhere close to 25-30 years of age. And yet the truth of the judgment that “The beluga whale has a life expectancy of 25-30 years” is not thereby threatened. When we say of *the* beluga whale that it does/is/has A, we do not talk of *all* beluga whales or *most* beluga whales. We do not, that is, talk of a quantity of individual beluga whales in the way that we would talk of a quantity of individual objects. Obviously beluga whales can be treated as quantifiable, but the point here is that, when we judge that “The beluga whale is/does/has A,” what we judge of is not something general in terms of quantity.

Now, Michael Thompson suggests that what we judge of is something general, in the way that the beluga whale *life-form* is general over the individual beluga whales. But what does this mean? When we say that the beluga whale carries its baby for about 14-15 months, our thought both describes and explains what is going on with individual beluga whales. We may understand why an individual beluga whale is continuously growing bigger over an extended period of time after it has reached its maturity, if we learn that *the beluga whale carries its baby for about 14 to 15 months*. What is more, like our judgments of practice, what the beluga whale does/is/has is what the individual beluga whale *should* do/be/have. To put it slightly differently, if an individual beluga whale does not do *what the beluga whale does*, this does not threaten the truth of judgments concerning what the beluga whale does. On the contrary, if an individual beluga whale does not do what the beluga whale

does, the *fault* lies in the individual beluga whale, and not in the judgment about what the beluga whale does. Let us take the example above and let us say that we know that *the beluga whale carries its baby for about 14 to 15 months*. If an individual beluga whale delivers its baby after 12 months of pregnancy, this does not falsify the judgment about what the beluga whale does. In fact, to say that the beluga whale carries its baby about 14 to 15 months *is* to say that, if an individual beluga whale delivers its baby sufficiently long before that, then there must be something *wrong* with that whale.

Michael Thompson hints at what is wrong with the individual living beings in such cases by calling them defective. This is not enough of an explanation. An artifact may also be defective. To say that the beluga whale carries its baby for about 14 to 15 months is to say that, if an individual beluga whale delivers its baby long enough before that, then the individual beluga whale (mother or baby) will fall short of what it takes to live. For instance, the baby beluga whale will not be safely brought into life; it will simply not be ready for the kind of life it will have to live. The sustenance of the life of the individual beluga whale (in this case the continuation of the life of the individual baby) will be endangered. The defect of the individual beluga whale that is falling short of what the beluga whale does is a failure in the living (of the life of the beluga whale). Thus, on this conception, it does not make sense to posit a sort of living which is a generic activity common to all living beings, and which remains, even when all the activities predicated of a certain life-form in the natural historical judgments, for some reason or other, fail. On this conception, life cannot be lived outside the several life-forms, in the same way that animality cannot be found in animals outside, say, their dogness or catness. And, thus, what it is for an individual bearer of a life-form to live a life at all is to live the life of its life-form; to a lesser or greater degree.

When the individual beluga whale is doing what the beluga whale does, it is *actually* living the life of *the beluga whale*. In other words, when an individual beluga whale does as the beluga whale does, it does not *just* do as it ought to do according to some external standard, as may be the case with the explicitly normative judgments; it actually lives the life of the beluga whale. It actualizes, as it were, the beluga whale life-form. Thus, we see that, even though there is no more to the life of an individual beluga whale than the life of the beluga whale, the reverse is not true. There is something more to the life of the beluga whale than the life of any individual beluga whale. That is, the life of the beluga whale is actualized in the living of an indefinite number of whales, as it is what gives unity to a manifold of whales.

I may say that, on this view, the natural-historical judgments express what an individual beluga whale *must* do to successfully live the life of the beluga whale; which is what it is for it to live, period.

3. *Back to Our Life*

I suggested that we should not assume that the judgments of our practice are merely corrupt variations of our explicitly normative judgments. I urged that

the judgments of practice are distinctively normative. I hinted that they are distinctively normative in that they are actualized in the individuals they explain, in the same way that judgments of life (natural historical judgments) are actualized in the individuals they explain. One may think that the special normativity involved in representations of life in section three above is not applicable at all to the representations of our practices. I said above that the failure of the individual beluga whale to live the life of the beluga whale is just the failure of the individual beluga whale to live, period. If the judgments of our practice are themselves representations of life, we should have to say that, for any *individual* bearer of the subject of these judgments (i.e. "us"), to fail to live the life of this subject (the life of "us") is to fail to live, period.

This idea may now seem even more counterintuitive in the case of human beings than it seemed in the case of beluga whales. In what follows, I will present the philosophical perspective from which this position appears counter-intuitive, and then I will offer an argument against this appearance.

First of all, one will object, in the case of judgments of practice, that we do not speak of what "the human" does/is/has, as we spoke of what "the beluga whale" does/is/has. We speak, instead, of what "we" do/are/have. In the example of the Greek crisis, one might say, we speak of us Greeks, or us who live in Greece, or us who live the Greek way of life. There is no limit to what may take the place of this "we." This, the objection continues, reflects the fact that there are multiple ways to be human and to live a human life. We know this much, at least, since the rise of the social sciences like anthropology, one will readily claim. Surely, we who live the life of Greeks will suffer terrible losses when *our* (judgments of) practice(s) become obsolete. We will not, thereby, cease to live. We will continue to live, for there is something to living above and beyond the sum-total of our practices: the living of the life of *the human being*. One may keep on, living the life of *the human being* is represented in exactly the way that living the life of the beluga whale is represented. Thus, on this conception, the life-form of the human being is represented by the sum-total of judgments like the following: "The human carries its baby for no more than nine months," "The human mates at all times of the year," "The human needs several years of nursing before it can be on its own," "The human needs daily feeding," "The human sleeps for about eight hours a day," "The human communicates through the use of language," "The human lives in communities," etc. Thus, even if one accepts that there is nothing more to living a life at all than actualizing a certain life-form, as I urged in section three above, one may suggest that living a human life is not represented by judgments of what we do. On the contrary, on this objection, human life should be represented in exactly the way that the life-form of the beluga whale is represented. On this conception, what our judgments of practice do is to merely reflect the organization of this human life-form in different ways. Judgments of what we who live the life of Greeks do, reflect the way in which we who live the life of Greeks have organized the material that is the life-form of the human being. The Spanish may organize this material differently, and so may the French and the British, and so on and so forth. For instance,

the humans that live the way of life of the Greeks communicates with its kind in a specific way that is different than it is elsewhere; or they feed themselves in a way that is specific to their society. On this view, the role of the judgments of our practice is to provide the *scheme* that will, each time, organize the *content* that is the human life-form, and which is available to us independently of the scheme. What we *all* have in common is this content. On this conception, then, when we speak of *what we do*, we speak of how *we* do what the human does, in the sense that what we do is a way of organizing what the human does, *such that even if we radically fail to do what it is that we do, we will not thereby fail to live the life of the human being*.

If our way of life, i.e. what the judgments of practice describe, is radically disrupted, we may still count as living a life; i.e. the life of *the* human being. This life will, of course, be rendered poorer by the disruption, but it will not be any less fitting for a human. On the contrary, it will be the core of what counts as *the human life*. It will always be possible for it to become richer again by the mere choice and appropriation of new practices.

In light of this possible conception, one will now ask: how will the view that I'm pushing here, the view that judgments of practice are themselves representations of human life, explain the possibility of keeping on living in the face of the radical disruption of what our judgments of practice reflect?

When we speak of what we do, we speak of how we do what the human does, in the sense that what we do just is what the human does in our case; *such that, to the extent that we radically fail¹³ to do what it is we do, to this extent we fail to live (a human life)*. In my view, the analogue of a natural-historical judgment in the case of us humans is just the judgment of practice. The judgment of practice is the representation of the human life (it reflects the actualization of the human life), in the way that the natural-historical judgment is the representation of the life-form of the beluga whale (it reflects the actualization of the beluga whale life). And so, the judgment of practice is actualized in the individual it explains, in exactly the sense that natural-historical judgment is actualized in the individual it explains.

But, as I said above, the opponent will readily object, what we observe in times of crisis, like the current one in Greece, is that, even when a way of life is radically disrupted, there may be a certain sense (however minimal) in which life goes on. The opposing conception of judgments of practice claims itself capable of explaining this fact. How are we to ever understand this fact if we accept my view of the logical status of judgments of practice (i.e. as representations of life in the case of the humans)? If no such understanding is forthcoming, then my view cannot save the phenomena.

Contrary to what one might perhaps expect, this understanding is indeed forthcoming. In a philosophically mesmerizing book, Jonathan Lear attempts to make explicit just this understanding, by focusing on a particular case: the

¹³ Of course there is a question as to when one counts as radically failing, but this is not my question. For my purposes it is enough if we accept that this possibility of radical failure is possible.

disruption of the way of life of the nomadic, hunting, warrior tribe of the Crow of North America with the advent of the white man.¹⁴ The Crow, contrary to some of their traditional enemies, survived the advent of the white man, and contrary to yet other tribes, did more than survive; they managed to find ways of living well. In his book, Jonathan Lear tells the philosophical-anthropological story of the disruption and the resumption of the life of the Crow. Lear centers his reading of this disruption around a phrase of the chief of the Crow, Plenty Coup. Plenty Coup, in his recounting of his story to a white man by the name of Frank Linderman, said:

“I have not told you half of what happened when I was young. I can think back and tell you much more of war and horse-stealing. But when the buffalo went away the hearts of my people fell to the ground, and they could not lift them up again. *After this, nothing happened.* There was little singing anywhere. Besides, you know that part of my life as well as I do. You saw what happened to us when the buffalo went away.”¹⁵

“After this, nothing happened,” says the chief of the Crow. As my opponent may insist, even after the white man came and the hunting and warring were wiped out, the individual Crow went on living. And this surely must mean that they went on *doing stuff*. These doings must surely count as happenings. How, then, can Plenty Coup say that *After this, nothing happened?* This is an analogue to the question raised above about my view of the logical status of the judgments of practice. How can I explain that individuals may go on living, even after their way of life is radically disrupted, if I say that, to live at all is, for us humans, to live our way of life?

In a brilliant move, Jonathan Lear sketches the following answer to this question. People usually assume that the scope of our shared practices –what is reflected in our judgments of practice– reaches all the way to individual time-specific activities only in some cases; say, in cases of acting that display courage in war or justice in the dealings with others, etc. On this common assumption, most cases of mundane acts, like cooking, or washing, or walking, etc., do not fall under judgments of practice in our sense. Lear objects, it is crucial even to mundane acts, such as cooking and washing and walking, that they fall under the heading of practices. In his case study, it was crucial for the Crow woman cooking the meal before the battle that she could answer the question “What are you doing there?” by saying “I’m preparing my family for battle.”¹⁶ It is an illusion to think that cooking, or any mundane act, for that matter, does not acquire meaning by instantiating, or exemplifying, or falling under practices.¹⁷ In answering the question *What are you doing there*, the

¹⁴ Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁷ An illusion that fails to grasp what Anscombe takes to be the mark of intentional actions: a particular susceptibility to a certain question why, that at some point or another is bound to end up in a judgment of practice or a judgment that may be transcribed in a judgment of practice. See E.E.M. Anscombe, *Intention* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957).

Crow woman “identifies the act by locating it in a larger scheme of purposefulness.”¹⁸ This larger scheme of purposefulness is what our (judgments of) practice(s) constitute, if held together. How are these (judgments of) practice(s) held together? They are, Lear explains, held together by the shared conception of what life is worth living for, or of what the good life is; or, to put it in yet another way, of what, in the case of the Crows, it means to be an excellent Crow.

When a way of life is disrupted, Lear tells us, what is going on is that this scheme of purposefulness, this nexus of practices, is suddenly disrupted; “and with it goes the possibility of identifying the [individual time-specific] act in this way.”¹⁹ In the case of the disruption of the life of the Crow, their conception of happiness could no longer be lived, Lear tells us.²⁰ What they went on doing could no longer be identified as the time-specific activity that it was, because the larger scheme of purposefulness within which it could be identified was now wiped out. In this sense, i.e. in the sense that the question *What are you doing* could no longer admit a proper answer, nothing happened. One will quickly object, is not the disruption of the possibility of living one’s conception of happiness something that, itself, counts as a happening? As Lear explains, a happening in human life counts as happening only from within a certain conception of what life is worth living, or a scheme of purposefulness. It is only within the warrior-hunting conception of happiness of the Crow that their individual time-specific doings counted as happenings. Things stopped happening for the Crow when the buffalo went away, in the sense that what it meant for things to happen in their lives could no longer be lived. We can say that what the crow underwent with the disruption of their way of life was the disruption of the possibility of anything happening in their lives; and so the possibility of living.

Yet, one will object, and this brings me to the heart of the matter here, that individual Crows nevertheless went on living. Greeks nowadays do go on living. How can I or anyone suggest that a radical disruption in the way of life—in the practices—is a disruption in living itself? Why not assume, as the interpretation I’m rejecting has it, that there is something to living that lies outside all forms of life, which people go on enjoying even after their *way* of life has been disrupted? Because, as Lear argues, the fact that individual Crows go on living is not to be understood except in terms of their conception of what happiness is. Before the advent of the white man, the Crow had their lives centered on conceptions of happiness that had to do with the practices of hunting and warring. Take, for instance, courage. Courage, for the Crow, was understood in terms of excellent behavior in the face of death in war. When the conditions for war as they knew it were disrupted, what it meant for them to be courageous was similarly disrupted. This disruption should, on my interpretation of the logical status of judgments of practice, be understood as a

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

failure in living. Individual Crows went on living. How could they go on living in the face of the disruption of their conception of happiness, in the face of the disruption of the nexus of their practices, in the face of their failure to live? How could they fail to live and yet go on living at the same time? How should we understand their capacity to go on living if not along the lines of the capacity of the beluga whale to breathe?

The answer to this, as Jonathan Lear shows, should be sought out in the Crow conception of what life is worth living, and the Crow nexus of practices that this conception held together. In Lear's example, the capacity of the Crow to go on living can be understood as the thinned out exercise of their capacity to live courageously. The capacity to live courageously was, for the Crow, the capacity to live successfully in the face of the possibility of death in war. When traditional war became impossible for them, it simply became impossible for the Crow to live their conception of successful living in the face of the possibility of death in war. This, at least partly, constituted their incapacity to live. And yet, individual Crows went on living. Lear keenly observes, the *Bildung* of the Crow in traditional practices of courage was, at the same time, the *Bildung* of the sensitivity and the imagination of the Crow. The *Bildung* of their sensitivity and imagination was the *Bildung* of their capacity to live successfully in the face of a sort of death that had hitherto not been conceptualized or imagined: the death of their practices, i.e. of their fleshing out of their conception of how to live. That the Crow went on living was not a matter of living the naked life of the generic human life-form; it was a matter of being courageous, as it was their attempt to live successfully in the face of the death of their practices, and it could only be understood in terms of those very practices.

To bring the point home, we may imagine a courageous Crow ex-warrior thinking to himself, "I never run away from my place in battle, I will not give up now, even though I no longer know who I am and what I'm doing." That is, even after the Crow practices were disrupted, a Crow who was successfully brought up to be courageous, was a Crow that was also inculcated with a thinner conception of how to live well; one that perhaps involved "not giving up," "keeping on," etc., and, more importantly, one that perhaps involved being able to phrase and re-phrase the question of "What to do" and "Who to be." To put it in other words, the practices of courage, of successful living in the face of death in war, were exemplified by individual time-specific activities that were no longer possible once the Crow way of life was disrupted. What the inculcation or actualization of the practices in the individual Crows also involved was the inculcation or actualization of thinner conceptions of happiness. To learn how to behave excellently in the face of death in war is, after all, to also learn how to not give up in the face of what no longer makes sense. Thus, when the practices of the Crow were disrupted, even though the conditions of practicing war were gone, the conditions for not giving up in the face of what no longer makes sense were not gone. This thinner sense of one's conception of the life worth living was what was preserved in the life of the Crow. It is this thinner conception which helps us make sense of the individu-

al Crows keeping on living, even when their life had stopped making sense. “I am a Crow; we do not give up even when things stop making sense,” we can imagine the Crow warrior saying; and this cannot be understood except in terms of the Crow conception (albeit a thin one) of the good life. It is only from within a conception of the life worth living, which is what our practices are held together by, that keeping on living may be understood, even when the practices that used to flesh out that conception are now gone. Judgments of practice, I may now say, reflect thick conceptions of the life worth living. Thick conceptions of the life worth living also involve thin conceptions of the life worth living. When our practices, the thick conceptions of our living, are disrupted, what may keep us going, what may make it possible for us to keep on living, are the thin conceptions of the life worth living. And this, the turning to the thinner conceptions of the life worth living, may be what sustains the possibility, and so the hope, of one day transforming these thin conceptions into thick answers to the questions of What to do and Whom to be.

Of course, it is never guaranteed that the disruption of the practices (thick conceptions of the life worth living) may leave intact the thin conceptions of the life worth living. And it is also not guaranteed that the thinning out of the thick conceptions of the life worth living will suffice to sustain living a life that stands a chance of being re-represented in thick conceptions of the life worth living. What *is* guaranteed, though, is that the possibility of keeping on living after the radical disruption of one’s practices (i.e. thick conceptions of the life worth living) can be explained by reference to what these practices are; i.e. thick conceptions of the life worth living; Bildung into which, or the actualization of which, also involves Bildung, or the actualization of thin conceptions of the life worth living.

Living, in the case of us humans, is living a form of life. A form of life is represented by the nexus of the judgments of practice to which the individual bearers of this form of life may have access. That is, and this brings me to the last point of clarification of the logical structure of the judgments of practice, a judgment of practice is actualized in the individual it explains in virtue of the fact that the individual has access to this judgment; in virtue of the fact, that is, that the individual can represent what she is doing by saying “We do A,” or “I’m doing A, because we do A,” etc.

In other words, when an individual is engaging in a time-specific activity, it is actualizing a practice, or a thick conception of the life worth living, because the individual may represent (or identify) what she is doing to herself by judgments of the form “We do A,” or “I’m doing A because we do A,” etc. And to live a human life is to be able to, thus, represent what one is doing.

When one’s judgments of practice fall apart, when the practices of which these judgments are judgments are disrupted, the individual may keep on living. And this living can be explained as actualizing thinner conceptions of the life worth living that may survive the practices now gone. We do not need to explain the possibility of keeping on living after the radical disruption of one’s practices by reference to an idea of life as something that is available to us humans independently of the way in which we live it. On the view present-

ed here, our life just is our way of life. And our way of life is structured by our conception of what life is worth living. This, our way of life, is vulnerable in a certain way. It may fall apart on us, as the means of sustaining our practices may get wiped out. In the face of this collapse, we may go on living. Although, perhaps it will be an uncertain, frail sort of living. A sort of living that is still held together by a thinned out version of these practices, and so of the conception of a life worth living. Also a sort of living for which there is radical hope: hope that this thin conception of the life worth living will be actualized in new practices, and, thus, in new ways of making sense of what one does and what one is.

Ethical Crisis and Decision-Making: Karol Wojtyla on the Role of Reason and Will¹

JOVE JIM S. AGUAS

Introduction

The main aim of this paper is to highlight the role of reason and will in decision-making, particularly in times of ethical dilemma, which could lead to ethical crisis. The ethical theory of Karol Wojtyla provides a basis for this role of reason and will in making ethical decisions.

On the eve of the national elections, Kathryn received from an unknown person a sealed envelope. After the person had left, she opened it and saw a considerable amount of money and a list of names of some candidates for local positions. Apparently, the intention was to buy her vote or bribe her to vote for the candidates on the list. The money is almost equivalent to a week's pay and it would certainly augment her family's meager income. Kathryn struggled with her thought. On one hand, she needed money desperately, but she did not want to compromise her right to vote according to her choice. Would she keep the money and vote for the candidates on the list or return the money and vote according to her conscience?

Alvin was having difficulty getting his driver's license released in the local transportation office. He was approached by an unidentified staff who told him that he can negotiate inside the office for the release of his license for some amount. Apparently, the money will be used as "grease money" inside. While Alvin does not like the idea of bribing people, he also does not want to be delayed in securing his driver's license. He is torn between doing what his conscience tells him and what is the most expedient thing to do at that moment.

One morning, Karla discovered that she is pregnant again. This would be her sixth child in eight years of her marriage to Paolo, an on-and-off employee in a local department store. The thought of another mouth to feed and another baby to carry worried Karla terribly. But she does not want to abort the baby and discontinue her pregnancy. When she told Paolo about it, he told her firmly that they cannot afford to have yet another child, so he instructed

¹ This paper is partly funded by the Philippine National Philosophical Research Society (PNPRS).

her to go to the local clinic and request for a pill that would abort her pregnancy. Karla is undecided; she is torn between her husband's decision and the baby she is carrying in her womb.

These stories are just examples of moral dilemmas that people encounter in their daily lives. Every day, we are confronted with different moral situations where we have to make a moral decision. The outcome of our decision will not only affect our own welfare; its consequences will have a far-reaching effect on other people and in the community or the society in general. Personal decisions do not only affect individual persons, they also affect other people and the community. The kind of society we have today is determined by our individual choices.

But, given the complexity of our modern living and the complex situations in which we find ourselves, the decisions are never easy, especially when those decisions involved ethics or morality. Decision-making, especially on ethical issues, is critical; it can either lead to the resolution of certain moral dilemma or to some positive result, or it can lead to more problems or difficulties. The moment of critical personal decision is a moment of personal crisis. While other people rely on their "gut feeling" or on the advice of other people, their decision will be somehow affected by many factors like culture, family influence, peer pressure, public perception, media exposure, school, religion etc., but ultimately it will be made by way of reason and will.

Ethical Crisis and Ethics

Personal decisions, whether they are moral, political or economic in nature, do not usually lead to crisis, but there are personal decisions that could become crucial and they could lead to crisis. Today, we are faced with different crises; there is "economic crisis," "ecological or environmental crisis," "political crisis," "social crisis" etc. But what is "crisis"? Some people have the ambiguous notion that crisis is "chaos." Somehow, crisis is related to chaos or it could lead to chaos, but this happens only when, in the moment, through indecision, the situation becomes disorderly and, therefore, chaotic. A political crisis could lead to chaos if, during the time when no political decision is made that can resolve a present political problem, the political situation is aggravated and can become disorderly and, therefore, chaotic. The same could be said of economic, social, environmental and even ethical crises.

The word "crisis" was derived from the Greek term "*krisis*," which means choice, decision, judgment, and "*krisis*" was derived from the Greek verb "*krinein*," which means "to decide." In the legal, medical and rhetorical contexts, "*krisis*" could mean a turning point in a decision, a crucial or decisive stage or state of affairs. In this context, a choice or decision is a critical moment which could lead to something positive, productive, meaningful and successful, or it could lead to something negative, tragic, senseless, or a failure. But when does something or some situation become a crisis? There are several factors or elements of crisis.

First, crisis happens unexpectedly; it is always sudden. While, in some cases, it could develop gradually, but the way a situation or a state of affairs reaches its critical point comes always as a surprise or suddenly for the parties involved. Even if we try to anticipate when a situation or state of affairs will reach its highest or critical point, the moment it happens will still be a surprise. Second, because it comes so suddenly or unexpectedly, it disrupts the normal flow of things, or the normal situation or state of affairs. Crisis puts the situation out of harmony, it puts the situation in a state of imbalance. Third, since crisis puts the situation in a state of imbalance, then, it creates instability and uncertainty. In a moment of crisis, things are out of control; the situation is beyond the normal control of the parties involved. If the disruption of the normal situation and the instability that it causes are not addressed, then crisis could lead to chaos or disorder. At this point, the situation has reached its most crucial moment. This leads to the fourth element of crisis, which is the most important –it is a crucial moment that requires a choice, a judgment, a decision. The decision will be based on certain choices and the decision could either resolve the crisis or aggravate the situation.

Going back to our examples, the situations that Kathryn, Alvin and Karla experienced happened unexpectedly; they disrupted their normal lives and created uncertainty, and these situations all required crucial decisions on their part. They with struggled how to deal with their respective crucial situations, but they need to make a choice, a decision. Their respective situations have the potential of becoming personal ethical crises. How should they respond? How should they decide?

Our society constantly faces different “crises” –political, social, economic and environmental, to name a few. Hence, the society is always faced with critical or crucial moments. These “crises” in the society result from personal or individual crises, like those of Kathryn, Alvin and Karla. The choices and decisions that society makes are founded on individual or personal choices and decisions. Individual choices are at the foundation of society’s choices. Individual decisions affect the greater decisions of the society. Hence, if societal crises are founded on personal and individual crises, then the resolution of societal crises are also based on personal choices and decisions. The ethical crisis, therefore, that we may encounter in society is based on personal ethical crisis, and its resolution is based on personal decision.

From an ethical perspective, the moment of decision or choice of an individual is essentially an act of the will; decision is an act of volition. The object of the act of volition is a value which the will perceives to be good. The will, however, does not usually act alone, the will acts with the influence of reason. The object of the will is a value that it perceives to be good. Whether such value is truly good or not is beyond the power of the will; the will must follow the guidance of reason. Volition, which is the act of the will, follows reason, and the proper object of reason is the truth. The will, then, when it makes a decision, must choose, and its choice ought to be based on the truth, that is, the true value of its object.

Ethical crisis involves crucial decisions on ethical matters and issues and, since the resolution of crisis involves decision that ought to be right, then, it is important to consider the primary roles of the will and reason in resolving ethical crisis. Reason has a role in volition and, consequently, in decision making or making a choice. The successor failure of the decision/choice, especially in crises involving ethical issues, can be affected by reason.

Man is endowed with rationality, and this enables him to deliberate and make conscious decisions. He is also endowed with free will, and therefore can determine his own actions, their course and objectives. Rationality and free volition bring with them concomitant responsibility; since man is a rational and free agent, he is responsible for his actions. His responsibility as a rational and free agent does not end simply with his actions; he also takes responsibility for their consequences and for the quality of the choice that he makes. Everyday man is faced with situations where he has to make a choice, and some of these situations could be critical; hence, it is his moral obligation to make the right choice, to follow the good option from the variety of options at hand. Whatever he chooses and in whatever manner he chooses, he is responsible for that choice and for its consequences. The extent of one's knowledge and freedom determine the extent of his responsibility; hence, the greater the freedom and knowledge, the greater the responsibility.

Morality is concerned with the goodness or evil of human actions, that is, of those acts done with knowledge, freedom and voluntariness. There are certain standards or norms that become the basis for judging a particular act to be good or bad and, likewise, they give the reasons why a particular action is morally good or morally evil. Regardless of the standard or norm we use to determine the morality of human act, a human act has a moral value, the value of being good or bad, right or wrong. Morality is motivated by the fact that people strive to be responsible agents of actions. Being responsible agents of actions starts with knowing which actions are good and which actions are bad. In times of moral or ethical crisis, one has to make the right moral or ethical judgment and decision, and such must be based on reason and volition. Although some people rely on feelings and emotions as the basis of moral judgment, such cannot be acceptable, because emotions or feelings are usually biased, irrational, or are just products of one's prejudice, and social and cultural conditioning. If one wants to base his ethical decisions on the truth, then, he must not allow himself be swayed by his feelings and emotions, but, instead, guide his feelings and emotions by reason.

Wojtyla's Ethical Theory

One particular philosophy that espouses the role of reason and will in ethics and on ethical decisions is that of Karol Wojtyla. In his account of ethics, he attempts to integrate the rational and experiential elements of the ethical act.²

² Karol Wojtyla is critical of certain formal and emotive ethics; he particularly criticizes the formal ethics of Kant and the emotive ethics of Scheler. His ethics is grounded on

The bedrock of his ethics is the act of the will which is grounded on the experience of efficacy. But the object of the will is the *good* which must be a perceived as a value by the person. Experience is the starting point of Wojtyla's ethical theory. Experience is correlated with the good, which is the object of the will, and the truth, which is the object of reason. The good is not just an abstract value, it is an experienced value. But a good value must not only be experienced; the good, which is the object of the will, must be truly good. The morality of the act must be based on goodness and truthfulness. Ethical decisions, therefore, must be based on goodness, which is related to the will, and truthfulness, which is related to reason.

According to Wojtyla, every human action involves a particular lived experience, which he refers to as ethical experience.³ The actions and consequent decisions of Kathryn, Alvin and Karla, in our examples, involve and are based on their lived experiences. Lived experience is the awareness on the part of the individual that, when he performs or does a certain action, he is the author of such an action; he is aware that he is agent of action. Kathryn, Alvin and Karla are aware that they are the ones who will decide and act on their decisions and, therefore, they are also aware of their responsibility. Since one experiences himself and his own person as the agent or cause of the act, then he also experiences himself as the efficient cause of the moral good or evil associated with the action. Through this, he also experiences the moral good or evil of his own person. It is, therefore, usual to feel the full weight of one's moral actions and decisions, because moral actions and decisions are directly reflective of the moral value of the agent, and that is the person. The full weight of moral action and decision is a lived experience. Kathryn, Alvin and Karla feel the full weight of their moral decisions, it is their lived experience. This kind of lived experience that is associated with the moral value of the action and decision is what Wojtyla calls ethical experience. For Wojtyla, there is a connection between lived experience and the act of the will. In the lived experience, that is, in one's experience of himself as the efficient cause of his acts, one encounters the will immediately. Going back to our examples, the ethical import of the decisions that Kathryn, Alvin and Karla have to make cannot be separated from their personal lived experience; such personal lived experience, with its concomitant responsibility, is also an ethical experi-

Thomistic ethics, having been influenced by the philosophy of St. Thomas. However, he is also influenced by phenomenology, and through his own application of phenomenology, he also integrates experience into his analysis of ethics. Wojtyla's ethical theory is based on a critique of Schelerian and Kantian ethics and an appropriation of Thomistic ethics. He analyzes the ethical positions of Scheler and Kant and offers his own way of doing philosophy of ethics along Thomistic lines. Cf. J.J.S. Aguas, *Person, Action and Love: The Philosophical Thoughts of Karol Wojtyla (John Paul II)* (Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2014), pp. 266-268.

³ K. Wojtyla, "The Problem of the Separation of Experience from the Act in Ethics," in K. Wojtyla, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, trans. T. Sandok, OSM (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 23-44, p. 23.

ence. The lived experience of responsibility affirms that the will is the psychological factor that constitutes the very essence of ethical experience.⁴

The Role of Will in the Ethical Act

Reason and will are the two rational faculties of man, and they constantly work hand in hand. The will wills so that reason may know, and reason knows so that the will wills what it wills. In his analysis of the act of the will, Wojtyla follows the conception of St. Thomas about the act of the will. For St. Thomas, the act of the will has two basic sources of actualization: one is the nature of the will itself as an appetite or an inclination, and the second is the objectification of the goodness of an object by reason. In the first actualization, the will, which is an appetite in itself, manifests a natural inclination toward anything that is in any way good. The will has a natural inclination toward anything perceived to be good, like food, relaxation, education, friends, love ones, etc. Hence, the will is, in itself, a causal-efficient source of impulses in the human being. But the will is also a rational faculty; it is a rational appetite, and the will's natural rationality of desire is actualized when the will conforms its motions or choices to reason's judgment about the object of desire. The true goodness of the object of the will as evaluated by reason directs the inclination of the will. Hence, the will is actualized by the true good as assessed by reason. The various objects of the will are goods objectified by reason, and the will is in potency with respect to the good, and the potency of the will towards these goods is actualized by reason. It is the will that will make the decision even in the most crucial moments or situations, but such decision must be fully informed by reason. Hence, reason has a crucial role in the ethical act and in ethical decision making.

The Role of Reason in the Ethical Act

The object of the will is the good and the object of reason is the truth. The will naturally inclines to the good and reason apprehends the truth. It is the task of reason to apprehend or objectify the good. The result of this close interaction of the reason and will is that the true and the good, in some sense, mutually permeate each other. The true, known by reason, is good, and the good, willed by will, is true. Although reason apprehends the good in a speculative way when it defines the good's essence, and since the good is an object of action, then, reason apprehends the good from the aspect of action. Reason also distinguishes among the different kinds of goods, namely *bonum honestum*, *bonum utile* and *bonum delectabile*. *Bonum honestum* refers to the good that conforms to the nature of a rational being because it is in keeping with what that being desires for itself, *bonum utile* is a good that is a means to an end, *bonum delectabile* is the subjective good of satisfaction or pleasure.

⁴ K. Wojtyla, "The Will in the Analysis of the Ethical Act," in Wojtyla, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, 3-22, p. 9.

Through these distinctions, reason guides our actions. Following St. Thomas, Wojtyla stresses the directive role of reason in human action. Such a directive role of reason in action is determined mainly by a holistic view of the human being, a part or faculty of which is reason. Reason is part of the whole human person and performs its practical functions within this whole.⁵ The superior and directive character of the function of reason is determined in a fundamental way by the fact that reason defines the good, which is the ultimate end of the human being and his action –the *bonum honestum*. This, according to Wojtyla, is what guarantees that reason has a directive role in human life. Reason sees to it that the good desired by the will is the real and true good and not just a delectable or useful good. Even the value perceived by the will must be a real and true value of the object which is desired by the will.

The Act of Willing and Decision

In the act of willing or volition, the self directs itself to an external object. Willing is an intentional act of the person and, in such an act, he orients and directs himself to an object outside of himself. The object of willing is always something desirable because it has a value; it is a good. The person never passively directs himself to an object; when one wills something, he moves toward the desired object. The greater the good or the value, the greater is its power to attract the will and, consequently, the person. The person's predisposition to be attracted by the positive and authentic goods and values, his unreserved consent to be drawn in and absorbed by them, are crucial factors in determining the maturity and the perfection of the person.⁶

Decision is more fully manifested in choice rather than in simple willing, because, in choosing, the person manifests his freedom and self-determination. Wojtyla points out that freedom is present and manifests itself in the ability to choose. This ability to choose "confirms the independence of the will in the intentional order of willing. In choosing, the will is not cramped by the object, by the value as its end; it is the will and only the will that determines the object."⁷ Freedom, then, is both dependence and independence; it is dependent on the self because it is the self that decides through the will, and independent from objects since, when the self decides, it is never determined by the object.

For Wojtyla, decision is a crucial moment in the experience of self-determination; it is always directed toward a value and involves the readiness to strive toward the good. It is viewed as an instance of a threshold through which the person has to pass on his way toward the good. His decision is somehow influenced by his absorption of the good and is further augmented as he approaches the good. The more he is attracted to the good, the more decisive his actions become.

⁵ K. Wojtyla, "The Role of Reason in Ethics," in Wojtyla, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, 57-72, p. 67.

⁶ K. Wojtyla, *Acting Person*, trans. A. Potocki (London: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1979), p. 27.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

Reference to the Truth and Decision

Is it possible to choose anything we want? Can we decide on any matter we perceive to be good? While reason is oriented towards the truth, the will as a faculty of choice is oriented towards the good. For Wojtyla, however, choice is not an arbitrary shooting in the dark, but a deliberate selecting. The ability to decide and to choose is connected with another significant aspect of the will, that is, the reference to "truth." Here, reason has an important role because it is the one that determines the truth of the good that the will desires. He explains:

"The reference to truth forms an intrinsic part of the very nature of a decision and is in a special manner manifest in choice. The essential condition of choice and of the ability to make a choice as such, seems to lie in the specific reference of will to truth, the reference that permeates the intentionality of willing and constitutes what is somehow the inner principle of volition."⁸

Truth, as the object of reason, Wojtyla asserts, is what releases the will from the influence of the object, and enables the person to be precisely self-determining in his acts with respect to all possible objects. Because of the reference to the truth, the object that is presented to the person who makes the choice is presented through cognition, which is focused on truth. Objects of choice do not come to the person as forces or impulses that push or force him into action; rather, they come to the person as things with a determinate known value that can be compared with other things according to that same known value. So, the known truth of the object mediates the object and the will, so that values do not compel but are freely responded to by the will.

While it is through reason that the truth is known, it is the will that responds to truth. The will wants the truth in what it wills or wants. The will wants true goods, not things that appear to be good but are really not. Wojtyla stresses that to "choose" does not simply mean turning toward one value and away from others; it means making a decision, according to the principle of truth, upon selecting between possible objects that have been presented to the will.⁹ The orientation towards truth is essential to the will and to its power of self-determination. The recognition of the validity and truth of the intended object is part of the dynamism of the will, because choice and decision are preconditioned by knowledge of the truth. Knowledge, then, is the condition that not only enables but also influences choice, decision making, and, more generally, the exercise of self-determination.¹⁰

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 140. "Knowledge is therefore a condition of the will. It is impossible to turn to values without knowing them. Knowledge of the truth about the object toward which the will is oriented is a fundamental part of the experience of value." R. Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyla: The Thoughts of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), p. 147.

Wojtyla describes the will's reference to the truth as the inner principle of decision and choice. Truth in cognition and the intrinsic orientation towards truth in the will are what make freedom and choice possible.¹¹ In every willing, what is manifested is a specific dependence, a specific moment of "surrender to truth" even before the object is presented to the will for decision and choice. It is because of this surrender to the truth that the person becomes independent of the objects of his own acting through the moment of truth; this moment of surrender to the truth is contained in every authentic choice of decision making.¹²

Conclusion

The critical situations in which Kathryn, Alvin and Karla find themselves are, respectively, moments of ethical decision; they are "crises," in a sense, because they demand decision. But they have the potential of becoming personal ethical crises; that is, they could disrupt their personal stability or their moral balance. How should they decide? Considering all other factors, in the end, they have to decide on the basis of what their respective wills desire to be good. Such decisions must be based on the truth, and it is through the use of reason that one recognizes the truly good. Of course, such a notion of reason as the final judge of what is truly good assumes that everyone has the right reason and has the capacity to use his reason rightly. It assumes that all human individuals are capable of using their reason rightly, that they will be able to understand and discern the right course of action or the truly good option. "Crisis," in this respect, is a challenge to reason; it puts reason right on the spot. And, in this situation, reason is not only confronted by "crisis"; it has to contend with the "*kairos*." While "crisis" calls for a decision or an action, "*kairos*" demands that such decisions or actions must be at the right time, in the right moment. So, while "crisis" is a moment of decision, "*kairos*" calls to attention the "right moment" of such a decision. Ethical crises cannot be avoided, they are part of human experience, but they can be resolved through a decision of the will, based on true value or goodness informed by reason, and such decision must be at the right moment. Again, reason is called to task to make the right decision at the right moment.

As a final remark I quote Wojtyla,

"The moral life consists in attaining the truth in all our action and behavior, and activity by nature always aims at some good. Consequently the essence of moral life is the lived experience of the truth of the good realized in action and the realization in that action of the good subjected to the criterion of reason and thus placed in the light of that truth."¹³

¹¹ P. Simpson, *On Karol Wojtyla* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2001), pp. 28-29.

¹² Wojtyla, *Acting Person*, p. 138.

¹³ K. Wojtyla, "The Basis of the Moral Norm," in Wojtyla, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, 73-94, p. 91.

Moral Values as Mentors to Confronting Contemporary Challenges

DEMETRIOS MATTHOPOULOS
MICHAEL MANTZANAS

Crisis and Values

The contemporary world is confronted by a constructive crisis, a crisis of values; a crisis assigned as a financial one, which, undoubtedly, is a crisis of virtues and moral values; a financial crisis that, in large part, is the result, not only of fraud from particular countries, although they should accept their responsibilities over their bad practices, but mainly of the financial planners' and country rulers' violating moral values. These moral values should be the keystone to those considered as the leaders of the world, virtues shaped in the beginnings of humanity that are considered as the foundations of civilization. Personal or governmental objectives have no reason to overcome these moral values, unless governmental officials place their own interests above worldwide interests. In this case, self-appreciation has been developed, not under the auspice of universal ethical values, but, rather, under the obedience of oppressive ones, values that deviate from the living rules and habits that nature carved over a period of millions of years, which have been applied all over the living constituent of our environment, providing living organisms with an inherent value.

Nature, over millions of evolutionary years, provided living matter with values and virtues recognizable by all organisms; diachronic values, not defined by human standards, which are responsible for the confrontations developed in nature, determining living organisms' mutual relationships, the so called ecosystems;¹ a set of values designated as inherent value that could be referred as "autaxia";² and, lastly, a set of values that have to be assessed properly, particularly by humanity. This assessment, in order to be achieved accurately, owes that the assessor should be conscious of the systemic methodology required. Has this naturally provided inherent value, autaxia, been assigned to humans? Of course, it has. We, humans, belong to the living constituent of our environment. We are part of it and we are not above it. Thus, we, too, possess our own autaxia. The main concern should be whether or not we are able to assess it and to conceive our personal, but in the meantime social, obligation deriving from this inherent value. The assessment is definitely the result of our inner self, our ethical status and the way of responding to our daily life; a process immediately related to our personality, being the outcome of the

¹ M. Mantzanas, "Arne Naess and Deep Ecology," in K. Boudouris (ed.), *Values and Justice in the Global Era* (Athens: Ionia Publications, 2007), 81-88 (in Greek).

² D.P. Matthopoulos, "I. Bakti and D. Theocharopoulos," in *Concepts in Environmental Aesthetics* (23rd World Congress of Philosophy–Athens, 4-10 August 2013).

interaction between our genetic background and our sociopolitical environment.

Humanity spent thousands of years in the environment before becoming conscious that it could not modify natural conditions according to its will. By that time, humanity tried to conciliate natural conditions through rituals and sacrifices. Lines of evidence come from the cave paintings of Western Europe, made several thousand years in the human past.³ This initial forethought became the spark, alongside societies' cultural unreeling, for the evolution of more systemic rituals that were finally developed into the known religions. Therefore, through religion, man aimed at conciliating those natural powers that contributed to his survival, while he was unable to intervene in them. The human mind, on its way to reaching reasonable conclusions, diverged from the lines at which religion was aiming and, as a consequence, philosophy was developed, while sciences evolved through the accumulation of knowledge. The human mind is a great natural gift reserved for all human beings. The notion of serial representation⁴ appears demonstrating that everything in nature is different, that every human being is different and powerful because he observes, he understands the differences and profits from them by coming to reasonable conclusions.

Spiritually developed specialists tried, through symbols and meanings, to elucidate notions that people were not able to understand. The linguistic development became the keystone to these specialists. The gradual transfer of vocal symbols to written ones gave them additional support. Under these new circumstances, colloquial speech, apart from being orally transferred, with the possibility of being weathered, was rendered stable over the ages. In parallel, man, being very close to nature, adapted living rules and habits that, through the passage of the time, developed into moral values known as 'ethics'; virtues that guide his way in his daily life, a consignment passed to humanity's progeny, modulated over the ages with regard to religious, social and technological development. Despite to their modulation, the fundamental beginnings, laid deep in the human conscience, under crucial circumstances, can be recalled in order to rejuvenate him.

Hermeneutical Considerations

The historical maintenance of ideas became the spark for the evolution of a new speculation. The time distance between the initial thinkers and those who, sometime in the future, sought the meaning of their work, imposes their analysis in order to become tangible. This process presupposes the development of a mental relationship between the initial thinker and the one who attempts

³ G.K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993); I. Tattersall, *The Fossil Trail: How We Know What We Think We Know about Human Evolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); S. Oppenheimer, *The Real Eve: Modern Man's Journey out of Africa* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publ., 2003).

⁴ J.-J. Rousseau, *Confessions*, in *La série: Poétiques et esthétiques*. Premières Rencontres des Arts Plastiques (Bordeaux: Éditions InterUniversitaires Bordeaux, 1992).

to explain the ideas of the former. This was the reasoning for the development of hermeneutics, the 'art' of explaining the meaning of notions, that through apprehension, seek to understand, analyze and explain the meanings of all cultural phenomena.⁵ Initially, it was essential for the mental sciences, but, gradually, it became important to other sciences and arts. Through the notion of serial representation, the different points of view respond to that need for analyzing and understanding. The representation of various points of view, in different paintings or texts, evince our need for analyzing and understanding nature.⁶

The beginnings of hermeneutical studies track down to the classical Greek philosophers, such as Plato⁷ and Aristotle.⁸ However, hermeneutics became a key science through the work of the German philosopher and theologian Schleiermacher, who embraces that hermeneutics "hunts the meaning not only of the written records but of colloquial speech as well."⁹ According to Speck and Wehle,¹⁰ Schleiermacher accepts that there is a need for a "spiritual relationship between the interpreter and the creator, as well as an emotional transfer of the former to the emotional and spiritual status of the latter, in order for someone to apprehend the deep meaning of a text." Later on, Heidegger radically transformed the apprehension of texts into the unlimited resource of human life.¹¹ Under Heidegger's consideration, apprehension is life's keystone in an environment which we are trying to understand and interpret according to our purposes. Thus, the center of every human activity and practice is prevailed upon by 'apprehending' and 'interpreting.'¹² We notice an interesting example of 'interpreting' in the critique of Art. We find the first attempts of interpreting or translating the artists' work in texts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A great example is the transposition of Gustave Moreau's paintings¹³ [Salome dancing in front of king Herod, 1876 and Apparition, 1874] in the French critics journals *Gazette des Beaux Arts* and *L'Univers Illustré*. Transposition-translation is an act of communication between different forms of art.¹⁴ An inner dialogue is established, for exam-

⁵ J. Speck und G. Wehle (Hrsg.), *Handbuch pädagogischer Grundbegriffe*. Bd. 2 (München: Kösel, 1972), p. 165. Cf. H.-G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke*, 10 Bde, Bd. 2: *Hermeneutik* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1960); P. Thanassas, "Heidegger and Hermeneutics," *Indiktos*, 15 (2002), 137-176 (in Greek).

⁶ J.-K. Huysmans, *À Rebours* (Paris: GF Flammarion, 1978).

⁷ J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, Vol. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907).

⁸ L. Minio-Paluello, *Aristotelis categoriae et liber de interpretatione* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949); R. Kassel, *Aristotelis de arte poetica liber* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

⁹ R.E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969).

¹⁰ Speck und Wehle, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

¹¹ Palmer, *op. cit.*, p. 124. Cf. M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1963).

¹² Palmer, *op. cit.*, p. 215. Cf. H.-G. Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1975).

¹³ M. Dottin et D. Grojnowski, *Lectures de «Salomé» de Gustave Moreau*, in *Transpositions* (Actes du Colloque National) (Toulouse: Service des Publications U.T.M., 1986), 41-66.

¹⁴ O. Avgoulea, *De l'image au texte. Réception et transposition des séries de tableaux impressionnistes dans l'oeuvre littéraire de Fromentin, de Huysmans et de Marcel Proust*, Thèse de Doctorat (Athènes: Université Nationale et Capodistrienne d'Athènes, 2007).

ple, between paintings and literary texts. The text becomes an interpretation of the artists' views, reflecting his points of view and ideas. So, the notion of imitation and correspondence is a real attempt at translation or interpretation, using a diversity of aspects and techniques.

In the past, hermeneutics was a practical approach of 'apprehending' and 'interpreting.' However, nowadays, it could be characterized as interpretation, explanation, translation, or just apprehension, although it comprises the theoretical and applied aspect of the same notion, and is related to the physical human ability by which humans are trying to encounter their fellowmen and, in consequence, the entire universe.

The initial hypothesis of targeting to apprehend cultural phenomena, and its subsequent application to the entirety of human knowledge and practice, that is, to the various sciences, converge to the point that science belongs to the cultural part of civilization.¹⁵ It must be kept in mind that art aims at interpreting nature, while science aims at investigating natural phenomena, as philosophy does. Capra¹⁶ pointed out that science and philosophy, for the ancients, were identical notions aiming to harmonizing human life in nature, while, as from the 17th century, the goal of science has been to seek the knowledge that can be used to dominate and control nature. Meanwhile, we ought not to forget that nature is nothing else but the environment into which every living creature is, in constant action, possessing its 'autaxia.'¹⁷ The Impressionist Claude Monet, the greatest interpreter of nature in the nineteenth century, said "I paint as fast as I breathe," meaning that he could not live without painting constantly. Using colours, he tries to captivate the moment by depicting the slightest changes of nature in different moments during the day. In his serial works, he was oriented towards translating the differences between the various paintings. The theme is not important anymore, but the interpretation and reflection of this pictorial adventure is.

Well, then, how do living organisms conceptualize their environment? Of what does it consist? Which are its boundaries? These are questions that we have to encounter. In order to respond to these questions, undoubtedly, we will have to deal with hermeneutics in order to apprehend the notion of environment. According to Schleiermacher,¹⁸ we ought to come to a spiritual relationship with its creator. In other words, we have to dive deep, philosophically and religiously, but, in the meantime, also scientifically, into two aspects; the one being the notion of environment, while the other is the subject of apprehension, in other words our self being.

The environment is distinguished into natural, that is the structure and activity of nature, and anthropogenic, which is the result of human activity. The anthropogenic one is distinguished into structural and cultural categories. The cultural one is the result of human interest for solutions to natural phenomena

¹⁵ Palmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-217.

¹⁶ F. Capra, *The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982).

¹⁷ See Avgouleas, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

¹⁸ F. Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutik* (Heidelberg: C. Winter Un. Verlag, 1959).

that take place in his surroundings.¹⁹ The result of this search is the accumulations of knowledge, and man's spiritual unreeling, which implies his cultural uprising. This is the uprising that develops the idiosyncratic notion of the cultural environment, part of which is the spiritual heritage, that is, what the past inherit to the oncoming generations.

This spiritual heritage we all have to keep, transmit and interpret to the oncoming generations. In order for this transmission to be as effective and representative as possible, those who have taken this responsibility have to come to a 'spiritual relationship,' to a complete 'emotional and spiritual concurrence' with the initial creators,²⁰ in order to share their deeper notions and attribute them properly, to the best of their ability, to the future generations. The French author and art critic of the nineteenth century, Huysmans,²¹ evokes, in his novel *À Rebours*, written in 1884, the spiritual relationship between him and the French painter Gustave Moreau. Very fond of Moreau's paintings, Huysmans is writing a novel trying to realize an effective and representative transmission-translation of the two masterpieces, *Salome dancing in front of King Herod* (1876) and *Apparition* (1874), for the future generations. The pages of the novel rejuvenate Salome, completing a spiritual and emotional concurrence between the initial creator (the painter) and the author.

Interpretation is the reification, via colloquial speech or shape configurations, of a scenery or idea that, in order to be presented, requires, initially, to be captured by the human senses and, finally, to be processed by the human mind. The incepted representations consequently can be expressed by various systemic methods, one of which is colloquial speech. In other words, they can be interpreted. The interpretation is a human activity that shapes in a defined framework. In interpretation, several activities intervene that refer to the liability of the person who performs it and, thus, this process develops relationships with moral values.²² It is needless to refer that, under these circumstances, notions such as dignity, correctness, practice, objectivity, and explication, which intervene into the process of interpretation, belong to what we all refer to as liability. Given the need for liability, the one who decides to perform the interpretation has to apply it on the basis of deep ethical values, otherwise the recipient of the interpretation will become obeisant of the former and will not benefit out of the interpretation. The interpretation can be expressed by either colloquial speech, written texts or by the arts. All means of expression require that the interpreter has to make good use of the means of interpretation. An additional prerequisite is a communicational identity of the interpreter with the creator of the subject under interpretation and with the mentality of the

¹⁹ M. Mantzanas, "Mensch der Kern der Philosophie. Bezogen auf Sokrates, Jaspers und Nietzsches Äusserungen in ihren Werken," *Zbornik Journal of Classical Studies*, 14 (2012), 191-212.

²⁰ Speck und Wehle, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

²¹ Huysmans, *op. cit.*

²² R. Lundin, A.C. Thiselton and C. Walhout (eds.), *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1985).

person he is addressing. This communicational process is a basic educational means.²³

Interpretation is attempted throughout our lifetime. All daily events are prone to interpretation. Our combinational ability is the main factor of effective interpretation. However, we ought to point that we, all of us are not positive recipients of all of the messages emitted towards us. By aging we all succeed to activate some sectors of our self-interpretation, that is, our inner self-ability to respond to the various stimuli we receive. As a result of this event, we sometimes should look for those who have the ability to analyze the retained presentations in order for them to become apprehended by us; in other words, to interpret for us the events of our surroundings. This search roots in the human desire to apprehend the real state of our experiences, be they natural or anthropogenic ones. Through the search for truth we try to develop awareness, so that our interest for the correct utilization of our daily activities may become a reality.

Under this hermeneutical activity, the issue of interest is not on the interpretation *per se*, but on the interpreter's mental and ethical status and, in consequence, on his personal aims and scopes.²⁴ Alexander Cozens, a painter of the eighteenth century (1785), invents a systematic method aiming at the transposition of every real point of view of a scenery, expressing his own interests and personal need to analyze the environment through a continuous hermeneutical activity.²⁵

Interpretation and personality

The correlation between interpretation and the personality of its performer introduces us to the fundamental values that should govern the interpretive process. These values lean on both the philosophical site of hermeneutics and its relationship with ethics. The relationship between ethics and hermeneutics tends to be totally split under Cartesian dualism and the philosophy of Kant. However, the perception of events is closely related to the behavior of those who are in the process, too; thus, the importance of hermeneutics lies in the event wherein interpretation influences the process at the same level as the process establishes the framework of interpretation.²⁶

We have to bear in mind that everyone is a unique personality. Under no circumstances can we meet two identical persons. Everyone's uniqueness is determined by his genetic background in relation to the rate at which the sociopolitical environment influences this background. These two factors, although they determine the framework within which everyone is capable of performing, in the meantime, they comprise the components that determine

²³ F. Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1957).

²⁴ Lundin et. al., *op. cit.*, p. xi.

²⁵ J.C. Lebensztejn, *Étude sur la nouvelle méthode pour secourir l'invention en matière de paysage* (Montélimar: Editions du Limon, 1990).

²⁶ Lundin et. al., *op. cit.*, p. xi.

the ethical values from which everyone builds his personality. Under these circumstances, the interpretation in which we are engaged is closely related to our ethical status, that is, the way through which we respond to our daily life or, in other words, to our inner self.

Ricœur,²⁷ in one of his early hermeneutical works, referred to the idea that hermeneutics drives from pre-apprehension to the apprehension *per se* of an event trying to conceive its meaning through its interpretation. Conceiving the deeper meaning of every object, independently, whether it is of a theoretical or of an applied study, artistic or spiritual, philosophical or divine, presupposes to define a moral framework under which it will act. Leaning on this institutional conception, Lundin²⁸ reported that Ricoeur alleged that hermeneutics, as a theory, provides us reasons to think that the Cartesian '*cogito*' leans on our inner self and not the opposite. Under this consideration, the philosopher who is directed by symbolisms minds to break out of the enchanted enclosure of consciousness of oneself, to end the prerogative of self-reflection.²⁹

Conclusion

To confront the constructive crisis which we are facing nowadays, requires that personal objectives should be set aside. By setting them aside, we will achieve breaking out the enchanted enclosure of consciousness of ourselves. In order to set aside personal objectives, our self-consciousness should be governed by the eternal moral values with which nature has rendered humanity over the course of evolution.

²⁷ P. Ricœur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967).

²⁸ Lundin, "Our Hermeneutical Inheritance," in Lundin et. al., *op. cit.*, 9-19.

²⁹ Ricœur, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

Racism and Altruism in the Contemporary World: A Concise and Epigrammatic Review

GRIGORIOS KARAFILLIS

The contemporary western world, the world of the everlasting market, mainly in Europe, but also in Latin America and elsewhere, suffers from a painful financial crisis, which, so far, burdens the South European countries. Within this pessimistic frame, we examine, concisely and epigrammatically, the identity, the function, and the consequences of two classic human and institutional behaviors of racism and altruism.

Racism¹ recommends a fundamental phenomenon of the individual and collective life, which, at the prehistoric and the older periods of history, was in effect as the decisive institution for the human relations all over the world. Since then, with fluctuations of its intensity during periods and in regions, it did not ever finally recede, while, during the last decades, it was strengthened with a particular dynamism that undermines the real possibilities, the prospects and the life of millions of human beings.

We should point out that the phenomenon of racism is presented from the dawn of the primitive organization of society and has a permanent historical life. In primitive communities, it is without doubt the tribes' way of living that is meant to be the unique one. This is the reason that it would be rather unrealistic to suggest that the earliest human societies got engaged in racism. Thus, the fact is that these communities are functionally bound to race. In the passage of time and gradually in accordance with cultural evolution, the transactions and the marketing the racist framework began to be restricted. However, racism gains ground each time financially and culturally superior people get in touch with populations which are, or are considered to be, weaker or inferior, such as in the times of colonialism.

To be more precise, the term 'racism' is hardly recorded in the early thirties,² and characterizes the method and the corresponding course of the Nazis, who used racial biology and anthropology in order to apply and justify their political program. In contemporary times, this has been considered an explosive social question. The rapid increase of population, the financial crisis and, mostly, poverty and loss of well-being led to the phenomenon of transference of a big number of people from Asia and Africa to Europe, the United States of America and Australia. These populations are confronting racism; they fall into the contempt of others and they suffer any kind of limitations, living in

¹ R. Mile, *Racism* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 54; W.T. Smith, "The Definition of Racism," *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 13 (1996), 31-40, p. 34; C. Headley, "Philosophical Approaches to Racism: A Critique of the Individualistic Perspective," *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 31 (2000), 223-257, p. 223. For more bibliography see footnotes 3, 4, 6.

² *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989). See *Webster's Dictionary of the English Language* (1989), p. 823.

poor conditions of life, most of the time. Racism today appears as the social exclusion of people, but mainly as stereotypes of rejection and xenophobic attributes.³

However, beyond these delimitations, we should look into the content of racism itself. Indicatively, therefore, we report that, in a precocious period for its analysis, racism is characterized as doctrine, according to which a national *group* is condemned as inferior from birth, while another is determined from birth as superior. Another definition for the term racism is the one according to which it recommends the theory at which the human characteristics and the faculties are determined by the race. It claims an intuition which defends the superiority of race, taking, of course, into consideration the relative elasticity of its significance. An interesting definition is that “somebody is racist when he is not interested at all or is not interested enough, according to morality, or is not interested with the equitable manners for the populations that are included in a constant racial team for which scorn, based on racial classification, exists.”⁴ Racism is “the imposition of unequal confrontation that causes the wish for sovereignty, based only on racial difference.”⁵ Racism “is always historically concrete even though it appears to have the same characteristics with social phenomenon”.⁶ Finally, we will regard as very important the definition that “racism is something that does not mix the convictions and our rationality or not, but the needs, the intentions, the preferences and our antipathies.”⁷

We insist on and follow the previous definitions about racism because, from our perspective, they present the wholeness of the context and they include its fundamental characteristics. All of the concrete and previous general definitions, however, have already introduced us to the core of our subject. In order to go further, we are supposed to record and analyze the two most powerful relative models⁸ of racism under the view of their reinforcing and institutional approach: the reinforcing racism, therefore, presents inquiring inter-

³ T.E. Hays, “Xenophobia and Others Reasons to Wonder about the Domain Specificity of Folk-Biological Classification,” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 21 (1998), 575-576; J.J. Mendoza, “Immigration: The Missing Requirement for an Ethics of Race,” *Radical Philosophy Review*, 15 (2012), 359-364.

⁴ J.L.A. Garcia, “The Heart of Racism,” *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 27 (1996), 5-45, p. 6.

⁵ Smith, “The Definition of Racism,” p. 34.

⁶ S. Hall, “Racism and Reaction,” in *Five Views of Multi-Racial Britain* (London: Commission for Racial Equality, 1978), 23-35, p. 26.

⁷ Garcia, “The Heart of Racism,” p. 6.

⁸ G. Ezorsky, *Racism and Justice: The Case of Affirmative Action* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 10; T. Sowell, *Race and Economics* (New York: David McKay, 1995), p. 165; Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 35; J.M. Blaut, “The Theory of Cultural Racism,” *Antipode*, 24 (1992), 289-299, p. 290; D. Goldberg, *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p. 8; P.C. Hoffer, “Blind to History: The Use of History in Affirmative Action Suits: Another Look at City of Richmond v. J. A. Croson Co.,” *Rutgers Law Journal*, 23 (1992), 271-296, pp. 280-281; R. Freeman, “Institutional Racism: How to Discriminate without Really Trying,” in T. Pettigrew (ed.), *Racial Discrimination in the United States* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 384-407.

est, because it is founded in the intention and the energetic action, while the institutional racism is propped in the social and the other structures of the system, and also connected with the precedent. In the reinforcing, racism it is important for us to delimit the intentional starting line of this particular phenomenon. Therefore, our first essential energy should aim at the foundation of this starting line; this is to say, to clarify and comprehend where from a person, who wants to harm somebody, acquires the particular volitional disposal. Surely, it is shaped through a corresponding culture in which "the other," different but also similar to the other bodily, intellectual or mental faculties, are considered inferior. According to institutionalized racism, this is a social phenomenon and, as such, depends on the relations that are developed between the individuals and is under the force of the basic changes from which a country suffers. Consequently, no one can easily claim that we are talking about a natural phenomenon that is structured and restructured, is constituted but also changes. Racism does not have a core which is developing and that is why we cannot think about it ontologically. It does not follow any natural or world law of growth.

From the basic description of racism and the presentation of the two above models, which are the most powerful of its patterns, we reached concrete conclusions. More specifically:

- Racism has an institutional sub-layer, essential as a frame in order to function by itself, while the individual and collective actions construct and reconstruct subsidiaries of the system in question.
- In any case, racism cannot be supported or exist for a long time if there are not any motives or interests, that is to say, real and concrete or more widely and long-lasting.
- The person who suffers racism is, by all means, economically feeble, while this is considered to be contemptable culturally, and so he or she is treated as a scapegoat, aesthetically.

The former conclusions help us to include the fight against racism either as a restriction and reduction of its intensity or as dynamics for its progressive recantation, in the following frame, particularly:

1. The academic and political debate on racism and anti-racism shows a higher level in those broader concerns, beyond any kind of recognition about what is breed (or race) and what exactly is meant by this term, and it would also be important to consider the significance of social forces and networks which create and reproduce racism. The dialogue has two perspectives: theoretical or continued ability to find solutions to the issue of racism or the exclusion of such a phenomenon. It would be better to discuss more than this, the case of debate and dialogue on more aspects and practices against social exclusion, which reproduces inequality and, inevitably, leads to racism.

2. The objective of current societies and, concretely, of the Europeans for the restriction and lifting of the phenomenon of racism should become more dynamic and more radical. That is why an international co-ordination is required, via organizations and new institutions that will daily fight for the lifting of racism and the reform of society.

3. In this struggle of great importance is the question of multicultural education, but also the scientific and systematic programs for the comprehension of racism and the battle against it, particularly in the white communities between the workers, the poor and the middle class. In the avant-garde of this battle should be those who once were the greatest victims of the social system and they should not only seek to rescue themselves.

4. However, the main question we have to face is not simply the medicine for the restriction or the obliteration of racism. Its lifting is integrally connected with the picture that we have for the world we want today. In order to constitute structures that will not be oppressive, structures that will value, above all, human beings and the rescue of the planet in the limelight, it will be required to apply a big reform. Thus, we might have racial justice and not simply goof racial relations.

5. It is sure that the creation of a new society with genuine political and economic democracy is impossible without rooting out racism and the lifting of white superiority.

On the other side of racism, there is altruism. *Altruism* = a selfless interest (care) for the welfare and the happiness of others; in French it is *altruisme*, from the Italian root *altrui*, which comes from the Latin *alter* = any other.⁹ Altruism¹⁰ is examined as a basic or a selective behavior of a person, which is concreted by the social motivation for charitable action. The questions are studied of whether it is the result of an emotion or a logical duty,¹¹ if it follows the course of development or the natural choice; it is compared to selfishness and certain perspectives are also examined for its enhancement, for example the choice of groups. Its identity is characterized by the differentiated relationship between the contrasting sides, and the conclusion is the one that emphasizes the complexity of the matter and the difficulty of its implementation. At this point, we are mainly interested in the content of altruistic morality, which is centered towards the others as regards its implantation in children. For this reason, it is showing less interest in the structure and development of moral thinking, while it perceives sacrifice and duty as the foundation and essence of morality, particularly these acts of duty done for the benevolence of others. Consequently, ethical behavior in terms of altruism is identical with its own expression, which seeks social life in stability and which could be developed at an early age of a human development. Among

⁹ *Altruism, altruisme, altrui, alter*; see A. Comte, *Système de politique positive ou Traité de sociologie instituant la Religion de l'Humanité*, Tomes 1-4 (Paris, 1851-1854), t. 1, p. 611; t. 2, p.183f; t. 3, p. 3, 69, 589; t. 4, p. 589; G.H. Lewes, *Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences* (London, 1890); L. Peikoff, *The Ominous Parallels: The End of Freedom in America* (New York: Stein and Day, 1982).

¹⁰ E.L. Khalil, "What is Altruism?," *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 25 (2004), 97-123.

¹¹ T. Nagel, *The Possibility of Altruism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 22, 70 and 120n; J. Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1983); See S. Hampshire (ed.), *Public and Private Morality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 23.

questions posed above the one which is of particular interest is whether altruism is the result of an emotion or that of a logical duty.¹²

From the questions already posed, there is a special interest pertaining to whether altruism is the result of an emotion or a logical duty. According to our opinion, in the question of whether it is a reaction, a behavior or even a stance that is based on logic or the emotionality of humans, we would claim that, between two situations and procedures, there is always developed a differentiated relationship or not, a component which gathers all results and drives to conclusions. Kant's¹³ and Nagel's perspective of altruism, for example, focus on the exclusive support and offering of help to the other, which cannot be declined or be adopted as the only approximation of the matter. The emotional and, most of the time, direct altruistic reaction of man indicates the restrictions of the absoluteness of the previous claim. Moreover, we should keep in mind that the emotional reaction—which typically does not follow the logical rules—includes a reference to the normal, meaning that human reaction comes from a structured behavior that sources from the comparison of his actions, which were recorded many times in his past, but most importantly the ones of the historical man, which are transmitted or are experienced as a way and a stance in life. We could not claim that, every time, we are totally conscious and calm enough to behave in an altruistic way, given that, many times, we have to react instantly or even illogically. This is actually the proof that logic, which is obvious, cannot be denied or hidden, but one cannot also eliminate the impulsive reaction, which, most of the time, is central to what is a duty.

In the subject matter of the relationship between altruism and development, things become more complex, because there is a structural deficiency in the co-existence of these terms. The biological and the natural choice, via the everlasting development process, has proven to us that those who survive are the autonomous and the powerful, and not the weak and those needing help.¹⁴ If the latter was untrue, natural law would be declined and it would spread a

¹² R.L. Campell and J.C. Christopher, "Moral Development Theory: A Critique of its Kantian Presuppositions," *Developmental Review*, 16 (1996), 1-47, pp. 23, 24, 26. In a long scientific framework there were constructed three approaches of altruism: the *sociobiological aspect* based on the claim that there is a gene which provides the essence of altruistic behavior at least for the close relatives. The *psychological theory* is based on the claim that the motivation for altruistic behavior depends on the parameter of beneficence. Finally, the *rational philosophical approach* of the altruistic attitude is associated with the capacity for abstract perception and it is explainable in vase it ends as a true or false empirical result. See the critique of P.S. Penner, *Altruistic Behavior: An Inquiry to Motivation* (Amsterdam-Atlanta GA: Rodopi, Value Inquiry Book Series, 1995), pp. 29-30.

¹³ I. Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, Werke*, Band 6 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1983), pp. 74-76.

¹⁴ C. Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (London: John Murray, 1859), esp. the ch. "Struggle for Existence," pp. 60-79 and "Natural Selection," pp. 80-130; See D.P. Todes, "Darwin's Malthusian Metaphor and Russian Evolutionary Thought," *Isis*, 78 (1987), 537-551, p. 538. There are different conceptions about evolution. Kropotkin, for example, challenged this narrative and supported the *mutual aid*. P. Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (New York: New York University, 1972; first publ. Kent, 1902).

society of the weak, having the powerful on the side, but without being able to discern which way we excluded them to the margin. As a result, we would support the constant and marginal survival of the weak, not only in the natural world, but also in the social world; survival and never domination. Under this spirit, we could see that altruism in a society should be combined, primarily, with the constant survival of those needing help and, secondly, of all the rest who suffer in various ways, so as to present it as a moral stance and a value of serving others, to make a value of choice, either through its influence or its constant adaptation, or through that of the social groups.

The opposite term of altruism, that is, self-interest, is mainly regarded as contentment as way of life, a process and a way of life that serves man and develops society.¹⁵ At the same time, altruism is estimated as a negative aspect and is considered to be an obstacle to development. However, the history of societies has proved much more than this. Selfish societies were developed or altruistic, or also mixed societies.¹⁶ Even men are discerned according to their altruistic or selfish character, in every case or in every place of action. But the service sector is a place where altruism is more obvious, but not in the respective primary and secondary conditions, because in this sector the numbers are countable and any such type of behavior would refuse its existential base. The selfishness of the altruistic choice of man is combined with the type of the society in which he is formed, without, of course, excluding his differentiation from his society. In general, humans are presented and operate more like selfish beings, but, in theory, they would prefer to be altruistic. They do not deny their altruistic duty to behave equally to others, as they do also exclude the expression of the primitive duty of survival, while, on rare occasions, they choose to be sacrificed in the name of others.

The common expression of altruism, which measures the morality or immorality of an action, is direct altruism.¹⁷ The criterion here is not always the obligation of Kant's orthodoxy for the action's ability to be generalized and following logical rules, but its immediate implementation without these, having, as a unique motivation, serving others people's needs. What is more important is the result of the action, which determines it as correct and the perception that it is a duty or an obligation. In order to achieve such an action, or

¹⁵ A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, B. I, Ch. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); Lawrence A. Blum, *Friendship, Altruism and Morality* (London, Boston and Melbourne: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), pp. 20, 27-28; V. Pareto, "Il massimo di utilita per una collettivita in sociologia," *Giornale degli economisti*, 46 (1913), 337-341; S.C. Kolm, "Altruism and Efficiency," *Ethics*, 94 (1983), 36-39.

¹⁶ D. Secchi, "A Theory of Docile Society: The Role of Altruism in Human Behavior," *Journal of Academy of Business and Economics*, 7 (2007), 146-160; G.S. Becker, "A Theory of Social Interactions," *Journal of Political Economy*, 82 (1974), 1063-1093; G.S. Becker, "Altruism, Egoism, and Genetic Fitness: Economics and Sociobiology," *Journal of Economic Literature*, 4 (1976), 817-826; F.A. von Hayek, "The Pretence of Knowledge," in *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas* (London: Routledge, 1978), 23-34.

¹⁷ Blum, *Friendship, Altruism and Morality*, pp. 84-87. Cf. I. Kant, *Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. L.W. Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959), pp. 385-387.

for it to be achieved, the creation of groups was tried,¹⁸ consisting either with more or fewer altruists, in comparison to other groups where they were absent, so as to discern which group develops better or faster and if society, through such formations, is able to develop.

In conclusion of this concise and succinct examination of the conditions of racism and altruism, we note the following comments: Racism, at the level that we have tested the issue, does not include a number of intrinsic characteristics but appears to nominalize the established laws, the customs, and those practices that systematically reflect and produce racial inequality in the society. Racism is not just a personal problem, or a case of individuals.¹⁹ It is rooted in the organic structure that is maintained and perpetuated in a variety of mechanisms working towards racial inclusion or exclusion. These, in their turn, are supported by social institutions and cultural practices.²⁰ Instead, at the examination of the identity and the function of altruism as a basic or selective behavior among individuals, we saw that it is founded on the social motivation for benevolent attitudes and actions. We have checked, also, if it is a result of an emotional or a logical task, and if it just follows the evolutionary prospects or the natural selection. We ended at the assumption that it is contrasted to selfishness and we explored some particular potential for improvement.

All the above conclusions, both for racism and altruism, indicate the complexity of these matters and their comparative operations. The financial crisis calls for their enforcement and their proper operation, while their analysis shows us, in our opinion, that the possibility of escaping and reducing racism, and choosing and reinforcing altruism is the correct and possible human behavior and stance.

¹⁸ S. Elliott and D. S. Wilson, *Unto others: The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), *passim*. Elliott and Wilson renewed the dialogue in Biology in relation to extent and importance of group' selection; P.H. Rubin, "Group Selection and the Limits to Altruism," *Journal of Bioeconomics*, 2 (2000), 9-23; C. Boehm, "The Nature Selection of Altruistic Traits," *Human Nature*, 10 (1999), 205-253.

¹⁹ J.M. Jones, *Prejudice and Racism* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1972), p. 131.

²⁰ Headley, "Philosophical Approaches to Racism...", p. 251.

PART VI

Crisis, Values and Modernity

The Crisis of Philosophical Thought within the Crisis of the Modern Bourgeois World

GEORGIOS DAREMAS

The Forms of Crisis of Philosophical Thought

The history of philosophy shows that philosophical thought is under a perennial crisis, either brewing beneath a surface of tranquillity and authoritatively accepted doctrines or violently erupting and undermining the established philosophical beliefs of any given era.¹ 'Crisis' is endemic in philosophy and in the variety of the forms of thinking which have striven to account for the structure of the *cosmos* because the emergence of the bourgeois world has brought in processes of continual change and the destruction of any erstwhile stable edifice upon which a static and unchanging conceptualization of the *cosmos* rested. In this regard, Marx's diagnosis that the consolidation of the bourgeois world in modernity results in whatever is 'solid to melt into air,' that is, all that is fixed, rigidified, unquestioned to suffer its unavoidable overturning and demise, has turned into an indisputable premise for the comprehension of the ever-changing features of social life and of the series of 'revolutions' that have affected philosophical modernity.²

In particular, what has suffered inimitable collapse was the reigning, from late antiquity till early modernity, 'cosmography' of an eternal 'Great chain of Being.' This, of course, is the apt term of A.O. Lovejoy that supported a frozen cosmological hierarchy of the beingness of the world, organized according to the notional axes of continuity, graduation and plenitude.³ In its stead, novel conceptions emerged of a 'multiple' universe or even of a 'multiply multiple' universe⁴ privileging discontinuity, qualitative leap and contingency.⁵ The resultant fragmentary picture of a 'multiverse' split into unconnected

¹ I want to thank the panelists, the audience and in particular the panel's chair Prof. João J. Vila-Chã whose incisive queries allowed me to connect the philosophical crisis with the current discursive forms of crisis expressing the economic, political and social crisis of contemporary Europe.

² K. Marx, F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1977), p. 37. See also the analysis of the structural embodiment of this condition of 'liquidation' in cultural modernity in M. Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982).

³ A.O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001, 1936¹).

⁴ See G. Daremas, "Ontology of Physis and Society in the work of C. Castoriadis," Paper presented at the International Workshop on *Social Theory and the Work of Cornelius Castoriadis* (University of Crete, September 29-30, 2000).

⁵ The 'principle of plenitude' enunciated by Lovejoy states 'that every genuine possibility will be actualized,' a fundamental tenet of ancient necessitarianism which was firstly and perhaps conclusively refuted by Duns Scotus's doctrine of contingency. See A. Vos Jaczn, H. Veldhuis, A.H. Looman-Graaskamp, E. Dekker and N.W. Den Bok, "Introduc-

‘regions of being’ reinvigorated the philosophical demand for a search after the *lost unity* of the world. In tandem with the idea of a ‘plurality’ of worlds, the newly emerging modern world and its scientific spirit introduced a *rupture* in the old philosophical Parmenidean conception of an ‘identity of Thought and Being,’ a philosophical assumption that had been taken up by Scholasticism and encapsulated in the principle of *adequatio rei et intellectus*.

The idea that mere thinking could, in an *a priori* and deductive way all by itself, provide ‘certain knowledge’ of the *physis* of the *cosmos* was revealed to be an unwarranted postulate. The radical questioning of such preterit natural philosophy was enhanced by the Cartesian turn to a self-doubting thinking subject, in search of a *foundational basis* for its very own existence and of its capacity to ground a secure grasp of what-is. With the Cartesian turn, a permanent *chasm* was grafted in the subject-object identity. Both ruptures in traditional philosophy reflect two dominant aspects of the ascendant bourgeois world: first, the emergence of a self-centred bourgeois individual who, in conditions of (mental) isolation (and socially unencumbered by the traditional communal web of interdependencies), could question *ab initio* his newly found status in the world; and, secondly, the constitutive experience of a powerful subject who can overcome the former passive and contemplative stance vis-à-vis his standing in the world and not only ‘posit’ nature (including his own self) as an object *apart*, but also to actively intervene, *via* science, technology and industry, in its transformation, ‘taming’ it according to his will and *manipulating* it at will.

This dual *schism* within the subject and between the subject and the object reflects two underlying developmental social processes taking place in the constitution of bourgeois modernity. The first involves the *division* of the self into a ‘private’ and a ‘public’ or ‘social’ self. Such a division of selfhood was the outcome of a process of the social differentiation of *societas civilis* from the state or political society. A sphere of ‘intimacy’ was gradually constituted that distinguished the inner life of the (bourgeois) individual from his public existence and socio-political status.⁶ The stress on the importance of social sentiments, like social approbation or esteem, characteristic of Scottish Enlightenment (D. Hume, A. Smith) and in J.-J. Rousseau is indicative of the gap that opened within the formation of individuality, and broadly expressed in the entrenchment of the distinction between private morality and social ethics.⁷ The other macroscopic process is that of *secularization*, whereby the collapse of the traditional theological worldview and the ‘abstraction’ of God from nature,

tion,” in J.D. Scotus, *Contingency and Freedom: Lectura I 39* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), 1-40, p. 20.

⁶ M. Becker, *The Emergence of Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 4-8.

⁷ I trace this originary division of selfhood as the condition of possibility for Hobbes’s conception of political representation as ‘authorization,’ in G. Daremas, “The Concept of Political Representation from Hobbes to Marx” (unpubl. PhD diss., University of Sussex, 2011), pp. 26-30.

rendering the latter purely 'inanimate,'⁸ created but not permeated by the divine *demiourgos* permitted the 'handling' of nature, its carving out as an object in-itself, 'subjected' under an array of reifying scientific-technical treatments. In the philosophical plane, both newly generated philosophical 'needs' effected by the contours of the novel bourgeois world, the search for the *lost unity* of Being and the provision of a *valid foundation* for knowledge acquisition and a secure epistemological access to the subject-object intertwinement, became the primary conceptual imperatives in Husserl's philosophical phenomenology.

Philosophical thinking is the attempt to present a systematic and coherent theoretical understanding of the *essence* of the cosmos, whether this is seen to be unitary, dual or multiple. We can speak of crisis in philosophical thought whenever, to use Thomas Kuhn's felicitous expression, we evidence a "paradigm shift," wherever an established doctrine has revealed its inadequacies and *cul de sac*, has stumbled upon unsurpassable aporias or it cannot address the emergence of new problems, new queries; in short, when many "anomalies" have gathered that taint the validity of its pronouncements.⁹

Every kind of philosophical crisis worthy of its name has presaged a philosophical revolution or so the proponents of the newer philosophical systems have regarded the overcoming of the formerly entrenched conceptual edifices. Cases in point can be considered to be Descartes' revolutionary turn toward subjectivity as the only ground of theoretical certainty. Across the continent on the English channel, around the same time, we evidence Francis Bacon's 'novum organum' or the "new science" (and 'new' at the time meant revolutionary in our modern sense),¹⁰ and, on his footsteps, the new materialist doctrine of 'logical/empirical atomism,' encompassing Hobbes, Locke, Hume, and John Stuart Mill as its culmination. Back to the continent, a new crisis in the established philosophical thought in the form of Leibnitzian and Wollfian metaphysics became manifest by Kant's self-acclaimed radical "Copernican turn" and his critique of dogmatic metaphysics,¹¹ and then again another crisis of critical Idealism by Hegel's dialectical logic and the self-positing of the Spirit, followed by its own immanent crisis in the form of the young Hegelians' critique and Feuerbach's secularization of metaphysics in a 'new religion'¹² and consequent upon that of Marx's radical re-orientation of thinking

⁸ The same divorce of 'God' from nature applies also to 'human nature' itself. Though the latter is seen as ensouled rather than as inanimate, 'God' is newly conceived as an extrinsic, distant entity, an 'incomprehensible being' for both Hobbes and Locke instead of as partaking of the 'corpus mysticum' of medieval theology.

⁹ T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970²).

¹⁰ Bacon's new science of nature begins "when man begins 'putting nature to the question' (that is, the torture)," i.e., the scientific mind *actively interrogating* nature rather than passively registering its features. R.G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics* (Chicago: Getaway Edition/H. Regnery Co., 1972), pp. 238-239.

¹¹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. V. Politis (London: Everyman/J.M. Dent, 1993), p. 15 [B xv].

¹² W. Breckman, *Marx, the Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

from 'heaven to earth,' and to the sociohistorical conditions of world organization and the primacy of social ontology,¹³ and further on to Husserl's phenomenology as the radical science that grounds any science, culminating in yet another post-phenomenological philosophical crisis, expressed in Derridean deconstruction, that has claimed insistently that deconstruction is the radical overcoming of the closure of Western metaphysics and its conception of *Being as presence*, even though it draws its sustenance from it. In a certain sense, the history of modern philosophy is nothing else than the successive history of philosophical crises.

The agency of crisis in philosophy is *critique*. Critique assumes a three-fold character. Firstly, it emerges as self-critique through which the philosopher becomes *other* than himself, objectifying the very product of his/her own thought and relating to it as if s/he were an 'external' judge of the same thought-content positioned differentially to himself as producer of his work. This self-reflectivity, which presupposes a 'dual self,' an inner schism, a distant self within the self that allows for corrections, modifications and identifications of 'blindspots' and incoherencies, it is reasonable to claim that it holds whenever the thinker adopts a 'readerly' stance *vis-à-vis* his text, when s/he is positioned as reader-interpreter of his own self-expression. The other form of critique is 'immanent' critique from someone else other than the philosopher, who, nevertheless installs him/herself within the thinking framework of the judged, adopts the guiding acceptations of the examined philosophical discourse, and thinks through the consistency of the claims and the consequences drawn as if s/he were similar to or in 'empathy' with the author of the discourse under consideration. This form of critique exhibits 'good faith,' for it does not impose an alien conceptual frame of mind on the judged discourse, but it judges and criticizes it in terms of standards posed by the discourse itself and, thus, the identification of logical contradictions and *non-sequitur* and the crisis resulting from refutation obtains a strong justificatory basis. The third form of critique is 'external' criticism, which opposes basic postulates and axioms of the particular philosophical thinking by furnishing its own cluster of fundamental premises, but it is necessarily joined with the judged discourse, shares a common interface by reference to a 'third term,' a *tertium comparationis* that operates as the evaluation standard of correctness, since, otherwise, the problem of incommensurability is unsurpassable.¹⁴ Critique, in its three forms, is none other than a sequence of judgements (*kriseis*) and syllogisms upon the discursive contents. In this regard, we can claim that there is an internal linkage of the two senses of (philosophical) crisis. The difficulties encountered by a philosophical systematic thought that evince its entrance in a crisis situation possibly leading to its eventual dismissal are brought about by a series of critical judgements that radically question or subvert its system-

¹³ C.C. Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1978).

¹⁴ For the necessity of a common background framework to address the incommensurability issue, see A. MacIntyre, "The Relationship of Philosophy to Its Past," in R. Rorty, J.B. Schneewind and Q. Skinner (eds.), *Philosophy in History: Essays on the Historiography of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 31-48, p. 42.

atic consistency, its logical validity or even its appeal to factual veracity.¹⁵ Because of the essentiality of judgement *cum* crisis, quite often the coherently organized philosophical reflection ‘builds’ in advance its own defences, that is, it meditates upon, with and against existing or possible objections and contentions that could vitiate its very own standing as a grounded doctrine. The consequence of this inherent necessity to guard against the refutability of a given doctrine, implies that every *present* philosophical discursive Reason inscribes within itself a relationship with the *past*, the previous forms of thinking with which it engages through critique, but, concurrently, it also relates itself to the *future* by fielding anticipatory arguments and counter-arguments in view of possible prospective objections raised against itself. This structure that sutures the past and the future with the present *within* the present resembles the essential structuring of the Husserlian concept of ‘experience,’ whereby any present situation of consciousness contains intrinsically the “retention” of a past and the “protention” of a future, of course, without Husserl himself advancing explicitly any suchlike similarity between the experiential stream of consciousness and the inner organization of philosophical consciousness.¹⁶

Husserl’s Pure Phenomenology as a Signpost of the Crisis of Modern Philosophy

I will focus on Husserl’s phenomenology, and, in particular, on his *Logical Investigations*, as a paradigmatic moment in the ongoing crisis of philosophical thought. Husserl’s phenomenology presents itself as the radical emergence of a new “all-encompassing eidetic ontology,”¹⁷ and it is a luminous sign of a *crisis* in philosophy (especially of *psychologism* which was then and is still now a dominant philosophical system in various modern-day versions), for the previous philosophical systems were not aware of what they were doing

¹⁵ Husserl himself states that “[t]he revolutions decisive for the progress of philosophy are those in which the claim of former philosophies to be scientific are discredited by a critique of their pretended scientific procedure.” E. Husserl, “Philosophy as Rigorous Science” (1911) in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, ed. P. McCormick and F.A. Elliston (Sussex: Harvester Press/University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 166-197, pp. 167-168. We could, perhaps, connect the ‘double meaning’ of philosophical crisis with instances of socioeconomic and political crises if we assume as the essential defining characteristic of crisis, the inability of any process, situation or phenomenon to secure its *conditions of reproduction or perpetuation* due to the disintegrating effect of internal contradictions. In this sense, social contradictions are the harbinger of crisis in social reality and logical contradictions in that of philosophical/theoretical discourse.

¹⁶ The inner connection of past and future in philosophical consciousness considered as a transhistorical itinerary of any given ‘science’ is tacitly hinted upon when in Husserl’s consideration of Galileo’s place in the theoretical history of geometry, he remarks that for both Galileo and the subsequent philosophical situations there exists a unifying thread “worked on in a lively forward development [sequence of future states], and yet at the same time a tradition. [Continuity with the past]” E. Husserl, “The Origin of Geometry” (1936), in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, 255-270, p. 269.

¹⁷ E. Husserl, “Phenomenology,” Article for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1927), in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, 21-35, p. 33.

by being tied to the factuality of the natural world and drawing their categorical frameworks from it, while they were deprived of a *secure foundation* for their *a priori* principles, since they lacked a systematic method validating their *a priori* scientific character. Husserl regards the whole history of philosophy as a failed attempt to achieve its ultimate aim; that is, to elevate philosophy to the status of a 'rigorous science.'¹⁸

Husserl defines the domain of philosophical thought to be any systematic reason that searches for *truth*. Philosophy has as its highest *telos* the arrest of truth and its rational grounding. Consequently, philosophical and scientific reason is inherently teleological and distinguished from other forms of discourse by this very purpose. At the same time, philosophy (which originates historically with Plato) is called upon to provide a foundational basis of the 'unity' of sciences which investigate particular regions of Being. Husserl espouses both the Platonic thesis of 'Being is One' and Leibnitz's philosophical demand for *mathesis universalis*. Reflecting on the history of philosophy, Husserl pontificates that philosophy has not as yet succeeded to fulfil its purpose; namely, to achieve the transcendental grounding of truth and of the unity of sciences, taking on the character of a systematic and "rigorous" science, analogous to the exemplar of the science of pure mathematics. In essence, he claims that philosophical thought has remained 'thought' without succeeding to make the transition to a systematic science and this inability encompasses even Kant's thought.¹⁹ Since, philosophy in its different construals has not yet accomplished the fulfilment of its purpose, it follows that it is defective, incomplete, and, thus, suffers from an ongoing crisis.

So, phenomenology emerges as a sign of crisis, of the impasse in the former modes of thought and, at the same time, it appears to be the *solution* of the crisis by offering a new model of overall comprehension of the theoretical understanding of the world, including all possible worlds, by demarcating rigorously the sphere of *ideality* from that of facticity and presumably providing the requisite 'secure foundation' for epistemology, since 'pure phenomenology' conceives of itself as the 'science of sciences' or the necessary *a priori* grounding of any and all sciences.

A third sense of crisis can be interrelated with the two forms of 'crisis' hitherto mentioned; i.e., critical judgement and epistemological crisis in the Kuhnian sense of a *paradigm shift*. This is *socio-historical crisis*, in the Marxian sense that a social contradiction has become generalized so that a basic social relationship under crisis cannot reproduce itself or enters a process of decomposition. There is a double connecting thread between the epistemological and the socio-historical senses of crisis. The first aspect is that both forms of crisis evince *turning points*, where the previous states-of-affairs have be-

¹⁸ Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," p. 166.

¹⁹ He regards Kant to have stopped short "of the idea of a foundational science of transcendental subjectivity owing to his 'regressive methodological procedure' and a mythical conception of transcendental faculties." J.N. Mohanty, "The Development of Husserl's Thought," in B. Smith and D.W. Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 45-77, p. 67.

come obsolete, or they are pregnant with ‘anomalies’ or inherent tensions and the process of their unfolding or reproduction is interrupted or enters a qualitative new phase. The other connection is that the emergence of an epistemological crisis could be associated or even be genetically traced to result as a consequence of a sociohistorical crisis situation or to reflect isomorphic basic components of its structure. So, the relationship between the two types of crisis is that they appear ‘distinct but inseparable from each other,’ and this resembles the mode of connection between the ‘transcendental ego and the natural ego,’ which, as Husserl stresses, “[m]y transcendental ego is thus evidently ‘different’ from the natural ego, but by no means as a second, as one *separated* from it in the natural sense of the word,”²⁰ an inner association of two distinct attitudes of an identical ‘ego’ that reveals the illusion of ‘transcendental duplication.’²¹

I will not expound on the inner dynamics of the perennial crisis of the bourgeois world, but, at certain points, I will ‘correlate’ Husserlian philosophical pronouncements and aporias with significant sociocultural contexts that ‘intimate’ underlying general crisis situations and phenomena endemic to the bourgeois world.

The Crisis of Philosophy as a Crisis of Its Unity

Husserl explicitly acknowledges that modern philosophy is in deep crisis in its being both fragmented and lacking an absolute logical ‘foundation’ and inherently calls for a ‘new beginning’, found at last in phenomenology as the novel solution to philosophy’s decline.²² Phenomenology’s *telos* is to suspend the fragmentation of philosophy by providing an absolute foundation and a logic of systematicity, interweaving the disparate regions of philosophy and, thus, realizing the ancient Platonic ideal, as well as reviving the Cartesian program that sought the unity of the sciences and the absolute grounding of phi-

²⁰ Husserl, “Phenomenology,” *Enc. Brit., op. cit.*, p. 31.

²¹ In a recent attempt to reconstruct the essential components of Husserl’s phenomenology as a whole by an analytical philosopher, there is a curious ‘excision’ of the category of the ‘transcendental ego,’ not even mentioned once in the text as if it does not play any role in Husserl’s thought. J. Hintikka, “The Phenomenological Dimension,” in Smith and Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, 78-105. It is true that in the first edition of the *Logical Investigations* the concept of the ‘transcendental ego’ is absent and its integrative function is assigned to the concept of the ‘unity of consciousness.’ But, in the second edition, Husserl, in a remarkable self-critical recognition of his error, rectifies his omission and acknowledges the existence of “pure ego” as the necessary center of the *self-evidence* attached to the ‘I am.’ E. Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, Vols. I & II, ed. D. Moran, trans. J.N. Findlay from the 2nd German ed. (London: Routledge, 2001 [1913/1921]). Hereafter abbreviated as *LI* followed by v. (volume) I or II, numbered Investigation, ch. (for chapter), § for paragraph and page number. The quote is in *LI*, v. II, 5th I, n. 6, p. 352.

²² “The decline and hopeless fragmentation of philosophy since the middle of the nineteenth century calls for a newer beginning and new Cartesian meditations. Phenomenology as their conscious resumption and purest result” (E. Husserl, Syllabus for the Paris Lectures on “Introduction to Transcendental Phenomenology,” in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, 78-81, p. 78).

losophy, but has gone astray. In this regard, Derrida is in error when he claims that the Husserlian phenomenological project strives to transcend Western metaphysics, but it is ineluctably mired within metaphysics by its intention to ground a “theory of knowledge.”²³ For it is Husserl’s *deliberate* purpose that phenomenology must salvage metaphysics in the form of *prima philosophia*, not at all to demolish it in the name of a post-philosophical thought. Husserl, in his *London Lectures*, claims programmatically that transcendental phenomenology is logic’s apogee, “an absolutely valid universal logic, and that is transcendental phenomenology” that leads “to the totality of the a priori sciences” and that “[i]t leads also to an a priori deduction of *the system of all the categories of being* and thereby to that of the system of the a priori sciences” [emphasis is mine].²⁴ Such an *a priori* deduction of all of the categories of being is nothing else than the epitome of ‘formal ontology.’ There is a certain revolutionary extravagance in the claim that phenomenology will provide *ab initio* the deduction of ‘all the categories of being’ independently of Being itself (this is the sense of apriorism) and, in disregard of its concrete examination, since the totality of facticity (the empirical existence of nature and society) must have undergone methodical reduction in order to reach the realm of ideality. This is an impossible and self-contradictory project to excise the effect of material being in the attempt to conceive pure ideality *per se*. But phenomenology’s radical stance to offer a new ‘science of sciences,’ in place of whatever has existed hitherto, resembles, in tenor at least, the revolutionary bourgeoisie’s aspiration in its struggle to abolish the feudal past and the *ancien Regime*, to construct a totally *new world*, to build the modern world from scratch by realizing the ideal utopia of a *novel* universe of universal freedom and equality.²⁵

Husserl executes a formidable critique of Psychologism, which is the reigning philosophical-scientific ideology of the modern bourgeois era, originating in Locke’s doctrine of ‘general ideas,’ in the extreme nominalism of Bishop Berkeley, in Hume, in J.S. Mill and culminating in various ‘psychologistic’ Logics of his time. Husserl is not against psychologism *per se*, but

²³ J. Derrida, “Speech and Phenomena: Introduction to the Problem of Signs in Husserl’s Phenomenology,” in *Speech and Phenomena* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 1-104, pp. 4-5.

²⁴ E. Husserl, Syllabus of a Course of Four Lectures on “Phenomenological Method and Phenomenological Philosophy” (1922), in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, 68-74, Lecture IV, p. 73.

²⁵ This idea of the bourgeois world building itself from scratch, breaking loose from the old traditional fetters (and the image of the bourgeois person as a ‘self-made’ individual whose property is the outcome of his ‘own’ efforts, hard labor and talents, not the effect of an ‘aristocracy of birth,’ of ‘patronage’ or of ascriptive status) shows striking parallels to Husserl’s criticism of contemporary sciences as acquiescing unreflectively to traditional shackles and thus unable to provide by themselves the ground on which they could stand solely by themselves. As against this dependency on accustomed ways of thinking and in congruity with the bourgeois world’s sense of self-constitution, “transcendental phenomenology is not a theory [...] it is a science *founded in itself*, and *standing absolutely on its own basis*; it is indeed the one science that *stands absolutely on its own ground*” (my emphasis). E. Husserl, “Preface to the English Edition of *Ideas*” (1931), in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, 43-53, p. 46.

against psychologism seen as an epistemological standpoint.²⁶ Logical Psychologism is criticized for relativism, for scepticism, but, above all, for ‘psychological hypostatization’ of the concept, of concept-formation and of logical laws. Psychological ‘hypostatization’ means that the concept as ‘general name’ is taken to be an offshoot of the intuited objects perceived by consciousness. Psychologism’s basic error consists in the obliteration of the fundamental distinction between the ‘laws of the real’ and the ‘laws of the ideal.’ As Husserl puts it, “[t]he basic error of Psychologism consists, according to my view, in its obliteration of this fundamental distinction between pure and empirical generality, and in its misinterpretation of the *pure* laws of logic as *empirical* laws of psychology.”²⁷ ‘Pure’ refers to *a priori* laws, logical principles and theorems, whereas empirical generality is generated inductively. So, phenomenology posits the existence of two distinctive kinds of laws, logical laws on the one hand, and empirical laws, either causal or probabilistic, on the other hand. These distinctive kinds of laws are located in two distinct realms of being. Here, we have arrived at the ontological quintessence of phenomenological philosophy. Husserl argues that phenomenological thought discovers a ‘categorical split’ in the essential structure of the cosmos. There are two categories of objects: real objects, which are always individual, and ideal objects, which are singular universals. The universal “is a thing thought of by us: it is not therefore a thought-content in the sense of a real (*realen*) constituent in our thought-experiences.”²⁸ ‘A thing thought of by us’ does not mean *invented* by human thought, but possibly conceived by reflective *insight*. The universal as a ‘unitary concept’ has an objective existence, not a thing-like status, but as object for thought, that it is *discovered*, but not created *ex nihilo* as if it were the mind’s product generated by productive imagination. The basis of this fundamental division is a split in the category of ‘being.’

“[W]e do not deny but in fact emphasize, that there is a fundamental categorical split in our unified conception of being (or what is the same, in our conception of an object as such); we take account of this split when we distinguish between ideal being and real being; between being as Species and being as what is individual.”²⁹

This *categorical split* translates the conceptual unity of predication into two different sub-species according to whether we affirm or deny ‘properties of individuals’ or affirm or deny ‘general determinations of Species.’ “This difference does not, however, do away with a supreme unity in the concept of an

²⁶ “[M]y struggle against Psychologism is in no wise a struggle against the psychological grounding of Logic as methodology, nor against the descriptive-psychological elucidation (*Aufklärung*) of the origin (*Ursprungs*) of the logical concepts. Rather, it is only a struggle against an *epistemological* position.” E. Husserl, “A Reply to a Critic of My Refutation of Logical Psychologism” (1903), in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, 152-158, p. 153.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁸ Husserl, *LI*, v. I, 2nd I, ch. 2, §8, p. 249.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

object.”³⁰ Whether we predicate the red colour to one, many or all red objects does not affect the unitary character of the ‘red’ species concept.

The categorial split of the objectivity of Being into real and ideal objects reveals the co-existence of two distinctive worlds, though not necessarily separate from each other, since the ideal world is often inscribed on the real objecthood of facticity. The species-concept ‘redness’ is irreducible to the ‘red moment’ of a ‘red house’ and it is not created by an aggregation of many similar ‘red instances,’ as empiricism or psychologism believes, but ‘redness’ can be extracted from the single instance of a ‘red moment’ if it is intuited by a suitable phenomenological act. The logical form that pertains to the ‘ideal unity’ of species-concepts that grounds its specific sort of universality is ‘the *A* (*in specie*),’ not the logical form of ‘*all A*’s’ that describes the ‘universality of range.’ ‘*The A*’ may possibly invoke a particular *A*, but it is not dependent on it or it can be conceived without it. A triangle is a possible instance of ‘triangularity,’ but ‘triangularity’ as a species-concept does not entail any correlate inner or outer intuitive content. This is the meaning of Derrida’s paradoxical statement in the *Specters of Marx* that ‘visibility in-itself is invisible.’³¹ Concepts as ‘ideal unities’ are objects (of perceptual or cognitive acts), but not things. They lack being, in the sense of materiality or immediate presentness, but they do ‘exist,’ inscribed or traceable in thinghood, if only they are cued in by specifically intended acts of reflection. Actually, the act of reflection that identifies the species-concept is a ‘form of abstraction.’ Husserl, in a methodical way, disambiguates two forms of cognition in immanent consciousness. The first form is perception that, in a ‘straightforward’ way, apprehends the sensible objects as they appear *within* consciousness in the form of “percepts.” There is a higher level where we have ‘perception’ of ‘states-of-affairs’ that are results of founded acts, that is, they presuppose some acts that are based on ‘originative’ intuitions. States-of-affairs involve categorial forms of acts, synthetic ones, since states-of-affairs are relational unities, not directly perceivable, but consisting of conjunctions and disjunctions of parts in wholes. This distinction in two levels correlates with two forms of abstraction. One type of abstraction is the “setting-in-relief of some non-independent moment in a sensible object.” Focusing on the nose in the face of someone exemplifies such an act of abstraction (from the rest of the face). As against this abstractive act, the other form of abstraction is “Ideational Abstraction, where no such non-independent moment, but its Idea, its Universal, is brought to consciousness, and achieves *actual givenness*.”³² By this act of abstraction, we have a “universal intuition” of *the* ‘nose’ as such. Not the cognisance of this or that particular nasal feature, but of the *essence* of what the nose is, i.e., its universal *identicalness*, regardless of the possible infinite instantiations of particular noses.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

³¹ “And visibility, by its essence, is not seen, which is why it remains *epekeina tes ousias*, beyond the phenomenon or beyond being.” J. Derrida, *Specters of Marx* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 125.

³² Husserl, *LI*, v. II, 6th I, ch. 6, § 52, p. 292.

The gist of Husserl's critique of logical psychologism's construction of the essence of a concept is that it lacks the comprehension of its 'unity' and, thus, it misses its *species* character and consequently it conceives the concept as a mere 'general name,' designating the 'extension' of the real particulars subsumed under it. There is a twofold problem with the logical procedure of concept formation employed by psychologism. Since it recognizes the existence of only single real entities, its mode of arriving at generalities, that is general concepts, predicates, attributes through which objects can be classified and known, is a process of identification of "likenesses" shared by objects. "Likeness" can only give us a certain range of a dispersed multiplicity of objects having a common feature. But mere likeness of entities, or the "objective possibility of recognizing all members of the range to be *like* one another," does not suffice to give *unity* to this range for thought and knowledge. For "a possibility, it is nothing for our consciousness, unless we think of it and grasp it. But such a grasp would [...] presuppose the thought of the unity of the range" and so the range itself would already "confront us as an ideal unity."³³ Without the prior unity of the concept, any 'extension' of the attribute would be limited to a finite range of subsumed things, lacking the objective possibility of subsuming 'all' like things under it. The transition from the finite range, 'finite' since it is based on the empirical given, to the ideal infinity of extension, where *all* suchlike things must be necessarily subsumable, would be illegitimate. Even if the *possibility* of encompassing 'all' members of the range is asserted as a unificatory criterion for the concept, it would still be insufficient, for

"[e]ach attempt to transform the being of what is ideal into the possible being of what is real, must obviously suffer shipwreck on the fact that possibilities themselves are ideal objects. Possibilities can as little be found in the real world, as can numbers in general, or triangles in general."³⁴

Consequently, empiricism's attempt to dispense with Species as ideal objects, by stressing their extensions, fails, for "[i]t cannot tell us what gives unity to such extensions."³⁵ A second major difficulty confronted by the psychologistic account is that each object belongs to a plurality of "circles of similars" and that these "circles of similars" must be distinguished among themselves. Without a previously given "Specific Unity" we cannot avoid a regress *in infinitum*. Different similarities connect objects and these are different in kind. So, to establish ranges of objects, "similarities of similarities" have to be identified and so on *in infinitum*.³⁶ Even though Husserl accepts the idea of the 'unreality of attributes' in not having an independent substance, he castigates J.S. Mill for failing "to see that the unitary sense of a name, and of every expression, is a Specific Unity" and not merely a range of objects whose unity is the unity of a verbal meaning.³⁷ Logical empiricism's

³³ Husserl, *LI*, v. I, 2nd I, ch. 1, § 4, p. 243.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

³⁷ *LI*, v. I, 2nd I, ch. 1, § 5, p. 246.

inability to conceive, let alone to ground, the ideal unity of a(ny) concept, reflects the bourgeois individual's incapacity to subordinate his or her self-interest under any *idealized common good* and, thus, form communities of purpose to realize the Good in unison. For this reason, the liberal *rule of law* that guarantees the 'unity' of political society is experienced as a constraining force that restrains the individual through punitive law, instead of being seen as a *public/political* condition of possibility for the exercise of personal freedom, at least in those polities where law-making has not yet been severed from the democratic input of citizens. The 'unity' furnished to the independent individuals of civil society by the rule of law is a mere *formal* unity, provided by the common subjection to the law, devoid of any substantive socio-political interconnection.³⁸ In Husserl's parlance, such formal unity constitutes an "aggregate" or a 'mere coexistence of any content,' not a true "whole." The aggregate is a 'mere form of thought' that does not intuit any objective unity and "it stands for the correlate of a certain *unity of reference* relating to all relevant objects."³⁹

As a consequence of the categorial split, there is the world of facticity, which is studied by the various empirical sciences, and the realm of *ideality*, where logical laws, concepts, truth 'exist,' and of whose interconnections pure logic, i.e. pure phenomenology and formal mathematics deal. All concepts are singular 'ideal unities,' they are *species*-forms or *universals* and rest within the realm of ideality. Husserl is careful and denies the attribution of any kind of 'conceptual realism' to concepts as 'ideal unities' as the Scholastics did, being misled by "metaphysical hypostatization."⁴⁰ The realm of ideality is prior and beyond the categories of space and time, and, thus, it is both spaceless and timeless, and its logical truths are consequently immutable.

Quite a few commentators (including Derrida) use the term 'omnitemporality' to describe the timelessness assigned by Husserl to the truth-meaning of the concepts of which ideality consists. *Stricto sensu*, this is erroneous. Infinite time still belongs to and presupposes the order of temporality, and, thus, the possible experience of a world.⁴¹ Whatever is 'in' time is exposed to empirical contingency, and so its *apriori* character is lost, its truth-validity is marred and its foundational value annulled. This sphere of ideality is what Derrida calls 'spectrality,' a zone of 'ghostly absent presence' that follows the living like shadow.⁴²

³⁸ K. Marx, "On the Jewish Question" (1843), in K. Marx, *Early Writings* (Middlesex: Penguin/NLR, 1975), 212-241, p. 233.

³⁹ Husserl, *LI*, v. II, 3rd I, ch. 2, § 23, p. 38.

⁴⁰ "Metaphysical hypostatization" is to assume that the species-concept "really exists externally to thought" whereas "psychological hypostatization" is committed when the assumption is adopted that "Species really exists *in* thought" (Husserl, *LI* v. I, 2nd I, ch. 2, § 7, p. 248).

⁴¹ In criticizing Sigwart's view of 'truth' (dependent on an intelligence that thinks it), Husserl contends that "it makes no sense to give truth a date in time, *nor a duration which extends throughout time*" (my emphasis). *LI*, v. I, *Prolegomena*, § 39, p. 85.

⁴² Despite Derrida's critical demotion of Husserlian phenomenology as belonging to the 'phono-logocentric' paradigm of metaphysics, he acknowledges unhesitatingly the 'debt'

Strictly speaking, the realm of ideality is located in the *nowhere* within the now-here of a possible categorial intuition. The ontological division of Being, through the phenomenological categorial *split*, suggests that at its basis lurks the perennial philosophical *schism* between subject and object; the modern disruption of the Parmenidean identity of thought and being, both plausibly conceived as distant conceptual reflections of the social dissolution of the organic bond integrating individuals in wholesome communities; a *disunity* of communal co-existence with its resultant opposition between the individual and his/her community, brought about by the divisiveness inexorably associated with the consolidation of the principle of private property and the *chorismos* into ‘mine’ and ‘yours’ that pits one individual against the other.

Husserl tries to mitigate the tension produced by the subject-object opposition by claiming to be both a ‘realist,’ in accepting the external, independent existence of reality, and an idealist, in the sense that access to the givenness of the ‘ideal realm of concepts’ is only possible *via* thinking acts of reflection that self-evidently validate the truth, i.e. the self-identical ideal meaning of specific concepts, grasped by intentional acts that take place in the consciousness.⁴³ It must be stressed that the ideal realm is *not produced by thought*,⁴⁴ but merely ‘constituted’ or discovered by it,⁴⁵ since ideality is independent from human thinking and transcendent to it, unrelated to the specific features of ‘human nature’ and it would continue to exist even if the human species became extinct. This argument undermines psychologistic relativism that ties the realm of conceptuality and ‘pure logic’ or makes it *relative* to any given philosophical anthropology. *Pure* phenomenology requires the suspension of ‘all reality,’ the independence from any form of world-constitution, for this is the necessary condition that vouchsafes the unconditional or *a priori* character of the truth of ideality. As Husserl has put it in his correspondence with Dilthey, “[a]ll objective validity, including even that of religion, art, etc., refers to ideal, and thus to absolute (‘absolute’ in a certain sense) principles, to an *a priori* which, as such, is thus in no way limited by anthropological-historical facticities.”⁴⁶

owed to Husserl in that “the radical possibility of all spectrality should be sought in the direction that Husserl identifies, in such a surprising but forceful way, as an intentional but *non-real* [*non-réelle*] component of the phenomenological lived experience, namely, the *noeme*. [...] [T]his non-reality [*non-réellité*], this intentional but *non-real* inclusion of the noematic correlate is neither ‘in’ the world nor ‘in’ consciousness” (Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 257, n. 6).

⁴³ Idealism, in Husserl’s sense, is meant not as a metaphysical doctrine but as “a theory of knowledge which recognizes the ‘ideal’ as a condition for the possibility of objective knowledge in general.” Husserl, *LI v. I*, 2nd I, p. 238.

⁴⁴ The concept as the ‘what’ of presentation is not a real part of the psychological content. “It is meant but not produced, in our thought.” Husserl, *LI v. I*, *Prolegomena*, § 39, p. 87.

⁴⁵ The ‘scientific investigator’ “does not *make* the objective validity of thoughts and thought-connections, of concepts and truths [...] he *sees* them, *discovers* them” (Husserl, *LI v. I*, 1st I, ch. 3, § 29, p. 226).

⁴⁶ E. Husserl, “Reply of July 5/6 to Dilthey’s Letter of June 29” (1911), in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, p. 205.

The unlimited character of the realm of ideality is populated by the principles, laws and rules of 'pure' logic, laws like the law of non-contradiction, of identity, etc. Since they are absolutely uncontaminated with anything pertaining to facticity and thus not exposed to contingency endemic in the totality of facticity, their truth-value is *eternal* and they must be taken as the indubitable *foundational basis* of the knowledge of (possible) Being. In this regard, 'pure' phenomenology, by methodically intuiting the logical essences, furnishes the ultimate secure ground that philosophy had been lacking up to now. At the same time, the diverse empirical sciences have been employing such logical principles and laws in the investigation of their concrete theoretical objects. Their common use of an identical set of logical principles and rules suggests that, despite the plurality of theories and scientific objects, the sciences share a logical/epistemological basis that provides for their unity. Any kind of theoretical assertion, surmise or propositional judgement has to submit to such logical rules if it wants to claim access to valid truth.

The whole Husserlian argument stands or falls on the condition that the phenomenologically intuited logical *aprioris* do not *presuppose* anything at all. Nevertheless, there are certain difficulties with his aprioristic doctrine, which I will try briefly to expose. Husserl's method of analysis is descriptive, not deductive or inductive. So, he proceeds to identify and elucidate basic logical distinctions without deriving them from anything else, but *assumes* them as indisputable. This is already a problem, for, in order to constitute 'pure logic' as the 'science of sciences,' its logical categories must be somehow established rather than be applied as ready-made ones. The identification of logical distinctions necessarily passes through semantic analysis in order to pin down, in an exact way, the differences in meaning borne by the logical distinctions. He introduces a fundamental logical distinction, dividing 'universal judgements' "into *individually* universal judgements such as *All men are mortal*, and specifically universal judgements such as *All analytical functions can be differentiated* or *All propositions of pure logic are a priori*."⁴⁷ 'All men are mortal' is deemed to be an *individual* universal judgement. Why is that so? That it is a universal judgement, there is no doubt about it. But why is it 'individual'? 'All men' is a clear reference to Man as 'species.' In that regard, it should be 'specifically' universal. But if it were defined as a 'specifically universal' judgement, then the concept of Man would belong to the sphere of ideality where species-concepts throng, and that means that a pragmatological worldly condition would participate in ideality as it ought to be ('redness' for example which is a species-concept certainly presupposes inexorably a coloured world). So, Husserl, to keep the field of *a priori* concepts uninfected by pragmatic considerations, drives an illegitimate wedge, bifurcating the concept of 'species' into a species ('specifically')/non-species ('individually') polarity by *definitional fiat*. Furthermore, the truth-value of the judgement 'All men are mortal' entails the element of necessity and absolute

⁴⁷ Husserl, *LI*, v. I, 2nd I, § 2, p. 241.

universality (it does not accept exceptions) and, thus, shares the two characteristics of the *a priori*.

Another sense of the proposition could be that ‘all men’ as species is meant to express the ‘individuality’ of the species and, thus, is legitimately considered as an “individually universal” judgement. But the idea of ‘all men’ as an individual species is made possible only on the condition that *other real* species exist, on the basis of which and in juxtaposition to which, the ‘individuality’ of the species Man is revealed. So, a *material precondition* is required in order to render the logical definition and the logical distinction that Husserl introduces, true and valid. But this is *impossible* in Husserl’s framework, because logical concepts and their distinctions absolutely cannot rest on anything located in the real world. The phenomenological trick is to bracket knowledge of the entire natural and socio-historical world in order to achieve purity and, thus, accede to the *a priori* of the realm of ideality, but *suppose furtively the result of knowledge* of the existence of the world and employ it in delimiting the contents of the ideal realm. Even the use of such a fundamental category for Husserlian phenomenology, that of “possible worlds” for which ideal objects are valid, can attain its meaningfulness only if a ‘real world’ can be hypothesized to exist in contra-juxtaposition.

Another deficiency is revealed in Husserl’s systematic founding of pure logic. The essence of the logical concepts exists in a state of in-itselfness. Logical concepts cannot be affected in their essence by other logical concepts; they do not exist relative to each other or under any kind of reciprocal influence. To describe “all men are mortal” as an “individually universal” judgement entails the proposition’s logical content to partake necessarily in the grid of animal species’ manifold. Additionally, there is logical ambiguity because there is a hidden ‘logical’ taxonomy behind such supposedly isolated judgements. If ‘all men...’ is an individually universal judgement, what is the logical status of a proposition like ‘All animals are mortal’? The ‘animal’ stands as the *genus* to the *species* ‘man.’ Is it, then, a ‘specifically universal’ judgement vis-à-vis the *individually* universal proposition ‘All men...’ or is it an ‘individually universal’ judgement in regard to the higher up proposition of ‘All life is mortal’? Husserl parades traditional logical distinctions without having examined their logical cogency that would have required immersion into the material conditions that support their formulation. A fundamental logical category is the genus/species relationship often employed by Husserl.⁴⁸ Genus is a higher concept than species, in that it includes it. Do we ascend from species to genus or do we descend from genus to species? Phenomenologically speaking, we must ascend from ‘species’ to ‘genus,’ since the process of reduction by abstraction starts from the immanently given per-

⁴⁸ The genus/species relationship belongs to the “category of object” and it is dealt by “the *pure (a priori) theory of objects as such*” (Husserl, *LL*, v. II, 3rd I, intro., p. 3). That means that the genus/species couplet is a pure categorial form transcendent to any *real* content. But without any reference to *materiality* or ‘facticity’ we can never know what is what and what kind of relation may hold between them. Either they are vacant ‘names’ thus mere marks or their formal ‘content’ is the product of definitional decisionism.

ceptual datum. The perception of the 'red' moment must be given in order to intuit reflectively the species concept 'redness' and only then to intuit by abstractive ideation the generic concept of 'colouredness.' But Husserl does not remain faithful to his method. He constantly posits first the genus (of "intention," of "primary contents") and then 'descends' to the specifics of the species.⁴⁹

Husserl claims that the ideal meaning meant in the intended expressions is 'identical to itself.' He writes:

"It can be an identical subject for numerous predicates, an identical term in numerous relations. It can be summed together with other meanings and can be counted as a unit.⁵⁰ As self-identical, it can in turn serve as the object for many new meanings. [...] A meaning can be treated as self-identical only because it is self-identical. This argument we find unassailable."⁵¹

Surely, it is 'unassailable,' since it is a blatant tautology. The whole point of Husserl's 'argument' was to demonstrate the essential character of the self-identity of 'ideal meaning' that remains invariable across contexts and unaffected by spatiotemporal determinations, since it is located outside of any space-time coordinates. What is the proof for such self-identity of meaning? "A meaning can be treated as self-identical *only because* it is self-identical" (my emphasis). The point is to know whether meaning *is* self-identical, not if it can be treated *as* self-identical. For it can be treated as 'self-identical' even if it is *not* self-identical due to *name fetishism*, when the meaning is hypostasized in the name, as, for example, when the term 'freedom' is taken to signify the same meaning in Ancient Greece, in the 17th century liberal discourse and today. Moreover, even if we assume that the self-identicalness of meaning can be surmised by its successful treatment as self-identical, Husserl has not proved that it is being treated as self-identical, for it begs the question on the self-identity of meaning, since the treatments of meaning as self-identical are *premised* on its being self-identical. Behind such dogmatic conception of the 'self-identity' of ideal meaning stands the uncritical acceptance of the logical law of identity ($A=A$), without Husserl having ever confronted the profound criticism against this law voiced by Hegel.⁵²

A last point that strikes directly at the heart of the logical *a priori* concerns the elementary logical form of 'pure' logic, the propositional form of 'S' is 'P.' Husserl thinks that this "ideal form" is valid *a priori*, regardless of the

⁴⁹ "[T]he descriptive genus 'intention' ('act-character') displays specific differences, *flowing from its pure essence*" (my emphasis). Husserl, *LI*, v. II, 5th I, ch. 2, § 10, p. 96. 'Desiring,' 'willing,' 'wishing,' etc. 'flow from the pure essence of intention' not the reverse, let alone that in the generic "pure essence" all species act-characters must have been ideationally dissolved. For the genus "primary contents," see Husserl, *LI*, v. II, 6th I, ch. 7, § 58, p. 304.

⁵⁰ It is obvious that the prototype of the logical concept is the 'number' since 'ideal meanings' are 'units' that can be 'counted' even 'summed together.'

⁵¹ Husserl, *LI*, v. I, 2nd I, ch. 1, § 2, p. 241.

⁵² Hegel's *Logic: Being Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), § 115, p. 167.

“infinitely many ways” it can be ‘materialized’ or ‘specified’ and he proceeds to make a most crucial claim “that we are not completely free in such specification, but work confined within definite limits. We cannot substitute any meanings we like for the variables ‘S’ and ‘P’.”⁵³ No doubt. But what is the *a priori* logical truth of this ‘logical’ formula, if ‘its definite limitations’ (thus, its rational determinateness) rest exclusively and necessarily so, on the types of “specification” it can accommodate? This means that this logical form *per se* is devoid of validity (and universality), it is an empty formula that becomes validated *on condition* that appropriate grammatical forms and subject/predicate connections are referenced or “substituted” for its marks. Thus, it is the totality of the world of ‘facticity’ that determines whether and how this ‘ideal form’ obtains logical sense and a valid embodiment. Husserl’s thought is trapped in the *chasm* of the subject-object divide. While he comprehends correctly that the *ideal* is grafted on the *real*, he cannot grasp that the *real* is also inscribed in the *ideal*, for, in that case, the absolute validity of ethereal ‘pure logic’ and its foundational basis of philosophy, falls to the ground.

The Husserlian philosophical program, by autonomizing truth and logic from the totality of the empirical facticity, by excluding the *temporal* from truth and infinity, seems to gain a permanent hold over the suchlike carved out domain. As Adorno pinpoints incisively, such a philosophical stance is subtended by a proprietorial relationship to such self-enclosed turf.⁵⁴ A highly abstract ownership relation seems to hold between phenomenology’s theoretical vista and the enclosed domicile of the treasured truths of the ideal realm. This obliges us to raise the question of ‘who are the possessors of such inestimable truths.’

Husserl’s narrowing of the set of those capable to accede to truth is shown when he counters Erdmann’s scepticism, where truth becomes validated when it is based on the agreement of everyone. By ‘scepticism,’ Husserl means the denial of the ideal objectivity of the concept and, consequently, its validation in the sceptic regard is only possible through the collocation of the subjective understanding of everyone. Husserl questions the appropriateness of such an epistemological conception in demanding such universal certainty and raises the question “whether truth may not rather be the appurtenance of a select few than possessed by everyone.”⁵⁵ Such a conception reflects both an anti-democratic aspect and a technocratically-minded prerogative; ‘anti-democratic’ in the sense that not ‘everyone,’ not the ordinary normal person, can accede to the “self-evident” character of conceptual truth, which is the only truth possible, but only “a select few” who can reflect on the intended meanings of con-

⁵³ Husserl, *LI*, v. II, 4th I, § 10, p. 63.

⁵⁴ “[Husserl’s] Cartesianism builds fences around whatever *prima philosophia* believes it holds the title deeds of the invariable and a priori for, i.e. around what (in the French of the *Cartesian Meditations*) ‘m’ est spécifiquement proper, à moi ego.’ Thus, *prima philosophia* itself becomes property.” T.W. Adorno, *Against Epistemology: A Metacritique, Studies in Husserl and the Phenomenological Antinomies*, trans. W. Domingo (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1984 [1956]), p. 17.

⁵⁵ *LI* v. I, *Prolegomena*, § 40, p. 100.

cepts, i.e. an ‘aristocratic intelligentsia’ can only possess truth, an ‘aristocracy’ that includes pure mathematicians and some logicians (obviously Husserl himself), but not all logicians and philosophers, since most of them have been misled into psychologism and empiricism. The technocratic aspect concerns the special methodical training required to learn to “attend” to the content of the presentations of consciousness, to identify ‘ideality’ from within the concrete object apprehended by consciousness. Husserl acknowledges the “major difficulty” that confronts the phenomenological method, whereby insights of essential truths are derived from immanent intuitions and this raises obviously the issue of the ‘testability’ of their correctness.

The solution he proposes to this interiority problem, which concerns nothing less than the very *truth* of phenomenological philosophy, is that “[t]hese insights can be tested and confirmed only by persons well-trained in the ability to engage in pure description in the unnatural attitude of reflection.”⁵⁶ This solution undermines at one go the claim about the ‘self-evidential’ character of direct grasp of intuited essences. It means they are not “self-evident” at all, but necessitate the mediation of specialists trained in “phenomenological purity,” so as to authenticate the genuineness of the intuited conceptual contents. “Well-trained” suggests the idea of a hierarchy of competence in phenomenological purification of intuition and presumably an official credentialization of the relevant degrees of competence or the institution of a body of experts as the validating forum of successful intuitions of essences.

Such philosophical conceptions reflect the exponential growth and rigidification of the social division of labor in late bourgeois society, where the division between abstract manual labor and specialized intellectual labor has been entrenched. Truth, logic, knowledge, mathematics, philosophy has become the special preserve of the “few select” scientific experts in the relevant domains. As for the rest, the great majority of ordinary wo/men, they comprehend the world under the ‘illusion’ of the “natural attitude,” believing the intuited objects in their consciousness to be none other than real perceptual replicas of the things externally located ‘out there.’

⁵⁶ *LI* v. I, (Intro. v. II, Pt 1 of German eds., § 3), p. 171.

Integration, Manipulation, Alienation

ANDREW BLASKO

“We live today in the age of partial objects, bricks that have been shattered to bits, and leftovers. [...] We no longer believe in a primordial totality that once existed, or in a final totality that awaits us at some future date.”¹

The importance of human existence and experience is often exaggerated. All too often, the significance of what we do is grossly overstated in an effort to regard ourselves as exquisitely meaningful and uniquely individual creatures who belong to the most developed species that has ever dwelt upon the face of the earth.

Self-awareness, self-reflection, and interiority frequently amount in practice to little more than solipsism on the cultural level, if not on the species level as well. We typically utilize these aspects of our being to erect and be the crown of creation. We thus conduct ourselves as if we were so exceptional that there was nothing else in the world within which we live that could be compared with us –or at least with the people who look like us and wear similar clothing.

In this vein, the uniqueness of personality that is so precious to Europeans is claimed to demonstrate the inherent superiority of our own specific culture and civilization over others. From another perspective, however, it shows itself as merely a modification of the sameness that marks us all as possessing, on the whole, an inability to grasp that we share much in common –very much in common– with all that we see around us, whether that be the dust of the Earth, those who speak a different language and perhaps worship in a different way, the stars that shine in the night sky, or the insects buzzing in the summer air. After all, have we all not been created from stardust?

But perhaps the saddest of all is that the world that we have made for ourselves in the name of civilization is today characterized by little more than the dissemination of knowledge and information, in order to produce ignorance and foster the manipulation of the many by the few. Public events are reported for the sake of entertainment and diversion, not to improve the quality of supposedly democratic society. Education is used to make us forget what is important in life, not to gain insight into the world that we have created for ourselves. Solidarity is encouraged so that imagination and diversity can be suppressed, not to foster belonging and a sense of community. A concern with public morality is transformed into support for narrow ideological views, adventurous foreign wars, and justification for universal surveillance, not to

¹ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), p. 42.

enhance civic responsibility and private ethical commitment. The hope of many of our leaders is that we become lost in what we believe we already know, instead of questioning the perennial link between faith and reason. We are not expected to come to a better understanding of the world in which we live that is both more profound as well as more accepting of those who do not resemble us, because –as we are taught– we have already learned all that is important about freedom, justice, and human fulfillment.

Aristotle remarked, in one of the most famous passages in the history of Western thinking, that all men desire to know. Unfortunately, this may no longer hold true, for today virtually everyone apparently wishes to be deceived and alienated. People now seek entertainment so that the superficiality and ignorance they crave will be enjoyable as well. And, even in those situations when they appear to search for information, it is all too often the case that they do so for the sake of diversion, not for knowledge or wisdom. In this way, we have trivialized such serious existential issues as faith, personal commitment, identity, and a sense of our place in the world, whereby they have been rendered harmless, insignificant, powerless, of no account, and even useless. Our lives have –at least to this extent– become void of insight, vision, and wonder, which have been replaced with a dull satiation.

As we address these matters, it will be useful to keep in mind Louis Althusser's observation that we exist today in the form of an objectivity in which we encounter our essence in the appearance of a non-human essence.² We should also remember a cogent remark by Jan Patočka concerning the crisis of European sciences that Husserl addressed in his final works; namely, we are now living a crisis of humanity that has rendered us blind and no longer able to understand.³

The first sentence in the program statement of the 2010 World Congress of Sociology declared that "Determination is dead in the social sciences."⁴ The statement went on to claim that we all are aware that human beings are "not completely dominated by" social structures, social mechanisms, and forms of reproduction, and that change "to a large extent depends on human action and imagination." However, this proclamation conveniently left open the question of the relative roles of action and imagination in social change, did not specify the range encompassed by "not completely dominated by" –as if there were no substantial difference between 1% and 99%– and seemed to take it for granted that action can typically be imaginative in a positive sense. There is no doubt, however, that we are fully justified in asking whether imagination, in a far from positive sense, can indeed not foster the type of action in which one makes oneself subservient to another –or even takes one's own life.⁵

² L. Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. B. Brewster (London: Allen Lane, 1969), p. 230, note.

³ J. Patočka, *Liberté et sacrifice* (Grenoble: Éditions Jérôme Millon, 1990), p. 267. See also E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. D. Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970).

⁴ See <http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/>.

⁵ Can imagination not be destructive, leading us away from positive change and fulfillment in any accepted meaning of the term towards emptiness, meaninglessness, and suffer-

Unfortunately, declarations about the death of determination all too frequently seem to indicate that determination is, in fact, alive and well. Pretty statements about the positive role of human imagination in social change, in fact, have very little to do with demonstrating the death of determination for anyone other than s/he who already wields unchallenged power over others and is able to determine the lives of those others.

But why does such an ideology exist, and why is it so commonly accepted today, when we live in a so-called postmodern civilization in which individualism appears to reign supreme? The answer I propose is that it exists to serve the structures of power that typify a society in which things as well as people are reduced to objects that exist solely in order to be manipulated, used for the purposes of another, bought, and sold. Perhaps this is the case particularly with those very individuals who feel themselves so very much in control of their isolated lives, as if they have been determined to think that they are not determined through their acceptance of the ideology that individuality as it exists today is essentially free, independent, and in control of its fate.

In our consideration of the significance of the individual today, it should be noted, in this regard, that Heidegger fundamentally transformed Husserl's important notion of intentionality. Briefly stated, Husserl's position in this respect is that conscious activity is always directed towards something, thereby consisting of both subject and object poles in respect to the emergence of meaning.⁶ Heidegger, in contrast, does not question the existence of things, although he does not reduce them to objects (opposed to a subject). In addition, he regards the attitude adopted towards Being, which he defines as "care," as fundamental to human existence. His entire early concern with existential analytic as it is developed in *Being and Time* is indeed centered on care, and he defines the very essence of human existence as care insofar as women and men are supposedly the sole beings for whom existence matters.

There is an interesting point that follows upon Heidegger's transformation of intentionality into care, insofar as care itself undergoes a transformation as a consequence of the exercise of power over the world in which we live by those who seek possession, control, and ownership of it. In such circumstances care may perhaps be better described as the attitude of those who exercise power towards those over whom they, in fact, exercise power. The analysis of human experience which Heidegger encourages us to carry out thus transpires in respect to the being who is concerned with the being over whom s/he (seeks to) exercise(s) power. In the conditions of the exercise of power, existence as such is thereby not a concern with being as such—as if being manifested itself in some a-historical and a-social location in terms of a fantasized

ing? Cannot imagination also produce the greatest of horrors, such as when Himmler stood on a railroad viaduct near Oświęcim, Poland, pointed into an adjacent empty field, and declared that it would be a good location for the extermination camp he had in mind? He thus made "social change" an inevitable and all too real fact for millions of people who hardly could imagine what was in store for them and had no say in the matter whatsoever.

⁶ This is famously the case even if we do not assume the existence of "real" objects in space and time.

life-world in general, without structures of power and ownership in which all were free and equal individuals. The object of concern would, then, rather be the existence of that which is possessed and the being over whom power is exercised in order to insure that possession. That is to say that care is to be understood as concern with the effective exercise of power and the successful possession of things in the world in which we live.

Under conditions of the exercise of power, the description of experience in terms of care matters to those who are concerned with their exercise of power over others for the sake of their appropriation of the world in which we live. It is as if we have returned to the world of the Ottoman Turkish Empire, in which the masters spoke of their subjects as “sheep” to underline how the flock had to be cared for so that they could provide wealth for the satisfaction of the masters.

Although Heidegger clearly accepts the significance of human individuality, he regards human existence as thoroughly social and historical.⁷ However, even if we accept that human existence is thoroughly social, it is nevertheless regarded in modern market society, particularly in its extreme American-style form, as being individual in its essence, regardless of Aristotle’s comments to the contrary concerning essence. That is to say that the ideology of today’s market societies proclaims that human beings are essentially individuals, which is reflected in the view of human rights typical of modern civilization. In this regard, perhaps it would be revealing and insightful, instead, to agree with Aristotle to the effect that the only so-called substantial differences between individuals involve non-essential elements.⁸ If this is the case, then today’s cult of individuality turns upon what is non-essential in the human being, for the things that make us different from each other involve, so to speak, the matter, not the form—the clothing and not the flesh—of human being. Only angels as individuals constitute species of their own.

⁷ The philosophical development of Heidegger’s existentialist notions has perhaps been most greatly influenced by the work of Søren Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard’s ideas concerning our subjective relation to truth, our existence in the face of death, and the temporality of existence, coupled with his passionate affirmation of one’s individual being-in-the-world, have indeed served to shape basic Heideggerian concepts. One fundamental difference between these two thinkers resides upon the fact that Kierkegaard emphasizes Christian thinking and the individuality of human experience while Heidegger sharply differentiates between philosophy and religious commitments and undertakings, at least after the early 1920s. See, for example, H. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-world: A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time, Division I* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1991), Appendix.

⁸ See Aristotle, *Met.* 10.1054b: “that which is different from something is different in some particular respect, so that that in which they differ must be the same sort of thing; i.e. the same genus or species.” In *Aristotle in 23 Volumes*, Vols. 17, 18, trans. H. Tredennick (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1933, 1989). Also see 1058b: “matter does not produce [essential] difference; and for this reason, too, individual men are not species of ‘man,’ although the flesh and bones of which this and that man consist are different. The concrete whole is ‘other,’ but not ‘other in species,’ because there is no contrariety in the formula, and this is the ultimate indivisible species.” Differences of this type involve attributes that are peculiar to the individual—they do not involve one’s essential nature as a human being.

Focusing upon the individual differences that separate us from each other—as is done in proclamations concerning the sanctity of the individual citizen/consumer and declarations about the sovereignty of individual imagination—thus diverts our attention from the essence that we share in common, as human beings who share a world in common. The market-created individualism of consumption for the sake of identity not only focuses our gaze upon what is of no essential importance in our lives, it also constructs a sense of individual significance upon the basis of what is of secondary importance in terms of what it means to *homo sapiens*. It creates a sense of meaning that may be said to be hollow because it ignores—even rejects—what is of the greatest significance in life insofar as what is essential has a greater importance and meaning than what is non-essential. It breaks the essential bonds that link us together for the sake of differences that reside upon what is non-essential, thereby reducing the individual to a means of consumption—or a consumption machine, as Deleuze and Guattari might say—who exists for the purpose of serving the accumulation of power and wealth by those who control the market in market-style society.⁹

It is also useful for us to keep in mind Aristotle's statement that all actions are done for a specific aim, which may be defined as the "the Good in each particular case."¹⁰ Aristotle observes elsewhere in the *Metaphysics* that "For it is the apparent good that is the object of appetite, and the real good that is the object of the rational will."¹¹ That is to say that, not only does the reduction of human beings to consumption machines serve a purpose that is good in some respect, it is good in terms of both desire and rationality—we both want it and justify our actions in terms of what is supposedly reasonable. Furthermore, this is not a good in a relative sense because it gives meaning and purpose to the action in question, which is to say that the good is a cause in an absolute sense for the activity in question.¹² In the case of modern individuality, however, this cannot involve what is good for the individuals who are reduced to consumption machines, because they are thereby made to serve the purposes of those who not only command power over the process of reduction, but accrue power from our own actions. As Aristotle succinctly notes, "in the case of things produced [or modern individuals—A.B.] the principle of motion (either mind or art or some kind of potency) is in the producer."¹³ He also states instructively that "in many respects human nature is servile."¹⁴

⁹ This point is reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the creation of desiring machines, as discussed in *Anti-Oedipus*, with an added consideration: individuals as desiring machines are created and manipulated by what appear to be hidden and unknown forces beyond their control. Social forces connected with the exercise of power within a specific social construction thus come to be regarded as cosmic forces that express the being that is manifest in human existence. For the original discussion of desiring machines, see G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*.

¹⁰ Aristotle, *Met.* 1.980b.

¹¹ Aristotle, *Met.* 12.1072a.

¹² Aristotle, *Met.* 1.988b.

¹³ Aristotle, *Met.* 6.1025b.

¹⁴ Aristotle, *Met.* 1.988b.

When the non-essential differences between individuals (which in the present discussion concern the particular commodities they consume) become the turning point of social and political ideology and practice—as is the case in advanced Western market society—and the individual is thereby reduced to serving the accumulation of power and wealth by those who control the market, the essential meaning of “the individual” or “individuality” is altered. It no longer involves the early modern notion of the rational individual with a given set of rights and obligations, who selects what s/he should and will do after deliberation and judgment.¹⁵ The full significance of an individual human life, with its desires, ambitions, hopes, virtues, and principles, has instead come to reside in the consumption of commodities, regardless of whether that means knowledge, love, designer clothing, or workman’s tools, which are purchased on the market for the sake of someone else’s satisfaction—that is, for the sake of increasing someone else’s power over our own individual and social lives. The cause of individual existence—that which may be described as the source of its meaning and development—thereby lies in something else that is concerned not with the welfare and goodness of given individuals, but rather with power over them by someone else.

This state of affairs may be described in classical Aristotelian terms as follows: The purpose of individual existence, which is the goal towards which individual life is directed—or that which draws forward the movement and development of individual existence—is to facilitate and serve the power that others exercise over it for the sake of their own private advantage and gain. Moreover, this comprises an act of love in which an individual willingly gives her/himself to that which is the meaning of his/her life—to that which is perceived as good for them. But, instead of this act of love being the fulfillment of one’s own life, it objectively comprises a sacrifice or negation of oneself, whereby one reduces the significance of his/her own life for the sake of fulfillment in the life of someone else. However, since this remains an act of love—albeit an act of self-deception—the individual does it willingly in the belief that the consumption of commodities is the paramount activity in which one becomes what one is in respect to the ultimate possibilities of human existence.¹⁶

Such reduced creatures may be said to find meaning in their lives through the consumption of meaning, not in the creation of their own meaning. They do not find meaning in their lives through reason, judgment, and experience shared with others, but rather by being filled from the outside by a significance that supports and promotes the structures and exercise of power in society. Very simply stated, they absorb what is told to them concerning the meaning and purpose of their lives, and they act accordingly as they search for their ideal commodities.

¹⁵ This in fact cannot be the case because both the meaning of and control over one’s life comes from the outside—from those to whom we submit by our own heart’s desire. Indeed, in many cases—and perhaps most typically—both the scope and purpose of rational deliberation are reduced to such an extent that such deliberation is stripped of the meaning it originally possessed.

¹⁶ See Aristotle, *Met.* 12.1072b.

This is the paramount example of alienation –from self and from society– in today’s advanced market society. Solidarity, civic-mindedness, patriotism, and commitment within such a society and amongst its members constitute integration for the sake of –and in the service of– inequality and subjugation.

This, in general terms, also constitutes the mechanism whereby power infuses the substantiality of alienated individuals in an alienating society with submission masked as liberty, such that individual potential is transformed into the potential to serve the expansion of the power that dominates for the sake of another’s fulfillment and private satisfaction. The very existence of the alienated individual is thereby possessed, so to speak, by the exercise of power in society.¹⁷

This transforms the processes of change and development in an individual’s life into means that serve the power of another and bring that other a sense of private pleasure. Change and development are thus no longer means that serve and promote one’s own good,¹⁸ and imagination becomes an instrument of self-deception. Moreover, the reduction of individual life to the consumption of commodities in market society goes hand in hand with the reduction of social life as well. In such circumstances, civil society becomes as great a myth as the self-responsible, rational individual insofar as the latter has ceased to exist –if it ever in fact existed in modern market society.

A kind of deformed and debased practical wisdom that accompanies the exercise of power under the guise of free choice in market-style civil society accelerates the drive to possess and consume commodities. This promotes the process through which the essence of alienated individuality is constituted, such that what is detrimental to the well-being of both the individual and society is considered to be the highest good. We may thus say, in a somewhat Heideggerian vein, that what may be referred to as “being consumed by commodities” is not only a possibility of the existence of human beings, but the predominant possibility of human beings in advanced market society today.¹⁹

¹⁷ Van Steenberghen’s summary of act and potency –*esse* and *essentia*– and the role played in the interplay between them by the infusion of infinite being –or a completion of Aristotle by means of the Platonic notion of participation– casts useful light upon the mechanism through which individual potential comes to promote the individual’s submission to power. See F. Van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West: The Origins of Latin Aristotelianism* (Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts, 1955), pp. 185ff. See also F. Van Steenberghen, *La philosophie du XIIIe siècle* (Louvain: Éditions Peeters, 1991), esp. Ch. VII.

¹⁸ For a discussion of the general issue of means, ends, and pleasure, see Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 1174a, in *Aristotle in 23 Volumes*, Vol. 19, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934).

¹⁹ For example, Heidegger, in his *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, discusses science as not merely an occupation, but rather as a way in which our human essence exists. Science does not merely involve what may be called learning the tools of the trade and finding appropriate employment, but rather taking up in one’s own life the specific presuppositions that one who moves in the circle of scientific research must bring along with him/herself in order to be a scholar. See M. Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* (Bloomington-Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009), “Introduction,” Section 2.

In terms of a sense of personal engagement as members of market society, we may say that the fact that we are dominated by the power exercised through commodities is no longer merely a matter of choice, as if we could somehow opt out of the grasp of commodities by choosing an alternative lifestyle or being more selective in our purchases. The reduction of liberty and personal fulfillment to opportunities to sell, purchase, and consume means that the submission to power becomes our fate in the sense that it is the predetermined mode of our existence. There is no individual personal freedom in the world of commodities—their very existence demands that we become consumed by them in an act of self-sacrifice as we endeavor to purchase and consume them.²⁰

One cannot merely struggle against such alienation from self as one would struggle against some beast or monster, as Beowulf wrestled with Grendel or Odysseus fought the Cyclops, as if we all could become epic heroes in freeing ourselves from the grasp of an alienated society that would feast upon us. The enemy we have to overcome is within us, in the very makeup of our souls and bodies. We are not simply subject to external power and violence, but rather create our own submission—indeed, our participation in being dominated is necessary because force cannot rule alone.²¹ It is our very being-in-the-world that ensures our submission to that to which we are supposed to submit.²² In an ironic analogy with Heidegger, one may say that history consists of the history of alienation in the terms of individual identity.²³ One could thus very well argue that Euro-American history consists, not of the supposed concealment of Being, but of the oblivion of the individual—that is, the redefinition of the essence of individuality into a consumer of commodities—for the sake of the unlimited expansion of the commodity market in today's society. Alienation, in this sense, is thus merged with individual identity to such a degree, in this type of society, that it has become a typical element of individual substance. It has become an essential characteristic of what it means to be an individual consumer of commodities as a subset of *homo sapiens*.

²⁰ Heidegger has written of how German critical philosophy, especially Neo-Kantianism, regarded Aristotle as an exponent of naive metaphysics. See "The Reception of Aristotle's Philosophy," in M. Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, trans. R. Rojcewicz (Bloomington-Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 5 ff. We might say that the power exercised through commodities does much the same as what Aristotle was accused of. Analogously to how Aristotle has been viewed as a naive realist, citizens as they have been reduced to consumed/consumers may be regarded as accepting the power-neutrality of commodities such that they believe that their subjugation comprises their fulfillment. They naively believe in their individual freedom because they can shop whenever and wherever they want to.

²¹ For a useful discussion of the mechanism whereby we exist in order to obey—including a sense of intrinsic necessity—see G. Therborn, *The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1980), pp. 93ff.

²² This issue arises in Therborn's discussion of ideology. See Therborn, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

²³ For a typical discussion of Heidegger's view that European history is the history of the oblivion of Being, not the oblivion of the individual, see "The Anaximander Fragment," in M. Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking*, trans. D. Farrell Krell and F.A. Capuzzi (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 13-59, pp. 26-27.

To struggle against alienation thus entails struggling against what we are and have become through our integration into society. It is not a question of somehow preserving one's own decency while seeking—in some “imaginative” fashion that promotes “progressive” change—some way in which to alter the range of possibilities offered by the supposedly “external” world to the sovereign individual—as if the overcoming of alienation were just another product on the market of human potential available for our selection. Alienation exists within us as the original sin of the commodity-eater—as part of the very fabric of our being after our Fall into the vale of commodity society. The process and structures of alienation that we see in the supposedly external world can only be overcome and eliminated as we eliminate them in the ways in which they exist within ourselves. We have to change ourselves in our efforts to change social structures and end the exercise of power in the service of private possession and control, for what we are today as individuals is destined to make our children as alienated as we are, if not more so.²⁴

Alienating social structures have indeed become fused with the substance of individuals to such a degree that a supposedly “free imagination” typically does not—and, indeed, perhaps cannot—challenge the current forms of existence of either social forms or individual identity. Those who deny determination conveniently overlook the fact that imagination today in market society is seldom concerned with anything other than finding the best shopping opportunities, deciding what to watch on television, selecting what to post on Facebook, or determining one's preferences in online pornography.²⁵ Today, some of the more imaginative individuals concerned with change in such a society are to be found among the so-called Tea Partiers in the United States, who claim Barack Obama is a Communist and present changes merely in the medical insurance system in the United States—not in the medical care system itself—as losing the battle to socialism. Others of the same ilk are those who argue, if that word may be used, that private citizens need to have access to military-style firearms so that they can protect themselves against world domination by the United Nations Organization. This is what imagination has been reduced to for countless tens of millions of people living in the paragon

²⁴ If we wished to allude to the Biblical story of the Fall of Adam and Eve, we could say that this describes the hereditary state of sin into which we have fallen as we have given ourselves over to a world in which relations between people have become relations between things.

Sisyphus thus continues to be the image that perhaps most accurately describes our times, just as it was for Camus. Life is worth living only as an endless struggle, just as Sisyphus was condemned for eternity to roll a boulder up a hill only to watch it roll down again to the bottom as he neared the top. This absurdity is of such a scale that we must revolt even though we will never reach our goal of a liberated future. We must struggle to overcome alienation because we live in a world in which the fact of alienation is inevitable in each and every individual life.

²⁵ One should certainly not forget that the pornography industry has been one of the principal engines driving the development of the digital technology underlying the emergence of today's “knowledge society,” in which individuals are supposedly empowered to attain heights that have seldom be seen in history.

of market society, which proclaims the virtues of liberated individualism as key to a meaningful life for all people everywhere.²⁶ Perhaps the most we can say concerning the quality of such imagination is that people often do the best they can with what they know –which is thankfully little from the perspective of those who wield power.²⁷

This casts Heidegger's appeals for an "openness to being" in, to say the very least, an ironic light: today's cult of individuality in market-style societies promotes individuality as it has been forcibly reduced to openness by virtue of the fact that individuals have been emptied of what is essential in human existence. Instead of the "authentic openness to being" that supposedly characterized pre-Socratic philosophy and for which we should search again today, as Heidegger claims, perhaps it would be more appropriate to describe market-dominated and commodity-filled individuality in terms of an "inauthentic openness" which consists not merely of an openness to being, but, more importantly, of a susceptibility and submission to power.²⁸ This is an openness which, by its very openness, not only conceals, but also empties the one who has been opened by the force brought to bear by an inherently violent social order. Heidegger thought that tragedy on such a scale was a positive element in pre-Socratic thought,²⁹ but I would suggest that it is rather one of the most characteristic –and far from positive– elements of modern market society, in which everything and everyone exists to be bought and sold.³⁰

Individuality, as it is typified in market-dominated societies –perhaps especially in its Anglo-Saxon version and in the world shaped by that vision– exists so that power can be exercised upon it. And because the exercise of

²⁶ Imagination of this sort reminds us of what Marcuse refers to as positive philosophy, which endeavors "to subordinate reason to the authority of established fact." H. Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (New York: Humanity Books, 1999 [1940]), p. ix.

²⁷ Today it seems that more people than not in market society are incapable of imagining a new way of life that neither consumes and destroys the Earth in the manufacture of commodities that serve power, nor consumes the souls of those who exist for the sake of the purchase and consumption of commodities. This is precisely the type of situation Marcuse referred to in his discussion of "one-dimensional men." H. Marcuse, *One-dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

²⁸ Perhaps the most appropriate description of the modern individual recalls Plato's analogy of the cave. We could say that individuals who have been reduced to commodity-consumers through the exercise of power over them not only are no longer able to grasp the meaning of objects, mistaking shadows for real things, they themselves have become shadows. They are nothing more than the commodities –including opinions for public consumption– with which the market has filled their emptiness. Heidegger on Plato?

²⁹ See, for example, the Translator's "Introduction," in M. Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking*. See also "The Anaximander Fragment," *ibid.*

³⁰ Heidegger observes that "The unconcealment of beings, the brightness granted them, obscures the light of Being. [...] As it reveals itself in beings, Being withdraws." See "The Anaximander Fragment," *ibid.*, p. 26. I would only wish to add that, in the current state of economically developed societies, the "withdrawal of Being" appears to be associated with the "presencing" or "givenness" of commodities. Indeed, does Being itself today have much significance left outside of the reduction of existence to commodities?

power is mediated by the fascination with what can be bought and sold, and because the significance of individual life is to purchase and consume commodities –and be itself a commodity– the exercise of power is concealed by the illusion that commodities are possessed and selected for consumption through personal choice. The exercise of power over the individual is thus presented as the personal choice of the individual for the commodity s/he wishes to possess, consume, and use. And even though this exercise of force is violent by nature –insofar as it is conducted with no regard for the well-being of the consumer– the violence brought to bear upon the individual is thereby disguised as individual freedom.

Evald Ilyenkov observes in a reference to Johann Gottlieb Fichte that the type of philosophy one chooses depends on the type of person one is. He states that everyone is attracted to a philosophy that corresponds to the already formed image of her/his own thinking, finding in it a mirror that fully presents everything that earlier existed in the form of a vague tendency or an indistinctly expressed allusion.³¹

We may say that those attracted to the philosophy of radical individualism are those who have already been seduced by fetishized commodities –and they are ready to reduce themselves to commodities as well. Indeed, the individual as presented by today’s cult of individuality has already been reduced to a commodity. Not only does its inherent significance turn upon the images of power and satisfaction associated with a society that has become dominated by market forces, its deepest inner meaning is completely framed in respect to the access to commodities. Moreover, it itself is a commodity that is available for purchase and sale on the market. It has been created specifically as a commodity that makes possible the market in other commodities, in support of the expansion of the power of a capital owning elite.

“Freedom” is thereby reduced to the selection of commodities. “Personal worth” is defined in terms of the degree to which one has transformed oneself into what s/he has bought and consumed. “Virtue” is defined by the ability to make a clever purchase, whether that be an intimate deodorant spray or, apparently, elective public office.

The meaning of individuality is today so completely bound to the reduction of the world to what can be bought and sold, and to the subsequent market in commodities, that the substantiality of the individual is inseparable from that of commodities in general. It is distinguishable from other commodities only by its ability to purchase and consume commodities itself in an apparently voluntary way. We could describe it as an empty shell or an empty bag of skin that acquires a determinate being only by being filled with the fascinating purchases it consumes.

Perhaps those who have the power of individual imagination in market society, and denigrate the fact and force of determination, have chosen to sell

³¹ E. Ilyenkov, *Leninist Dialectics and the Metaphysics of Positivism* (London: New Park Publications, 1982). See Ch. I, “Marxism against Machism as the Philosophy of Lifeless Reaction.”

themselves to those who wield power, seeking some sense of fulfillment in being possessed and consumed by those judged to have superior purchasing power.

Parliamentary Democracy in Crisis: Thoughts on the Origins of Its Pathogenesis and the Attempt at a Normative Re-Conceptualization of It

CHRISTOS GRIGORIOU

The economic crisis that rages both in Greece and in south Europe has brought forward a considerable crisis of political representation. Democracy and its political personnel seem today to be bitterly, and I might add inauspiciously, depreciated, with the political ascension of militant antidemocratic parties and practices being only the most conspicuous testimony of this crisis.¹ I am not willing, of course, to trace the political, historical or sociological roots of this development, I will just attempt to place it in the context of modern practical philosophy, suggesting that some of the pitfalls into which democracy has fallen can be related to a certain conceptualisation of democracy. I will then try to depict some possible ways out of this paradigm and present some attempts towards a richer appreciation of democracy.

To sketch the plan of this article, I propose, at first, to present the *Economic Theory of Democracy* of Downs. It is a well-articulated and quite fertile example of an economic conceptualization of democracy, which, I think, is to be blamed for many of the pathologies of our political system. Then, I will consider two of the most eminent attempts towards a normative reformulation of the concept of democracy. I will focus initially on the *Theory of Justice* of Rawls and then on *Between Facts and Norms* by Habermas.² For both of them, democracy is not just a procedure, but the right form of government, intimately connected to what morality would also point out as right.

I realize that, at first, the project outlined above runs the risk of taking a manichaeistic form, with Downs playing the role of the evil and Rawls with Habermas that of the good. So, I hasten to observe that the choice to present the work of these three thinkers suggests not only differences but also elective affinities that allow a coherent and a more or less continuous narration to

¹ The “enraged” of the Spanish and Greek squares also questioned directly the legitimacy of the political system, attacking bitterly the symbols of Democracy, while, long before, the high levels of abstention from elections and the augmenting political indifference was a clear warning bell for the crisis we are referring to.

² See J. Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, trans. W. Rehg (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1996). The title of the original is *Faktizität und Geltung*. A brief but comprehensive presentation of this work is found in K. Kavoulakos, “Rule of Law and Democracy in Habermas,” *Axiologika*, 13 (2000), 70-103. Parousis’s work [M. Paroussis, *Deliberative Democracy and Communicative Ethics* (Athens: Indiktos, 2005)] treats a subject relevant to mine and probably on broader terms as far as it concerns the work of Rawls and Habermas. Parousis traces some of the pathologies of representative democracy such as in the transformation of citizens to voters, the autonomization of administration, the sharpening of social inequalities and the formation of the so called two- thirds society, and, last but not least, the professionalization of politicians.

show up; a kind of fertile debate and evolution of ideas. Besides, in the end, I will conclude this article with some critical remarks on Rawls and Habermas, as I do not find their conceptualization of democracy sufficiently satisfactory in the face of the present crisis.

Politics as a Market

From the outset, the title of Downs's work on which I focus (*Economic Theory of Democracy*) speaks volumes about his methodological premises and analytic tools. Downs's purpose is to build a theory of government following the workings of market and thus to portrait homo politicus in the image of homo economicus. As far as the concept of democracy is concerned, what must be stressed from the beginning is that the term is used in a descriptive and not a normative way. The whole democratic structure provides, thus, the selection of government through elections conducted at stated periods, the right of one vote for each citizen and the party competition for the ascension to power, are all taken as facts rather than as values, as the given environment in which political parties and citizens interact.

Here, then, we have the two poles of the theory with which we are interested: citizens on the one hand and parties on the other, which, let it be noted, are also understood as coalitions of individuals. Government, in this context, is nothing more than another party, which happens to be in power. As in the case of markets, what weaves a complex political network are relations of exchange and competition. Citizens exchange their votes for party programs and anticipated profits from them (what Downs calls "utility income"), while government and opposing parties compete for political support and power. We have, in this way, politics transformed into a market, a field dominated by rational individuals seeking to maximize profits. Rationality is here understood strictly in a typical sense, in terms of selecting right means for given ends, in terms of classifying and weighing of alternatives.

This reduction of political relations to economical by the acknowledgment of exclusively individual goals, boasts of transforming politics into a positive, predictable science³ with no "metaphysical," that is normative, blemishes. It builds a theory that does not attempt to prescribe any common good or to describe a collectively binding concept of prosperity. Downs is downright concerning the fact that his theory can tell us nothing about what government should or should not do. Collective goals are achieved and political virtues displayed only as a second level attendant of a kind of political egoism. Since parties want to obtain the vote of rational voters, their behavior must be predictable, and thus their declarations and acts must correspond. Parties are thus forced into honesty; they are obliged to honor their promises.

³ Quite interesting is the fact that there exist empirical studies that refute the basic premises of Downs's theory, the premises that regards the self interested motivation of individuals and parties. For an elaborate refutation of the economic models of citizenship see T. Christiano, *The Rule of the Many* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 131-164.

The Mandevilian hive seems to become seasonable once more and the epigram “private vices, public virtues” to acquire new force.

If typical rationality is the one pillar of Downs’s system, doubtless, the other is the principle of uncertainty. Downsian rationality operates, and thus acquires its special character, in an environment of uncertainty, constitutive for modernity, that regards both voters and political parties. Uncertainty refers to the lack of positive knowledge about the past, present or future and is intimately connected with the complexity of modern societies, the extended division of labor that characterizes them, and the consequent, unavoidable inequalities of income, position and influence. It is this concept that gives politics its special character, in Downs’s theory. Voters cannot always know what government does or is intending to do, and even less how its policies are going to affect their income. They are also uncertain as to how their votes are going to affect the result of the elections or how the others are going to vote. Parties, on the other hand, are unsure as to how their measures are going to affect the income of citizens, how the economic environment is going to react to them or what the opposition will do, etc.

Uncertainty points at voters ready to be guided and, accordingly, at those who are eager to influence them and profit from their uncertainty. Government and opposition hire experts to listen to public opinion and will and propagators to manipulate it, while, on the other hand, groups of interests, more certain as to which governmental action would promote their interests, are eager to show themselves as representatives of this will, and thus promote their special interests.⁴ Because, given the uncertainty of both voters and government, it is rational for the last to promote the interests of those who are more positive as to what they want. The conclusion to which Downs comes is quite impressing: rationality, in conditions of uncertainty, forces governments to consider some voters, those who are certain of their interests and preferences, and thus eager to influence others, as more important than those who are more indecisive or are unable to exert such influence. The ideal of equality of influence, to which the institution of universal vote aspired, is, in fact, grossly subverted.

Closely related to the concept of uncertainty is that of information. Downs’s analysis of the role of information in modern societies deepens his analysis about uncertainty and rationality, and validates his conclusions about real political inequalities. In fact, what constitutes these inequalities unavoidable is the fundamental inequality in the diffusion of information in society. Information is the only cure for uncertainty: the means through which a citizen can diminish uncertainty, make rational choices and influence politics in the direction of his interests. But this information has a cost—even if that is the cost of time needed for its acquisition and elaboration—and, as a result, the amount of information one can acquire is closely related to his place in the division of labor (and so does his capacity to take advantage of this information and cultivate it). A lawyer, for example, does come across, as part of

⁴ In this game of persuasion participate also those that Downs calls “favor buyers,” those that offer money or favorable propaganda to the government in exchange for its favor.

his every day routine, a wide, larger amount of politically relevant information than a farmer, and he does have the capacity to take advantage of it easier. In this context, the one regarding information and the cost of acquiring it, Downs observes that, for some people, abstention from the elections may be the most rational choice –if the cost of voting is higher than the expected benefits.

Towards a Democratic Principle of Equality

In contrast to the above sketched theory, moving in an individualistic direction, Rawls's theory of democracy is a holistic one; it forms part of an overall theory of justice which seeks to establish a standard for a *just* distribution of rights and duties in the context of society (including a just distribution of the benefits and burdens of social life). In this context, the concept of democracy is reformulated in normative terms. Rawls's theory does not aspire to depicting the hidden rationale of a working system, as Downs's theory does, but to setting an ideal applicable in modern societies.

Getting right to the core of Rawls's *Theory*, the two principles of justice he sets forth are the principle of liberty and that of equality. The first principle refers to a set of basic liberties (political ones, liberty of conscience, freedom of speech and assembly, liberty of conscience and freedom of thought, freedom of the person, the right to hold personal property and freedom from arbitrary arrest and seizure) which must be acknowledged by everybody and which are to be extended as far as their mutual compatibility allows. While this first principle holds an indisputable priority over the second –Rawls introduces what he calls lexicographical priority– it is the second principle, and especially the principle Rawls calls the “principle of difference,” that forms his major contribution to the theory of justice and democracy.

Rawls finds his way to the principle of difference after discussing what he calls the “system of natural liberty” and “liberal liberty.” For the partisanship of natural liberty, every disposition of wealth and income is legitimate, and just as far as every legal obstacle in the pursuing of social position has been raised and a typical equality is scrupulously observed. The motto, as it is well known, goes: “careers open to everybody.” The liberal conception of the principle of equality goes a step further. What is, under these terms, demanded is a *fair* equality of chances, where fairness refers to the mitigation, through state and legal intervention, of the effect that class differences have on the prosperity of each individual. The idea is that those who have the same talents and willingness to use them must have the same prospects of success, irrespective of social contingencies. This, in practice, would mean the prevention of the excessive accumulation of property and wealth, and the maintaining of equal opportunities of education for all.

Rawls's intuition, which leads him to what he terms the *democratic* interpretation of the principle of equality, is that natural abilities are, from an ethical point of view, as arbitrary as social assets; natural abilities, besides, Rawls hastens to observe, are not as independent from social status as they may appear. The principle of democratic equality, thus, keeps the requirement of a

fair equality of chances and enhances it with the principle of difference, according to which “social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both to the greatest expected benefits of the least advantaged.”⁵ Thus, this conception of equality aims at blunting social and economic inequalities, without, however, introducing a levelling project. In Rawls’s conception, natural talents are to be considered as a common asset for the benefit of society. It is indeed quite interesting for our purposes that Rawls considers his principle of difference as embodying in concrete terms, in the terms of justice that is, the much neglected principle of fraternity.

What is of major importance is the emphasis Rawls places on the fact that these two principles are realized through political and legal institutions, forming part of a purely procedural justice, the criterion of justice existing within the rules that cement the system of institutions, and not in the actual result and distribution of shares. The redistributive project of Rawls does not aim at the satisfaction of known persons with given desires and needs, nor does it aspire at a targeted redistribution with certain results.

Rawls does not limit himself to the formulation of the principles of justice; he also proceeds with the application of these principles in the institutions of a just society. I will confine myself to a brief reference to the chapter referring to political justice, where the concern for liberty intersects with that for the blunting of economic inequalities. In this context, the principle of liberty transforms itself into the principle of equal participation, which requires that “all citizens are to have an equal right to take part in and to determine the outcome of the constitutional process that establishes the laws with which they are to comply.”⁶ What I want to stress here is that, besides the typical provisions of a constitutional democracy, Rawls places a strong emphasis on the fact that inequalities in private means can, in substance, cancel equal political liberties, allowing the advantaged to steer public conversation, influence law making for their benefit and, thus, adulterate public will. For this reason, and in order to secure the fair value of equal political liberties, Rawls seeks for correctives. He thus favours a wide dispersion of wealth and property, the regular provision of governmental money for public discussions and the funding of parties from the state budget.

Rawls, however, makes it clear that political liberties, as his whole theory of justice, apply to institutions only, and are not meant to acquire any republican correlation, making political participation an ideal worth absorbing the whole energy of active individuals. In a well structured state, as Rawls puts it, only a small fraction of citizens is to devote its whole time to politics. The principle of ‘each person a vote’ is not a value in itself, as, often the interest of the least advantaged –it remains the standard of Rawls– would be best promoted by giving priority to the opinion of certain people. In any case, what

⁵ J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 72.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

seems, for Rawls, to be the major value of political liberties is the securing of the individual liberties.

The way Rawls founds his theory⁷ is involved in a quasi-tension to which we must attend. On the one hand, Rawls chooses to revive a contractual tradition with all its normative connotations, considering individuals not only as a priori free and equal, but also as moral agents; individuals, that is, that have a sense of justice and are ready to honor the fair terms of their agreement. On the other hand, in his “original position,” he incorporates elements from the rational choice theory –the ground on which Downs raised his theory.⁸ He thus describes individuals who are mutually indifferent (more elegantly put, individuals with limited altruism) as called to decide which principles would best satisfy their interests.⁹ In the words of Rawls, “they strive for as high an absolute score as possible. They do not wish a high or a low score for their opponents, nor do they seek to maximize or minimize the difference between their successes and those of others.”¹⁰ Rawls thus attempts the reconciliation of what he calls the rational and reasonable. It is an attempt to introduce normative aspects into a society conceived as unalterably pluralistic; a society that can no longer enforce collective goals on individuals and groups, but must respect their different individual or collective identity and integrity.

The device Rawls uses to effect this reconciliation, to get, in other words, normative conclusions from prudential judgements, is the prescription of limitations and conditions for the process of decision making. This is the role of Rawls’s famous “veil of ignorance,”¹¹ a veil that is meant to exclude any partiality of the individuals in their own favour, in favour of the persons they represent or even in favour of their generation. Not only are people considered as equals from an ethical and political point of view, they are, in a way, stripped of every identifying trait, referring neither to their social status nor to any physical and mental abilities and traits; they are called to decide on the

⁷ I am referring to the contractual founding of the theory and not to the method described as “reflective equilibrium.”

⁸ Rawls goes as far as to say that his theory of justice is part of a theory of rational choice. It is a statement that he later regrets [see J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 53, n. 7], distinguishing strongly between rational, having to do with which is the selection and ordering of individual ends and the right adaptation of means to ends and reasonable, referring to a kind of moral sensibility that allows cooperation in the context of society. Rawls thinks rational and reasonable complementary and distinguishable. See also *Justice as Fairness*, where he argues that in the way he sets up his original position, rationality is subject to the reasonable which holds the absolute priority. See J. Rawls, *Justice as Fairness* (Cambridge Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 82.

⁹ The persons in the original position value their interests in terms of primary goods relating to basic liberties, chances and income (those goods are in a way themselves means for promoting the special life plans of each individual).

¹⁰ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 125.

¹¹ The veil of ignorance is introduced along with some “typical constraints of the concept of right.” Thus the principles that people can choose must have general form, universal application and be publicly acknowledged as the Supreme Court for ordering the conflicting claims of moral persons.

principles of justice without knowing their rank and status in society, but also ignoring their intelligence, physical strength, their specific concepts of good or their specific psychological predisposition.¹² We have, thus, Rawls's intuition about natural inequalities (as arbitrary) transferred into the natural position, and its limitations, in a way, forcing rationality to comply with justice.

The question with which Rawls's invention of the original position reaches its climax is why rational individuals seeking their interests under a veil of ignorance would choose the above mentioned principles of justice, and especially the principle of difference. Rawls's answer is summarized in the standard of maximin. The individuals, says Rawls, would not choose with a utilitarian standard, they would not choose those principles of justice that would maximize the average utility, because, not knowing their place in society, they would risk losing everything. In contrast, it would be more reasonable for them to choose those principles that maximize their share of social primary goods, in case they ended up with the minimum of them, in case they found themselves among the least advantaged in society. It is the standard of maximizing the minimum (maximin), choosing with the assumption that it is one's worst enemy who will place one in society. This standard of distribution, the standard defined by the principle of difference, is also better from an equal distribution of the social original goods, because it would ameliorate the prospects of all.

From Representative to Deliberative Democracy

The way Rawls forms his original position has an awkward result; while the social contract device points to a kind of agreement between contracting parties, and thus someone would be tempted to picture it as an ideal democratic procedure, the description of Rawls's original position and the introduction of the veil of ignorance make each member of that state interchangeable with any other and thus the principles of justice could just as well be deduced by one person:

“Therefore, we can view the agreement in the original position from the standpoint of one person selected at random. If anyone, after due reflection prefers a conception of justice to another, then they all do and a unanimous agreement can be reached.”¹³

Habermas pointed critically at that monological character of Rawls's theory and, instead, promulgated and founded an intersubjective, discursive ethical and political paradigm.¹⁴

¹² In the classical theories, the individuals of the natural state were psychosomatically complete.

¹³ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 120.

¹⁴ For the criticism Habermas addresses the Rawlsian theory, see J. Habermas, “Reconciliation through the Public Use of Reason: Remarks on John Rawls's Political Liberalism,” *The Journal of Philosophy*, 92 (1995), 109-131. A brief presentation of their dispute is found in P. K. Sourlas, “The Ethical Basis of the Democratic Rule of Law: The Theories of John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas,” *Critical Review*, 2 (1994), 39-55.

The difference, however, between Habermas and Rawls is more like a “family dispute,”¹⁵ it is a debate between people who move in the same direction and share the same deeper convictions. The radical difference is, of course, with the Hobbesian and, accordingly, the rational choice theory, which understands society as a conglomerate of independent individuals seeking their personal interests. This kind of action, called instrumental or strategic by Habermas, can only describe a part of human activity which relates to the structures of markets and administrations. Those are the fields that ensure the material reproduction of society and which, indeed, have known an unprecedented progress during modernity. But man is not solely an “economic animal” and society not just a sum of its individuals. In fact, the functional structures of bureaucracy and market (Habermas uses the term system) depend on a larger nexus of relations that ensure social integration and the symbolic reproduction of society. It is what he calls lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*), the ground on which morality, institutions and values grow. According to Habermas, this larger social horizon has also known an unprecedented rationalization during modernity. The end of traditional metaphysical and religious systems, Habermas believes, has freed a potential of rationality hidden in language, and has left us with no alternative but to found social coordination on rational deliberation. Thus, Habermas introduces the famous discursive principle, according to which: “only those norms are valid to which all affected people would agree as participants in rational discourses.”¹⁶

Lifeworld is regulated and organized by communicative action, which, in contrast to strategic action that is oriented towards success, is oriented towards understanding. Not only are we not to take strategic action as comprising our whole activation, it is rather parasitic to communicative action, while the tendency of the system to colonize lifeworld is reproved as responsible for all modern social pathogenesis (lawlessness, corrosion of social bonds, alienation, moral decadency and social instability). In any case, communicative action is the field of autonomy and solidarity, while such an aforementioned system is characterized by heteronomy and self-regard.

The discursive moral principle seems to be modelled after an ideal democratic procedure, which, in the case of morality, is internalized. Democracy finds its actual flourishing when this (discursive) principle is externalized in institutions and gets to refer to law making: “the democratic principle states that only those statutes may claim legitimacy that can meet with the assent (*Zustimmung*) of all citizens in a discursive process of legislation, that in turn has been legally constituted.”¹⁷ In the context of this democratic principle, we see individual and political autonomy founding one another. Political rights legitimize the legislation and enforcement of the law, but also presuppose the concept of a legal subject equipped with actionable subjective liberties. Indi-

¹⁵ The phrase comes from Habermas himself and the above mentioned article. See, *Ibid.*, p. 110.

¹⁶ Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, p. 107.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

viduals, in this way, see themselves not only as addressees of law, but also as authors of it.

Habermas's politics and theory of law is articulated on a scale of three levels, which seems not only to deepen but also to broaden the claims of a normative deliberation. He acknowledges the need for a standard democratic procedure which guarantees the basic liberties (the existence of competing parties, periodic elections with universal suffrage, etc.), he stresses the need to enhance institutional deliberative processes (mostly parliamentary processes) with what he calls "a reasonable quality," that is a high level of discourse, assuring reasonable results, and finally takes a step further, by setting next to the institutional forms of deliberation and formation of public will a broad informal public sphere.

The concept of the public sphere, the locus of public opinion, forms a central preoccupation of Habermas's thought from the very first of his writings.¹⁸ Its basis is civil society, a general public, which creates its social space through an unbiased communication between equals. The public sphere is an unofficial, unorganized and open communicative structure –belonging thus to lifeworld–, which serves as a sensitive antenna that perceives new problems and perspectives. Habermas writes,

"Here, new problem situations can be perceived more sensitively, discourses aimed at achieving self-understanding can be conducted more widely and expressively, collective identities and need interpretations can be articulated with fewer compulsions than is the case in procedurally regulated public spheres."¹⁹

What this emergence of a general public to the political arena seems to be is the responding of democracy to an extended, extremely complex and pluralistic society, composed of people with different identities, world views and needs. Habermas understands this process as a way of reviving the concept of solidarity, which now is reinterpreted as solidarity between strangers "who concede one another the right to remain strangers."

Habermas sketches a "two-track" deliberative politics, where the official level of parliament, ministries and parties must take care to have an open ear to the information coming from civil society. On the other hand, however, civil society must never aspire to exert the role of the lawgiver or the politician, as its role is not to implement laws or make decisions; its sphere of action is limited and, to the agents of civil society, is acknowledged as the right to exert influence, but not to exercise political power. Habermas does not wish to see the unofficial sphere of politics replacing the official sphere under the ideal of a self-organization of society from below. Law making and political decisions must acquire their legitimacy through the institutionalized democratic procedures. A comment here: the character of public opinion to which Habermas aspires is crucial. By this term, Habermas does not wish to denote

¹⁸ See J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge Mass.: Polity, 1989).

¹⁹ Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, p. 308.

just the sum total of private opinions. Public opinion seems to transcend private opinion, as Rousseau's general will transcends particular wills. However, Habermas, as Rawls before him, does not wish to appeal to a content, to a common good, transcending private interests, but to a certain procedure; here, the ideal is described in terms of an ideal communicative action where the most convincing argument prevails. Thus, Habermas refers to a qualitative public opinion that scrutinizes different proposals, information and reasons. That public opinion is, according to Habermas, entitled to claim a legitimate influence upon the political system.

A Critical Synopsis

To sum up, Downs in my article represents an individualistic paradigm of theorization on democracy, which consciously aims at rejecting any normative understanding of democracy and, of course, any appeal to a common good, stressing the complexity of modern societies and making uncertainty the fundamental and crucial characteristic of it. In this context, he depicts a politics of dissimulation, rather, in which it is the analysts and manipulators of public opinion who rule, while government is capable of supporting itself only in so far as it can flatter and bribe a majority of voters. Thus, the Downsian paradigm vindicates, I think, the two major enemies of democracy; passivity on the one hand and demagoguery on the other. As a result, it undermines social coherence and corrupts both the political personnel and citizens. It makes democracy a procedure convenient for the smooth operation of the market economy, but completely inappropriate when it is mostly needed, in times of crisis.

Rawls's and Habermas's work, on the other hand, is here presented as an attempt to reinvigorate a normative understanding of democracy. This, however, is done without losing from sight the peculiar character of modern pluralistic societies and the challenges it poses for democracy. With this environment in view, both writers ground their philosophical schemes on what may be termed "procedural reason," a reason that can only prescribe processes for determining the validity of beliefs and action norms and not particular contents, tangible goals for society. They can, thus, answer the challenges posed by the individualistic paradigms and articulate holistic programs for modern societies, without returning to what seems to them as outdated, old metaphysics of society or the individual.²⁰

Rawls and Habermas, in this article, are posited as accomplishing, in a way, a complementary work, each focusing on one of the two major pillars of every normative conceptualization of democracy: equality and rational deliberation. On the one hand, Rawls's theory is highlighted for its emphasis on equality on both the economic and the political levels. We referred to the link-

²⁰ On the rejection of a foundationalist philosophy by both Rawls and Habermas, see T. Hedrick, *Rawls and Habermas: Reason, Pluralism and the Claims of Political Philosophy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), pp. 6-7.

ing of democracy with a redistributive program that blunts socioeconomic inequalities and also to the relevance of these socioeconomic inequalities with what Rawls calls the fair value of the principle of participation. Habermas's work, on the other hand, brings forward the potential towards deliberation, understanding and consent that binds individuals in society and renews the concept of popular sovereignty, relating it to the workings of the public sphere. With his work, Habermas in a way which has special importance for democracy, accomplishes an important transition from an individualistic paradigm, or if you wish a monological one, to an intersubjective or a deliberative one, weaving a close interrelation between private and political autonomy.

It must here be remarked that the present article does not do justice to Rawls's or Habermas's full work, or even to the totality of their contribution to the theorization concerning democracy. I consciously neglected the so called political turn of Rawls and his *Political Liberalism* (where from his concepts of 'public reason' and 'overlapping consensus' present extreme interest for our subject), as well as the famous exchange of opinions between himself and Habermas. As for Habermas, I do not consider his thoughts concerning the crisis of Europe and his plea for a Constitution of Europe.²¹ A complete appreciation of the practical philosophy of the two thinkers would, of course, have to take these works into consideration, too, but such a task would exceed by far the limits prescribed to this article.

Before closing this article, some critical comments on Rawls and Habermas are, I think, necessary, as both writers leave us, in the end, with a sense of a rather poor conception of citizenship. Citizens, in fact, are left with a small share in the government of their societies. In the case of Rawls, they are treated, once more, merely as voters, and even in the context of Habermas's civil society, they can only influence politics, but not formulate it. They are, in neither case, able to envision, suggest or promote collective aims.²² Downs's *homo economicus* seems to have been replaced by an equally abstract *homo juridicus*, who stands as in awe before the intricate legal system, as *homo economicus* does before the complexity of markets; a man understood as a legal subject and scarcely as a politically active persona, actuated by a true democratic spirit. This would be the *desideratum* of a democratic education, and nothing is becoming more obvious, in our distempered times, than the lack of

²¹ This was the subject of Habermas's presentation in the World Congress of Philosophy held in Greece in 2013. For this preoccupation of Habermas, see *Crisis of the European Union* (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity Press, 2012).

²² For an attempt towards a richer account of a normative appreciation of citizenship, see T. Christiano, *The Rule of the Many*. Christiano, after having refuted the economic theories of democracy, elaborates what he calls the choice of aim model of citizenship which he couples with a conception of deliberation as a necessary prerequisite for such choice. Doppelt's critique of Rawls, from the perspective of a Marxist humanism, is also quite interesting in this context as it imputes Rawls conception of agency of being quite partial. It treats individuals as consumers rather than as democratic subjects able to control the goals set by production or the conditions under which they participate in the labour process. See G. Doppelt, "Rawls's System of Justice: A critique from the Left," *Nous*, 15 (1981), 259-307.

such an education and such a spirit.²³ In fact, the eminent proceduralism of Rawls's and Habermas's theories may help to broaden the dominion of democracy, answering the needs of multiculturalist, pluralistic societies, at the cost, however, of making democracy a lifeless procedure, unable to engage the devotion of citizens.²⁴ I am thinking of whether it would be wise to start thinking of democracy again as a value in itself,²⁵ and not merely as a set of institutions and processes, as a good necessary for human happiness and prosperity in modern societies, and this, of course, without sacrificing the valuable achievements of legal civilization.

²³ For a criticism of proceduralism and the need for a democratic education, see C. Castoriadis, "Democracy as Procedure and Democracy as Regime," *Constellations*, 4 (1997), 1-18.

²⁴ For a discussion on matters of methodology of the social sciences and on the foundation of values, see K. Psychopedis, "Formalism, Historicism and the Bindingness of Political Praxis," in *In memorial of Sakis Karagiorgas*, Honorary Volume (Athens: IPA, 1988), 361-398, and K. Stamatis, "For a Historical Foundation of Values," *Politis*, 21 (1996), 23-26.

²⁵ The attempt to systematize the basic democratic values, with reference to the *First Democracy* made by P. Woodruff in *First Democracy: The Challenge of an Ancient Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), could provide some ideas as to the content of this value. Woodruff defines democracy in relation to seven ideas which he traces in ancient Athens: liberty from tyranny, concord, the principle of legality, natural equality, wisdom of the citizens, deliberation without special knowledge, general education. Of major interest is also what Woodruff calls the idols of democracy; what democracy is not. In Woodruff's view, these idols are of three kinds: voting, the principle of majority, the principle of representation.

PART VII

Art and Crisis, Art in Crisis

Crisis and Tradition in the History of Twentieth-Century Music: The Schoenberg Case

PANOS VLAGOPOULOS

Der Wege zur Philosophie sind unendlich viele. [...] Jede Untersuchung, die bis zu den letzten erfaßbaren Zusammenhängen und Elementen fortschreitet, muß eben damit in philosophisches Gebiet gelangen.¹

At the turn of the twentieth century the environment in Vienna was crucial in defining Modernism in more than one domain: philosophy, psychoanalysis, poetry, painting, architecture, design, and music. Common to all manifestations of Viennese Modernism has been some kind of linguistic turn, involving the thematization of language and the questioning of its limits. However, one should distinguish between First and Second Viennese Modernism.² Hoffmannstahl, Altenberg, Schnitzler et al. represent the former; Kraus, Bahr, Trakl, Wittgenstein, Schoenberg, Webern et al., the latter. Typical of the Second Viennese Modernism was a radical critique of language in philosophy *and* the arts, with solipsism as the arch-danger. Schoenberg's path typically went, first, through a First-Modernism phase.³ Then, for more than a decade (roughly from 1908 to 1921), he lived through a serious personal, spiritual and creative crisis. His philosophy of music after 1923 (after all about Schoenberg's theosophical and Schopenhauerian strains of thought are said),⁴ the one revolving around the central notion of the "musical idea," shows more parallels to the so-called Semantic tradition of Schlick and Frege⁵ than to Wittgenstein, with whom usually he is, rather impressionistically, paired.⁶ De-

¹ M. Schlick, *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*, in *Moritz Schlick Gesamtausgabe*, Abteilung I: Veröffentlichte Schriften, Bd. 1, hrsg. von H.J. Wendel und F.O. Engler (Wien: Springer, 2009), p. 138.

² For more on the First/Second Viennese Modernism distinction, see W. Methlagl, "Crise et critique du langage, Georg Trakl, Ferdinand Ebner, Ludwig Wittgenstein," trans. O. Mannoni, *Littérature*, 95 (1994), 111-123.

³ "En fait," writes Methlagl, referring to Second Modernism's key figures, "leur humus commun était l'opposition à cette 'modernité première autrichienne' [...] même si chacun d'entre eux avait, à sa manière, parcouru cette modernité" (*Ibid.*, p. 114).

⁴ The same combination of Schopenhauerian *with* theosophical ideas was typical of Gustav Landauer and Fritz Mauthner, a major influence in one of First Modernism's most typical author: Hugo von Hoffmannstahl; see J. Le Rider, "Crise du langage et position mystique: le moment de 1901-1903, autour de F. Mauthner," *Germanica*, 43 (2008), 13-27.

⁵ I understand the "Semantic tradition" as situated squarely into Second Viennese Modernism; for the term see J.A. Coffa, *The Semantic Tradition from Kant to Carnap to the Vienna Station* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁶ For instance, in J.K. Wright, *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2007).

spite Schoenberg's lifelong attempts to define this central notion of "musikalischer Gedanke," this much should be, nevertheless, clear: for Schoenberg, the laws of musical thought are but the laws of thought *simpliciter*; thoughts inhabit a Platonic (sc. Swedenborgian) heaven; they are imperishable and independent from the fact that somebody thinks them; they relate to musical works as a whole;⁷ they are objective, like Fregean thoughts (i.e. they are non-real but objective, which makes them comprehensible by all rational beings). At the same time, all things related to historical and/or subjective constraints concern a distinct level, that of the presentation of ideas; this is what Schoenberg called "Stil," the notion paired to "Gedanke." The goal of understanding –and making one understand– music connected Schoenberg to his audience, his pupils, and the great composers of the past, fending off the (typically for Second Viennese Modernism) perceived threat of solipsism.

Schoenberg's Conception of the History of Music

In 1930, Schoenberg gave a lecture in Prague under the title "Neue Musik, veraltete Musik, Stil und Gedanke."⁸ One can also find the distinction between "Stil" and "Gedanke"⁹ in 1950, in the title of his famous collection *Style and Idea*.¹⁰ What he meant by "style" is more straightforward than "idea": The concrete mode of presentation (or "Darstellung," as he calls it elsewhere)¹¹ emerges in a natural, non-intentional way; it is something like a composer's "fingerprint," conditioned by her age, her spatio-temporal limitations or, as Schoenberg put it, her "Lebensform";¹² hence a typical temporal paradox, in Schoenberg's own words: "At least, [Bach's music] was not out-

⁷ Cf. A. Schönberg, *Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen: Ausgewählte Schriften*, hrsg. von A.M. Morazzoni (Mainz: Schott, 2007), p. 208: "I [...] consider the totality of a piece as the *idea*: the idea which its creator wants to present" (original emphasis). This, of course, creates serious mereological problems, which I cannot discuss here. (I will keep throughout the German form of his name [Schönberg] only when referring to bibliography in German.)

⁸ A. Schönberg, "Neue Musik, veraltete Musik, Stil und Gedanke," in *Stil und Gedanke*, hrsg. I. Vojtech (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1992), 40-53 (the 1930 German text) and *idem, Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen*, pp. 201-212 (the 1945 English text). The collection was first published in English, one year before his death, then in 1975 with new material. The German edition followed a year later (*Stil und Gedanke*, 1976/1992).

⁹ "Gedanke" can be translated in English as both "thought" or "idea."

¹⁰ The earliest use of the distinction, if I am right, is in a manuscript note dated 5 September 1923: "Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen," in *Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen*, p. 12.

¹¹ See, e.g., his 1925 text "Zur Darstellung des musikalischen Gedankens," in A. Schönberg, *Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen*, p. 103.

¹² The temptation is here too to think of Wittgenstein and his "Lebensformen": it is only that the term gained in popularity and was identified with Wittgenstein after the publication of the *Philosophical Investigations*, in 1953. Before that, the term has a long history in German philosophical writing: the Grimms mention the word in 1834, and famous users include Nietzsche, Spengler, Eisler (the philosopher, father of the composer), and especially theorists in the tradition of the 'verstehende Psychologie' originating in the work of Dilthey, like Eduard Spranger, author of the best-selling *Lebensformen* (1914).

moded forever, as history shows; today, their New Music [=the *musique galante*] is outmoded while Bach's has become eternal."¹³

Now, where did this clear distinction between style and idea come from? Though it is difficult to say, this bears certain similarities to the Fregean distinction between meaning (*Sinn*) and reference (*Bedeutung*), whereby the same reference could have various meanings or modes of presentation; furthermore, a thought (*Gedanke*) might remain the same against many different concrete utterances or sentences. Of course, in music, there can be no distinction between (musical) language and external reality—a route to which is defined by reference/*Bedeutung*. Instead, a musical *thought* should be taken as the ideal musical content, of which that which is actually heard, i.e. the specific *mode of presentation* (for Schoenberg: the style), is but its earthly mirroring, as it were.

The “*Gedanke*”

The most important term in Schoenberg's talk about music is by far the “*Gedanke*.” As Neff and Carpenter¹⁴ showed, although Schoenberg was preoccupied with this notion as far back as 1906, it was only in 1923, parallel to the invention of the twelve-tone system, that he began expressing himself in writing on it. In a manuscript note from 1931, one can read: “Musical thought underlies the *laws and conditions valid for all other of our thought*; in addition it has to take into account the conditions resulting from the [musical] material.”¹⁵

Let me linger for a while on Schoenberg's treatment of the laws of musical thought *qua* laws of thought *simpliciter*. This is a bold step, considering the dominant tradition in the German-speaking world, namely Kant's dissociation of music from all but sensory aspects due to its lack of words, and, ironically, for this very reason, Schopenhauer's exceptional positioning of music as—what could be described as—the seat of *intentional* content (*locus classicus*: “[music is] the inner nature of the will itself.”¹⁶ Schoenberg's move consisted, first, in bringing music onto a par with thought in a general sense; this was a price he was willing to pay so that he could treat music—or this, I think, was the hope—as on a par with laws governing *conceptual* content (in Schoenberg's original parlance these laws were “*Faßlichkeit*” and “*Zusammenhang*”). Time and again, Schoenberg's prose gives the impression that the

¹³ Schönberg, *Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen*, p. 205.

¹⁴ A. Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique and Art of Its Presentation*, ed., trans. and commentary S. Neff and P. Carpenter (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

¹⁵ “Das musikalische Denken unterliegt den *Gesetzen und Bedingungen unseres sonstigen Denkens* und hat hiebei noch die aus dem Material ergebenden Bedingungen zu berücksichtigen” (A. Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique and Art of Its Presentation*, p. 303; Schoenberg's emphasis, my translation).

¹⁶ Citation in the “Introduction” to Y.H. Gunther (ed.), *Essays on Nonconceptual Content* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2003), p. 2.

conception of musical language and thought which he developed over the years also went as close to *propositional* content as possible. In a 1948 text under the title “Connections of Musical Ideas,”¹⁷ he refers to musical “connectives” that allow for the “fluency” of musical ideas. He thus distinguishes musical ideas from connective musical parts, similarly to a theory of Grammar.¹⁸ (Already, medieval term-logicians had distinguished categorematic from syncategorematic words, roughly the “logical constants” of modern logic). Musical discourse, Schoenberg seems to be saying, is held together by something like an *inferential* structure (Schoenberg’s term is “fluency”) – which brings it even closer to language.¹⁹

Back to the “Stil/Gedanke” distinction: remember that, as far as sentences, written or spoken, are concerned, the reason that Frege distinguished *sense* or *thought* (Sinn) from *meaning* (Bedeutung) was to account for the possibility of co-referential expressions having the same content, i.e. expressing the same thought; in music, where reference is unthinkable (or highly improbable), Schoenberg’s mode of presentation is not just an aspect of the one (the right) side of the thought vs. reference distinction, but a new distinction altogether: mode of presentation (=“Stil”) vs. thought (=“Gedanke”).

Objectivity of the (Musical) Idea

One cannot stress enough the importance invested by Frege and Schoenberg in bulwarking the objective quality of (musical) thought against psychologism (Frege), or the subjectivity of aesthetic judgments (Schoenberg). Let me start with Frege. What exactly did he find so annoying in psychologism? The fact that psychologism –in the form of post-Diltheyan contemporary philosophical psychology– identified the Subjective with the Non-Real, and the Real with the Objective.²⁰ Thus, the mere allocation of thought to the Subjective *ipso facto* undermined that thought’s claim to validity. Frege’s answer was to distinguish between, on the one side, subjective-and-private representations (*Vorstellungen*), of which the material was provided by the senses; on the oth-

¹⁷ “Musical ideas are such combinations of tones, rhythms, and harmonies, which require a treatment like the main theses of a philosophical or [space left for another word] subject. It poses a question, sets up a problem, which in the course of the piece has to be answered, resolved, carried through. It has to be carried through many contradictory situations, it has to be developed by drawing consequences from what it postulates, it has to be checked in many cases and all this might lead to a conclusion, a *pronunciamento*.” *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. L. Stein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 287-288.

¹⁸ Cf.: “... one would, accordingly, best proceed along the line of *grammatical* principles” (*Ibid.*, p. 287).

¹⁹ Undated note, see J. Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents for a Life* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 327-328. Note the dominance of the *asyndeton* in this excerpt –its rhetorical subtext might be: exemplification of language’s closeness to music!

²⁰ W. Carl, *Frege’s Theory of Sense and Reference*, *Modern European Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 78.

er, thoughts (*Gedanken*), which belonged to what Frege called “the third realm” of all things, being at the same time objective but not real in the common sense.²¹ “Objective” is explained by Frege as “something that is exactly the same for all rational beings, for all who are capable of grasping it [*fassen*].”²² Thoughts are independent from the act of thinking. Thoughts that not have been thought yet could be thought in the future. Their objectivity is the condition of the possibility of inter-subjectivity. Thoughts are not private. Quite on the contrary, their being objective makes them accessible to all rational beings.

The analogy with Schoenberg is striking: he felt the same pressing need to secure the objectivity of musical thought against any version of subjectivism. The two subaltern notions to the musical idea, i.e. coherence (“*Zusammenhang*”) and comprehensibility (“*Faßlichkeit*”) are not related to some subjective ability of the listener; they acquire their legitimization from the objectivity of the musical idea. The accessibility of objective musical ideas regards both the listener and the composer (i.e., virtually every rational being). The objectivity, and, hence, the accessibility of musical ideas wards off the danger of solipsism, and allows for musical communication in all directions, namely between Schoenberg and his pupils, between Schoenberg and his (ideal) public, and, last but not least, between Schoenberg and his ideal interlocutors in music history, i.e. great composers like Bach or Beethoven.

More on Schoenberg's Conception of the History of Music

The following could be a summary reconstruction of Schoenberg's conception of the history of music, based on his 1930 lecture: *hoi polloi* confuse causes with effects; the *cri de guerre* “Neue Musik” is based on the pseudo-scientific belief of the “pseudo-Historiker”²³ and their credulous bystanders, that this battle-cry is enough to usher in a new period in the history of music; to take an important historical example, the Classic period was preceded by what was then the New Music (i.e. *musique galante*); the followers of the fashionable New Music then considered J.S. Bach's music as outmoded (*veraltet*); in this, they failed to understand the real causes of musical change, the ones leading to the “evolving variation” (Schoenberg's key-notion in his description of the Classical style); similarly, the “pseudo-Historiker” of today fail to understand the real causes that make twelve-tone music unavoidable,

²¹ G. Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, trans. J.L. Austin (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1953), § 26. As G. Sundholm points out, “contrary to a common misapprehension,” Frege was not the first to use the ‘third realm’ catchphrase. G. Sundholm, “A Century of Judgment and Inference, 1837- 1936: Some Strands in the Development of Logic,” in L. Haaparanta (ed.), *The Development of Logic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 263-317, p. 302 [fn. 26]. Sundholm also points out the indebtedness of Frege's “Gedanke” to Bolzano's “Satz an sich.” See *Ibid.*, p. 304, n. 23.

²² G. Frege, *Posthumous Writings*, trans. P. Long *et al.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 7.

²³ The “pseudo-Historiker” are the villains in the Schoenbergian conception of the history of music. They play a role similar to that of the “Journalisten” in Kraus's world.

but by no means subversive or disruptive, in relationship to older music; what they finally fail to understand is that any important music *is* New Music, whereby “New” refers mainly to Ideas, as opposed to Style.

In other words, what the “pseudo-Historiker” fail to understand is the deeper continuity in music-historical time beyond apparent discontinuities, whereby the gluing element is provided by the atemporal quality of musical ideas (the most often cited phrase from this Schoenberg text reads: “*An idea can never perish*” (Schoenberg’s emphasis).²⁴ The objective nature of the musical ideas guarantees their accessibility, as well as their immunity from the flux of historical time. Schoenbergian musical ideas “never perish” (*vergehen*) and they seem to belong to the same “third realm” as Fregean thoughts do. What does change is the outer form, the historical-time bounded *style*.

Seamless Transitions

In a 1950 interview,²⁵ Schoenberg says, elaborating on the “dissonance problem” (English in the original):

“[B]eauty is only a secondary evaluation. I think the main point is to understand what tones mean. Accordingly I would say that comprehensibility, the relation of tones with one another, is the deciding point. And may be that one calls this –or one is entitled to call this– beauty, if the relationship becomes very clear.”

The question he was answering regarded his opinion on changing tastes regarding musical intervals. After the part of his answer cited above, he went on to present a nutshell history of the gradual acceptance of intervals as consonances; in the beginning, “not even thirds were considered as consonances.” Exactly before the cited part, he makes the stunning declaration that “[he is] not very good in history of music”; then the even more stunning one: “I make up history, generally, myself, whether true or not. I try to find out how it *could* have been.” In other words, in what could literally count as a parodist reversal of a typical academic approach, Schoenberg-the-composer commences from his actual understanding and uses it as a foil in tracing back music history. In this, accessibility to the work of the great masters is guaranteed by the musical-idea interface, and this should provide him with all the confidence he needs. Instead of modifying his ideas to fit the ways of the past (this would

²⁴ Cf. the last sentence in his text “Gesinnung oder Erkenntnis?,” in A. Schönberg, *Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen*, p. 133: “Der Gedanke hat keine Zeit, darum kann er ruhig warten; aber die Sprache muß sich beeilen!” A repercussion of this conception for the history of music based on the centrality of the Musical Idea can be found in Webern’s lectures *Der Weg zur neuen Musik* (1960); also in both of his Greek pupils, as indicated in Nikos Skalkottas’s unpublished manuscript text “Collection of Ideas” [Perisylloge ideon]; and in Christos Perpessas’s notion of “res simplex” (a notion equivalent to the Musical Idea). See P. Vlagopoulos, “Harilaos Perpessas and the Quest for the *Res Simplex*: Notes on Arnold Schoenberg’s Doubting Disciple,” *Μουσικός Λόγος Online* (2013) (<http://m-logos.gr/issues/i0000/a0006-vlagopoulos>).

²⁵ See Schönberg, *Stile herrschen, Gedanken siegen*.

count as relativism), he would rather modify the past to fit his grasping of musical ideas (in which the ideas of the great composers of the past are comprised). Because musical thought is, for him, time-transcendent, the objection of anachronism cannot be even raised.

By the way, does this make him an anti-realist about the past?²⁶ I do not think so. Beyond the fact that, in this interview's citations, a glimpse of Schoenberg-the-ironist might be visible –the target of his irony being the rather naive American journalist who keeps addressing him as “Mr. Schoenberg”–, we should see his “history make-up” remarks as a kind of ironical comment on historical discourse, his perennial target being the “pseudo-Historiker” (now in the guise of this specific journalist!). The irony would relate, if I am right, to the observed asymmetry between their claim of scientific standard and their final poor understanding of what really matters in music history, i.e. the real causes of music-historical change, knowledge of which is available only to those who *understand* the music of the past, i.e. those who *grasp* the ideas in works of music.

Again, Schoenberg's anti-psychologism; his equating of musical thought with thought *simpliciter*; his project of securing inter-subjective access to musical content across the contingencies of time and place; his placing of the musical idea in a kind of Platonic/Fregean Third Realm; all situate Schoenberg –even *à son insu*– in the long Semantic Tradition initiated by Bernhard Bolzano and soon thereafter brought to fruition by Gottlob Frege.

Crisis?

Let me add a concluding remark to Schoenberg's conception of history with the help of the semantic models Reinhart Koselleck suggested were operating in the use of the word “crisis,”²⁷ as well as a very useful comparison of Schoenberg's to Marx' project. Koselleck's three models are: A. World history as a continuous crisis or history as a “Weltgericht,” B. Crisis as the bridge (or “Schwelle”) to every new era, and C. Crisis as a clearly futuristic notion, originating in theological-eschatological last crisis (=Last Judgment) discourse. Now, the problem with Marx, continues Koselleck, is that he has been operating with two crisis models, without ever being clear about the distinction: when he is explaining the way history moves through successive capitalist crises, then he was operating with model-two; when he is anticipating history's unavoidable path leading to the victory of the proletariat and the coming of the classless society, he was operating with model-three. Something similar to that could be said about Schoenberg: on the one hand, his *Stil-Gedanke* distinction, the one favoring a conception of history moving through seamless transitions, rather than upheavals, point towards a model-one conception of

²⁶ In other words, is it the case that he believed that past could change as time passes, because of the evidence about the past can change, as time passes, which is anyway, according to the anti-realist, the only defining criterion (i.e. the evidence) about what the past is?

²⁷ R. Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichten* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2006).

music history, in such a way that, ultimately, the crisis aspect becomes secondary to the continuity aspect. On the other hand, the radical quality of his atonal *and* twelve-tone music, as well as its sheer difference to whatever preceded it, brings out the disrupting aspect that is suggested in the “tonality (final) crisis” catchphrase, and points towards a model-three conception. Perhaps the tension between these conflicting models could be eased –and eventually vanish– through meticulous listening, as well as participation of the audience:²⁸ now this, i.e. the training of the audience to the difficulties in grasping new music (not only the one by Schoenberg), was obviously Schoenberg’s motive for the *Verein für Privataufführungen* project; this was also the anticipated result in everybody involved in the successful experiment of the ten open rehearsals of the *Kammersinfonie*, op. 9: at the end, people in the audience were excited because they felt they had understood the work in every detail.²⁹ Nevertheless, it is worth remarking that Schoenberg himself, unlike Adorno, did not use the word “crisis.” Instead, he used to speak about “the emancipation of dissonance,” while his overall discourse was one emphasizing continuity and tradition, rather than disruption and novelty. One can also get a glimpse of this attitude in the respectful and, as it were, collegial tone in which Schoenberg’s imaginary dialogue with the great luminaries of music history was bathing: among them, the Classics, Bach, Brahms, Josquin (all named in the 1930 text). His understanding of innovations as turning out to be actually seamless transitions *upon analysis* (an analysis putting the musical-idea notion in its center) is, I think, what earned him the famous characterization by Willi Reich of a “conservative revolutionary.”

²⁸ The same tension could be also responsible for Schoenberg’s displacement toward neoclassicism in the years to follow his 1930 lecture.

²⁹ For details, see M. Henke, *Arnold Schönberg* (München: dtv, 2001), pp. 88-106.

Kazimir Malevich (1879-1935) in and under Crisis: The Return from the ‘Non-Objective World’ to the Figure during the Period between the World Wars

ILIANA ZARRA

The Suprematist Malevich and the “Leap to the Vacuum”

Kazimir Malevich, when launching the movement of Suprematism in 1915 (Fig. 1), was elevated as one of the dominant figures of geometrical abstraction of the first half of the twentieth century. It is a case of an anti-mimetic art, without common-place objects and earthly images, having as basic motifs geometric structures, painted in solid colour and suspended in a boundless non-structured illusion of space. As Suprematism was not merely an act of ‘pure painting,’ but the absolute expression of a new world,¹ his creator promised the possibility of a total transformation of the perception of the world through this new art, as expressed also through the manifestos of the era.

In 1918, Malevich closes the circle of the production of suprematist works with *White on White* (Fig. 2) and, until 1926, he has been elevated to being one of the leading figures of left-wing Russian art. It is an era when he abandons painting, and is dedicated to the teaching and writing of theoretical and philosophical works. From 1923 to 1926, he is the designated director of the Leningrad Institute of Artistic Culture (INKhUk), and, immediately afterwards in 1927, he travels to the West, in order to bring the public of the Europe in contact, not only with Russian non-objective painting, but with his theoretical thinking as well.

The Return to Representational Painting

Hence, up to this point, it becomes apparent that, in the late phase of his life and creation, he did not cease to be an ardent proponent of the philosophical and visual doctrine that he himself had introduced.² Still, utterly suddenly, safer upon his return from abroad, and after several years of abstention, Malevich also returns to painting. However, he does not return to his non-objective art, but to the topics which he had developed prior to reaching the ab-

¹ K. Malevich, “‘Suprematism’ Positions from the Catalogue of the Exhibition Tenth State Exhibition. Non-Objective Art and Suprematism (Moscow 1919)” (trans. from French M. Lambraki-Plaka), in A. Kafetsi (ed.), *Ρωσική Πρωτοπορία 1910-1930: Η Συλλογή Κ. Κωστάκη/Russian Avant-Garde 1910-1930: The G. Kostakis Collection*, Vol. II: *Θεωρία-Κριτική/Theory and Criticism* (Athens: National Gallery and Alexandros Soutsos Museum–European Culture Centre of Delphi, 1995), p. 151.

² See more in I. Zarra, *Episodes of Artistic Regression in the 20th Century: An Interpretative Attempt* (Thessaloniki: Epikentro, 2011), pp. 193-273, where someone can also find the older literature.

stract Suprematism, and along with these he reinstates the figure. In particular, these are works superficially similar to the geometrical figures of the peasant in the rural landscapes of the pre-revolutionary period, for the creation of which he had borrowed the expressive modes from the traditional art of icon painting (Fig. 3) and from cubism. In fact, the works of the 'second' rural line, painted between 1928 and 1932, bear false datings (1909, 1910, 1913, and 1915), which date them back to his pre-Suprematist phase.

According to scholars, the abandonment of abstract art and the return to representational painting by Malevich constitute one of the least studied problems in the history of the avant-garde.³ Indeed, what is the reason why this ambitious creator abandons abstraction and yields to a previous imagery and art style? If, as it was made apparent, Malevich endeavoured to communicate his new visual system in which he identified art and life, would he really wish to remain in history through the works which brought him back, prior to the 'leap to the vacuum'?

Nevertheless, some of the current figures do not, actually, bear any relation with those of the 1910's. In these works, humanoids, isolated or in groups, whole-body or torsos, able-bodied or without members, are shown, for the most part, without features on the face (Fig. 4-5). With regards to the structure of the composition, there are dominant horizontal and vertical axes, resulting in up-right and rigid figures, absolutely vertical to the surface of the painting, erect, usually front-facing, precisely vis-à-vis the viewer. Lastly, another significant feature of the pre-War period is that the figures, now, are not in interaction with the strictly 'regulated' environment, which is often defined by successive colour zones or diagonal geometrically organized fields. They are not occupied with any activity; they do not bear any complementary object (Fig. 6). They merely stand frozen still and their oval faces have dismissed any human feature, with the consequence that no thought is exposed, no expression depicted, no mental state manifested. It is a totality of works that is problematic, which causes crisis in the very scholarly thought of art history, and usually, unfortunately, constitutes the object of tangential reference by those scholars. In which case, either the adversity of the access to the meaning of these compositions is recognised⁴ or, when they are interpretatively approached, the relevant appraisals of the experts are contradictory. Specifically, at times, the late physiognomies are described as 'visionary creatures

³ J. Milner, *Kazimir Malevich and the Art of Geometry* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 198; N. Antaskina, "The Destinies of Avant-Garde Art under Totalitarian Rule: Unofficial Art of the 1920-1940s in the Kostakis Collection," in A. Kafetsi (ed.), *Ρωσική Πρωτοπορία 1910-1930: Η Συλλογή Κ. Κωστάκη/Russian Avant-Garde 1910-1930: The G. Kostakis Collection*, *ibid.*, p. 581; H. Foster, R. Krauss, Y.-A. Bois and B.H.D. Buchloh, *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004), pp. 133-134.

⁴ J. Golding, "Malevich and the Ascent into Ether," in *Paths to the Absolute* (Princeton: Thames and Hudson, 2000), 47-80, p. 80. John Milner observes that is only recently attracted the attention it deserves (Milner, *op. cit.*, p. 198).

of another kind,⁵ and the canvasses at issue are appreciated as possessing an incisive and magnificent vigour and, at other times, in contrast, a great part of the specific production is described as 'tentative' and 'awkward.'⁶

In order to attempt a new interpretation, we have to take into account, firstly, the personality of the creator. As arises from his overall life and is pointed out by the international literature,⁷ a permanent and steady interest thereof was to stay in history in a flattering way, not hesitating, for this reason, to bias the mode of the reception of his work for the coming generations with the appropriate interventions. Secondly, in order to avoid a dry form-analytical interpretation, which, as was shown, has been contradictory, we have to integrate these works within their political context.

From the beginning of the 1920's, with the constitution of a new artistic group, bearing the name Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (AKhRR) he will play a catalytic part for the re-emergence of representative realism. As a matter of fact, from the second half of the decade, this will be elevated to the dominant artistic constellation, having direct state support on its side. Its significance lies in that it set the tone, to a significant degree, for what eventually constituted the official doctrine, Socialist Realism.⁸ In its brief declaration from the summer of 1922, the group clarified its intention to represent '... the life of the Red Army, the workers, the peasants, the revolutionaries, and the heroes of labour...'⁹ thus rendering the true image of the events and not abstract inventions which degrade the Revolution, before the international Proletariat. In 1924, a short while after Lenin's death, political repression begins to be manifested in all facets of cultural activity, reaching the point at which, in the second part of the same decade, the avant-garde is interpreted as the principal enemy of Soviet totalitarianism. Ever since, the actions for the marginalization of avant-garde elements, such as the humiliations, the arrests and the exiles of the undesired creators, shaped an atmosphere in the art world which was poisoned by permanent controversies, scandals and denouncements.¹⁰

For Malevich, in particular, during this period, the situation is becoming increasingly difficult, as he loses all of the public positions that he held. Gradually, he becomes subjected to a regime of fear and distress, which dominated the emotional atmosphere of art circles. While it is characteristic that the reception of his individual exhibition, which took place in Moscow at the

⁵ Milner, *Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁶ C. Douglas, "The Return to the Painting," in *Malevich: Artist and Theoretician* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), pp. 22, 24.

⁷ See more in C. Douglas, "Malevich and De Chirico," in C. Douglas and C. Lodder (eds.), *Rethinking Malevich: Proceedings of a Conference in Celebration of 125th Anniversary of Kazimir Malevich's Birth* (London: The Pindar Press, 2007), 254-293, pp. 257, 265, 287-289, 292-293.

⁸ P. Wood, "Realism in the 1930s," in B. Fer, D. Batchelor and P. Wood, *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism: Art between the Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 272-275.

⁹ Quoted in Wood, *Ibid.*, p. 275.

¹⁰ Antaskina, *op. cit.*, p. 580.

end of 1929 and presented his late rural series along with the early one, was nothing but positive, the critic of the exhibition will identify his art, as well as that of other left-wing avant-gardes, with the art of the pre-revolutionary bourgeoisie. A terribly ironic fact, if one recalls to mind that equally Malevich, in the first conception of his thematic, as also V. Kandinsky, in his own compositions, evaluating the art of icon painting much higher than academic painting, projected it as the symbol of the spiritual superiority of the Russian province, which precisely resisted the materialistic world view of bourgeois rationalism. Through this path, the two pioneers of abstraction also justified their orientation towards non-objective art, as the latter was unbound by terrestrial objects and, hence, capable of healing the ill soul of the materialism of the bourgeoisie.¹¹ The continuation of the story for Malevich is known. Immediately following his individual exhibition, the Director of the Tretyakov Gallery, Fedor Kumpan, was sentenced to imprisonment for a long term, precisely on the grounds that he had exhibited these works,¹² while Malevich is arrested and is detained in October and November of 1930 under the suspicion that he is a German spy. With regard to the experience of his imprisonment, what the artist confided to his colleague Pavel Filonov is enlightening: "... AKhRR wanted to completely destroy me. They said 'Do away with Malevich and every kind of Formalism will die'."¹³

The sense of threat, therefore, which the painter is now experiencing concerns, not only his intellectual entity, but his physical integrity as well. It was then that his friends and comrades burnt many of his essays and manuscripts, out of fear that they may be used against him.¹⁴ Thus, Malevich's 'disengagement' from abstract art was an issue that was exigent and crucial; in reality, it was an act of vital necessity. As characteristically described by Natalia Antaskina, 'A record of past membership in one or more of the avant-garde grouping was dangerous, so to belonging to any political party except the Bolsheviks.'¹⁵ Ever since, and from 1933 up to and including his death, Malevich paints portraits of the members of his family and friendly persons, adopting a representative style, which alludes to the art of the North-European renaissance and dates them accurately (Fig. 7-8).

This is the political framework in which the change in the artistic as well as the theoretical orientation of Malevich is included. It is perhaps time to dive deeper into some of the works of his forged rural series. And, in order to do that, it is necessary to bend over the very works themselves. In the back part of the painting *Complicated Premonition (Torso in a Yellow Shirt)* (1913, Fig. 5), the painter has noted the following: 'The elements of this composition are the sensation of emptiness, solitude, and exilence.'¹⁶ As a matter of fact,

¹¹ V. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (New York: Dover, 1977 [1914]), p. 9.

¹² Golding, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

¹³ Cited in Douglas, "The Return to the Painting," p. 24.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁵ Antaskina, *op. cit.*, pp. 580- 581.

¹⁶ Quoted in Douglas, "Malevich and De Chirico," p. 287.

the work was characterized as a self-portrait.¹⁷ Herein is included a motif that is recurring also in other paintings and drawings of the same period. The red house with a black roof, without a door and window, is correlated to the experience of his incarceration in prison and the fixation of the painter on that experience. Whereas, in one of the numerous drawings depicting the same theme, Malevich wrote: 'Man in prison. The feeling of a man in prison.'¹⁸

To the same series belongs the *Peasant Woman*, painted at the beginning of 1930 (Fig. 9), also dated as of 1913. The peasant stands still with the hands empty at the sides and, as she turns her head to the right, there is revealed, instead of a face, a black shape alluding to a coffin. The image has been appraised as 'a composition of metaphysical, almost mystical significance.'¹⁹ For Malevich, the renunciation of the art of abstract Suprematism was equivalent to a sacrifice of the ego. Following the revolution, however, the logic of the self-surpassing was thwarted through the repression of the very same creative individuality. For this reason, I regard that the composition is, in reality, an almost macabre painting. As a matter of fact, such works, which directly refer to the mission of the Soviet state to repress the liberating force of individualized creativity,²⁰ reflect Malevich's disillusionment due to the failure of the Revolution to implement his Suprematist dreams.

This is confirmed by the fact that, only four days after Lenin's death, on January 21, 1924, he writes in the draft of his 'Book on Non-Objectivity.' These are experimental proclamations reflecting his faith that the political transformation of Russia and the Suprematist perfection of art were aspects of the same superior transformation of the human species, which, alas, was not fulfilled. On the contrary, despite the dramatically revolutionary formulations in the area of art, the latter, returning to the old representational conventions, became again an object of manipulation by the forces of power.²¹ The latter pursued the preservation of their esteem by instilling respect for themselves into the masses, in order to perpetuate the social structures which guaranteed their longevity.

In any case, the new form-types alluding to the human figure, in all their versions, whether they are the humanoids of Malevich or the Bauhaus dolls of the 1920's, appear, after a decade of violence and atrocity, as an aftermath of the purges of the Great War. In the history of the transformation of the human form, this innovative creation, drained from psychological autonomy, was characterized as post-humanistic and was elevated to a 'metaphor, a symbol

¹⁷ See in J.-C. Marcadé, J.-H. Martin, and E. Petrova (eds.), *Kazimir Malevich*, exh. cat. (Barcelona: Fundació Caixa Catalunya, 2006), p. 239.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

¹⁹ D. Sarabianov, "Malevich at the time of the 'Great Break,'" in *Malevich: Artist and Theoretician*, p. 145; J.-C. Marcadé, J.-H. Martin, and E. Petrova, *op. cit.*, pp. 239, 250, where the title is rendered as *Peasant Woman with a Black Face* (c. 1930).

²⁰ A. Spira, *The Avant-Garde Icon: Russian Avant-Garde and the Icon Painting Tradition* (Hampshire: Lund Humphries, 2008), p. 164.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 172.

of human form....'²² In fact, the model of the specific subclass of the faceless forms refers to a specific type of children's Ukrainian doll, which did not have features and hands and which Malevich knew well.²³ On the one hand, according to Haine Maria Rilke, the doll, with her inexpressive look, offers a comforting presence, but, at the same time, it imposes, in a cruel way, an unexpected silence. For this reason, the doll is the first figure which imposes on the human creature the experience of estrangement.²⁴

On the other hand, the creation of the human body on the model of the form of this doll, due to its childish simplicity, combined a relieving and apparently living charm with a nerveless personality, insofar as the human element was absent.²⁵ By standing between naturalness and artificiality, it was converted into a vessel of simultaneously emotional identification and estrangement, a fact which finally justifies the impregnable and ambiguous character of the said form-type, which rendered their aesthetic appraisal so difficult.

The *Peasant* (Fig. 6), thus, as he stands without individual features, is opposed to the physical integrity of the healthy body of the national propaganda and, despite that, it attains the anonymous uniformity, so necessary for the constitution of the collective subject –the healthy hero, the farmer– is made, alas, the metaphor of the entire rural world, which, during the Soviet phase, is converted into a group of people who do not see, do not listen, do not speak.

By embedding these creations in the intellectual climate of the Stalinist period, I would claim that the forms of Malevich find themselves very close to a history of the author of the absurd and an ardent supporter of the painter Daniil Kharms, published precisely in the same period (1927). In the said short story, the literary author, speaking on censorship, the contempt and the frustration of the avant-gardes' ideals, essentially insinuates the distortion and the disappearance of people and things and, eventually, of the avant-garde itself. More analytically, this story is divided into five chapters and has as a protagonist 'in a manner of speaking' a red-haired man who is characterized by this circumlocution, as he was not able to talk because he did not have a mouth, nose, arms, legs, stomach, back, or any insides. He was a figure 'in a manner of speaking,' as, in reality, he has nothing. For this reason, in the fifth chapter, the author concluded: 'So we'd better not talk about him any more.'²⁶ By taking into account the increasingly intensifying censorship in the year of the publication of the story, this prompt could have been perceived as a covered instruction. Consequently, the expression could mean that it is safer that

²² Cited in J. Koss, "Bauhaus Theater of Human Dolls," *Art Bulletin*, 85 (2003), 724-745, p. 731.

²³ *Kasimir Malevich*, exh. cat., *op. cit.*, p. 268.

²⁴ Koss, *op. cit.*, p. 734.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 724.

²⁶ J.E. Bowlt, "1907-1917-1927-1937: What Happened to the Russian Avant-Garde?," in M. Papanikolaou (ed.), *Πίσω από το Μαύρο Τετράγωνο: Κείμενα και Λόγου/Behind the Black Square: Texts and Speeches* (Thessaloniki: State Museum of Modern Art, 2000), 185-195, p. 188.

no one should talk about the very avant-garde any more. A sad corroboration of the foregoing explication constitutes the end of Kharms, who is arrested and eventually executed, a consequence of the brutality of Stalinist censorship.²⁷

Conclusion

Taking the above into consideration, I claim that Malevich's mutilated humanoids were in a head-on collision with the principles of Socialist Realism, not only because they insinuated the image of the vigorous young and bright hero he promoted, but also, primarily, as, due to their special qualitative properties, on the one hand they encouraged the emotional response and, simultaneously, the absence of emotion.²⁸ By extension, the humanoids of Malevich repelled their embodied viewing and the penetration of the viewer in their internal world, leaving the art work uncompleted. On the contrary, it is ironic that the identification sought after through its heroic themes by Socialist Realism, by aiming at the emotional absorption of the public, essentially adopted a passive model of bourgeois viewing. This found itself in total opposition to the critical approach and the active intellectual investigation generated by the problematic type-form of Malevich.

Such forms that introduced the 'abstract human,'²⁹ weakened the death of naturalism and its subsequent psychological emotions. In any case, the disentanglement of the humanoid from its natural environment also constitutes a form of abstraction, which, as it continued, had to be camouflaged with false data, such as their false dating. In conclusion, this series of works, signaling the moment just prior to the turn of Malevich to the art of Renaissance and, in combination, to the effort of deceiving the hostile horizon of reception through the false dating, do not merely express the dilemma or the oscillation of Malevich between the absolutist norm and abstraction. It is essentially a symptom of the crisis under which the artist is suppressed, due to his difficulty to preserve his creative autonomy.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

²⁸ Koss, *op. cit.*, p. 735.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 729.

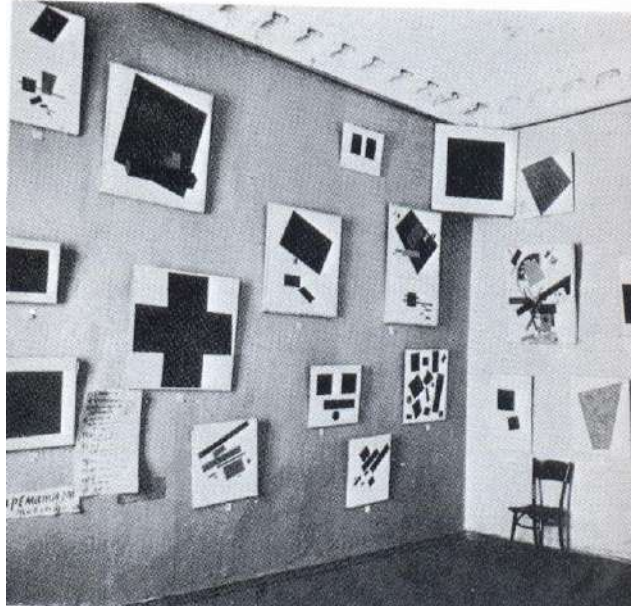


Fig. 1: Photograph showing a section of Malevich's display of Suprematist paintings at *The Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings, 0-10 (Zero-Ten)*, Petrograd, December 1915-January 1916 [rpt. detail from J. Milner, *Kazimir Malevich and the Art of Geometry* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996, Fig. 192)].

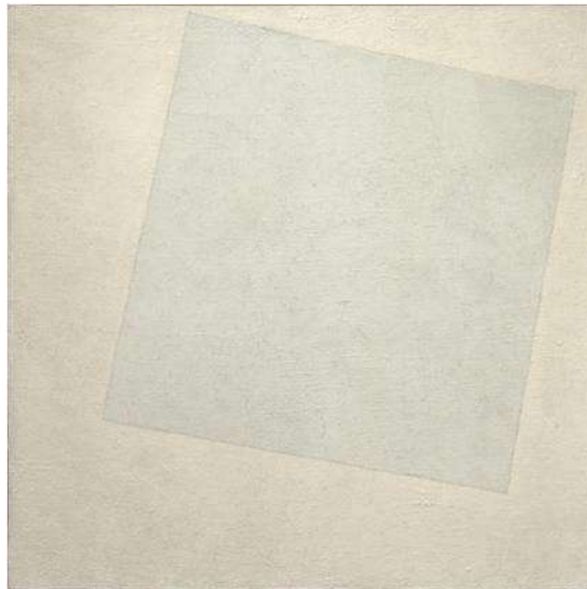


Fig. 2: K. Malevich, *White on White*, 1918, oil on canvas, 80,01X80,01 cm., Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Fig. 3: K. Malevich, *Head of a Peasant*, 1928-9, oil on plywood, 69x55 cm., Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 4: K. Malevich, *Peasant in a Field*, 1928-29, oil on plywood, 71,3X44,2 cm., State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 5: K. Malevich, *Complicated Premonition (Torso in a Yellow Shirt)*, c. 1932, oil on canvas, 99X79 cm., State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 6: K. Malevich, *Peasant*, 1930-32, oil on canvas, 120X100 cm., State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 7: K. Malevich, *Self-Portrait ("Artist")*, 1933, oil on canvas, 73X66 cm., State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 8: K. Malevich, *Portrait of the Artist's Wife*, 1933, oil on canvas, 66X56 cm., State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 9: K. Malevich, *Peasant Woman*, 1913 (1930), oil on canvas, 98,5X80cm., State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.

Responding to Post-War Crisis in Germany: Survival and Memory in Joseph Beuys's Actions

CONSTANTINOS V. PROIMOS

The only thing that art critics seem to agree about when they consider Joseph Beuys is the most elementary biographical details around the artist, namely his date of birth in Krefeld, Germany in 1921, and his death in Düsseldorf in 1986.



(Fig. 1, you see a photographic portrait of the artist at work and fig. 2, the artist in one of his actions, *Titus/Iphigenie*, Festival of Theater, Experimenta 3, Theater am Turm, Frankfurt 1969)

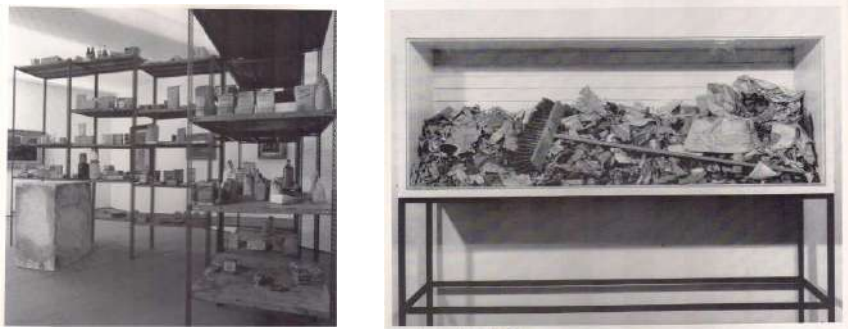
Then, some proclaim him as the most interesting post-war artist in Germany, while others as the greatest charlatan.

In any case, Beuys remains an emblematic figure for all the dilemmas and enigmas that accompany today's reception of contemporary art, and of the neo-avant-garde in particular.¹ The extreme variety of responses that Beuys's work has produced and continues to generate is a sure sign that the import of his work has not yet been adequately exploited. However, this extreme variety of responses to Beuys's work is, in part, also a function of his artwork that has uniquely intertwined with the artist's persona, itinerary, life experience and biography.

¹ In Hal Foster's words, the question of the neo-avant-garde refers to "a loose grouping of North American and Western European artists of the 1950s and 1960s who reprised such avant-garde devices of the 1910s and 1920s as collage and assemblage, the readymade and the grid, monochrome painting and constructed sculpture." See H. Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 1. The term neo-avant-garde gained great prominence in P. Bürger's, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. M. Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

This fact of the artist, his work and his personality being inextricably tied together, has created numerous confusions, riddles and debates, even court trials, whenever there has been an attempt to catalogue, let alone to exhibit Beuys's works since the artist's death.² Being difficult to assemble or to exhibit, Beuys's work was proved to be even more difficult to account for, critically.

Jean-Philippe Antoine remarks on a difficulty that affects the most varied audiences of the latter's work. Thus, on the one hand, the general public is most often astounded to discover, in the most respectable museums, quotidian objects and detriments of everyday life, seeming to have been assembled together, without any particular care and being displayed as art.³



(Fig. 3, *Wirtschaftswerte*, *Economic values*, 1980, fig. 4, *Ausfegen*, *Sweeping*, 1972)

On the other hand, the more specialized audience of art connoisseurs, curators, critics, artists, and others often gather in three fiercely opposed camps: one blinded by uncritical adulation, another, all too eager to ostracise, dismantle and banish anything having to do with Beuys, and a third, all too ready to condescendingly and complacently tame Beuys's work into fitting, traditional, art historical canons.⁴

Trying to be neither in the camp of Beuys's advocates nor in that of his critics, I shall attempt to give a close reading of a few of Beuys's works, in an effort to propose a rather partial and open-ended interpretation of them. Beuys's work rarely lends itself to the coherent "whole" which is customarily

² With regard to these problems of Beuys' reception and the general "brouhaha about legacies," see D. Galloway, "Beuys and Warhol: Aftershocks," *Art in America*, 76 (1988), 113-122.

³ See D. Thistlewood, "Joseph Beuys' 'Open Work': Its Resistance to Holistic Critiques," in D. Thistlewood (ed.), *Joseph Beuys: Diverging Critiques*, 'Tate Gallery Critical Forum Series,' Vol. 2 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press and Tate Gallery, 1995), 1-19. Thistlewood mentions the "evident lack of 'studio' discrimination" in Beuys' work. See p. 15.

⁴ J.-P. Antoine, "Je ne travaille pas avec des symboles. Expérience et construction du souvenir dans l'œuvre de J. Beuys," *Les cahiers du musée national d'art moderne*, 58 (1996), 57-73, p. 51; all translations from French are the present writer's unless otherwise indicated. For the views of those rejecting Beuys' art, see D. Kuspit, "Joseph Beuys: Between Showman and Shaman," in Thistlewood (ed.), *Joseph Beuys: Diverging Critiques*, 27-49, pp. 27, 28, 32. See also J. Cladders, "Joseph Beuys: Origins and Affinities," in Thistlewood (ed.), *Joseph Beuys: Diverging Critiques*, 21-26, p. 21.

defined as “artistic creation,” by being radically fragmented and resistant to integration into concrete art historical contexts and discussions, such as that of “originality,” with which Benjamin Buchloh takes issue. This is certainly one of the work’s major difficulties, as well as one of its greatest merits, namely, the extent to which it requires from its viewer a suspension of many certainties about art.⁵ Likewise, the critic or art historian engaging with Beuys’s work is obliged to adopt a point of view that also puts everything at stake and questions all known art historical premises, including the notion of art itself. Without pretending to propose any classification of Beuys’s work, I shall examine his first decade as a sculptor, around the 1960’s, a time when his interests and preoccupations took a definitive form that was quite crucial for the rest of his artistic career.⁶

Most works by Beuys have had the form of installations or of performances ultimately serving the artist’s renowned “actions,” the term he preferred to use for his site-specific, “theatrical,” event-like or performance works. Being bound to the time and place of their inception or performance, these installations and actions are difficult to experience in retrospect. One can nevertheless get a glimpse of what they were like through the existing documentation about them.

Useless Objects

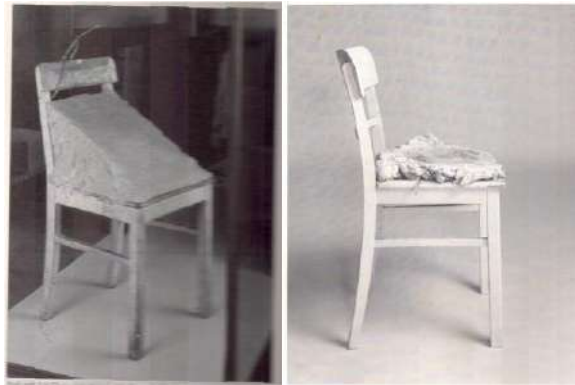
Among all of Beuys’s works, the assembled objects constitute his simplest installations and, as they are also the ones that have most obviously remained in the same state as they were meant to be, they occasion our present point of departure. Beuys never excluded regarding them as autonomous objects, even if many of them were relics of his actions.⁷ However, the fact that these objects were relics of his actions and were specifically employed to serve a time and space-specific event or performance, and were not therefore primarily “aesthetic objects” meant for mere display, plays an important role.

⁵ See Beuys’ own remarks with regard to his mistrust of the notion “work of art,” in V. Harlan, *Joseph Beuys. Qu’est-ce que l’art?*, texte français Laurent Cassagnau (Paris: L’Arche, 1992) p. 135.

⁶ See a number of important works whose first version is located in the sixties and later versions subsequently. It seems that according to Beuys’ biography, he reached his period of creative and personal maturity in the sixties. His concept of action was invented in 1962 with the *Earth Piano*. Around the 1960’s, Beuys overcame a psychological crisis, decided to become a sculptor, assumed a professorship of sculpture at the Düsseldorf Academy of Art, got briefly involved with the *Fluxus* movement and married Ewa Wurmbach. See H. Steichelhaus, *Joseph Beuys*, trans. D. Britt (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1991), pp. 126, 187, 188.

⁷ Jean-Marc Poinot pointed out to me that “remnants” of the actions would be a better term than “relics,” for the last carries a religious significance. After careful consideration of his remark, I still think that the term “relics” corresponds better to the significance that Beuys himself attached to these remnants, the leftovers of his rituals, to the fact that not only himself but also most of his collaborators treated these remnants with religious respect as if they were artworks, in the first place.

Such an object is the famous *Stuhl mit Fett*, *Chair with Fat*, which remained known under this name, since the time of its original inception in 1963 (fig. 5).



(Fig. 5, fig. 6)

A second version of the same work appeared as untitled in 1985, and was alternatively referred to as *Fettstuhl*, *Fatchair* (fig. 6).⁸ In the original work, one can see an ordinary kitchen chair, made of wood on which a triangular volume of fat (margarine) has been placed in such a way so as to cover the entire sitting surface. The triangular volume of fat composes what seems like a three-dimensional rectangle whose hypotenuse unites the end of the seating surface and the chair's top handle. A wire made of steel is around the top chair handle, indicating perhaps that the object was originally meant to be hanging, possibly from a ceiling. In the more recent version of the work, less fat has been placed on the chair and without any particular care, but rather amorously. Now it looks as if someone had sat on the chair because the volume of fat is compressed and its top is flattened. The wire is missing but now a new element, a medical thermometer has been inserted into the fat.⁹

The object oscillates between an assemblage,¹⁰ a Duchampian readymade and sculpture, without being able to be convincingly contained in any of these art-historical categories. On the one hand, it is neither merely an assemblage, nor a readymade, as there is an elementary attempt to sculpt or form the mass of fat appended to the chair, more conspicuously in the first version of the work, less so in the second. On the other hand, it is not merely sculpture, as the most central element constituting the piece, namely, the kitchen chair, is a

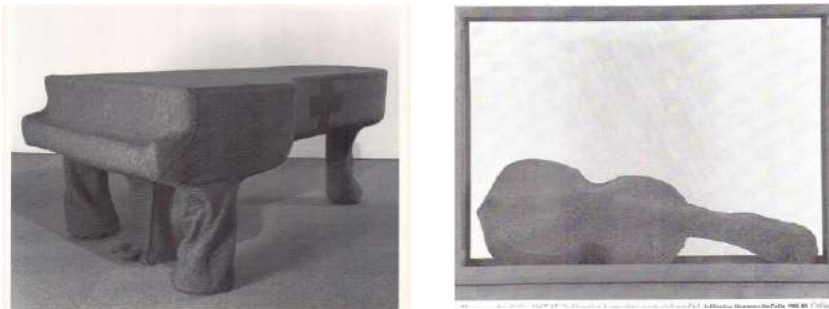
⁸ See F. Herrgott (ed.), *Joseph Beuys*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Editions du Centre Pompidou, 1994), pp. 150-151.

⁹ For description and commentaries on both versions of this work, see *ibid.*, and C. Kuoni (ed.), *Joseph Beuys in America: Energy Plan for the Western Man. Writings and Interviews with the Artist* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993), p. 125.

¹⁰ Assemblage is defined as some sort of collage in three dimensions that finds its origin in cubism. See R. Atkins, *Petit lexique d'art contemporain*, trans. J. Bouniort (Paris: Abbeville Press, 1992), p. 53.

found object, left intact and the material manipulated (margarine) is unqualified for sculptural creation, at least by the traditional theory of sculpture.¹¹

Nonetheless, the most striking thing about *Chair with Fat* is not solely its defiance of such art-historical categories. It is also the fact that this work largely depends on a quotidian object, a kitchen chair, which is rendered almost unrecognizable and unfamiliar by the volume of fat placed on it. In fact, the fat obstructs what the chair supposedly serves: it obstructs sitting and therefore renders the chair not only practically unusable but also quite mysterious, as a material entity or synthesis. Actually, a number of Beuys's objects follow the same "compositional" logic. For example, a piece from 1966, (fig. 7) with the title *Infiltration Homogen für Konzertflügel, Homogeneous Infiltration for Grand Piano*, has a grand piano totally covered with felt, in a way that its felt cover follows the forms and corners of the piano like a skin. On one side of the covered mute piano, two pieces of red fabric have been sewn on the felt to compose the sign of a red cross. A similar piece appeared in 1967 with the title *Infiltration Homogen für Cello, Homogeneous Infiltration for Cello*, substituting the piano with a cello this time (fig. 8).



(Fig. 7, fig. 8)

Observing this range of objects, as well as many others from around the same period of Beuys's career (see, for example, *Untitled*, 1962, a knife cov-

¹¹ Despite the fact that Beuys was the first to systematically find recourse to materials such as fat, felt, wax, honey and others he was not unprecedented with regard to the use of all types of eccentric materials in sculpture. See U. Boccioni, *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* (1912), where the first modern appeal is being made to the use of all kinds of different materials in sculpture, in order to go beyond the boundaries of the art practiced. This claim will be repeated several times before the second world war by different representatives of the avant-garde. See K. Schwitters, *Merz* (1921) and N. Gabo, "Sculpture: Carving and Construction in Space" (1937), instances when this same appeal is repeated from the point of view of dada and constructivism, respectively. All in H.B. Chipp (ed.), *Theories of Modern Art* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1968). No one else before Beuys had such an extensive and systematic use of materials such as fat, felt, wax, and the like, despite Buchloh's contrary claims that evoke Degas and Medardo Rosso. See B.H.D. Buchloh, "The Twilight of the Idol: Preliminary notes for a Critique," *Artforum*, 18 (1980), 35-43, p. 41. In any case, the point is not who used a material first but what kind of use artists reserve for the materials they employ in their work. As we will see later, the use of these materials by Beuys was unique for his case.

ered with felt at its edge),¹² reveals a paradoxical logic that they all have in common: on the one hand, they are extremely familiar and quotidian objects, tools or instruments which remain clearly recognizable as such and seem to occupy a rather important place in the work. On the other hand, these objects are also employed, slightly changed or presented, in a way that obfuscates their utilitarian purpose, and consequently makes them appear rather mysterious, estranging and disconcerting. What the viewer clearly retains in encountering these common, everyday objects is that, in fact, they are hardly common at all: one can neither sit on the chair, nor play the piano.



(Fig. 9)

Indeed, in all visual arts, what is displayed is not meant to serve the beholders' use, but only to satisfy their sight. Even the most recent aesthetic theories claim that all artworks primarily cater to aesthetic pleasure and only incidentally serve any utilitarian value.¹³ But, according to the same aesthetics, pleasure of the sight is the result of the artist's work, the transformation of raw material into a self-subsistent entity, which pleases in this self-subsistence and difference from all other things. Except for the fat appended on the kitchen chair and the felt attached to the grand piano, no other material transformation takes place which regards these objects. Even this transformation regards solely the presentation of these objects and not at all their material construction. It is more than anything else a transfiguration rather than a transformation. Furthermore and as mentioned previously, the chair and the piano are part of the artist's actions and were not simply meant to be autonomous artworks offering to the beholder a spectacle for aesthetic contemplation. This is clearly observed in the way they are presented. For, were someone to attempt to just look at them and describe them in the most formalist of ways, as a conglomeration of lines and shapes, this attempt would be in vain, as their shapes are being distorted by the addition of formless elements, like the fat and the

¹² See also *Feldbett*, *Felt bed* (1963-1964); *Jason* (1961); *Erdtelefon*, *Earth Telephone* (1968), and several others in F. Herrgott (ed.), *Joseph Beuys*, exhibition catalogue, pp. 66, 209, 142 and 169, respectively.

¹³ See, for example, M. Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. E. Casey, A. Anderson, W. Domingo and L. Jacobson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 92-96.

felt, which, by definition, cannot be susceptible to formalist description.¹⁴ Therefore, the quotidian objects that Beuys employs in his actions do not have a definite and assured status as artworks, but, rather, oscillate between art and utilitarian objecthood, having an intermediary status between the two.¹⁵

By blocking the way these quotidian objects, as the chair and the piano, are presented, Beuys chooses to block their utilitarian function as objects and, thus, inevitably draws attention to these blocked functions.¹⁶ As the objects he employs lay bare, stripped of their purpose and as the viewer stands helplessly in front of them, wondering what to make out of them, the most essential and most elementary fact about these objects becomes explicit to the viewer: their suspended usefulness.

Deficient Modes of Concern

The helplessness with which humans stand before things which are unusable, either because they are broken, missing or standing in the way and obstructing a concern, was called a “deficient mode of concern” by Martin Heidegger in *Being and Time*.¹⁷ Heidegger introduced the phenomenon exemplified by the deficient modes of concern in a crucial part of his seminal book, in order to explain what he called “the worldhood of the world.” The thesis associated with the worldhood of the world, is the fact that we all get “a glimpse of the world” in everyday life, without necessarily having, first, to interpret or thematize this world by employing ontology or phenomenology.¹⁸ The deficient

¹⁴ Some of Beuys' favorite materials for sculpture, like fat, felt, honey, wax and others seem to have been selected precisely for their radical formlessness. See the artist's commentary on the *Fat Chair* in Kuoni (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 125. Beuys seems to have appraised materials in exactly the opposite way René Descartes did. See the latter's example of the wax, described as if it was a fierce enemy of form, in the *Meditations on First Philosophy*, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Vol. II, trans. J. Cottingham, R. Stoothof, D. Murdoch, “Second Meditation” (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 20, 21. Beuys derisive and humorous comments particularly on the *Fat Chair*, indicate a certain affinity with the views of Georges Bataille who became famous for his literally formless definition of the formless. Bataille compared the formless with a spit, the spider's net and he likened it with the state of the universe. See G. Bataille, *Œuvres Complètes I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), p. 217. Thus Bataille's notion seems quite akin to Beuys', despite Rosalind Krauss' opposite assertion, in Y.-A. Bois and R.E. Krauss, *L'informe: mode d'emploi*, exhibition catalogue (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1996), pp. 136-138.

¹⁵ With regard to this issue, see Beuys' response in an interview with Volker Harlan, to the question that the latter posed in reference to the usefulness of the objects employed by the artist and how this usefulness affects their status as objects as well as their reception by the viewer. Beuys' response was that he did not wish to block any kind of reception from the part of the viewer and that all receptions would be valid, as far as he was concerned. See Harlan, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

¹⁶ I am grateful for this insight to David Raskin's remarks about the *Fat Chair* in his unpublished paper, for Prof. Donald Kuspit's seminar, under the title “Hunting for Coyote: The Art of Joseph Beuys,” May 18, 1993, p. 18.

¹⁷ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 103.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

modes of concern give us this glimpse, make us “ontically” discover things around us, before all theory and ontology. Heidegger seems to indicate that the only access we have to the presence of all things is through their absence, obtrusiveness to a purpose or un-usability. Only in this kind of “negative” or “privative” way do the entities of this world and this world itself, become explicit to our view and consideration. When all the world’s things are “ready-to-hand,” readily available to our needs, Heidegger claims, their mere presence escapes our attention. We tend to take both their presence and use for granted, and do not notice things except as mere means to achieve our everyday assignments. From the moment they stop being ready-to-hand, they become “present-at-hand,” explicit in themselves and in their environment, precisely because our assignment with them has been disturbed.¹⁹

The logic of construction of Beuys’s objects under consideration can be best described in the above Heideggerian terms. The things, and the world of which they are part, first become revealed in the “negative” and “privative” experiences, stemming from their non-availability, from the fact that they cannot serve, in Beuys’s actions, what they were purportedly made for. Therefore, it is as if Beuys, along with Heidegger, claims that it is not by looking at things that we experience them. It is rather the opposite: we can get a first glimpse of all things after we have experienced their suspended usefulness. It is the experience of privation with the things and their world, that precedes the aesthetic experience, traditionally conceived of as an experience of fulfillment and plenitude.²⁰ Or, in other words, the aesthetic interest we demonstrate in certain objects and things is subsequent to our commerce with them in everyday life and especially to the cases when we fail to have any commerce with them at all. Then and only then, are we really able to see things for the first time.

This is why the aesthetic, traditionally speaking, has, in Beuys, a derivative and secondary status. Hence, also, Beuys’s notorious, iconoclastic remark that “our most urgent need is not to create pictures or sculptures but to shape the economy,” a task that he, nevertheless, considered to be the ultimate task of his expanded theory of art and sculpture.²¹ Likewise, the concomitant order

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 103-105.

²⁰ It would be possible to interpret, towards this direction of plenitude and emotional fulfillment, several passages from traditional texts on the philosophy of art. See for example I. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J.H. Bernard (New York: Hafner Press, 1951) p. 77, about the necessary satisfaction accompanying the feeling of beauty, or Hegel’s aesthetics, in which he writes about art’s satisfaction of “spiritual wants,” in G.W.F. Hegel, *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, ed. M. Inwood, trans. B. Bonasquet (London: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 12. Dufrenne writes about “the depth of aesthetic feeling,” which may also be interpreted in this direction (Dufrenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 405-407).

²¹ See Frans Haks’ interview with Beuys in 1976, in Thistlewood (ed.), *Joseph Beuys: Diverging Critiques*, p. 54, for his expanded theory of art and creativity see also pp. 56, 57. The expanded concept of art and creativity with its special political ramifications that Beuys cherished and practiced from 1960’s until the end of his life is what distinguishes Beuys from dadaists like Kurt Schwitters and Marcel Duchamp who questioned the notions of art without, however implementing this questioning with a sociopolitical vision. Beuys

that traditionally accompanies the aesthetic, namely, that order which dictates that sight precedes and conditions experience, gets reversed: it is, rather, experience which precedes and conditions all sight.²² Beuys is among the twentieth century artists that became famous, along with Marcel Duchamp, for advocating a non-retinal art.²³

The experience that the artist cherishes as fundamental for all art is, rather, that of warmth, an experience that has never before been valued in aesthetics.²⁴ Humans seem to be the most fragile organisms with regard to warmth; they can hardly maintain the certain body temperature essential to their survival by themselves, unlike most animals. Thus, since their first apparition on earth, they have been using felt to cover themselves and have been consuming fat to be able to bear their energy losses. The invention of fire and, in short, a complex array of issues that have marked all civilizations, relate to warmth, and essentially had to do with maintaining body temperature and recuperating daily energy losses.

Fat and felt, for the use of which Beuys has become famous, are well known as insulators, i.e. for their ability to help the human organism replenish quickly large amounts of lost energy. Thus, fat and felt have been and continue to be essential for keeping warm or, in other words, for human survival. Furthermore, the smaller elements in the objects under consideration reinforce the reference to warmth and human survival. The thermometer in the recent version of *Fettstuhl* (fig. 5) is an object indicating a concern with the body temperature, which rises only when the organism is in some form of danger or defense and cannot, therefore, maintain the regular body temperature.

The Indexical Relation of Beuys's Objects to War and Survival

The red cross sewn on the felted piano has the exact same shape, appearance, dimensions and color of the Red Cross Foundation sign, a neutral foundation

was especially preoccupied with the work of Duchamp, to whom he dedicated one of his most well known actions with the title *Das Schweigen von Marcel Duchamp wird überbewertet, Marcel Duchamp's silence is overestimated*, in Düsseldorf, 11 of December 1964. To Duchamp's art which the artist thought, already since its very inception, that it anticipated or even preceded all subsequent forms of contemporary art and which oscillates between art and non art, Beuys counteracted his expanded model of art. According to Beuys' model, art needed to overcome the traditional conventions only in order to be able to aim at social action and reform. See Herrgott (ed.), *Joseph Beuys*, exhibition catalogue, pp. 275, 276.

²² Beuys was very adamant on this point that we must experience his objects first before resorting to judgment and interpretation. For him, it did not simply suffice to see them. See Antoine, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

²³ As explained previously, Beuys had a difficult, almost paternal relationship of affinity, closeness and distance with Marcel Duchamp. For the non-retinal values of Beuys, see Beuys' remarks in Harlan, *op. cit.*, p. 30, and C. Philips, "Arena: The Chaos of the Unnamed," in L. Cooke and K. Kelley (eds.), *Joseph Beuys: Arena - Where Would I Have Got If I Had Been Intelligent!* (New York: Dia Center of the Arts and Distributed Art Publishers, 1994), 52-62, p. 53.

²⁴ For warmth and its importance for Beuys, see Harlan, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

providing medical first-aid to victims of war-stricken countries and places worldwide. Beuys knew, admired and was reportedly inspired by the work of Henry Dunant, the founder of Red Cross and the visionary artist.²⁵ Even separated from its context, the red cross sign indexically points to the Red Cross Foundation and thus to war and survival. Thus, these appended elements on Beuys's quotidian objects, whether they occupy an important and conspicuous role or not, establish an indexical relation to the event of warmth and human survival. As Jean-Philippe Antoine remarks: "An indexical logic put at work... lies undoubtedly at the center of Beuys's work."²⁶ Antoine relies on Charles Peirce's notion of the index, defined as:

"... a sign, or representation which refers to its object not so much because of any similarity or analogy with it, nor because it is associated with general characters which that object happens to possess, as because it is in dynamical (including spatial) connection both with the individual object, on the one hand, and with the senses or memory of the person for whom it serves as a sign, on the other hand. [...] Indices may be distinguished from other signs, or representations, by three characteristic marks: first, that they have no significant resemblance to their objects; second, that they refer to individuals, single units, single collections of units, or single continua; third, that they direct the attention to their objects by blind compulsion."²⁷

If, indeed, all materials like the fat, the felt, the thermometer and the cross are indexically related to warmth and survival, the red cross gives us an additional clue that the survival to which we specifically refer, is survival from war. Thus Beuys's appended materials on his quotidian objects are indexically related to the event of survival from the closest war in memory for Beuys and his audiences, namely the Second World War, the memories of which they propel onto them. It was certainly of primary importance to Beuys and to some of his generation, not to forget, but to actively remember the vicissitudes of their survival through the Second World War and Nazism. Having been drafted to serve the German Nazi forces at the age of twenty, almost right when the war broke out, and having been wounded and risked his life five times, leading up to 1945, when he was released from a British camp of German prisoners, Beuys surely had reasons to try to find a meaningful way to cope with his traumatic experiences.²⁸

This is also the reason why Beuys himself often talked about the role of his *Erinnerungsstütze*, his "memory accessories," among the materials he employed in his works.²⁹ As Jean-Pierre Antoine remarked, through his "memo-

²⁵ See K. Levin's "Introduction" in Kuoni (ed.), *Joseph Beuys in America: Energy Plan for the Western Man*, p. 3.

²⁶ See Antoine, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

²⁷ C. Peirce, *Philosophical Writings*, ed. J. Buchler (New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1955), pp. 107, 108.

²⁸ See Kuspit, "Joseph Beuys: Between Showman and Shaman," pp. 35-40, and Stachelhaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-25.

²⁹ See Antoine, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

ry accessories,” Beuys went even further than merely contemplating his own war survival:

“... the role of crutch or of the “memory accessory” [*Erinnerungsstütze*] [has] developed in Beuys’ production in the context of a greater social and political project: to overcome the trauma caused by the Second World War and Nazism, in Germany but also more broadly in Europe, and through the ‘hard labor of remembrance,’ to retrieve the symptoms of illness of the culture that made this catastrophe possible, so that once these symptoms are identified, to heal the social corpus.”³⁰

It is precisely by blocking, through fat and felt, the access to the quotidian objects and the world that these evoke, that Beuys attempts to commemorate these objects and their world, as lost unable to correspond to their function. Indeed, the world must have felt this way for a German after the Second World War, even if it is rare and understandably difficult for some to also think of Germans as war victims. But, according to Heidegger, Beuys’s strategy of commemorating the quotidian objects and their world as lost would also mean rendering them explicit, retrieving them for memory and conscience, and valuing them, all perhaps for the first time.³¹ Furthermore, the fat, the felt, the thermometer and the cross with which these objects are mainly appended, indexically relate to the event of survival from their single, unique and monstrous referent, the Second World War, and, thus, historically situate Beuys’s work in a firm and pertinent manner. Both effects of his work certainly qualify Beuys’s artistic attempts for a new and meaningful beginning, after the sharp end to everything that the war imposed.

Of course Beuys’s work does not exactly involve a direct tribute to the war and its many monstrosities, in the sense that it does not address directly the atrocities committed. However, it was a common conscience after the Second World War that a direct artistic representation of the atrocities committed was not only inefficient, but also totally out of the question. Representation, having been the crux of modern European culture for the recent past centuries, could not simply be employed again to account for this enormous, modern European cultural fallacy and perversion of the war.

The role of the term counter-image, *Gegenbild*, which Beuys often employed in his interviews and statements, demonstrates his conscious rejection of image as mere representation and describes the indirect and positive way that his works commemorate the events of the Second World War. In his own words: “These events [of the war and the Holocaust] can only be commemorated through a positive counter-image, to the extent that all this is really eliminated from the world and from man so that the rest of inhumanity may be surmounted.”³² Thus, the blocked chair with fat and the felt-covered piano are counter-images, rendering explicit these quotidian objects and their world

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³¹ Heidegger, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

³² Cited in Antoine, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

and thus indicating a new point of departure. At the same time, they indexically commemorate the event of survival, so that “the rest of inhumanity” may be surmounted and not repressed, in the act and fury of the new beginning.

However, as Peirce warned his reader “... it would be difficult, if not impossible, to instance an absolutely pure index, or to find any sign absolutely devoid of the indexical quality.”³³ Furthermore, both icons and symbols permeate all things to a certain extent, and it can therefore be inferred that Peirce’s threefold distinction of signs in icons, indices and symbols is also valid in the interior of each sign.³⁴ Beuys also worked with symbols and assumed the expressionist stance with which they are usually accompanied, in continuation of the prewar avant-garde tradition of expressionism in Germany. Thus, he consciously employed in his art fat and felt, and other degenerate, formless and quotidian materials that would have had his work surely banned during the Nazi era.³⁵ Moreover, he created a personal and collective mythology of remedy and healing through his art and life, in order to cope with the legacies that he, his country and Europe in general, were left with, after the end of the Second World War.³⁶

Nevertheless, as much as Beuys’s expressionist stance is true, and as much as the symbolic content of his works should not be excluded, this symbolic content is too often overemphasized in his critical reception. For simply noting the symbolic references of his materials does not suffice to illuminate the logic with which these materials are assembled or presented, and have, thus, so far, mostly closed rather than opened venues for the analysis of Beuys’s oeuvre.³⁷ It is certainly true that Beuys himself, with his incessant, and, at times, contradictory and obscure statements and interviews, has also been responsible for his symbolically over-interpreted and yet hardly understood work. However, despite his faults in this regard, it is Beuys himself, again, who also emphatically stated, several times and on different occasions, that he does not work with symbols but only with materials.³⁸

³³ Peirce, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 105, 108, 112, 114.

³⁵ See Kuspit, “Joseph Beuys: Between Showman and Shaman,” p. 40.

³⁶ See, for example, Beuys’ account of his experience with the Tartars who saved his life by wrapping his wounded and burned body in fat and felt after his plane crashed in their area. The facts that account of this experience have been contested by several critics but this contestation by itself, does not suffice, of course, to disqualify Beuys’ art. Kuspit provides an answer for the artist in his remarks about the mythological impact of these events, without regard to their factual or fictional status. See “Joseph Beuys: Between Showman and Shaman,” pp. 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36. Also his “The Body of the Artist,” pp. 96, 97, 98, 100. For the account of the experience with the Tartars, see also Stachelhaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-25. For the contestation of this experience, see Buchloh, *op. cit.*, p. 38, and B. Buchloh, R. Krauss, A. Michelson, “Joseph Beuys at the Guggenheim” *October*, 12 (1980), 3-21, p. 8.

³⁷ It is almost the entirety of Beuys’ critics, particularly those who are favorably disposed towards him that emphasize the symbolic and mythological associations in his work as for example Kuspit, Stachelhaus, Adriani, Tisdall and others.

³⁸ See his interview with Louwrien Wijers in Kuoni (ed.), *Joseph Beuys in America: Energy Plan for the Western Man*, p. 252. See also M. Rosenthal, *Joseph Beuys, Blitzschlag*

While, with his quotidian objects, Beuys tried to launch a new beginning in art, thought and action, with his appended materials, he attempted to safeguard the memory of the past, so that this new beginning, after the war, that he strived to herald, avoids past grave mistakes.

PART VIII

**Religion and Crisis,
Religion as a Remedy to the Crisis**

Claude Lévi-Strauss
Going on a Journey to Byzantium:
From Last Judgment to Paradise

CHRISTOS D. MERANTZAS

Introduction

The cultural description of heaven and hell, as referenced in the narrative of St. Andrew the Fool, likely dating back to the tenth century A.D., or that in Byzantine/post-Byzantine mural paintings explains the creation of a mutually opposing, yet multidimensional, anthropological system, where archaic classification styles are embedded. In our paper, we will argue that the binary oppositions, known largely by the anthropological analyses of Claude Lévi-Strauss (i.e. heaven-hell, male-female, healthy-contaminated), that make up Christian spirituality have built the fundamental structure of a system compatible with Christian salvation. More specifically, the binary opposition of heaven and hell is a necessary requirement for the Last Judgment. The anthropomorphism of heaven excludes from the Last Judgment and salvation all that is animalistic and subject to racial or sexual ambiguity. Indeed, heaven's anthropomorphism is defined by the figures of the demonic and the contaminated as forms of alterity.

Hell hosts the animal species and its emotional anomaly and ascribes it as the figures of alterity, placing it on the opposite direction away from humanity. So the ancestral animal origins confront the principles of human reason, civility and socio-cultural order. Within hell, the "bestial other" is either a demon or an anthropomorphic entity, which is defeated because of torture and the loss of its physical integrity and able-bodiedness. Essentially, only the humanness of heaven recognizes the supremacy of reason and only this element ensures Christian salvation.¹ Just like the dream of St. Andrew the Fool's imaginary transition to heaven depicts life's cultural differentiation, so do the artistic realities of the Byzantine and the post-Byzantine Last Judgment. They expose a fundamental cultural division within the Byzantine world. On the one hand, there is the purity of heaven (male) and, on the other hand, the contamination of hell (female). This division ultimately identifies the subjects that are esteemed in the Christian world's hierarchical demarcation. As Judith Butler emphatically states, gender is produced under the authority of the heterosexual womb (matrix) and all that the dipole excludes (e.g. sexual ambiguity or erratic identities) belongs to the world of otherness.²

¹ C. Wolfe, "Introduction," in C. Wolfe (ed.), *Zoontologies: The Question of the Animal* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), ix-xiii, pp. x-xi.

² J. Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 86-87.

From a "Raw" Heaven to a "Cooked" Hell

In the narrative of St. Andrew the Fool, a document likely to date back to the tenth century A.D.,³ insanity as a way of life offends civil reason. In the Foolish Saint's case, natural instincts are entangled with one's soul, thus giving a new meaning to the physical and spiritual forces that once shaped the cultural context of the urban setting. The Fool deviates from rationality⁴ to the point that he gives up on self-control as a defining measure for civilized behavior and, therefore, threatens social cohesion and security. The Fool personifies nature's primary instincts and permanently ends up in an exceptional state, living at the city's fringes. For a period of time, he is restrained so that he comes to his senses.⁵ The Foolish Saint cannot take part in material indulgences, so he symbolizes all of the primary desires and repressed thoughts of the unconscious. He reveals the world's natural function, one that lays the foundations for an alternative cultural pattern of civilization. The Fool puts forth an inverted definition of disgust, which, if recognized as a social way of functioning, could lead to the breakdown of social cohesion. But the Fool's primary need for survival is completely irrelevant to the daily concern of ensuring his nutritional intake. His own self deprives him from cultivating land which would otherwise ensure safety and sustainability. The Foolish Saint therefore adapts to a qualitative assessment of his life. He lives in the greatest uncertainty and his life expectancy can only correspond to a minimum time span due to poor food intake.

In light of the untouchable, St. Andrew's imaginary stroll must be observed in heaven.⁶ The Foolish Saint senses in full action, through smell, sight and audition, the magic of indulgence. All the while, he is completely free of physical coercion. Heaven promises to fulfill him with an evergreen euphoria. That being said, the Saint does not taste or touch, at least as evidenced by his narrative from which the following is extracted in this context: "I found myself in a lovely and most wonderful garden";⁷ "a wreath plaited with all sorts of flowers";⁸ "shimmering with the color of roses";⁹ "a fire of pleasure, full of

³ L. Rydén (ed.), *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. I. Introduction, Testimonies and Nachleben Indices* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1995), pp. 23-147; S. Efthymiadis, "Hagiography from the 'Dark Age' to the Age of Symeon Metaphrastes (Eighth-Tenth Centuries)," in S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, Vol. I: *Periods and Places* (Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 95-141, pp. 126-127.

⁴ «φύσει παρατραπείς» (Andrew has gone stark mad), L. Rydén (ed.), *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. II. Text, Translation and Notes. Appendices* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1995), 103, pp. 18-19.

⁵ «δεσμοῖς δεθῆναι αὐτόν» (he should be chained), *Ibid.*, 111, pp. 18-19.

⁶ For the Byzantine apocalyptic visions of the Other World and their relationship with economic and social realities of their time, see J. Ralls Baun, *Tales from Another Byzantium: Celestial Journey and Local Community in the Medieval Greek Apocrypha* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁷ «παράδεισον τερπνὸν καὶ θαυμαστὸν λίαν,» Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. II.*, 505-506, pp. 46-47.

⁸ «παντοίων ἀνθέων,» *Ibid.*, 515, pp. 46-47.

rejoice and delight”;¹⁰ “some flowers were everlasting and never-faded”;¹¹ “others were ordained by God to be adorned with fruit”;¹² “wings made of gold or snow”;¹³ “the song of their beautiful and delightful voices”;¹⁴ “a vine with golden leaves spreads its crown over the river on both sides”;¹⁵ “this sight made my heart rejoice”;¹⁶ “the beautiful trees there were filled with a wonderful fragrance that surpassed all the aromas of things terrestrial”;¹⁷ “the breeze stirred the trees’ fragrance so that for a long while I became speechless, enjoying the sweetness and grace of the wind’s most pleasant perfume”;¹⁸ “possessing a sweetness like roses and lilies and a purple color like a violet”;¹⁹ “sending out a perfume more pleasant than myrrh and musk which pierced my heart”;²⁰ “singers of hymns, beautiful, tall, and white like light, sending forth flashes of fiery bright rays from their eyes”;²¹ “I was filled with spiritual honey and fragrance”;²² “very pure amber”;²³ “cladded in dazzling purple and linen but reducing his splendor”;²⁴ “I gazed at the magnificence and beauty of the God-Man the way one looks at the sun as it rises”;²⁵ “the voice dripped honey; it was mild and sweet”;²⁶ “the plain was very beautiful with green grass, lily flowers and roses in boundless quantity. It had wells gushing with milk and honey, emitting a wonderful fragrance and sweetness.”²⁷

At the end of this thorough, literal description of heaven, the senses of touch and taste remain unexploited, the sole exception being the kissing of the crosses when one ascends to higher stages, as does the Fool when wandering

⁹ «ὑποροδίζων ἀνθήμασιν,» *Ibid.*, 519, pp. 48-49.

¹⁰ «πῦρ ἠδονῆς καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσεως καὶ εὐφροσύνης,» *Ibid.*, 527, pp. 48-49.

¹¹ «ἄνθη δεδωρηται ἀκατάπαυστα καὶ ἀμάραντα,» *Ibid.*, 529, pp. 48-49.

¹² «καρπῶ προσέταξε καλλοπιζεσθαι,» *Ibid.*, 530, pp. 48-49.

¹³ «χρυσόπτερα καὶ χιονόπτερα,» *Ibid.*, 534, pp. 48-49.

¹⁴ «φωνῆς αὐτῶν τῆς ὠραίας καὶ ἐνηδόνου,» *Ibid.*, 535-536, pp. 48-49.

¹⁵ «Ἄμπελος... χρυσοφθέσι τοῖς φύλλοις ἠὲ τρεπισμένη,» *Ibid.*, 553-554, pp. 50-51.

¹⁶ «ἐτέρπετο ἡ καρδία μου,» *Ibid.*, 559, pp. 50-51.

¹⁷ «ἡ εὐπρέπεια ἐμπελησμένη εὐωδίας θαυμαστῆς ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ἀρώματα τῶν ἐπιγείων,» *Ibid.*, 567-568, pp. 50-51.

¹⁸ «Ἐπνεε δὲ ταρασσῶν τὴν ἐν τοῖς δένδροις εὐοσμίαν, ὥστε ἐπὶ πολλὴν ὥραν ἐννεόν με γενόμενον τῷ γλυκασμῷ καὶ ἔρωτι κατατέρπεσθαι τῆς ἠδυτάτης ἐκείνης εὐοσμίας τοῦ πνεύματος,» *Ibid.*, 575-577, pp. 50-51, 52-53.

¹⁹ «ἔχον τὴν ἠδύτητα ὡς τὰ ρόδα καὶ τὰ κρίνα, χρῶμα δὲ ἔχον πορφυροῦν ὥσπερ τὸ ἴον,» *Ibid.*, 586-587, pp. 52-53.

²⁰ «ὑπὲρ μύρον καὶ μόσχον τὴν εὐωδίαν ἐκπέμποντα, ἥτις εἰσέδου εἰς τὴν καρδίαν μου,» *Ibid.*, 588-589, pp. 52-53.

²¹ «μελωδιστὰὶ ὠραῖοι, εὐμεγέθεις καὶ λευκοὶ ὥσπερ φῶς χρηματίζοντες, πυρσανγεστάταις ἀκτίσιν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπαστράπτοντες,» *Ibid.*, 611-613, pp. 54-55.

²² «πνευματικοῦ μέλιτος καὶ εὐωδίας ἀνάπλεως γέγονα,» *Ibid.*, 617, pp. 54-55.

²³ «ἤλεκτρος ὑπὲρλαμπρος σφόδρα καθαρός,» *Ibid.*, 649-650, pp. 56-57.

²⁴ «πορφύραν καὶ βύσσον ἐξαστράπτων, συνεσταλμένης αὐτῷ τῆς λαμπρότητος,» *Ibid.*, 671-672, pp. 56-57.

²⁵ «εὐπρέπειάν τε καὶ ὠραιότητα, ὄν τρόπον τις τὸν ἥλιον βλέπει,» *Ibid.*, 674, pp. 56-57.

²⁶ «φωνὴ ἦν μελισταγῆς, πραεῖα τε καὶ ἠδύλαλος,» *Ibid.*, 682-683, pp. 58-59.

²⁷ «τὸ πεδῖον ὅλον ὠραῖον σφόδρα, γλοηφόρον, ἀνθίζον κρίνα τε καὶ ρόδα ἐν ἀπειρῷ πυκνότητι. Πηγαὶ δὲ ἦσαν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ αὐταὶ βρῦουσαι γάλα καὶ μέλι· εὐωδία δὲ ἐξήρχετο μεγίστη ἀπ’ αὐτῶν καὶ γλυκύτης,» *Ibid.*, 697-700, pp. 58-59.

disembodied in heaven. Here there is no physical pleasure through touch or taste, because the vision revolves around the imaginary experience of indulgence in a setting where everything seems to be offered in abundance. Consequently, all the above conditions, while rendering a state of bliss, operate in the absence of the two main bodily senses.

The Fool experiences the break up between secular and heavenly life and gives into heaven's nature where indulgence is different to what is considered on earth as devouring behavior, and seen as a fundamental requirement imposed by life's basic needs. Moreover, the passage to heaven is accompanied by a symbolic castration, to the extent that the imaginary pleasure he takes part in eventually amounts to an eliminated phallus. The Fool enters the heavenly state by means of complete paralysis of the phallus. The latter is functionally inactive: "I noticed that I was disembodied, as it were, for it did not seem to me that I was wearing flesh."²⁸ Nonetheless, the detailed presentation of heaven's imaginary diversity is motivated by the need to be freed from the earthly order of things. Eventually, the Fool returns to earth's reality as a sort of unaccounted entity which opposes heaven's imaginary rule and therefore finds himself in the primordial state of nature: "naked, young, foolish."²⁹ At this point, Saint Andrew's life is especially striking because the narrative unites the horror and brutality of daily life with the magnificent, though imaginary, splendor of heaven.

Terms that refer to the animal substrate are missing from the above detailed description of heaven's landscape. There is no mention of a human being's basic needs as a creature of nature. Instead, the stages in heaven consist of a coherently arranged visible space where physical change is missing. Firstly, the term «εὐπρέπεια» (magnificence)³⁰ is the fundamental element of heaven's *status quo*, which describes a tenaciously consistent safety net. However, order³¹ and modesty³² are the most valuable practices for a tenacious cultural firmament. Another essential difference between heaven and earth's status, in line with what has already been mentioned, is the absence of darkness. So, in the imaginary, the white light's simulation is referred to as snow ("looked like snow";³³ "white as snow"³⁴) and complies entirely with the description of heaven. In reference to the latter, full visibility plays the main role. Consequently, the earthly sphere is the birth place of darkness: "to what I saw there, what is here is darkness."³⁵ Earth is the place where labor means productive

²⁸ «Κατενόουν δὲ ἑμαυτὸν ὡσπερ ἄσαρκον· οὐ γὰρ ἐνόμιζον σάρκα φορεῖν,» *Ibid.*, 512-513, pp. 46-47.

²⁹ «γυμνός, νέος, σαλός,» *Ibid.*, 712, pp. 60-61.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 529, pp. 48-49; 557, pp. 50-51; 660, 665, and 675, pp. 56-57.

³¹ «παράταξις πρὸς παράταξιν» (They stood in rows, one line of battle behind the other), *Ibid.*, 545-546, pp. 48-49.

³² «Ἐιστήκεσαν οὖν τάξει τινὶ καὶ κοσμιότητι» (They stood on this awesome height in a proper order), *Ibid.*, 653, pp. 56-57.

³³ «ὡς χιόνος ὄρασις,» *Ibid.*, 566, pp. 50-51.

³⁴ «λευκὸν ὡσεὶ χιῶν,» *Ibid.*, 626, pp. 54-55.

³⁵ «πρὸς γὰρ τὰ ἐκεῖ σκότος τὰ ἐνταῦθα,» *Ibid.*, 548-549, pp. 50-51.

power, hence consumption. While the Fool lives in such a place, he is asked to accept the defining features of poverty and humility if he wants to avoid consumption.³⁶ This reference to reality is essential because, without it, the heavenly order collapses. As a result of this, the Fool liberates his anger, freely consumes any kind of food and, thus, serves as a counterexample that can destroy the earth's *status quo*. So the Fool takes on the heavy burden of deconstructing the earthly order and is, therefore, exposed to all kinds of misunderstandings from the urbanite.

In the narrative of St. Andrew the Fool, a natural product known largely from the anthropological analyses of Claude Lévi-Strauss of what is *pure* makes its appearance. The function of *pure* opposes the function of fire.³⁷ Here, reference is made specifically to honey under the form of a plant. In this evergreen and ever-sweet plant,³⁸ an entity is formed that opposes darkness and fire in every sense. Each of the latter two terms (honey vs fire) defines the dominant properties of two opposing worlds. They each invoke, respectively, two fundamental categories, where abundance and sex battle the sun to claim the source of eternity. There are cooking guidelines. Both worlds possess complementary features, which Claude Lévi-Strauss could designate as “pre-cooked” and “post-cooked,” respectively.³⁹ Moreover, in the narrative of St. Andrew the Fool, there is a description of heaven and hell that defines two symmetrical worlds. On the one hand exists a world of abstinence from sexual activity, and on the other hand a world of abundance. However, the body does not exist in heaven's landscape: “I was overwhelmed by a feeling that I had been transplanted there without my body.”⁴⁰ Instead, it leaves behind an imaginary and decomposed being: “for it did not seem to me that I was wearing flesh.”⁴¹ It is important to mention the need for human flesh (meat) as a pre-requisite in order to enable a cultural system of bipolar opposites to function, even if it must include the cooking fire's negative features as they exist in hell.

For this reason, honey⁴² is equivalent, not only to heaven, but to the very existence of God. It opposes earthly abundance and makes reference to the fall of the soul into Hades. A product which cannot be consumed but can be

³⁶ «δι' ἄπειρον πτωχείαν»; «διὰ τὴν ταπεινώσιν» (because of your boundless poverty; because of your humility), *Ibid.*, 711-712, pp. 60-61.

³⁷ C. Lévi-Strauss, *From Honey to Ashes*. Vol. 2 of *Mythologiques*, trans. J. Weightman and D. Weightman (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).

³⁸ «ἀλλ' ἀειθαλῆ καὶ ἔτεροφυῆ, μελισταγῆ καὶ ὑψίκορμα» (trees of a different nature, dripping with honey, with lofty and pleasant foliage), Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. II.*, 524, pp. 48-49.

³⁹ C. Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, Vol. 1 of *Mythologiques*, trans. J. Weightman-D. Weightman (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), pp. 292-296; Lévi-Strauss, *From Honey to Ashes*. Vol. 2 of *Mythologiques*.

⁴⁰ «ἀνατρέπει με λογισμὸς ὡς ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος τοῖς ἐκεῖσε προσπεφυκέναι με,» Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. II.*, 593-594, pp. 52-53.

⁴¹ «οὐ γὰρ ἐνόμιζον σάρκα φορεῖν,» *Ibid.*, 513, pp. 46-47.

⁴² «σπνευματικοῦ μέλιτος καὶ εὐωδίας ἀνάπλευς γέγονα» (I was filled with spiritual honey and a fragrance), *Ibid.*, 617, pp. 54-55.

satisfied by one's eyes is now available to an entire religion. The heavenly state of the soul's salvation mobilizes the senses of sight,⁴³ smell⁴⁴ and audition.⁴⁵ All of the above coincide with the Fool's imaginary trip, where he falls into a kind of hibernation due to the cold. Sight, smell and audition function when human existence is at its highest peak: "my mind was carried away into ecstasy";⁴⁶ "still amazed were my thoughts and my mind."⁴⁷ This peak is far from the reproductive area, known as the lowest point of the body, which is associated with a divergence toward rage and the demonic. The highest peak complements the aforementioned honey. At this point appears the whiteness of light and snow,⁴⁸ as does the whiteness emitted from the rays of light, which must not be confused with the rays of fire: "A flame of fire came forth but not like the fire of this world but one that is whiter to look at than snow."⁴⁹ The volume of honey is then duplicated through the sound of light, which then also drips with honey: "A voice was heard from this light, tearing the wonderful air with its mighty sound. The voice dripped honey."⁵⁰ Here, the honey represents the divine voice which, in any case, does not participate in the cooking process.

Let us now focus our attention upon the cooking process and its ingredients. Fire is the unprocessed ingredient used in hell: "they will be wholly surrendered to the fire."⁵¹ The lowest body parts, such as the reproductive and anal areas, hold a central place and generate disgust. The cooking ingredient is associated with stench and dung: "at last there was a small stinking room in which there was nothing but ordure of men and dogs."⁵² These are inextricably linked with self-contamination and death. Acceptance of cooking the primitive animal leads to a transition toward abundance, which is associated with impurity,⁵³ as observed under the light of a stillbirth body and soul: "These are the souls which have been compared to foolish beasts and likened to them."⁵⁴ In this case, the physical function of digestion is interwoven with

⁴³ «Ταῦτα τοίνυν ὄρων ἠὺφραϊνόμεν μεγάλης καὶ ἠλάλαζεν ἡ καρδία μου καὶ ἠγαλλιᾶτο τὸ πνεῦμα μου» (At this sight I felt great joy, my heart shouted with delight, and my spirit rejoiced), *Ibid.*, 599-600, pp. 52-53.

⁴⁴ «ἠδύτης τοῖς αἰσθητηρίοις διὰ τῆς ὀσφρήσεώς μου διήρχετο» (fragrance and sweetness again reached my senses through my nostrils), *Ibid.*, 597, pp. 52-53.

⁴⁵ «τὸν κελαδισμὸν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτῶν τῆς ὠραίας καὶ ἐνηδόου ἀκούεσθαι» (so that the song of their beautiful and delightful voices was heard), *Ibid.*, 535-536, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁶ «καὶ ἠρπάζετο ὁ νοῦς μου ὡς εἰς ἔκστασιν,» *Ibid.*, 537-538, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁷ «τὴν ὠραιότητα ἐκθαμβούμενος τῷ λογισμῷ καὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ,» *Ibid.*, 540-541, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁸ «τὰ δὲ ἄλλα λευκὰ ὡσεὶ χιόν» (the other two white as snow), *Ibid.*, 610, pp. 54-55.

⁴⁹ «Φλόξ δὲ ἐπορεύετο ἐξ αὐτοῦ, οὐχ ὡς τὸ πῦρ τοῦτο ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τῆς χιόνος ὀρώμενον τὴν λευκότητα,» *Ibid.*, 669-670, pp. 56-57.

⁵⁰ «Ἐλήλυθε δὲ φωνὴ ἐκ τοῦ φωτὸς ἐκεῖνου κεκτημένη μέγιστον ἦχον, ὥστε συντριβεσθαι τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἀέρα ἀπ' αὐτῆς. Ἡ δὲ φωνὴ ἦν μελισταγής,» *Ibid.*, 680-682, pp. 58-59.

⁵¹ «... τῷ πυρὶ ὀλοκλήρως παραδοθήσονται,» *Ibid.*, 2347-2348, pp. 166-167.

⁵² «ἔσχατον ἦλθον ἐν τινι οἰκίσκῳ δυσώδει, ἐν ᾧ οὐδὲν ἦν εἰ μὴ κοπρία ἀνθρώπων καὶ κυνῶν,» *Ibid.*, 2333-2334, pp. 164-165.

⁵³ «αἱ δὲ μοιχῶν, αἱ δὲ πόρνων, αἱ δὲ Σοδομιτῶν» (others to adulterers, some to fornicators, others to sodomites), *Ibid.*, 2356, pp. 166-167.

⁵⁴ «Αὗται εἰσιν αἱ ψυχαὶ αἱ παρεσυνεβλήθησαν τοῖς κτήνεσι τοῖς ἀνοήτοις καὶ ὁμοιώθη-

disgust, because consumption has occurred: “the gluttonous as horses, the drunkards as demoniacs, the heretics as dung, the whoremongers as asses; the procurers who with oaths and lies bring men to women, submerging them in fornication.”⁵⁵ It also includes sexual freedom, which is tightly linked to animal behavior.⁵⁶ The latter is the inverse state that replaces heaven’s honey. Therefore, the absenteeism of honey plays a key role to man’s return to his animal origin. He becomes equivalent to an image that completely lacks sexual control.

Honey is presented as an abundant liquid, equivalent to that of water,⁵⁷ or as a liquid that fertilizes nature and does not pollute the very sources that allow milk and honey to flow.⁵⁸ Of relevance are a number of similar properties: i. The ineffable light;⁵⁹ ii. The evergreen and ever so tall tree trunks;⁶⁰ iii. The everlasting flowers;⁶¹ iv. The chirping of birds with golden and snowy-white wings;⁶² v. Heaven’s sequential rows of flora;⁶³ vi. The greenery of heaven’s cultivations;⁶⁴ vii. The cultivation of vines,⁶⁵ and viii. the scent of trees;⁶⁶ ix. The sweetness emitted from roses and lilies;⁶⁷ x. The fragrance of myrrh and musk;⁶⁸ xi. The whiteness of snow,⁶⁹ and xii. the beautiful, gener-

σαν αὐτοῖς.» *Ibid.*, 2358-2360, pp. 166-167.

⁵⁵ «τοὺς λαμάργους ὡς τὰ ἄλογα, τοὺς μεθύοντας ὡς τοὺς δαίμωνωντας, τοὺς αἰρετικούς ὡς τὴν κόπρον, τοὺς πορνοκαπήλους ὡς ὄνους, τοὺς προξενητὰς τῆς πορνείας, οἵτινες ὄρκοις καὶ ψεύσμασιν ἄνδρας εἰς γυναῖκας ἐπιμίξια βοθρίζουσι.» *Ibid.*, 2367-2370, pp. 166-167.

⁵⁶ «τοὺς κτηνοβάτας καὶ ἀρσενοκοίτας ὡς τὸν μῦν καὶ ὡς σκωληκόβρωτον κύνα τὸν ἐπὶ τῆς κοπρίας ἐρριμμένον, τοὺς πόρνους ὡς τοὺς χοίρους» (those who have intercourse with animals and the sodomites as rats and as dogs thrown on the dunghill and eaten by worms, the fornicators as swine), *Ibid.*, 2363-2365, pp. 166-167.

⁵⁷ «ποταμὸς μέγας μέσον τοῦ παραδείσου διώδευε καὶ ἐπότιζε πάντα τὰ φυτὰ» (a mighty river flowed straight through the garden, watering all the trees), *Ibid.*, 550, pp. 50-51.

⁵⁸ «Πηγαὶ δὲ ἦσαν αὐτῷ καὶ αὐτὰ βρύουσα γάλα καὶ μέλι» (It had wells gushing with milk and honey), *Ibid.*, 698-699, pp. 58-59.

⁵⁹ «ἀρρήτου φωτὸς τῆ ἰδέα» (with an indescribable light), *Ibid.*, 518, pp. 48-49.

⁶⁰ «ἀειθαλῆ καὶ ἑτεροφυῆ, μελισταγῆ καὶ ὑψικόρμα καὶ τερπνὰ» (evergreen trees of a different nature that drip with honey and with lofty and pleasant foliage), *Ibid.*, 524, pp. 48-49.

⁶¹ «ἄνθη δεδῶρηται ἀκατάπαυστα καὶ ἀμάραντα» (to some had been given everlasting and never-fading flowers), *Ibid.*, 529, pp. 48-49.

⁶² «χρυσόπτερα καὶ χιονόπτερα, [...] τὸν λελαδισμόν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτῶν τῆς ὡραίας καὶ ἐνηδόου ἀκούεσθαι» (with wings like gold or snow. [...] so that the song of their beautiful and delightful voices was heard), *Ibid.*, 534-536, pp. 48-49.

⁶³ «Πάντα δὲ τὰ ὡραῖα φυτὰ ἐκεῖνα ἐνορδίνως ἴσαντο ὡς παράταξις πρὸς παράταξιν» (all these beautiful trees stood in rows like one line of battle behind the other), *Ibid.*, 545-546, pp. 48-49.

⁶⁴ «μακαρία ἡ χεὶρ ἣ ταῦτα φυτεύσασα» (blessed be the hand that planted them), *Ibid.*, 546, pp. 48-49.

⁶⁵ «βρίθουσα μεγίστοις βότρυσιν εὐπρεπεστάτοις» (heavy with big, splendid grapes), *Ibid.*, 557, pp. 50-51.

⁶⁶ «δένδρων ἢ εὐπρέπεια ἐμπλησμένη εὐωδίας» (The beautiful trees there were filled with a wonderful fragrance), *Ibid.*, 567, pp. 50-51.

⁶⁷ «τὴν ἡδύτητα ὡς τὰ ρόδα καὶ τὰ κρίνα» (having a sweetness like roses and lilies), *Ibid.*, 586-587, pp. 52-53.

⁶⁸ «ὅπερ μύρον καὶ μόσχον τὴν εὐωδίαν ἐκπέμποντα» (sending out a perfume more pleasant than myrrh and musk), *Ibid.*, 588, pp. 52-53.

ously sized and fair singers of hymns;⁷⁰ xiii. The brightness of angels whose intensity exceeds that of the sun;⁷¹ xiv. The order and civility shining from the angels;⁷² xv. The flame that emanates from God is equivalent to the whiteness of snow and contradicts the earth's fire.⁷³ xvi. Finally, the sun is identified to the Godly man's splendor.⁷⁴ All of these elements demonstrate the malfunction of sexual penetration. In other words, they represent the limitless boundaries that oppose the darkness of the Hades.

Hell possesses its own dietary regime where bodily feces are intertwined with sexual practices all within a dark environment.⁷⁵ Equivalent to hell is abstinence from eating honey and the consumption of sexual intercourse. Here, what we realize in essence is that this partnering of consumption and defecation exists in hell. Areas that define disgust are revealed,⁷⁶ where fluids are considered pollutants and do not bear fruit. This includes animalistic fecundity, from which a Christian should abstain for the sake of salvation of his soul. The animal's original shape is an obvious implication of the body's vulnerability to disease and death. Aside from bodily fluids, noticeable practices include adultery, prostitution, sodomy,⁷⁷ bestiality, homosexuality,⁷⁸ gluttony and drunkenness.⁷⁹ In addition to that, a number of animals act as symbols. In the culture of consumption animals, such as mice, dogs, donkeys, scorpions, snakes, pigs, wolves, foxes, cat like species and crows, are associated with stench and disgust.⁸⁰ In this climax of disgust, the feces possess a dominant

⁶⁹ «λευκὰ ὡσεὶ χιόν» (white as snow), *Ibid.*, 610, pp. 54-55.

⁷⁰ «μελωδισταὶ ὡραῖοι, εὐμεγέθεις καὶ λευκοὶ ὡσπερ φῶς» (singers of hymns, beautiful, tall, and white like light), *Ibid.*, 611-612, pp. 54-55.

⁷¹ «πλῆθος ἀναρίθμητον νοερῶν ἀγίων ἀγγέλων πυρίνων, τὰς ὄψεις τηλαυγεῖς ὑπὲρ τὸν ἥλιον» (an innumerable multitude of spiritual holy angels of fire with faces more far-shining than the sun), *Ibid.*, 652, pp. 56-57.

⁷² «Εἰστήκεισαν οὖν τάξει τινὶ καὶ κοσμιότητι» (they stood on this awesome height in proper order), *Ibid.*, 653, pp. 56-57.

⁷³ «Φλὸξ δὲ ἐπορεύετο ἐξ αὐτοῦ, οὐχ ὡς τὸ πῦρ τοῦτο ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τῆς χιόνος ὀρόμενον τὴν λευκότητα» (A flame of fire came forth from it, not like the fire of this world but whiter to look at than snow), *Ibid.*, 669-670, pp. 56-57.

⁷⁴ «τὴν θεάνθρωπον εὐπρέπειάν τε καὶ ὡραιότητα, ὃν τρόπον τις τὸν ἥλιον βλέπει» (I gazed at the magnificence and beauty of the God-Man the way one looks at the sun), *Ibid.*, 673-674, pp. 56-57.

⁷⁵ «σκότος ἐκεῖνο τὸ ἀλαμπές» (the impenetrable darkness prevailing there), *Ibid.*, 2327, pp. 164-165.

⁷⁶ «δυσβάτους τόπους καὶ λίαν δυσειδεῖς καὶ δυσώδεις» (places that were difficult to access and very ugly and noisome), *Ibid.*, 2326, pp. 164-165.

⁷⁷ «αἱ δὲ μοιχῶν, αἱ δὲ πόρνων, αἱ δὲ Σοδομιτῶν» (others to adulterers, some to fornicators, others to sodomites), *Ibid.*, 2356, pp. 166-167.

⁷⁸ «τοὺς κτηνοβάτας καὶ ἀρσενοκοίτας» (those who have intercourse with animals and the sodomites), *Ibid.*, 2363, pp. 166-167.

⁷⁹ «τοὺς λαϊμάργους ὡς τὰ ἄλογα, τοὺς μεθύοντας ὡς τοὺς δαιμονῶντας» (the gluttonous as horses, the drunkards as demoniacs), *Ibid.*, 2367-2368, pp. 166-167.

⁸⁰ «μυῶν καὶ κυνῶν καὶ κνωδάλων καὶ ὄνων καὶ ἡμίονων καὶ ἐρπετῶν» (the rats and dogs and beasts and asses and mules and reptiles), *Ibid.*, 2349, pp. 166-167. Also: «φονεῖς ἡγείται ὡς σκορπίους, τοὺς εἰδωλολάτρας ὡς τὰ κνώδαλα, τοὺς μοιχοὺς ὡσπερ τοὺς τὸν νοῦν ἀπολέσαντες, τοὺς μάγους καὶ τοὺς φαρμακοὺς ὡς τοὺς ὄφεις, τοὺς κτηνοβάτας καὶ

title⁸¹ that is directly linked to an infectious impurity. The latter corresponds to the destructive power of an incinerating fire.⁸² Therefore, the binary opposition⁸³ of inside water/outside fire with regards to heaven and outside water/inside fire with regard to hell are analogous to a man's abstinence, or sterility, found in heaven and a woman's fertility that resides in hell.

The presence of honey on the one hand, and fire that incinerates all physical matter on the other, demonstrate the asymmetry between the two worlds. In the former exists the spiritual substance of honey and that of heavenly water, whereas, in the latter, fire represents bodily functions. The source of the latter must be extinguished with heavenly water in order to deter obscene acts and passions from entering the human body.⁸⁴ Indeed, the two worlds follow opposite paths. The first is defined by hyper-cooking and uses a fire which burns in heaven but does not deteriorate any materials, while the second is defined by meta-cooking and uses a fire from hell that burns all materials and converts them to damaged goods.⁸⁵ This contrast between the beneficial usage of heaven's elements [water(+)-fire (+)]⁸⁶=«οὐχ ὡς τὸ πῦρ ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τῆς χιόνοϋ ὀρώμενον τὴν λευκότητα» (not like the fire of this world but whiter to look at than snow)⁸⁷] and the destructive function of hell's elements [fire(-)=«τῷ πυρὶ ὀλοκλήρως παραδοθήσονται» (they will be wholly surrendered to the fire)⁸⁸+water(-)=«διελύθη ὁ ταλαίπωρος καὶ ἐρρύησαν αἱ σάρκες αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ὡσεὶ ὕδωρ» (the miserable man's body dissolved, his flesh flow-

ἀρσενοκοίτας ὡς τὸν μῦν καὶ ὡς σκωληκόβρωτον κύνα τὸν ἐπὶ κοπρίας ἐρριμένον, τοὺς πόρνους ὡς τοὺς χοίρους, τοὺς κλέπτας ὡς τοὺς λύκους, τοὺς δολεροὺς ὡς τὰς ἀλώπεκας, τοὺς φιλαργύρους ὡς τοὺς αἰλούρους, τοὺς ὀργίλους ὡς τὰ θηρία, τοὺς ψεύστας ὡς τὸν ὄφιν, τοὺς λαιμάργους ὡς τὰ ἄλογα, [...] τοὺς καταλάλους ὡς κόρακας...» (for the murderers he regards as scorpions, the idolaters as beasts, the adulterers as those who have lost their mind, the magicians and sorcerers as snakes, those who have intercourse with animals and the sodomites as rats and as dogs thrown on the dunghill and eaten by worms, the fornicators as swine, the thieves as wolves, the deceitful as foxes, the avaricious as cats, the quick-tempered as wild beasts, the liars as snakes, the gluttonous as horses, [...] those who speak evil of others as ravens), *Ibid.*, 2361-2368; 2373, pp. 166-167.

⁸¹ «οὐδὲν ἦν εἰ μὴ κοπρία ἀνθρώπων καὶ κυνῶν» (there was nothing but ordure of men and dogs), *Ibid.*, 2334, pp. 164-165.

⁸² «Μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τῶν σωμάτων, τότε τῷ πυρὶ ὀλοκλήρως παραδοθήσονται» (After the resurrection of the body they will be wholly surrendered to the fire), *Ibid.*, 2346-2348, pp. 166-167.

⁸³ C. Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, Vol. 1, trans. C. Jacobson and B. Grundfest Schoepf (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 132-184.

⁸⁴ «ὧτινι προσέπελον ἀφομοιοῦμεναι ἐν τῷδε τῷ κόσμῳ τῇ πολιτείᾳ καὶ ταῖς αἰσχίστοις πράξεσι καὶ τοῖς πάθεσιν» (showing to what each one of them has become similar in this world because of their way of life and its shameful acts and passions), Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. II*, 2354-2355, pp. 166-167.

⁸⁵ «Διεφθάρη δὲ καὶ διελύθη τὰς ἀρμονίας» (Its frame became so ruined and dissolved), *Ibid.*, 2398, pp. 168-169.

⁸⁶ «καὶ ἰδοὺ πῦρ φλέγον τὰ ἐκεῖσε ἅπαντα» (there was a fire burning everything there), *Ibid.*, 632-633, pp. 54-55.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 669-670, pp. 56-57.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 2347-2348, pp. 166-167.

ing on the ground like water)⁸⁹] is confirmed by verbal recordings that render both contexts respectively. Heaven's environment declares a pleasant outflow, openness, magnitude, ecstasy, ascension and spiritual consumption: "my heart was filled with divine joy";⁹⁰ whiteness and brightness ["glowed";⁹¹ "grow";⁹² "ecstasy";⁹³ "amazed";⁹⁴ "emitted a vapour";⁹⁵ "sending out";⁹⁶ "shining like the sun";⁹⁷ "flashing";⁹⁸ "sending forth flashes of fiery bright rays from their eyes";⁹⁹ "spread out";¹⁰⁰ "rays of light";¹⁰¹ "with faces more far-shining";¹⁰² "rises";¹⁰³]. However, hell's environment declares introversion, confinement, descent, animal-like consumption and darkness ["prisons and bars and jails";¹⁰⁴ "enclosed";¹⁰⁵ "submerging them in fornication"¹⁰⁶] equivalent to an unpleasant and destructive assimilation.¹⁰⁷

Meanwhile, heaven praises an economy based exclusively on sight, smell and audition, but under no circumstances the intention to consume. The gluttony of hell, however, as defined by food or sex, comes into force through touch and consumption and is linked to an economy of abundance and greediness, the consequences of which are unfortunate. Nevertheless, these two opposite settings have a distinguishable feature in common. They present, each in its own unique way, a kind of slurry –an abundance of honey on the one hand, and a dry/burnt substance on the other. A similar contrast is demonstrated between heaven and hell's olfactory codes. Heaven's olfactory properties are opposite to those of hell, where the latter's olfactory code is one of foul defecating odors: "noisome"¹⁰⁸="unpleasant"¹⁰⁹="ordure"¹¹⁰="sub-merging."¹¹¹

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2396-2397, pp. 168-169.

⁹⁰ «ἐπλήσθη χαρᾶς θεϊκῆς ἡ καρδία μου,» *Ibid.*, 685-686, pp. 58-59.

⁹¹ «Ἔστύβει,» *Ibid.*, 518, pp. 48-49.

⁹² «ἐξανέτειλεν,» *Ibid.*, 52, pp. 48-49.

⁹³ «ἔκστασιν,» *Ibid.*, 538, pp. 48-49.

⁹⁴ «ἐκθαμβούμενος,» *Ibid.*, 540, pp. 48-49.

⁹⁵ «ἀτμίζειν,» *Ibid.*, 566, pp. 50-51.

⁹⁶ «ἐκπέμποντα,» *Ibid.*, 588, pp. 52-53.

⁹⁷ «ἤλιος ἔλαμπεν,» *Ibid.*, 605, pp. 52-53.

⁹⁸ «ἀστράπτοντα,» *Ibid.*, 610, pp. 54-55.

⁹⁹ «πυρσουργεστάτοις ἀκτίσιν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπαστράπτοντες,» *Ibid.*, 612-613, pp. 54-55.

¹⁰⁰ «ἐφαπλούμενος,» *Ibid.*, 638, pp. 54-55.

¹⁰¹ «ἀκτίνες φωτός,» *Ibid.*, 664, pp. 56-57.

¹⁰² «ὄψεις τηλαυγεῖς,» *Ibid.*, 652, pp. 56-57.

¹⁰³ «ἀνατέλλον,» *Ibid.*, 675, pp. 58-59.

¹⁰⁴ «φυλακάς καὶ κλειθρα καὶ δεσμοπήρια,» *Ibid.*, 2328-2329, pp. 164-165.

¹⁰⁵ «ἐναποκεκλεισμένοι,» *Ibid.*, 2330, pp. 164-165.

¹⁰⁶ «ἐπιμιξία βοθρίζουσι,» *Ibid.*, 2370, pp. 166-167.

¹⁰⁷ «παρῆσανεβλήθησαν τοῖς κτήνεσι τοῖς ἀνοήτοις καὶ ὁμοιώθησαν αὐτοῖς» (have been compared to foolish beasts and likened to them), *Ibid.*, 2359-2360, pp. 166-167.

¹⁰⁸ «δυσώδεις,» *Ibid.*, 2326, pp. 164-165.

¹⁰⁹ «ἀηδῆ,» *Ibid.*, 2329, pp. 164-165.

¹¹⁰ «κοπρία,» *Ibid.*, 2334, pp. 164-165.

¹¹¹ «βοθρίζουσι,» *Ibid.*, 2370, pp. 166-167.

This fundamental opposition equally exists also in both the senses of audition and sight. The chirping of heaven's birds, as well as its blinding white light, diametrically oppose the dark, rough and foul stench of hell. Claude Lévi-Strauss also confirms this in his work *The Raw and The Cooked*,¹¹² while explaining how noise and odor are replaced by pleasant sounds and fragrance. Of great interest is also the fact that the sexual code is openly showcased in the context of hell, although inferred through a food code in the context of heaven. This is demonstrated in Epiphanius' vision for St. Andrew the Fool, where the consumption of heavenly fruit¹¹³ is nonexistent: ["Did I not see you, not only that you took of its fruit and ate but also that you enjoyed it to repletion?"; "he swore and insisted that he had not even touched as much as a mouthful of it"].¹¹⁴ The former statement implies the female's sexual code, which is one of exuberant consumption, while the latter refers to the male food code, one of abstinence and sperm retention. This controversial relation of opposites confirms, nonetheless, a deeper implication. It assumes that stench and decay¹¹⁵ are natural in hell, while fragrance, restoration and order [«εὐπρέπεια» (beauty)¹¹⁶+«ἀμάραντα» (never-fading)¹¹⁷+«παράταξις πρὸς παράταξιν» (stood in rows like one line of battle behind the other)¹¹⁸+«εὐπρεπεστάτοις» (splendid)¹¹⁹+«τάξει τινὶ καὶ κοσμιότητι» (in proper order)¹²⁰] are features that define a heavenly culture.

Consequently, the stench is the non-edible and natural display of femininity. Milk is a product that is offered, but is non-edible in heaven.¹²¹ Thereafter emerges the cultural component of stench, but only when associated with sexual activity. On the contrary, heaven's pleasant odors are associated with abstinence from sexual practices. From a cultural perspective, the non-edible is the vegetative that possesses positive cultural implications, while the edible is the animal, bound up with sepsis, and consequently assessed in a negative way. As it turns out, the life of St. Andrew is depicted by both images of heaven and hell. Each gender's resolution toward the edible or non-edible elements is obvious. Animal hierarchy is edible. It integrates the female and is a consequence

¹¹² Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, pp. 294-295.

¹¹³ «οὐκ ἐγὼ σε εἶδον ὅτι ἦρες ἐκ τοῦ καρποῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔφαγες, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς κόρον τοῦτου ἀπήλαυσας;» Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. II*, 1721-1723, pp. 126-127.

¹¹⁴ «ὧμνευε δι᾽σχυριζόμενος μήτε ἕως ψήγματος ἄψασθαι αὐτοῦ.» *Ibid.*, 1723-1724, pp. 126-127.

¹¹⁵ «ἐρρῦσαν αἱ σάρκες αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν ὡσεὶ ὕδωρ, καὶ ἠφανίσθη ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ἅπασα, καὶ διεσκορπίσθη τὰ ὀστά αὐτοῦ παρὰ τὸν ἄδην» (man's body dissolved, his flesh flowing on the ground like water, so that all his features disappeared, and his bones were strewn over the mouth of Hades), *Ibid.*, 2396-2398, pp. 168-169.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 529, pp. 48-49.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 529, pp. 48-49.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 545-546, pp. 48-49.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 557, pp. 50-51.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 653, pp. 56-57.

¹²¹ «Πηγαὶ δὲ ἦσαν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ αὐταὶ βρῦουσαι γάλα καὶ μέλι.» (It had wells gushing with milk and honey), *Ibid.*, 698-699, pp. 58-59.

of a natural event in hell. It opposes the context of heaven, which is non-edible, and highlights the exclusive partnering between the male and culture.

The Human Being's "Devouring" Practices and Its Regurgitation

In this context, we are able to understand the Fool's reaction as outlined in the narrative of Saint Andrew. His life is a battle field where two opposing but complementary worlds meet. It is the place where the reversal of life becomes real. The life of the Fool presents a condition that complements the terrestrial senses of touch and taste in order to sustain violence without compensation. The most crucial element, however, is that the Fool represents an unconditional uniqueness in an urban setting. Therefore, the presence of the Fool is exemplary, because it expresses either an obvious disparity or the paradox of an encrypted truth. The Fool achieves to rid the city of its vulnerability and places it on the path to salvation. But, within the city, he represents the absolute otherness and, thus, gives the impression of being a cause for concern. He is the "anti-noise" in heaven's silence¹²² and, therefore, this "otherness" is where the earthly meets the transcendent world.

In yet another example outlined in the narrative of Life of Saint Andrew, a disappointed wife attempts to deter her husband with magical tricks from his tendencies toward prostitutes. The refusal to ingest, in this case to fast, indicates the woman's repressed sexual desire, which is gradually manifested in her sleep. She dreams of an old Ethiopian man, a dark-skinned and husky dog and Constantinople's hippodrome statues. She dreams of these in succession, wishing that they would have sex with her. Even in her sleep, she ingests a frog, snakes and reptiles, which express the paradox of her dreamy state. However, this kind of consumption could also be perceived either as an excessive yet basic need to consume or as a need to give into animalistic sexual temptations. These needs appear because of cessation or food restriction. But, even after fasting, which is essentially therapeutic, the cause of unpleasant dreams is once again disclosed to the betrayed spouse in her sleep. The magician overs her sacred icons with foul-smelling stools from top to bottom, which "were smeared with human excrement from top to bottom and emitting an unmatched stench."¹²³ These elements of bodily secretions indicate an "endearing reversal," which confirms the elimination of sexual desire as opposed to its need.

At the same time, the dream may reveal the denaturing activity of being overly-sexualized in a non-verbal reality,¹²⁴ as in the case of the woman's sleep. So the wife witnesses a second "endearing" reverse event. Her oil candle fills up. But, instead of oil, there is dog urine: "the lamp was filled with

¹²² «σιγῆς μεγίστης παρευθὺς γεγονώσης» (suddenly there was a deep silence), *Ibid.*, 579-580, pp. 52-53.

¹²³ «κεχρισμένοι ἀνθρωπίνης κόπρου ἀπὸ ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω καὶ δυσωδίαν ἀνεύκαστον φέρουσαι,» *Ibid.*, 2508-2509, pp. 176-177.

¹²⁴ J. Kristeva, *The Sense and Non-sense of Revolt*, trans. J. Herman (New York and Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2000), pp. 60-62.

dog's urine."¹²⁵ When she wakes up, she comes to realize the magical act that took place in order to keep her husband close to her. Consequently, she then feels as if she has fallen into a sewer. This event brings forth a third assumption, one of "reverse ingestion." All of these reversals are an imaginary verbalization of deprivation. They function in order to deconstruct the "devouring" nature of the self, which reveals the inevitability of death. Moreover, the narrative of St. Andrew's Life is especially obvious at this point. The "reverse ingestion" corresponds to the inhibition of physical needs, but in a nonverbal world: "they sleep and drink gladly, pursue relaxation, fornicate, devote themselves to gluttony, laugh, sing, play the guitar and satisfy the desires of the flesh carelessly."¹²⁶ This kind of regurgitation (i.e. the reverse of ingestion) is the only stool that has the unique advantage of providing access to God's hungry mouth: "unless we are baked through the temptations we cannot become unto God a most pleasant piece of bread."¹²⁷ We deduce that the dietary needs of the divine are very modest. Indeed, they lean toward the nullification of caloric requirements, which makes evident the fundamental destitution of God, which is contrary to the insatiable Hades.

When the human being's physical needs are limitless, the inner self is defeated. The human being remains fundamentally an outsider in terms of assimilating with God. This assimilation takes place only when agreement with God occurs, which, of course, means the impossible return to nature's needs and material things. Consequently, according to the narrative of the Life of St. Andrew, a human being's need for excessive consumption – "bleat like a goat /barked violently like a shepherd's dog"¹²⁸ – is identical to the sensuous pleasures and impurities of the animalistic state: "Besetting him with bad thoughts through the burning desire of the flesh he tried to draw his soul's beauty down pitifully into the mire of lechery,"¹²⁹ in other words, a totalitarian state: "that God does not need filthy servants."¹³⁰ The narrative, then, attempts to reconstruct a reality that lacks all traces of an animal state by using lexical terms synonymous to disgust: "defiled and rotten and stinking and smeared with dung and brimstone."¹³¹

¹²⁵ «τὴν κανδῆλαν γέμουσαν οὖρον κυναῖον,» Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool*, II., 2515-2516, pp. 176-177.

¹²⁶ «οὗτοι ἡδέως πίνουσι, τὴν ἄνεσιν καταδιώκουσι, πορνεύουσι, γαστριμαργοῦσι, γελῶσι, τραγωδοῦσι, καθαρίζουσι καὶ τὰ ἐπιθυμήματα τῆς σαρκὸς εὐκόλως εἰσπράττουσι,» *Ibid.*, 2757-2759, pp. 190-1991, 192-193.

¹²⁷ «ἐὰν μὴ ἐνηθῶμεν διὰ τῶν πειρασμῶν, θεῶ ἡδύτατος ἄρτος γενέσθαι οὐ δυνάμεθα,» *Ibid.*, 2778-2779, p. 192.

¹²⁸ «ὥσπερ αἶγα φωνάζειν»/«ὥσπερ κύων ποιμίνου βαρέως βαβύζων,» *Ibid.*, 2817-2818, pp. 194-195.

¹²⁹ «Τοῖς πονηροῖς δὲ λογισμοῖς διὰ τῆς πυρώσεως τῆς σαρκὸς ὑπαναγκάζων εἴλκεν οἰκτρῶς ἐνθεῖναι ἐν τῷ τῆς λαγνείας βορβόρῳ τὸ τούτου ψυχικὸν κάλλος,» *Ibid.*, 2720-2722, pp. 188-189.

¹³⁰ «ὁ θεὸς ῥυπαροῦς ὑπηρέτας οὐ χρῆζει,» *Ibid.*, 2839, pp. 196-197.

¹³¹ «μεμιασμένην καὶ σεσηπῶσαν καὶ ἀπόζουσαν καὶ ἀλειμμένην κόπρον καὶ τέαφον,» *Ibid.*, 2860-2861, pp. 198-199.

This self-restraint style of resisting nature's imperatives¹³² includes all days of the week, even Sunday. Nevertheless, this resistance soon becomes abolished, along with the reality of space and time. As a result of this, the natural passing of time degrades. In this case, diverging from one's feelings, instincts and appetites becomes a risk to the "progression" of time, because it implies a new order of time, one that "contracts." The latter is interpreted as the need for total minimalism that equates to the weight and the size of one and only substance, that of the human soul: "light [...], very fine [...], into a kind of invisible limb."¹³³

From all the above-mentioned, it becomes clear that the acceptance of a self-restraint system is carried over to all natural and societal environments. Uniqueness exists when one is in a state of deprivation, granted that fasting and abstinence seem to decisively determine, in a way, the natural history of a human being. In the emaciated space and time established by Christian anchorites, where needs are restricted voluntarily, a new field of complete brightness emerges. The body's emaciating state allows the dominant sense of vision to strengthen. A noticeable change in the range of light gives meaning to the transition from total darkness to a blinding brightness.¹³⁴ Restricted senses have a unique privilege. A look alone offers access to light. At the same time, however, the intake of light is what remains when all, but one, of the bodily senses are removed. The sensed experience is reduced to the field of vision alone. This restriction is intertwined with another function, one that restores all bodily senses when time comes to an end.¹³⁵ But these are not the sinner's littering senses of touch and taste, which the evil bites into, previously having grabbed them by the hand. Furthermore, the mouth (i.e. food) and the rectum (i.e. bowel movements) are complementary functions that represent the entry and exit of food from the body. The demonic is identified as the body's "devouring" function and possesses all of the determinant features of touch and darkness. Its reversal, however, restores brightness. Viewed in this light, the field of darkness is identical to touch, taste, smell, "devouring" and is detached from the field of brightness. Hence, identity and otherness are two functions that establish a system in two opposing worlds. As a result, what is

¹³² «τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς πύρωσιν εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ» (by the fire of his flesh he had desired his wife), *Ibid.*, 2870-2871, pp. 198-199.

¹³³ «ἐλαφρόν [...], λεπτότατον [...], εἰς ἀόρατά τινα μέλη.» *Ibid.*, 2907-2909, pp. 200-201.

¹³⁴ «... ὅσον δὲ ἐπιμένομεν τῇ νηστείᾳ, τῇ παννύχῳ στάσει, τῇ προσευχῇ, τῇ δεήσει, τῇ ἐγκρατεῖᾳ, τοῖς νενομοθετημένοις ἡμῖν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, τοσοῦτον φαιδρυνόμεθα, φωτιζόμεθα, λαμπρυνόμεθα» (as much as we persist in our fasting, our standing in all-night prayer, our supplication and abstinence, which have been imposed upon us by the Holy Spirit, so much we become illuminated, beaming, radiant), *Ibid.*, 2922-2924, pp. 202-203.

¹³⁵ «... καὶ συναχθήσονται τὰ ὀστά τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἕκαστον πρὸς τὴν ἄρμονίαν αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐφαρμόσουσι καὶ κολληθήσονται, καὶ ἀναβήσεται ἐπ' αὐτὰ νεῦρα καὶ σάρκες, καὶ δοθήσεται ἐκάστῳ σώματι ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ ἄφθαρτος...» (and the bones of men will come together, each to its own joint, and they will unite and be fastened together, and sinews and flesh will spring up on them, and to each body will be given its soul, imperishable...), *Ibid.*, 2964-2967, pp. 204-205.

declared in the Life of St. Andrew is death's reversal. But this affirmation is related nonetheless to the human being's "devouring" behavior.

Meanwhile the distinction between a devouring behavior and the behavior of regurgitation, or reverse ingestion, must be determined and the allocation of human beings into two classes should be statistically recorded with evidence. St. Andrew the Fool established this taxonomic distribution with a statistical sample derived from those leaving a Sunday Service (i.e. the exit poll). The narrative provides the opportunity to reconstruct the verbal experience of two opposing worlds. The positive behavior of "reverse ingestion" equates to brightness and abstinence as the following terms show: [«λευκὸν» (white); «χιόνα» (snow); «ἥλιος» (sun); «χρυσοῦς κατακεκοσμημένους» (wreaths of gold); «εὐωδία» (fragrance); «ἴα» (violets); «ρόδα» (roses); «έκοσμοῦντο» (decked out); «πορφύρας» (purple); «νεανίσκοι δὲ περικαλλέστατοι» (very beautiful young men); «άγίας τεσσαρακοστῆς» (Holy Lent); «νηστείας» (fasting); «άοράτως» (invisibly); «σωματικοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς» (bodily eyes); «άκτίς ἡλίου» (sunbeam); «διέλαμπον» (shining); «άπεχόμενοι πορνείας, μοιχείας, μνησικακίας καὶ πάσης φλυαρίας» (keeping away from fornication, adultery, remembrance of wrongs and all kinds of foolish talk); «χλαίνας χρυσᾶς» (golden cloaks); «αἴγλην» (beaming); «περιστεραὶ λευκαὶ» (white doves); «μύρου» (perfume); «θυμιάματος εὐοσμία» (smell of incense); «ύστεροῦμενοι' (deny)].¹³⁶ On the contrary, the negative behavior of devouring equates to darkness and excessive loathing: [«ἠσβολωμένον» (black as soot); «κοπρώδης» (dirty); «βεβορβορωμένη» (filthy); «αἴλουροι» (cats); «κυνάρια» (dogs); «ὄφεις» (snakes); «άπορρέοντα βόρβορον» (the filth that flowed); «βάτραχοι» (frogs); «θηρίους» (animals); «άσωτοι» (profligate men); «άρσενοκοῖται» (sodomites); «μοιχοῖ» (adulterers); «μαλακοῖ» (catamites); «φιλάργυροι» (lovers of money); «χοῖροι» (swine); «βόρβορον τῆς άμαρτίας» (the filth of their sin)];¹³⁷ [«οἱ μηδὲ αὐτὰς τὰς νενομισμένας ἡμέρας τῶν άγιῶν νηστεῶν φυλάττοντες, ἀλλὰ μάλλον άποστρεφόμενοι καὶ μισοῦντες αὐτὰς καὶ βαρετὰς ἡγούμενοι» (they don't even observe the customary days of Holy Lent but rather turn away and hate them even considering them a nuisance)];¹³⁸ [«δαίμονες» (demons); «ὄφεις» (snakes); «άσπίδες» (adders); «μοιχείας» (adultery); «πορνείας» (fornication); «άρσενοκοιτίας» (sodomy); «κόπρον» (filth); «δυσωδίαν άφόρητον» (unbearable foul smell); «Μετὰ δὲ τὸ άποθανεῖν αὐτοὺς πρόκεινται ἐν τῷ μνημείῳ σκοληκόβρωτοι καθάπερ κύνες, δυσωδίαν άναπέμποντες» (After they have died they will be eaten up by worms in their tombs like dogs, sending out foul smell)];¹³⁹ [«πνέουσι δυσωδίαν διὰ τὴν άμαρτίαν» (issued a foul smell because of sin)].¹⁴⁰ At the same time, the distinctness of disgust is reflected upon the terminology of olfactory discomfort

¹³⁶ For the terms, see Rydén, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool. II.*, Appendix a, 17-45, pp. 362-363; 364-365.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 68-104, pp. 366-367; 368-369.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 82-84, pp. 368-369.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 99-100, pp. 368-369.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 101, pp. 368-369.

and darkness: «μέλανές τε καὶ ζοφώδεις» (black and dark).¹⁴¹ These impressions of evil are the predominant otherness that halt the continuity of the Christian culture and are enhanced when furious souls completely lose control: “Ethiopians armed with fiery sticks.”¹⁴²

All of these terms render the very essence of a “devouring” behavior, whereas energy gained from psychic turmoil and pure hostility reinforces them. At times, there are terms mentioned in the narrative that describe a discrepant state. They also express the origin of anger’s presence: “these are the irascible and hot-tempered.”¹⁴³ In other instances, there are terms that convey the intense desire for destruction that resorts to armed violence: “that is the image of wrath, anger and fury.”¹⁴⁴ The negative function of defecation is inconformity with the latter: “all but squander their whole life on these passions, although they know that they will reap no other fruit than filth and unbearable foul smell”;¹⁴⁵ [«holding two-edged swords»/«covered with blood»/«a viper full of wrath and fury»/«senseless, as it were, and bereft of reason»/«undisturbed anxiety»/«robbers and those who have acquired the disgusting passion of profligacy»/«because they are set on fire by the spiritual beast, the viper»/«to murder»].¹⁴⁶ To an extent, these verbal recordings recognize the value of reversal and represent a reality in nature that desires to see this reversal as the backbone to a religious experience (i.e. either by reverse defecation or regurgitation or fasting). Christianity has to compete with the highest form of otherness, which is none other than the negative value assigned to animal behavior and the animal species. Here are some terms that define animal behavior: “and the most despised among beasts, I mean frogs and rats and tortoises and others still more abominable.”¹⁴⁷ Similarly, a human body’s features are described as being splashed with soot: “and they had their bodies covered all around from head to foot with soot.”¹⁴⁸ The animal species thus forbid access to the sun’s brightness – “and their eyes blinded so that they could not see the sun”¹⁴⁹ – and to the transcendental reduction that light possesses.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 105-106, pp. 368-369.

¹⁴² «Αἰθίοπες ἀπηγριωμένοι, μάχαιρας ὀξείας ἐν ταῖς χερσίν αὐτῶν κατέχοντες,» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 108-109, pp. 368-369.

¹⁴³ «οὗτοι δὲ εἰσιν ὀργίλοι καὶ θυμώδεις,» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 131, pp. 370-371.

¹⁴⁴ «τοῦτ’ ἔστι τὸ τῆς μῆνιδος καὶ τῆς ὀργῆς καὶ τοῦ θυμοῦ,» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 134-135, pp. 370-371.

¹⁴⁵ «ἀλλὰ δι’ ὅλου τῆς ζωῆς αὐτῶν χρόνου εἰς ταῦτα τὰ πάθη πάθη καταδαπανῶντας ἑαυτούς, μηδὲν ἄλλο καρπεύειν εἰδότες ἢ κόπρον καὶ δυσωδία ἀφόρητον,» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 96-98, pp. 368-396.

¹⁴⁶ «μαχαίρας διστόμους κατέχοντες»/«αἵματος πλήρεις»/ «ἔχινδα πλήρης ὀργῆς καὶ θυμοῦ»/«ἀναίσθητοι καὶ φρενῶν ἄμοιροι»/«ἀάραχος ἀστασίαστος»/«ἄρπαγες καὶ οἱ τὰ πάθη τῆς βδελυρᾶς ἀσωτίας ἔχοντες»/«διὰ τοῦ νοητοῦ θηρίου τῆς ἐχίδνης ἐμπυριζόμενοι»/«φέρειν τοῦ φόνου.» For the terms, see *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 116-126, pp. 370-371.

¹⁴⁷ «καὶ τὰ ἀτιμώτατα τῶν ἐρπετῶν, λέγω δὲ βᾶτραχοι καὶ μύδες, χελῶνάι τε καὶ ἕτερα χείρονα περὶ αὐτούς,» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 129-131, pp. 370-371.

¹⁴⁸ «ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω ἐν τοῖς σώμασιν αὐτῶν κόνιν αἰθάλης περικεχυμένοι,» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 137-138, pp. 370-371.

¹⁴⁹ «κατετύφλουν τὰ ὄμματα αὐτῶν τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν τὸν ἥλιον,» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 141, pp. 372-373.

Saint Andrew the Fool's insanity is demonstrated by the human being's life experiences when living in the Byzantine urban setting. At a first glance, his life upsets the cultural norm. The life of the holy fools attempt to redefine what a mental disorder looks like in an urban setting. The Fool's insanity is the medium that, from the outset, describes the actions of an uncontrolled natural world. He refuses to comply with customs and so threatens to undermine the urban cultural ideal. The Fool serves as the epitome of animalistic behavior. A reversed, yet disguised, mediocrity embodies the Fool's insanity and presents itself in the ruptures of an urban setting. Consequently, the reader soon faces a dilemma that challenges and internally overthrows the normalcy of conventional culture. The Fool's actions become an opportunity to reexamine the animal's essence, the human being's outward behaviors and self-awareness. Seen under the light of a reversal, St. Andrew's narrative captures a meaning. In the narrative's author, the Fool's insanity, seen through the eyes of urban residents, is synonymous with irrationality. The Fool finds himself there because he truly represents the function of reversal. For the author of the narrative, this animalistic insanity introduces a world of transcendental possibility. It is as if his foolishness is a tool with a reverse function from nature's devouring mechanism.

Saint Andrew the Fool personifies the kind of animalistic behavior that ultimately ends up with the elimination of the self. In this context, the Fool bears the weight of something ambiguous that reintroduces animal behavior as a mechanism for self-awareness in the cultural order. Without this awareness, it is impossible to understand the difference between the order of nature and that of culture. In this sense, the Fool expresses the interweaving of two complementary life conditions. These are the need to self-confess to others, and also to acknowledge individual differences as a necessary prerequisite in order to appreciate others. Thus, the Fool's illegal actions remove every possible safety measure from a Byzantine city. But these actions are considered imperative because they allow the Byzantine citizen to understand nature's double function. Consequently, the Fool's actions introduce an essential distinction between the sensible and the intelligible. His actions agree with fulfilling one's physical needs, but nevertheless show the significance of self-restraint practices. By not ingesting, the Fool's presence breaks nature's chain and introduces new elements into the conventional cultural order. Rejecting man's enslavement to the order of nature allows for the denaturalization of the human being. Only within this framework does it become possible to shift human actions towards the transcending finitude and fixed limits, instead of toward the extravagance seen in nature's reproductive function. The path of "anti-nature" leads to the being's emaciation. This potential to spread the animal's "devouring" behaviors presents a negative backwardness, and hence is fixed far opposite from Christian salvation. In conclusion, the non-consumption of "raw food" results from abstinence and rawness. Let us recall here the statistical sample generated from the "exit poll": "naked, darkened like Ethio-

pians, holding two-edged swords covered with blood.”¹⁵⁰ The narrative of St. Andrew’s Life insists on the nudity and bloodiness that describe cruelty. However, this experience of cruelty is what essentially differentiates the earthly from the heavenly.

Conclusion

Once conceptualized, these binary oppositions structure the world on two foundations of two extremes. Each of these extremes gathers the “qualitative features” of a kind of exclusivity. From this point of view, the aforementioned binary oppositions describe two scenarios. On one hand, there is a utopian scenario of a disembodied and divine ascension and, on the other hand, there is the “dystopia” of the human being experiencing the body’s constraints through the torturous descent into the Hades. In fact, these extreme opposites define the constraints of any discrepancy in a society. Instead of seeking a third path, society’s “standardization” depends on intensifying the different, which is favorable to heaven’s exclusivity. In the worthy yet burdened pre-modern setting of Byzantine and post-Byzantine civilization, the dualism of opposite structures (i.e. culture-nature, male-female, divine-demonic) dominates; terms to which possessive evaluative nuances refer for supremacy, legitimacy and male identity. Negative evaluations imply impurity and female identity. In this asymmetric relationship, male represents the principle of identity while female represents the otherness. Consequently, female identity becomes an adverse counterweight to the male’s sound realizations. Hence, Saint Andrew the Fool’s vision for Byzantine idealizes male sexual abstinence. But projected therein are female impurity and woman’s various sexual practices, which lead to excessive use and abuse of the body. Nevertheless, the female confirms the durability of the ancestral duality of male and female. This duality extends toward many more dualities, such as culture-nature (i.e. nature being equal to primitivism), active-passive, healthy-infected, clean-unclean and right-wrong.¹⁵¹ First of all, what is worth mentioning is a negative evaluation triggered by this distinction in the male-female dualism. Secondly, the dualistic make-up of human life itself devalues female fertility in the male’s institutional standard. Thirdly, the aforementioned dualistic conceptions are culturally defined. In fact, all these dualisms shape a world of hierarchical constitution that exacerbates inequality and hierarchy, and reproduces the taxonomic categorization of the identity and the other.

In reference to the events of the Last Judgment, the Byzantine and mainly post-Byzantine representations¹⁵² of bodily torture reveal that man is captive

¹⁵⁰ «γυμνούς, ξεζοφωμένους ὡς Αἰθίοπας, μαχαίρας διστόμους κατέχοντας, καὶ αὐταὶ αἵματος πλήρεις.» *Ibid.*, Appendix a, 115-117, pp. 370-371.

¹⁵¹ D. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 177.

¹⁵² D. Mouriki, “An Unusual Representation of the Last Judgment in a Thirteenth Century Fresco at St. George Near Kouvaras in Attica,” *Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας*, 8 (1975-1976), 145-171; M. Garidis, *Études sur le Jugement Dernier Post-Byz-*

to his own mortality. For the Christian faithful, this communicates the cruelty of hell's torturous weapons that serve as a punishment for the terrestrial sins committed. However, there are many ways to establish the permeability of death. Other ways include man's cultural temporality after death and a survival mode while the body is under constant torture. This sort of temporality is dominated by the fundamental asymmetry between pain and pleasure, torture and eroticism. Sharp torturous weapons are used while acting as reversed phalluses, thus causing pain instead of pleasure. They are nailed on the genitals of the tortured bodies. This indicates the painful penetration of these weapons into the human body in the most marginal and sadistic way. In hell, the use of sharp weapons in order to nail with intensity the genitals of the tortured not only implies the annihilation of the human body, but also creates a ban upon this sexual activity under the reign of religion. For this reason, in the Last Judgment's artistic scene, the sexualized body becomes condemned. Everything within a sexualized body corresponds to the underworld's identities where the gender's personality lies on a phallic structure. So, in this place of punishment and torture, the phallus functions as an anti-pleasure inducing organ.

Hell is qualified as a constrained environment to the extent that it hosts a multitude of abominations and perversions that intend to normalize the bodies of the faithful through negative connotations. Accepting painful trauma that results from rape, a kind described with knifelike and phallic connotations, is a fact that provokes the fear of death, and thus renders the representation of trauma much more robust. But, in the context of hell, the provocation to fear death has already occurred. It is in this sense that the image of hell constructs a kind of bio-authority,¹⁵³ where the disgrace of heaven is clearly declared. It is no coincidence that, in the torture scenes, sanctioned bodies are sometimes represented with their secretions and eventually become contaminated. Here, hell is a place of reference for the others and defines an environment of otherness characterized by insecurity and the risk of perforation. It is the place of demonic power that represents the release of emotions, animalistic reproduction, a disturbed sexuality and a monstrous, inhuman nature, as evidenced by the imaginary representation of a black figured and winged monster with hybrid features. The latter reflects the interweaving of sexuality with birth defects which could not be further from the origins of animal. Contrary to the annihilation by hell, the salvation of paradise indicates the creation of a familiar body and an alien one, an able body and a body that has lost its integrity

antin du XVe à la fin du XIXe siècle. Iconographie-Esthétique (Thessaloniki: Etaireia Mak-edonikon Spoudon, 1985); M. Angheben, "Les Jugements derniers byzantins des XIe-XIIe siècles et l'iconographie du jugement immédiate," *Cahiers Archéologiques*, 50 (2002), 105-134; N. Patterson Ševčenko, "Images of the Second Coming and the Fate of the Soul in Middle Byzantine Art," in R.J. Daly (ed.), *Apocalyptic Thought in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Baker Academic, 2009), 250-272.

¹⁵³ P. Brent, *On the Use and Abuse of Foucault for Politics* (Lanham, Maryland and Oxford: Lexington Books, 2005), pp. 9-34.

and boasts contamination, a term that deliberately records the connotations of rape and its practices (i.e. loss of purity). Therefore, hell, as opposed to heaven clearly distinguishes between an embodied and a disembodied state. It identifies the otherness of a spoiled ideal with inferences to homosexuality. However, heaven, thanks to celibacy, is foreign to the narrow confines of demographic (i.e. reproductive) distress.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, in terms of the bio-politics of the Christian salvation,¹⁵⁵ the image of the tortured in hell introduces a kind of place that allows one to worship the pure, asexual self, and reject the evil and gendered monstrous otherness.

¹⁵⁴ A. Athanasiou, *Ζωή στο όριο. Δοκίμια για το σώμα, το φύλο και τη βιοπολιτική* [*Life at the Limit: Essays on the Body, the Gender and Biopolitics*] (Athens: Ekkremes, 2007), pp. 90-95.

¹⁵⁵ T. Lemke, *Bio-Politics: An Advanced Introduction*, with a Preface by M. Casper and L.J. Moore (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011), pp. 33-64; T. Campbell, "Translator's Introduction," in R. Esposito (ed.), *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. and intro. T. Campbell (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), vii-xlii; A. Negri, "Giorgio Agamben, The Discreet Taste of the Dialectic," in M. Calarco and S. DeCaroli (eds.), *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 109-125.

Between *Paideía* and *Mystagōgía*: Formative Ideal and the Crisis of Today

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Introduction

It is not easy to obtain an accurate understanding of what is particular to the formative ideals that various European cultural traditions have. A syncretism of values and traditions, an overlap of spiritual values and interpreting perspectives is an improper, but yet the most handy, solution for an interpreter, if being still under the influence (either conscious or not) of the Enlightenment and Rationalism (still having a significant influence nowadays). When searching for an adequate interpretation, we are found in a strange cultural situation nowadays, as the paideutic paradigm that crosses both the education system and the present cultural values still owes much to the ideals of Enlightenment. If proposing to follow the meaning of edification for present day women and men, we must establish the original frameworks that allow us this research and guide us towards it. Our tough conscience to have an individuality that may not be altered or diminished originates in the intuitions and formulations of Late Antiquity.

The 4th century AD was the time when a new mentality and new interpretation manner, unknown by Late Antiquity (at least at the cultural level), began to make an impact, i.e. Christianity. At first, the refined Neo-Platonic thinking that dominated philosophy did not view the Christian message as a challenge, yet, with the emergence of writings by the Cappadocian Fathers and other early Patristic authors, it became obvious that the new spirituality brought along a kind of asceticism and mysticism that could definitely not be ignored. Conversely, the Christian Fathers in the decisive 4th century AD had to express a practical and practicing understanding of the evangelic message, and they achieved this using Neo-Platonic language.

Paideía, Neo-Platonic and Christian

The tension between the Christian and the Neo-Platonic understandings of the ultimate meaning of human experience lay, not so much in the texts and discourses, but in the significance of concrete experience and in the inner experience of the self. The antagonism was not between two manners of *explaining* the world, but between two ways of *living* the world. The philosophy in late Antiquity involved a practical path of inner experience through the statements of a system of thought, which involved asceticism and also what may be described as mysticism. Asceticism had become a necessity of the practice of philosophy, for concentration, focus and the strengthening of capacities that jointly assured the achievement of the philosophical undertaking, which was

not limited to theory. The term “mysticism” covers the content of this type of philosophical practice –although it is commonly associated with religious acts – as the goal was *ek-stasis*, the coming out of one’s self. If, over time, the influence of the Neo-Platonic spiritual and formative path declined, it was because, both in practical terms and in its promise, Christian mysticism proved its superiority.¹ The Athens Academy had simply lost its following among the Greek aristocracy. The well-off citizens of Athens, and of the Empire in general, would send their offspring to attend the courses of the famous school, since it guaranteed the consummate instruction, not only of the students’ minds, but also of their personality.²

By its very design, the Academy aimed at something different than the acquisition of solid knowledge of philosophy. The Greek-Hellenistic cultural tradition had long been skeptical of knowledge accumulation in itself and for itself. The initiation required, at first, the mastery of the rules of formal logic. Thus, after the cycle of a *paideía* common to any town school had been passed, the Late Academy proposed a level called *preparation mysteries*, which focused mostly on the systematic study of Aristotle. The other level consisted of two stages, the first cycle being marked by the ideal of forming what the Greeks would call the *political man*, the individual who understood and practiced civic virtues. The objective was achieved by studying some of the more accessible dialogues of Plato. Yet the goal of this education system was achieved only in the last stage, which involved the study of the most difficult of Plato’s dialogues, such as *Timaios* or *Parmenides*, and, subsequently, the initiation to rigorous ascetic practices and also to Orphic mysticism and Chaldean oracles. This orientation in the training of the individual was sought by Christian *paideía* as well, yet the differences appeared in the description and the understanding of the last stage of initiation. The path of the union with the One, the Neo-Platonist theme, presupposed the doctrine of emanation. Yet the Christian doctrine vigorously emphasized the difference in nature between the created and the uncreated, asserting that there was an absolute difference between the two, whereas the theory of emanation considered that the mystical act of contemplation (*ek-stasis*) was possible due to the *shared nature* of the human mind and the Ultimate Reality, the One.

The Byzantines, as promoters of new the Christian formative paradigm, never abandoned principles of the Greek and Hellenistic-inspired *paideía*, and even largely maintained the contents of this model of forming the individual. Yet the difference with this heritage occurred when the ultimate claims of the

¹ I would like to repeat that the argument is not over the theoretical and discursive superiority (although in this area too Christianity brought exceptional change), but the motivation offered by the contents of an inner experience. In this manner one can explain the closing down of the Athens Academy by emperor Justinian in the year 529 AD. Although certain modern historians have considered it a brutal act of censorship of anything that did not reflect Christian thought, a more thorough evaluation of the context of the decision has proven that the reality was different.

² A. Ducellier, *Les Byzantins* (Paris: Seuil, 1963), p. 184.

old *paideia* were considered: to make one capable of attaining union with the One *by himself*, by his own power, the highest goal of Neo-Platonism.

New Description of Human's Open Existence and Need of Initiation

This was viewed as impossible from the Christian perspective, so that it was thought that the ultimate experience could not be result of any type of formal instruction, but of a different guidance, which could be called practical spiritual guidance. The latter can only be achieved through *spiritual guidance*, an exclusively face to face relationship, yet one which did not equate to the passing on of information or techniques, because, for the first time, the absolute and radical uniqueness of personal experience was acknowledged. Of particular significance was the understanding of the human from this novel perspective. Gregory of Nyssa and Basil the Great faced the task of describing an existential situation which could not be confined to the classical Greek philosophy understanding of nature (*ousia*). In light of the explicit or implicit presentation of the Holy Trinity in the Gospels, its essential characteristic is the Personal dimension, one not being conditioned by the Divine Nature. Christian doctrine was the first one to establish the boundaries that enable the recognition of man's free existence. Freedom, in the proper sense, involves the possibility to overcome conditioning and predetermined frameworks. The postulation of man's personal dimension (*hypóstasis*) marked an essential leap, compared with the philosophical understanding of man up to that point.

The pinnacle of the Greek meditation on man's existential situation was Tragedy, which described the individual's forever unsuccessful attempt to evade the fate that ruled his life.³ Tragedy was the limit that Greek meditation could attain in reflecting on man's effort to suspend his conditionings, because there were no arguments in favor of man's capacity to genuinely alter the course of his existence. Christian doctrine did not merely accredit the fact that man is able to make decisions freely and to realize his decisions, it also emphasized the possibility that man can radically change his way of living, his own existential condition, to be in other words an *open* existence. Of course, such a statement involves paradox, being very difficult to make reliable statements about human. The paradox required the use of a different type of language, called "apophatic," which is based mainly on negation and suspension in order to escape the trap of describing what cannot be positively stated in any way. Consequently, the only way to express the personal mode of existence is to exceed conceptual language (which frames the object of its description in definitions and details), and to adopt a new acceptance of the terms' use, which alludes to an apophatic reality, rather than categorizing it in some way. The word is given the role of *indicator*, signaling a reality that eludes conceptual frameworks and even simple description.

The understanding of a fundamental difference between God and World was full of consequences for the way in which the possibility of knowledge

³ I. Zizioulas, *Ființa eclesială (Being as Communion)* (București: Bizantină, 1996), p. 33.

was conceived. In the Greek horizon before Christianity, it was stated that the possibility of knowing the truth was offered by the co-naturalness of the human mind with God, because the world is not ontically different from God, but it is an emanation of Him. But the Christian doctrine brings the conscience of an unsurpassed abyss between the created mind and uncreated God, and therefore it is impossible for the mind to find out about God on its own. For this reason, it was necessary to reconsider the acceptance of philosophy as a truth-searching exercise. To philosophize could not any longer mean a rational effort to grasp the mysteries of reality. Yet this did not mean a rejection of the value of classic philosophic exercise, as made by Plato or Aristotle. But a preparatory role was granted to this way of searching, a very important one, in the economy of searching, the ultimate purpose of the philosophical exercise.⁴ It was called “*exōterikós*”; however, this did not describe an inferior level, but it pointed out that this is the maximum possibility that the human effort could reach in knowledge; it is what we call the knowledge from the *outside*. This “outside” means the lack of something which can offer true and complete knowledge, “being outside” the relation what could deliver the truth. For the entire cultural history of the Christian East, practicing this outside philosophy was considered to be forming the mind’s possibilities to discern, because any higher spiritual experience⁵ has many dangers, such as the risk of falling into an imaginary frame of mind, as long as the rational capacities are not completely formed. It has been considered that instruction in the classic Greek philosophical texts could accomplish this formative task. For this spiritual horizon, the Truth is not *something* any longer but *Someone*. Reaching the truth takes the form of a personal relation with the Truth as Someone, as a Person. In this understanding, we can no longer talk about an objective knowledge of the truth, so the much used later difference of modernity between the objective and the subjective becomes useless.⁶

Outer and Inner Philosophy: Paideía and Mystagōgía

More importantly, there is also an inner philosophy, *from the inside*, which received the name “*esōterikós*.”⁷ This philosophy does not follow the rigor of the Greek classic rationality: its specific form is given by that which is characteristic of each person in his/her opening to communion with Logos, with God. This is the reason why, in its intimacy, this part of philosophy is situated higher than the speech, it names the depth of the personal relation between the

⁴ S. Runciman, *The Last Byzantine Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 85.

⁵ Which today we call *mystical*, but it did not have this name because it did not have the exceptional character we associate today to mystical experience, but it had a signification of an experience through which anyone could search the true path to Christ.

⁶ M. Costa De Beauregard, D. Stăniloae, *Mica Dogmatică vorbită (The Little Spoken Dogmatic)* (Sibiu: Deisis, 1995), p. 86.

⁷ C. Cavaros, *Byzantine Thought and Art* (Massachusetts: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1968), p. 15.

Creator and the creature, a relation always unique and non-repeatable. Nevertheless, reason is not absent from this experience, but takes superior forms which cannot be simply placed in a discursive expression. This is also the place where the paradox of this expression lays, in an experience which does not go around reason, but it cannot be put into words either. This is the most practical dimension of philosophy, one that involves the entire being, all of the human capacities and has, as its consequence, a change of man in his depth, which received the name *metánoia* in the Patristic texts. It means a change of mind, not as in a modification of its function, a decrease or alteration of its rational capacities, but as in opening of it to the understanding of what is above the creation; it is a *participation* with the uncreated. The consequences of this experience are much more ample; they imply the whole human being, even the body. There are changes also in the references to the world, in the way we interact with it, so that we could talk about a *real* influence of man upon the world through his inner changes and not through external direct actions or things. From this point of view, we can even say that a subtle influence, but one which implies precisely the profound way of existence of the world, is the consequence of the achievement of this *metánoia*, rather than the outer interaction with the objectivity of this world.

The recuperation of this understanding is very productive nowadays, not just for philosophical discourse, but also for the orientation of educational models. In fact, the broader issue that needs clarification is how a certain doctrine on the person can be relevant for contemporary education. When man is understood as a modality of personal existence, he is not just a simple piece in a universal aggregate that is guided by immutable laws. The positivism that dominated the practice of science over the last three centuries (whose influence is strong to this day) could not lend man anything more than the role of a ring in a chain of determination that is under the strict command of the causal laws of nature. This vision could hardly find a meaning for the notion of human freedom. The notion of person could not be understood under scientific research. As far as classical science is concerned, guided as it is by the rules of positive experiment and of its verifiability, *personal reality* as a mode of interaction with the world cannot even be considered. Yet, contemporary border science is in the situation to resort to what lies beyond the visible, especially when it must offer the description of a certain reality that eludes conventional scientific explanation. It increasingly takes into account the elements pertaining to the “data” of the personal mode of existence and influence. To a certain extent, advanced research in neurosciences could describe the influence that man can have on the world, or on himself, by spiritual practices. So, the contemporary recuperation of the Eastern Christian perspective on the person can have significant consequences.

Conclusion

This understanding can offer a different answer to the question about human freedom, to the question of how this freedom can be described and under-

stood. If the signification of freedom were to go beyond the borders of moral and moralizing discourse, then a consistent description of the effectiveness of the person's influence must be offered, from the perspective of the relationship between freedom and determinism. The person is not a static reality; it is something that can be, rather, intuited. However, what we might call *dynamism*, in this case, is not exactly used simply to describe or to frame. The person is a reality that "does not stand," in its very fundamental grounds. It "moves," i.e. "it is in the making," it becomes that which it was not. Wo/man is not; he/she *becomes*, for he is called to go beyond himself, to be united with a nature beyond himself and all creation. The apophatism of the person is a phrase that must be interpreted in the light of this latter statement. The language of negation is more appropriate when one aims to talk about something that ceaselessly makes oneself and is, beyond oneself, in union with something above the self. Yet one must add that this calling and this proper feature of the person does not point to a single path, because everything is discussed within the limits of identity, of the unrepeatability, of unity. Nothing else exists but concrete persons, and the concrete, unique and unrepeatable experience of each of them. Although wo/man, as personal reality, has freedom by his very constitution, the manifestation of this freedom supposes something more or something less; it supposes a certain way of becoming actual that cannot be presupposed beforehand. Typical for the Eastern Christian spirituality is the notion of *betterment*, understood as a process of enhancing human's humanity. This progress, or *betterment*, as it is termed, can be described as the attaining of somebody's "measure." So, somebody's identity is not a fixed configuration of psychological characteristics, but a kind of virtual tendency that can be, more or less, actualized.

Yet this road to somebody's betterment requires guidance, and this guidance is an act that cannot be done by following a manual, or a book, because of the concreteness and non-repeatability of the personal mode of existence. The Byzantines used the ancient Greek word "mystagōgía" for this guidance, intending, by this naming, to indicate that there is rather an initiation than a teaching, than something related to the classical *paideía*. I consider this formative dimension as the missing aspect of today's education. We need, today, a formative strategy that should compensate just the building of practical or theoretical abilities, this compensation being the *initiation process*, as a personal guidance dedicated to concrete and unique persons. This mystagogical approach can be described as the discovery of what is non-repeatable, of what is not to be found in any categorical description. In that way, the human potential can be unleashed, otherwise never to be activated or to be insufficiently activated by the current educational strategy. Such a formative ideal stands under what is called *spiritual humanism*,⁸ a form of humanism that must compensate and correct the problematic features of Early Modernity's secular humanism, that one which hypostasized mathematical reason as privileged

⁸ As it is described, for example, by T. Weiming in *Humanity and Self-Cultivation: Essays in Confucian Thought* (Boston: Cheng & Tsui, 1998).

human capacity. It becomes obvious that, besides the economic crisis today, we face other types of crises, the educational one being more critical in the longer term.

Faith as the Form of Reintegration

SERGEY NIZHNIKOV

When analyzing the history of culture one can come to the conclusion, that a person, at all times, experienced spiritual crisis of a certain depth, the contradictions of which forced him to develop spiritually; however, the situation in the contemporary world is especially frightful, for, as a result of every possible kind of global accident, not only can certain tribes or states be destroyed, but all of mankind can be eliminated. Spiritual crisis has taken on a menacing scale and depth. First of all, there are problems of war, ecology and morals, which are closely integrated with each other. As humankind loses the characters of its spiritual archetype, a person loses its humaneness. Therefore, it is so necessary to reveal immemorial values with new force.

The loss of faith, Dostoevsky considered, leads to individual (Kirillov in *Devils*) or collective (global contemporary problems) suicide. Contemporary people meditate “to find a fairy life, but after rejecting Christ, they terminate their life by saturating the world with blood, for blood calls for blood, and the one who raises a sword dies by a sword.”¹ The absence of faith, according to the thought of the writer, results in violence and crimes, but also, and this is the worst, in the irresponsibility of man, “since if you have no God, then what is then a crime?”² Sometimes, there are such examples of human being’s desperate situations that only faith can help. The idea of faith is the absolute spiritual protection from all of the misfortunes of a man’s life. It is clear that the idea on its own is not enough. In order to become a spiritual one, it has to materialize in a person, not only in his mind, but in his heart and feeling. The inner “sensors” of a man should be transformed in accordance with the idea. To make such a transformation possible, there should be a heroic act that is all spiritual and living experience. The spiritual existence of Christianity is the manifestation of such a kind of faith idea. The realization of this display is metaphysics and ontology of faith. In compliance with it, “faith is not momentum, a situation of human soul that constantly changes, but its permanent specific tonus –*integrity*, or *virtue* of spirit.”³ In the process of faith comprehension as a spiritual phenomenon, we should not perform its psychological analyses. Faith, in this aspect, is not just psychological confidence, but a fundamental existential and metaphysical orientation. Dostoevsky describes it in the following way: “Do believe till the last possible moment, let it be that all people in the world lost their faith and you are the only one who keeps it...”⁴

¹ F.M. Dostoevsky, *The Karamazov Brothers*, Complete edition in 30 volumes, Vol. 14 (Leningrad: “Science,” 1976), p. 288.

² *Ibid.*, p. 286.

³ G.V. Florovsky, “Human Wisdom and Divine Wisdom,” in *Of Old Russian Thoughts* (Moscow: “Agraf,” 1998), 74-86, p. 84.

⁴ Dostoevsky, *The Karamazov Brothers*, p. 291.

A lot of authors and thinkers of our day write on the actuality of faith. Richard Niebuhr, meditating over the present position and state of mankind, comes to conclusion that “faith is the problem that has the utmost importance.”⁵ From Russian metaphysical philosophy, the loss of faith gives birth to social disease, leads to crises of culture and personality, and in the end, to a tragedy, since, if there is no absolute value that is the goal of faith, then there is nothing to create, and, hence “the culture as concept is impossible.”⁶ Faith sets the horizon of experience and cognition “...discloses the essence of things and gives birth to gnosis.”⁷

Faith practically determines the general world outlook of a person and its own central line. In this sense, the elimination of faith threatens to eliminate the creative ability of a person to fulfill his directive aims and to achieve his goals in general, because of the destruction of the spiritual structure of his personality. The necessity of faith follows from the position of a person in the world and from the existence of consciousness as an integral phenomenon. Only the divine consciousness can be totally filled up with knowledge, a human one, when being steadily deployed, can also increase the horizon and level of that which is unidentified. For the activity of man in the world, and for the substantiation of morality, he needs an absolute position that comes from the supposition that he is cognizant of everything, that he needs the concept of the initial reason of every being, of absolute virtue. Faith meets these requirements.

The religious spiritual symbols represent such human ideals, like metaphysical categories do. An ideal, as it is the ideal by its nature, is supposed to be treated on the basis of faith that, by the way, does not exclude knowledge. Faith in general demonstrates the relation of the self-consciousness of a person towards spiritual items inside his or her own consciousness. In this aspect, faith does not contradict the reason, but, in the same way, it finds its roots within a person’s ability for speculative activity that serves as a basis for the development of philosophy and religion.

The concept of faith is extremely complicated and may be interpreted from different sides. In the spiritual sphere, faith can be characterized as pure spiritual guidance. God, as an object of faith, is the pure fundamental spiritual concept. Faith is a process of transcending to Him. The absolute faith, to its fullest meaning, confirms that a person has obtained his essence, has disclosed it and has understood its reality, in spiritual meditation of the object of faith. Being represented, himself, before God in his prayer, a man, through transcending, obtains his immanent being, his essence. The level of faith shows the ratio of deployment of the essence of a man. The Bhagavad-Gita says, in connection to this: “In conformity with the essence of a man is his faith Bharat. A man is created by faith; he is the same as his faith.”⁸

⁵ R. Niebuhr, *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture*, in *Christ and Culture: Selected Works of Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr* (Moscow: “The Lawyer,” 1996), 225-374, p. 227.

⁶ P.A. Florensky, *The Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius*, in *Compositions in 4 Volumes*, Vol. 2 (Moscow: “The Thought,” 1996), 352-369, p. 357.

⁷ S.N. Bulgakov, *Light Unfading* (Moscow: “The Republic,” 1994), p. 59.

⁸ *Bhagavad-Gita* (Ashkhabad: “Il’um,” 1951), p. 147.

Here is disclosed one more gnoseological aspects of faith that is specified by a number of philosophers. This is being confident of the outer world's existence. Like D. Hume, a German thinker contemporary of I. Kant, i.e. J.G. Hamann (1730-1788), considered faith to be the basic argument for confidence of real existence of outer things. Faith, in his opinion, can provide things that all the abstract philosophy cannot do, with all of the apparatus of its volumes of proofs. In accordance to Hume, belief exists as a gnoseological phenomenon and faith as a spiritual concept, both of which are mixed, as per Hamann. He says: "Things that are believed at do not need confirmation and vice versa it is possible to prove irrefutably some concept and to have no faith in it."⁹ Then, he continues: "Faith is not a product of reason so it cannot be attacked by it, since faith appears as a result of deduction same often as a result of eyesight." It turns out; faith is based and rooted on the fundamental stone of sensation, for experience is defined as "the only initial source of any possible knowledge." As per Hamann, thus, the sensualization of faith concept took place, which is not acceptable for the metaphysics of faith.

In German philosophy, meditation concerning faith was continued by F.H. Jacobi (1743-1819). He was the nearest predecessor of the later "positive philosophy" of F. Schelling. His former enemy, Schelling, is valued for his criticism of philosophical rationality, though even the latest Shelling could not absolutely agree with Jacobi, for his treatment of nature and knowledge relied exclusively on faith. The purpose of Positive philosophy, according to Schelling, consists in the *cognition* of the Absolute. At the same time, knowledge should have no points of contact with mythical revelation or theosophy. For the "expression 'faith' that has the utmost value in religion," Hegel remarks, "is used by Jacobi for definition of all other kinds of content."

Many works by Russian philosopher S.N. Bulgakov (1871-1944) are devoted to analyses of the concept of faith as an ideal. "Faith is a function of a freedom," he declares. Russian religious philosophy in general, within the frames of Christianity –Orthodox Christology– accumulated a lot of fundamental concepts of faith. To begin with, Bulgakov speaks against the extended comprehension of faith as a relation to all trans-subjective being (S.L. Frank), against the "secularization of faith concept" per Jacobi, who related it to empirical things as well. The philosopher notes that such an understanding of faith comes from Kant's statement of subjectivity of any perception, which results in the idea that, to make the things an objective perception, you should have faith in its being, as the empirical sense of reality is based on some specific intuition. According to this "mythical empirics," faith is present in every act of cognition. In the beginning of the 20th century such faith understandings will be seconded by E. Husserl. But Bulgakov speaks against such a "terminology mixture" as the intuition of empirical reality and metaphysical faith. If, in the first case, faith has practical roots and stays within the limits of the partite sphere, then, in the second case, it is gnoseological. In first sense, the

⁹ See V.F. Asmus, *Problems of Intuition in Philosophy and Mathematics* (Moscow: "The Thought," 2004), p. 42.

reality of faith is verified in an experimental empirical way, here, to have faith is to “feel.” The metaphysic of faith, to the contrary, “certifies the existence of other, transcendent reality and our connection with it.”¹⁰ Its objective has a *qualitative* difference. This kind of faith is characterized by personal, free and creative seeking, and not by the statistical existence of a sensual object. Such faith cannot last, if the spiritual momentum of its progress weakens, it is an act that should be repeated, again and again, to “keep” it.

Bulgakov opposes faith in the form of “secrecy knowledge,” as some mystery for which superstitious people eagerly look. Faith is not anything like a secret that is guarded from those who are not adept. At the same time, it is a mystery, unconditionally beyond man’s abilities, since its object is a transcendent one. Only transcendence can be considered as the true mystery: “Transcendental can be defined as such only by faith,” for it is beyond cognition, higher than it. From here comes the necessity of revelation. Revelation is understood by Bulgakov as “a necessary gnoseological element of faith”: faith does not deny gnosis, “it gives birth and impregnates it: ‘Love the Lord by all your heart and by all your soul (i.e. by will), and by all your understanding (i.e. by gnosis).’”¹¹

Materialism and atheism often define faith as a superstition. However, superstitions are based on the naturalistic determination of reality; although it is influenced by spiritual forces, faith represents, by itself, a speculative construction that is a spiritual, theoretical perception of the world and of a human life. There is no doubt that superstitions can mix in both faith and science, but it is necessary to distinguish the principal difference between them. In the hierarchy of the cognitive abilities of a man, faith, from metaphysical point of view, occupies one of the highest positions. The superstitions form a negative side of cognition, then proceeding to objectivity, followed by feelings and senses, then comes reason (science), intellect (philosophy) and, at last, faith (metaphysical, philosophical and religious). The last helps to disclose things that are beyond sensual experience and positive cognition. Faith is gnostic knowledge. Here, thus, appears the hierarchy, the situation wherein faith is to be considered as primary in relation to such kinds of knowledge. Keeping priority in the sphere of theognosis, faith does not deny necessity and the importance of positive cognition and knowledge. But its role becomes a secondary one, auxiliary, and does not comprise a spiritual character. The purpose of this knowledge is to confirm, to work out the concept, to form judgments and conclusions, to supply reasons and find the basis, to arrange and systemize. This is how G. Leibniz (1646-1716) calls the reason “natural revelation”; faith, he calls, “a supernatural reason,” that, in any case, should not deny natural revelation, otherwise it risks becoming a superstition.¹² When faith starts to deny the significance of the positive method of cognition or to oppose it to

¹⁰ Bulgakov, *Light Unfading*, p. 34.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹² G.W. Leibniz, *About Faith, Mind and Their Boundaries*, in *Works in 4 volumes*, Vol. 2 (Moscow: “The Thought,” 1983), 511-519, p. 519.

itself, then it is transforming into something absolutely irrational and useless for man, and into a superstition in the long run. We can see such distortions of faith in concepts of Tertullian and Lev Shestov (1866-1938).

From the other side, faith that tries to gain a foothold on the conclusions of reason transfers into something formal, entirely dependent on the logical and cognizing abilities of a man. In the long run, such a ratio results in the total absorption of faith by reason, or in its denial, both of which are unacceptable for the metaphysic of faith. In Russian philosophy, brothers E.N. and S.N. Trubetskoi have chosen a methodology that leads to the described results and, thus, in contradiction of L. Shestov, came from one extreme to another. In the middle ages, West European scholasticism is displayed in the same way by St. Thomas Aquinas, who said “it is impossible that revealed truth of faith has opposite principles which are cognized by reason in a natural way (*quae ratio naturaliter cognoscit*).” However, when the reason is allowed to enjoy intellectual and material satisfaction, then faith is pure spiritual plenty. Knowledge is compulsory, faith is free (Shestov). A man believes in the Absolute, not because its being can be proved. Knowledge is the truth that exists as a reality and it does not need personal participation, for its affirmation or grounding. Faith –subjective, even if it is not of common significance– is a certainty as a personal one. Faith is a product of the fusion of the Abrahamic revelation and ancient metaphysics. It is gnosis of a specific form, a knowledge that cannot be proved, but which invests reason into everything that can be proved.

Along with it, faith, if we look at it in the fundamental metaphysical sense, is not something that absolutely contradicts knowledge. Indeed, faith and knowledge are two different methods of cognition, but they coincide in essence, especially in the case when we consider knowledge, not as empirical, but as the mind-view philosophical concept. Then, faith is a special type of knowledge, characterized by its super-mind depth. According to Russian philosopher V.I. Neshmelov (1863-1937), faith is the “direct intuitive cognition of transcendent reality.”¹³ Faith is a special type of cognition of speculative reality. Very similar to this is saying of Maximus the Confessor: “Faith is knowledge that cannot be proved.”¹⁴

We can clear up the comprehension of the concept of theological questioning and faith through analyses in the works of M. Heidegger, where he states a difference between faith and philosophical questioning, both of which are united by essence, from the point of view of the spiritual phenomenon reflected in them.

In Heidegger’s concept of the attitude toward theology, all is clear; his several replicas are very eloquent at all times, even when they are, likewise, negative. At one of his seminars, he said “*We express our respect to theology by saying nothing about it.*”¹⁵ Nevertheless, he notes that the “... strained rela-

¹³ V.I. Neshmelov, *Faith and Knowledge from Gnoseological Point of View* (Kazan: Ver-nissage, 1992), p. 59.

¹⁴ Maximus the Confessor, *Creations*, Book 1 and 2 (Moscow: “Martis,” 1993).

¹⁵ R. Safransky, *Heidegger: A German Master and His Time* (Moscow: “The Young Guard,” 2005), p. 190.

tionship between ontology and speculative theology –this structural specific of metaphysics– was included into closest sphere of my research,”¹⁶ that without “... initial theological education I would never started on my way of thinking.”¹⁷ Along with it, Heidegger admitted that “The true aim of theology, to which theology should return again, is concluded in looking for a word that can summon to faith and keep within faith.”¹⁸

Theologizers of 20th century were aware of this task and tried to solve it using, though it may seem strange, the works of M. Heidegger. As per P. Tillich, “Historical role of Heidegger is that he fulfilled existential analyses of courage to be oneself more profoundly than anyone else.”¹⁹ Tillich, same as Heidegger, considered that the being of a man is the only key to the Being as it is: “... A man has discovered that the key to cognition of fundamental levels of reality is within himself and that exclusively his own existence gives him possibility to cognize the Being in general.”²⁰ A man has an inner connection with Being, but at the same time is separated from it in his life. Heidegger aims to eliminate this separation, as does European theology of 20th century, both Protestant and Catholic. So K. Rahner –an outstanding German Catholic theologian– did not reject Thomism, but, at the same time, created within it a fundamental anthropological overturn, when he realized that it is impossible to speak about the God and not to speak about a man at the same time. The basis of his concept was both the transcendence of Kant and the analyses *Da-sein* of Heidegger; that is why he got the reputation as “true successor of German philosophical thought from Kant till Heidegger.”²¹ Both Tillich and Rahner successfully interpreted Heidegger’s concept of Being in a theological manner, making use of any possible experience of new ontology, transcendence and existentialism, to meet the requirements of contemporary man for faith.

Heidegger wrote: “Theology by the sense of the word means the science about the God though the God is not in the least the object of its research.”²² He also showed the way out: “While anthropology-sociological and existential conceptualizing is not overcome and put aside the theology will not be able to speak freely about things she is supposed to speak about.”²³ James M. Robinson notes, in his work *Discussions of Late Heidegger*, “for non-meta-

¹⁶ H. Ott, *Martin Heidegger: Unterwegs zu seiner Biographie* (Frankfurt a.M./New York: Campus Verlag, 1988), p. 60.

¹⁷ M. Heidegger, *Unterwegs zur Sprache* (Pfullingen: Verlag Günther Neske, 1959), p. 96.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁹ P. Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, in *Selected: Theology of Culture* (Moscow: “The Lawyer,” 1995), 131-202, p. 105.

²⁰ P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I (Moscow-St. Petersburg: “The University Book,” 2000), p. 65.

²¹ A. Gorelov, “Karl Rahner of God and Man,” in K. Rahner, *The Foundation of Faith: Introduction to Christian Theology* (Moscow: St. Andrew’s Biblical Theological Institute, 2006), XV-XXI, p. XXI.

²² M. Heidegger, *Phenomenology and Theology*, in *Martin Heidegger and Theology*, Part I (Moscow: Institute of Philosophy, 1975), 2-28, p.14.

²³ Robinson, *Discussions of Late Heidegger*, p. 36.

physic God the door remains open.”²⁴ “In case there should exist some theology,” he continues, seconding Heidegger, “then it should become non-speculative clarification of faith content from its inside.”²⁵ In this connection, it is necessary to note that, up to the present time, neither in philosophy, nor in theology is the ontology of faith itself considered in details, but this problem needs fundamental attention.

Though, by the usage of the achievements of Heidegger’s philosophical method (existential analytics *Da-sein*), faith can be considered as central metaphysic problem, the most important metaphysic-existential one, a specific attribute of *Da-sein*, even more important, to our opinion, than *horror* and *concern*, which are indicated in Heidegger’s analytic. It turns out that ontology-existential philosophy is more capable of comprehension of this phenomenon, for it possesses the appropriate method. Faith, here, is the “hope of being,” in which a man is supposed to exist, i.e. as if trying to associate the real meaningful spiritual life. Transcending, for being a man is deploying the immanent within him. Some kinds of contemporary theology aspire to use the ontology of faith as a foot hold by using the method of Heidegger and discarding the previously mentioned objectification, and number one among them is Karl Rahner.

P. Tillich longed to make peace between faith and culture, R. Bultmann and D. Bonhoeffer tried to de-mythologize it, and Karl Rahner aims at discovering an ontological foundation that is closer to a philosophical analysis of faith. He moves in a backward way from Heidegger: fundamental-existential ontology leads him, not from, but right toward faith.

At the basis of a man’s being, as K. Rahner found it out, lies *transcendental experience*, which comprises the experience of *transcendence*. He believes that this experience, this “lighted-darkness of theology,” “absolute sacred mystery”²⁶ provides “some certain anonymous and non-thematic knowledge of the God.”²⁷ For Rahner, He is original transcendental experience that is beyond adequate cognition and in conceptional reflection. He is mystery.²⁸ Along with it, “the talk of God is reflection indicating original, non-thematic and non-reflection knowledge of the God”;²⁹ “in metaphysical reflection we just express things that prior to words we have known about ourselves long before within the depth of our personal self-actualization.”³⁰ In transcendence, Rainer supposes, the God is represented as non-thematic and non-conceptual. All our cognition is just-*indication* to him. This is something *Absolute* and *Gigantic*, *sacred mystery*, *transcendence of love*, this “*Where to*” *transcendence*, *direction to absolute mystery*, is some constant task posed before a man by nature itself.³¹

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Rahner, *The Foundation of Faith*, p. 30.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³¹ *Ibid.*

Consciousness, by the use of faith, is able to be concentrated in a spot within a central symbol or an idea that may result in a splash of self-consciousness, the realization of transcendence as a spiritual process. Faith turns out to be “an implicit metaphysic,” “a mute knowledge” of the original source of existing.³² It is the spiritual art of creating a human being and creating humanity in a human being. Faith is not an object, but a process, an intrinsic spiritual mood, “motiveless joy of one’s own being,”³³ of its openness to Being. Faith is not a property, so it is impossible to “have” it, as any other spiritual intention. But it is possible to be grasped by faith in a process of transcendence. It appears as a result of questioning: “Do not ask where the God is but seek for him” (Serafim Sarovski). According to Heidegger, faith is concluded in the “specific existential possibility” that is prior to theology and philosophy.³⁴

Morality stands the closest to faith. This was distinctly and profoundly understood by Kant, when he developed the foundation of ethic-theology. But he deprived faith, not only of metaphysic, but also of ontology, because, within frame of new European categorical and naturalistic thinking, it was impossible to speak about it. The only possible thing was to postulate the categorical imperative. But, by doing that, Kant gave way to the possibility of other faith analytics appearing, which can be put into practice coming from Heidegger’s *Da-sein*, where existence is combined with ontology. However, Heidegger was rather more engaged in being itself than in faith, which was its attribute, though the most important one. The most important existence, as per Heidegger, a specific “pre-ontological mood” (*Stimmung*) is *concern*.³⁵ But it may be that the being itself as basic mood is displayed through faith *Da-sein*, constituent in the sense of presence?! Gadamer writes that, in criticizing the reference of theology by Heidegger (impossible without faith in its essence) to ontic sciences,

“It is obvious that this theoretical scientific thesis –is a deliberate provocation. In faith you meet what you believe at,– and in the same time it is possible only in case if faith in general falls under conceptual interpretation. Is it not that ‘anything one believes at’ should be either object or objective sphere, similar to objective sphere of chemical substances or live substances? May it be that faith –same as philosophy– comprise all human dasein and the mankind world as the universe?”³⁶

³² A.V. Semushkin, “Metaphysic of Faith as a Problem of Cognition,” Foreword to S.A. Nizhnikov, *Metaphysic of Faith in Russian Philosophy* (Moscow: Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia, 2001), 3-5, p. 4.

³³ V.D.A. Gubin, “Mood as a Philosophy Problem,” *Philotheos: International Journal for Philosophy and Theology*, 6 (Beograd 2006), 61-72, p. 62.

³⁴ M. Heidegger, *Phänomenologie und Theologie* (Frankfurt a.M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1970), p. 32.

³⁵ M. Denn, “Husserl–Heidegger: Way to Restoring of Ontological Question and Significance of These Problematics in Dialog between West and East,” in *Russian Philosophy and Orthodoxy in the Context of World Culture*, International Scientific Conference (Krasnodar: Publisher “World of Kuban,” 2005), 99-111, p. 100.

³⁶ H.-G. Gadamer, *Ways of Heidegger: Research Works of Later Period* (Moscow: “Propylaeas,” 2007), p. 203.

The concept of philosophical faith was developed by a friend of Heidegger, who later became his opponent, Karl Jaspers; in this concept, he tried “to negotiate the breadth of philosophical knowledge unity, to bring together heterogeneous and multi directional trends of philosophical cultures to unite it in new spirituality that supposed to satisfy both rational-cognition and mood-valued requirements of the time.”³⁷

A.V. Semushkin considers this concept of Jaspers as a “result and perspective of west European philosophical process”, as the “real and hopeless embarrassment of western philosophical thought,” as “a traditional disease of European philosophy”³⁸ (including the Russian one, – *S.N.*), that is reflected in the constant argument of faith and knowledge, of philosophy and theology. That is exactly in that existentialism coincides the “critical reflectiveness of philosophy and groundless inclination of faith,” as far as

“it expects to break open the boundaries of faith and reason for their mutual approach to each and under this process they inevitably clear of their limits and develop in its essence and significance. Therefore, faith and reason are supposed not to affirm themselves in their egoistic isolation but compliantly and good naturally justify each other in experience of mutual enrichment on the way to the truth.”³⁹

The task of philosophical comprehension of the ontology of universal faith is not only theoretically exciting, but also extremely fascinating, when, in the globalizing world, a conflict of certain interpretations of faith occurs. And contradictions in the spiritual sphere produce all other kinds of conflicts within inter-civilization, inter-cultural and inter-religious levels. The deployment of the ontological, i.e. universal faith level will create a basis for the spiritual unity of mankind, upon which basis can be solved the global problems of contemporaneity, “to unite spiritually disintegrated mankind.”⁴⁰

³⁷ A.V. Semushkin, “Philosophical Faith of Existentialism and Its Claims for Universal Ideology,” in N.S. Kirabaev (ed.), *Globalization and Multiculturalism*, Collective Monograph (Moscow: Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia, 2005), 232-250, pp. 232-233.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁴⁰ Semushkin, “Philosophical Faith,” p. 242.

From Old Age to New Age: Eastern Monism as a Reaction to the Ecological Crisis of the West

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It is a fact that, nowadays, we are experiencing an acute environmental crisis. The climate change, the natural catastrophes, the acid rains, the irremediable disappearance of many species, the playing out of the resources, etc., are the effects of about two hundred years of industrialization. In fact, all of these, and many others, are the payback for our own comfort as specie. Of course, for any responsible human being, it is a “must” to stop the ecological degradation, as it is for any decision factor in this world, no matter if it is public or private, political or economic. Many short, medium and long term plans were elaborated especially by different countries or international organizations of the world. But it seems that it is not enough. It needs more than a political decision to stop the irremediable destruction of the environment, more than few thousand environmental associations and foundations to repair what was undone and more than an ecological education to work for a better environment. It seems that the changes have to be, first of all, at the level of the individual consciousness, deeper than the “wormy” ecological attitude acquired in an afternoon eco-workshop. This profound change at the level of consciousness implies a consistent changing of the worldview, a re-examination of the fundamental beliefs, the assuming or rediscovering of a specific ontology and cosmology, and, in fact, a reevaluation of the world in relation with its Creator. For acquiring such profound changes, it seems that there is only a solution: the reevaluation of the world from a more spiritual and religious view, and a shift in ways of seeing and valuing nature.

Of course, major religions could not stay aside and tried to bring to the forefront their own arguments for a more responsible attitude toward the material world. We can say that this environmental crisis demanded coherent ethical answers from all traditional religions. All, or at least the majority of them, started to sanction –with relative success– any abuse over nature, but their voice is still quite irrelevant for the contemporary man.¹

If we restrict our evaluation to the West, it seems that there is, indeed, a crisis of identity. The Christian message no longer convinces the secularized man, who, among others, sees Christianity as partially responsible for this juncture. It seems that Christian arguments do not work anymore. The theistic perspective is no longer viable, a personal God is also obsolete, and the mediation of the church is futile. Nevertheless, the Westerner still needs a symbolic

¹ See M.E. Tucker and J.A. Grimm, “The Emerging Alliance of World Religions and Ecology,” *Daedalus*, 130 (2001), 1-22; C. Campbell, “The Easternization of the West,” in B. Wilson and J. Cresswell (eds.), *New Religious Movements: Challenge and Response* (London: Routledge, 1999), 35-48, p. 39.

system by which to validate, among other things, his ecological stance. In this case, he is looking for his own prophets and alternatives, embracing extraneous worldviews. Secularism closed the gate towards the God of the Bible, but opened a door to many, many alternatives, the most popular one being the Eastern worldview.²

1. *From [A]theism to Monism: The Easternisation of the West*

In his study published in 1999, called “The Easternization of the West,” Professor Colin Campbell, observing the changes which came into view in Western culture in the last century, suggests that the West is in a full process of Easternization. The language changes, the decline of the belief in a personal God in favour of one in “some sort of spirit of life force,” and the decline of the belief in the standard Christian doctrine of heaven and hell in favour of one of reincarnation, all of these suggest a paradigm shift.³ Referring to Weber’s scheme for the classification and analysis of world religions, the author points out the essential differences between the Eastern and Western religions. The East emphasized the immanent principle of divinity, who is part of the world from eternity and to whom man can adapt himself, an outlook specific to the Brahman-Atman principle in Indian religious philosophy. The West emphasizes the transcendental character of divinity, fundamentally separated from the world, creating it *ex nihilo* and controlling it from above. From these two perspectives derive all of the differences between East and West. Of relevance for environmentalism, we can say that the main features of the Eastern paradigm are:

“man and nature are one spiritual and physical are one; mind and body are one; man should recognize his basic oneness with nature, the spiritual, and the mental, rather than attempt to analyze, label, categorize, manipulate, control or consume the things of the world; because of his oneness with all existence, man should feel ‘at home’ in any place and with any person; science and technology, at best, create an illusion of progress; enlightenment involves achieving a sense of oneness with the universal; it is a state where all dichotomies vanish; meditation, a special state of quiet contemplation, is essential for achieving enlightenment.”⁴

The Western paradigm is the opposite:

“man has characteristics which set him apart from nature and the spiritual; man is divided into a body, a spirit and a mind; there is a personal God who is over man; man must control and manipulate nature to ensure his survival; rational thought and an analytical approach to problem solving should be emphasized; science and tech-

² N. Achimescu, “New Age și ecologia. Considerații critice din perspectivă creștină,” *Teologie și Viață*, 1-6 (1997), 107-127, p. 107.

³ Campbell, “The Easternization of the West,” pp. 35-36.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

nology have given us a good life and provide our main hope for an even better future; action and the competitive spirit should be rewarded.”⁵

It is not hard to notice that the Western Semitic paradigm is unacceptable for a man who, on the one hand, as we mentioned earlier, condemns Christianity for the ecological crisis, and, on the other hand, rejects the scientific positivistic perspective about the infinite evolution through science and technique. But, rejecting these paradigms, he also rejects the theistic conception of divinity, without knowing which one to favour.

2. *The Eastern Monism: The Paradigm of Non-Dualism in Vedantic Philosophy*

The Vedantic metaphysics, which finds its ultimate meaning in the *Advaita* philosophy, is part of the oriental philosophical landscape by means of certain particularities, as it seeks to give an answer to the debate regarding the relationship between one (*ultimate reality*) and multiplicity (the universe). At a first sight, Sankara (788-820), the one who systematized the pattern of the metaphysical principles in the Upanishads, a system which in Western philosophy, was perceived as “non-duality” (*advaita* - “no” + “two”), proposes an ontological devaluation of the universe by denying its reality. The formulation *Ekam-eva-advitiam* (“One-without-the-second,” *Chandogya-Upanisad* VI, 2, 1-2), which is at the core of the whole Vedantic metaphysic, proposes a philosophical interpretation which in Western philosophy is called monism. Although it may seem closely related to the monistic philosophical system, the Vedantic philosophy does not entirely correspond to this paradigm.⁶ Basically, Vedantic metaphysics specifies a different report which ranks the *Absolute* and the universe, and another ontological status of the universe.

Therefore, the Sankarian metaphysical non-dualism proposes a repositioning, a rethinking of the ontological values of the universe, a different perspective to the Oriental paradigm. Understanding the universe through a gnoseological perspective ultimately leads man to a proper conduct regarding the universe. The main focus is for the man not to transform the universe into an object that may be abused according to the social and industrial needs, but into an object of philosophical reflection, which ultimately leads the man into discovering the Ultimate Reality.

The problem with which the *Advaita Vedanta* dealt was demanding: it had to reconcile the cosmological statements about *Brahman* as the cause of the *Sruti* world, with the metaphysical notion of immutability, of the unchanging character of *Brahman Nirguna*. On the one hand, Sankara argues, in *Brahma-Sutra-Sankara-Bhasya* II, 3, 17: “Only a divided entity could have an effect

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

⁶ See R. Karunakaran, *The Concept of Sat in Advaita Vedanta* (Quilon: Sri Sankara Sanskrit Vidyapeetham Edakkadam, 1980), pp. 179-180.

and origin because there are no effects.”⁷ On the other hand, *Brahman*, as the immutable and identical entity itself, is not covered by fortuitous phenomena. According to the Indian philosophical tradition, every division is a step towards disintegration, towards the destructive chaos,⁸ yet *Brahman* is viewed as the efficient (*nimitta-karana*) and material cause (*upadana-karana*) of the endlessly heterogeneous, moving and changing world.

If the Advaitin metaphysics pivots on the thesis that *Brahman* is *Nirguna*, undifferentiated and non-relational, the legitimate question that arises is connected to the legitimacy of a relationship between the universe, accepted as real only in the *vyavaharika* sense, and the *Ultimate Reality*. If the answer is a positive one, then what is the relationship between the “unity of existence and the multiplicity of its apparent developments?”⁹ In order to solve this philosophical dilemma, different terms are proposed: *unity*, *non-separability*, *non-identity* and *non-difference*. Each of these terms gives us an indication regarding the degree of reality of the universe. A. Rambachan¹⁰ brings into question the analogies which suggest the relationship between *Brahman* and the universe –the clay and clay-pots, gold and ornaments– stating that the universe does not emerge from *Brahman* in the same manner in which jewels are crafted from gold. The concept behind this analogy is that the fundamental nature of gold remains the same, despite the fact that it produces a multiplicity of jewels which are non-distinct from gold. Given the fact that gold is always gold, even when embellished with various ornaments, it is necessary to propose a distinction in the nature of the gold in order to preserve its unique nature. In a similar manner, taking into consideration that the emergence of the world from *Brahman* neither exhausts, nor transforms the nature, an explanation involving a twofold suggestion is useless. Since *Brahman* is the cause of the universe, this does not diminish the fullness of its being.

D. Prithipal¹¹ states that *Brahman* is continuous with the universe and that this feature represents its reality. There are two distinct entities: the universe and *Brahman*. If we take into consideration a certain way of seeing things from an empirical perspective, in *Advaita-Vedanta*, the universe is nothing but *Brahman*. *Brahman* and the universe are not “different” and this is the reason why the issue of the ‘between the two’ does not, in fact, exist. However, *Brahman* is not dependent on the universe, and this justifies the argument that *Brahman* and the universe are not identical. But when it is understood that the

⁷ *Brahma-Sutra-Shankara-Bhashya: Badarayana's Brahma-Sutras with Shankaracharya's Commentary*, trans. V.M. Apte (Bombay: Popular Book Depot, 1960), p. 451.

⁸ See N. Isayeva, *Shankara and Indian Philosophy* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1993), p. 160.

⁹ See P. Deussen, *The System of the Vedanta: According to Badarayana's Brahma-Sutras and Cankara's Commentary thereon set forth as a Compendium of the Dogmatics of Brahmanism from the Standpoint of Cankara*, trans. C. Johnston (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), p. 267.

¹⁰ A. Rambachan, *The Advaita Worldview: God, World and Humanity* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2006), p. 86.

¹¹ D. Prithipal, *Advaita Vedānta: Action and Contemplation* (Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Prakasan, 1969), pp. 85-86.

reality of the universe is *Brahman*, the claim regarding their identity is legitimate. Such an *identity* should be understood only in a transcendent sense, since *Brahman* is known, all questions regarding the finite lose their justification. In practical terms, the key for the advaitin interpretation lies under the realm of the acceptance of the twofold truths: *paramarthika* (absolute) and *vyavaharika* (relative).

The relationship between the universe and *Brahman* is defined by the assertion that the universe is “an indicative of *Brahman* but without incorporating it,” as T.R.V. Murti explains.¹² This does not concern the relationship between the part and the whole, because this would assign the change within *Brahman*. *Brahman* becomes a phenomenon himself like (*iva*) in a free act. The relationship between *Brahman* and the universe is like the relationship between two terms, out of which one is the base of the other. *Brahman*, as the basis of this relationship, may have an unlimited, free, unconditioned and inexhaustible existence in the relationship. The other term is fully exhausted in the relationship and has a *relative* existence.¹³ It is important to note exactly where the universe is on the *non-being – Being (Brahman)* scale, in order to emphasize the relevance of the non-dualist Vedantic thesis: *Brahman is ekamevadvityam*.

The Sanskrit term corresponding to the Western term “world” is *jagat*. According to J.G. Arapura,¹⁴ from an etymological perspective, *jagat* denotes what the nature of the movement is. From a metaphysical perspective, the world is a constant and unstable movement between the two poles of *is* and *is not*. In *Vivekachudamani* 20, we find the statement that *brahma satyam jagan-mithyety* (“*Brahman* is real, the universe is unreal”¹⁵). A first reading might lead us to the conclusion that the universe is completely *unreal*. But obviously, the world cannot be entirely *unreal*, in the sense that it may be fictitious or non-existent, because we perceive it through the senses.¹⁶ Although the ontological status of the universe excludes reality (*sat*), this does not imply unreal-

¹² T.R.V. Murti, “The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita (*Tatastha-laksana* and *Svarupa-laksana*),” in H.G. Coward (ed.), *Studies in Indian Thought: Collected Papers of Prof. T.R.V. Murti* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1983), p. 77.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ J.G. Arapura, *Hermeneutical Essays on Vedāntic Topics* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1986), p. 52.

¹⁵ *Vivekachudamani of Sri Sankaracharya*, Text with English Translation, Notes and Index by S. Madhavananda (Mayavati: Advaita Ashrama, 1944), p. 8.

¹⁶ If the vedantic non-dualism implies that the entire world of our experience is nothing but an *appearance* –concept that will be further debated in this study– and that all things falling under the incidence of our feelings are nothing but appearances, the world consists of, accordingly to R. Bihari Das, “The Falsity of the World,” *Philosophical Quarterly*, 19 (1940), 80-90 p. 80, not only the physical external world, but also the internal psychic world, since they are experimented as a duo, and the *Advaita* promotes the thesis according to which *reality* is unitary: “The world does not only mean the visible exterior world and its sensitive qualities. It also means this and a lot more [...] In fact, everything that is shown to us, external or internal, to our mind or our senses forms a part of the world, which, both holistically, as well as individually, reveals to us as false. Therefore, falsity is confirmed by everything we could see, feel, think, or imagine.”

ity (*asat*). This would mean that the world is *an appearance*. Although *an appearance* has an ontologically special status, it cannot be called a *non-being* or a *non-existence*. It appears that the word *mithyā*, applied to the world, is providential in this case, in order to solve the problem solicited by the context of the current text. These aspects of the Vedantic metaphysics open the main ideational routes of our investigation, in order to offer some probative answers regarding the universe's ontology: in which eloquent coordinates do the *real* and *surreal* appear in the universe? What does *Brahman is real* and the world is *apparent* mean? The *appearance* exists in a certain way, but it is not real; however, it cannot either be *surreal*, because, in *Advaita*, *surreal* refers to all logical impossibilities, such as a quadrate circle, the rabbit's horns, or the son of an infertile woman. Thus, the *surreal* is null, everything that is contradiction per se, and cannot possibly exist. *Surreal* does not complement *reality*, but it opposes *reality*. *Reality* alone is exhaustive.¹⁷

In conclusion, we can decide ourselves upon the universal ontology through three different angles: from an empiric perspective, the universe is *real*;¹⁸ from the transcendental perspective the universe is *surreal*; and, from a philosophical and logical point of view, the universe is undeterminable.¹⁹ Alternatively, without mistake, one can tell that the universe, as perceived by the senses, is undeterminable:

“The apparent world is not absolutely *surreal* (*atyantam asat*), because it is known, sensitively perceived, and has a certain existence. However, it is neither real (*sat*), because it is not incontestably in its three temporal dimensions – past, present, and future. It is neither a combination of *real* and *surreal*, because such a description would violate the contradiction law. It is neither the negation's continuity of *real* and *surreal*.”²⁰

The Vedantic metaphysics does not quite affirm the identity between *Brahman* and the *world*, but denies the independent reality of the world. Vacaspati Misra treats the matter accordingly: “When we say the universe is not different to *Brahman*, we do not confirm the identity of the *Brahman* and the world, but we merely deny their real existence (*na khalu ananyatvam iti abhedam brumah kim tu bhedom vyasedhamah*).”²¹ This means that, in the absence of *Brahman*, there will be no world of appearance.

We thereby end this section with a Sankarian *bhasya* from *Mundaka-Upanisad* II, 2, 11: “All these that stand in front are nothing but *Brahman*, the immortal. *Brahman* sits at the right, as well as at the left; up and down, also, *Brahman* expands alone. This world is nothing else but *Brahman*, the al-

¹⁷ R. Puligandla and D. Matesz, “Appearance and the Laws of Logic in Advaita Vedanta,” *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 26 (1986), 75-86, p. 80.

¹⁸ L. Saxena, *Neo-Hegelian and Neo-Advaitic Monism: A Study in Converging Perspectives* (Delhi: Bharat Bharati Bhandar, 1980), p. 102.

¹⁹ S. Lokeshwarananda, *Aspects of Vedanta* (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Mission, Institute of Culture, 1995), p. 75.

²⁰ Karunakaran, *The Concept of Sat in Advaita*, p. 191.

²¹ Quotation by Karunakaran, *The Concept of Sat in Advaita Vedanta*, p. 191.

mighty.”²² The statement *sarvam idam brahma eva* (“Indeed, everything is Brahman”), which appears in *Chandogya-Upanisad* III, 14, 1, *Maitri-Upanisad* IV, 6, *Bṛhadaranyaka-Upanisad* II, 5, 6 does not intend to establish an *ontological identity* between the phenomenal universe of appearance (*vyavaharika*) and the ultimate *reality* of Brahman (*paramarthika*). More accurately, it shows that the universe, which seems to be real on an ordinary experience, is, indeed, completely dependent upon *Brahman* in its entire existence. But this dependency only swings in one direction –*Brahman* does not depend upon any type of universe in its existence. Moreover, this total dependence expands upon all of the universe’s things, which, in the end, derive from *Brahman*, not necessarily ontologically, but phenomenally.²³

Given the statements mentioned above, a certain attention is given to different aspects of the reception of the metaphysics of Vedantic thought in the Western pattern of study. If, under the current ecological crisis, the *New Age*, or any other socially-religious paradigm, wishes to offer a reinterpretation of the universe to the occidental Man, it would be better to do it under the oriental teaching’s criteria of legitimacy and authenticity.

3. From Old Age to New Age

We now have to answer an important question: in which way had this Indian metaphysics outlook achieved such popularity in the West, especially in the field of environmentalism? The answer which we propose here is via New Age. Neither common cultural transfers, nor Hindu missionaries brought and popularized it in the West, but it was brought about by means of this new Western religion, seen as a reaction to the present ecological crisis. It is not our objective to describe and analyze here the New Age philosophical and religious doctrine. We are only trying to identify the reasons which justify the New Age’s lop-sidedness to the Eastern monism as a response to the ecological crisis. In our opinion, these are: the New Age leaning towards environmentalism, the rejection of the Christian values and of their science and technology –at least in their positivistic dimension–, and the appetite for syncretism, all of them interlacing into a coherent religious system.

Gordon Melton²⁴ identifies four essential ideas which distinguish New Age in the contemporary landscape. These are: 1) The possibility of personal transformation in the immediate future by the medium of New Age techniques, transformation which is seen as a healing of the individual. 2) A millennial expectation which consists in a cultural transformation, which means the hope that the actual world, with all of its problems, will be swept aside and replaced with a new, golden age. 3) The emphasizing of the occult arts

²² *Eight Upanisads*, Vol. II: *Aitareya, Mundaka, Mandukya & Karika and Prasna*, trans. S. Gambhirananda (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1973), p. 142.

²³ See W.M. Indich, *Consciousness in Advaita Vedanta* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1995), p. 4.

²⁴ G. Melton, “New Age,” in J.R. Lewis (ed.), *Odd Gods: New Religions and the ‘Cult’ Controversy* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2000), 373-376, pp. 374-375.

and processes. Astrology, tarot, mediums, psychic healing, channelling, meditation, etc., have become tools of self-transformation. 4) The identification of the individual as a singular essence with the divine, an impersonal God, seen as mind or energy, being the only reality.

It is obvious that none of these traits are new, but we can still speak of newness: the way these are combined in a single, unitary ideological system is all new. New Age, by its nature being a “unique synthesis of many pre-existing movements and religious traditions,”²⁵ has the capacity to inspire and harmonize any other religious symbol or element from a foreign culture and fill it up with all new meanings. As an example, Rachel Fell McDermott refers to the goddess Kali and her signification in Hinduism and in New Age.²⁶ Another similar example is the belief in reincarnation: from a Hindu-specific concept, it reached, in the West, a slightly but significantly different interpretation via New Age. Within Vedantic monism, things are somehow the same: the ontology, cosmology and “theology” of Brahman are taken as arguments for the deep ecological consciousness, although they are neither completely understood, nor correctly explained.²⁷ As long as we could see, the Hindu monism is far from being as simple as New Age tries to present it to the Westerners. Understanding it requires, not only a strong philosophical and conceptual basis, but also the exercise of meditation and inner development. The New Age monism is somehow a lighter version of Eastern monism encased in the New Age holistic world view, where God and man are both parts and parcels of the cosmos. The immediate conclusion is that the world is divine and sacred.²⁸ What stronger argument do we need for a deep ecological consciousness as a reaction to the contemporary ecological crisis? As Steve Bruce points out, “New Age Green [protects the environment] out of respect for a superior being.”²⁹

New Age is maybe the most militant eco-religious contemporary religious movement. In her *Introduction to the New Age Encyclopedia*, Belinda Witworth’s description of New Age’s objectives sounds like this: “The New Age movement is concerned with just about every area of existence, but I came to it first through love for Nature and concern about the environment, then complementary health and counselling, and, more recently, meditation and tarot reading.”³⁰ *All New Agers are green!* is more than a saying and the deep ecological consciousness is more than a virtue for a New Ager. But, for this, the

²⁵ A.G. Diem and J.R. Lewis, “Imagining India: The Influence of Hinduism on the New Age Movement,” in J.R. Lewis and G. Melton (eds.), *Perspectives on the New Age* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1992), 48-58, p. 48.

²⁶ R. Fell McDermott, “New Age Hinduism, New Age Orientalism, and the Second-Generation South Indian,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 68 (2000), 721-731, p. 726.

²⁷ For the influence of Hinduism over New Age, see Diem and Lewis, “Imagining India,” pp. 48-58.

²⁸ Achimescu, “New Age și ecologia,” pp. 113, 120-121.

²⁹ S. Bruce, *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 211.

³⁰ B. Witworth, “Introduction,” in *New Age Encyclopedia: A Mind, Body, Spirit Reference Guide*, (Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Age Books, 2003), p. 7.

New Ager needs a strong system of reference. It seems that the theistic one is unacceptable for him. New Age means an objection to dualism, in all its forms: religious, philosophical, ecological, etc. This dualistic thinking is ascribed to the influence of institutionalized Christianity and of the over-rationalist science. Maybe this stance is the reason why New Age was and is considered the religion of the postmodern [secularized] man. Moreover, the New Age era began in the times of cultural relativism, more specifically in the '60s, when the absence of a standard of truth created a vacuum which required to be filled.³¹ All of these brought New Age closer to the Eastern paradigm. Against dualisms, New Age opposes a holistic alternative: therapies must consider man as a whole person, God and man are one in their inner essence, and humanity must rediscover its lost unity with nature. Another subject of discontent for New Age thinkers is the reductionism. The universe is not a dead mechanism, but a living organism permeated by a spiritual force.³² It is obvious that there would be a reaction against Christian theism and positivism by embracing exactly its opposite: Eastern monism, pantheism or panentheism and a spiritual view over the quantum physics.

4. *New Age – The Vehicle of “Re-enchanting” the World*

The New Age reaction to the ecological crisis is a radical one: nothing can be saved from the old paradigm. It is so “disenchanted,” obsolete and futile that what is required is a brand new solution. And the solution at hand for New Age is to “re-enchant” the world, either through occult-esoteric significances applied to nature, or through a deification of it. And it seems that these solutions are somehow complementary. You have a cosmos. First of all, you have to give it the most profound signification that you can, so the best thing you can do is to deify it. On this basis, you need means to interact with this new deity, to communicate your needs to it and to take what you receive from it. And there are no better means to interact with this re-enchanted world than the old, ancestral magical rituals, which also correspond to the esoteric aspect of New Age.

Of course, this is exploratory research, and there are still many questions which are waiting for answers. Beyond bewildering the West with an alien worldview, has New Age found the real solution to the ecological crisis? Will it be really functional, in the sense that its impact will be strong enough over individuals in order to really change consciences in the direction of achieving a greater responsibility towards nature? Does its increasing popularity affect the general attitude towards the individual and the cosmos? Maybe time will reveal the answers to all of these questions and future research will find out if the Eastern monism/pantheism/panentheism, brought to the West via New Age, was indeed efficacious in making us more ecologically responsible.

³¹ D.W. Hollis III, “Cultural Origins of New Age Cults,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 10 (1998), 31-48, pp. 31-36.

³² W.J. Hanegraaff, “New Age Religion and Secularization,” *Numen*, 47 (2000), 288-312, pp. 291-292.

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PHILOSOPHY AND CRISIS

**RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES
TO WAYS OF LIFE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

VOLUME II

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RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES
TO WAYS OF LIFE
IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

VOLUME II

Edited by

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George Francis McLean
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PART VIII

Crisis in the Ancient World

Democracy with Restrictions: Thoughts on the Political Thinking of the Later Plato

THOMAS M. ROBINSON

There have over the centuries been a number of attempts to get the best of democracy while avoiding what are perceived to be major problems it exhibits when left entirely to its own devices. It has been and continues to be thought by many to be a system which is particularly susceptible to a political version of the Second Law of Thermodynamics: left without constraints of some sort, its tendency is towards break-down. And several models of constitution have emerged, since the time of the original great Athenian experiment with what we might nowadays call participatory democracy over two and half millennia ago, to cope with this perceived problem.

We could start with the ‘Strongman’ model of democracy exemplified by the late Mr. Chavez in Venezuela. The most prominent feature of this model is the personal force of a single individual, who frequently comes to power in a fair and free election, and often with a very large majority vote. While the Strongman wields much clout, his power is not absolute, and he can be voted out of office if he loses popular support.

An alternate system, which I shall call the ‘live free or die’ model, is particularly popular in the USA. According to this model, government should be reduced to the absolute minimum, and every freedom should be made available to any individual citizen which is compatible with the legitimate claims to freedom espoused by everyone else. This particular model, while popular with many, has its own problems satisfying everyone in areas where freedom-claims clash, such as when your supposed freedom to carry a gun runs up against my right not to risk finishing up as ‘collateral damage’ in one of your (‘self-defensive,’ of course...) shooting sprees.

Between these two extremes are a number of variants bearing features of each, and often found in conjunction with them. A prominent one is the ‘market’ model (very popular up to 2008, at which point it lost a lot of its appeal, though it is now showing signs of a comeback). In this model democratic society might or might not be under the thumb of a strong and often charismatic human leader, but it is clearly the willing subject of one or other or both of two *other* leaders, each of them hugely powerful but neither of them, as it happens human. The first of these, very much material in nature, goes under the name of ‘The Market,’ and is characterized by a demand for total obedience to its whims, backslidings, and general unpredictability of behavior, and also by its total lack of conscience about any human suffering it causes. The second is God, who is *immaterial*, and has the infinite capacity to offer us consolation (but no cash) when the first –‘The Market’– is on one of its periodic rampages. A good example of such a society is the present-day USA. A post-Christian variant on it, in which ‘The Market’ reigned supreme but a

comforting God had for most people more or less vanished from the scene, was Margaret Thatcher's Great Britain.

Three other models have to do with a choice of moral principles in the establishment of the *goal* of one's democracy. The first is the 'virtue' model, in which the goal of society is the production of citizens characterized by the maximum amount of civic virtue of which each is capable. The second is the 'common good' model, in which the goal of society is the overall good, even if on occasion this may have to supersede the apparent good of a number of individuals.

The third model has as its driving force John Stuart Mill's 'no harm principle.' This might be seen as another variant on the 'live free or die' model, but this time stressing freedom *from* as much as freedom *to*. It makes no attempt to produce virtue in its citizens, but is satisfied if, whatever their private predilections, people are law-abiding and avoid harming the other to the degree they are able. This is of course a very popular principle in a number of today's democracies, but trying to come up with a satisfactory definition of what constitutes 'harm' in various circumstances continues to be a source of dissension.

I mention these variants as a brief introduction to my paper, which will be a discussion of one of the earliest attempts to describe, and to defend with argument, what *Plato* took to be the most acceptable model of democracy that he felt had a chance of being realized. To those who have read his *Republic* but not his *Laws*, this might come as a surprise, but I hope that it will be less surprising as my argument proceeds.

We can begin by saying how much the *Laws* resembles the *Republic* in various details, and little time need be spent on this. While much else might have changed, his thoughts on basic education, for example, have changed little, and education continues to be a major component of his theory. And the same could be said of his overall teleological vision of things, and of virtue as the goal of a good society; he is as much a functionalist in the *Laws* as he was in the *Republic*, and the doctrine colours everything he discusses.

The same goes for his overall view of the common good, which a virtuous citizen will always have as a goal transcending (if need be) his personal predilections. And if a 'noble act of deception' by the rulers is called for to encourage him along this path, a noble act of deception, he says in both dialogues, is eminently justifiable.

But a great deal seems to have changed from the *Republic* too, and I want now to set out those differences, to offer reasons why they might have come about, and to assess, as best I can, their philosophical, political and social worth in terms of our own continuing efforts to produce democracies which we think worthy of the name.

The biggest overall difference lies in the ontological status of the society the *Laws* sets out to describe. While the society outlined in the *Republic* was purely paradigmatic, the society described in the *Laws*, Magnesia, is meant to be a live practicality, in a real country and populated with real Greeks. He calls it his second-best society, but not in any negative sense. The term is used

to contrast it, not with the paradigmatic Kallipolis of the *Republic*, but with the *first-best instantiation* of that paradigm, which he writes off as being an instantiation confined to our imagination, since it would have to be populated by (in his words) ‘gods and sons of gods.’ If we talk of it simply in terms of where it stands among practical possibilities, Magnesia would of course be entitled to be called his *best* society.

A major constitutional difference from the paradigm is the fact that Magnesia will be, he says, a mixture of monarchy and democracy. But the monarch’s role seems to be strictly that of fashioning the society, in conjunction with the ‘legislator’ who had the good fortune to find him. Once this is done, he just seems to vanish from the scene. What is ‘monarchic’ about the society which remains is unclear, unless Plato means simply that the Guardians of the Laws and the Nocturnal Council appear to enjoy a disciplinary power often associated with monarchic rule. But their members too, we need to remember, have a limited term of office, and must render an account of themselves upon leaving it. So, while members of the two institutions certainly wield much more power than any citizens of contemporary Athens, the fact that their term of office is *limited*, and the fact that they are held *accountable* for their actions *in* office, it could be argued, render the two institutions considerably more compatible with basic democratic procedure than might at first appear.

The idea of a *class of rulers*, both male and female, which can be identified –and perpetuated in existence across the generations– by a combination of appropriate parentage and appropriate, highly specialized education, has likewise been abandoned. Magnesia will not be run in accordance with the *fiat* of a virtuous Guardian class, as in Kallipolis, where laws are unnecessary, there being no antisocial activity or criminality within the society; it will be governed by laws, the implementation of which will be by a group of rulers drawn, not from some political class, but from the general citizenry, and with fixed terms of office.

A further difference will be that education will be for *all* citizens, male and female, and those who finish up in governing roles in society will do so, not because they belong to some supposed political class, but as the result of a combination of election and the use of the lot-system. (Let us call the idea ‘constrained meritocracy’). As for any *further* education received by members of one particular body, the Nocturnal Council, this will be voluntary *self*-education in disciplines its members perceive necessary for a more profound understanding of the laws it is their job to safe-guard.

A further change is the institution of private property for all, including the rulers, and in a way such as to guarantee neither poverty nor excessive riches for any citizen.

Yet another change will be the existence of something the Greeks would have found genuinely new, and that is, preambles to laws, such that all citizens are always fully informed, and in some detail, of the reasoning behind each one. If penalties can be grievous, and many are, citizens will at least be aware of the reason why the Nocturnal Council thinks they should be what they are, and the purpose they serve in the overall good of the state.

Much of the above turns on Plato's assumption that Magnesia, unlike the fully virtuous Kallipolis, where there is no such thing, will be characterized, as I have just mentioned, by a good deal of antisocial and indeed criminal activity.

A final, very broad difference of assumption between the *Laws* and the *Republic* is the *grounding* of something the two dialogues are fully agreed on, and that is, the *virtue* which both societies have as their objective. In the *Republic* this grounding was, not a set of gods, but something transcending the gods –the Form of the Good. In the *Laws* it is the gods themselves who are the grounding, and one god in particular, that Divine Chess-Player who is the world's Rational Soul. And this has the effect of turning Magnesia into, not just a combination of monarchy and democracy, but a theocracy, where its king, and subsequently the Guardians of the Laws, are, in the final analysis, the mouth-piece for the King of all things.

Who other than these leaders have access to the Divine Chess-Player's wishes? Everyone, says Plato, and his views on the matter are nowhere more evident than in his discussion of homosexuality, where the divine will for our conduct is there for *all* to infer from the operations of the *natural world* they see around them.

I have used the word 'infer,' and this leads naturally to another feature of Magnesia: the fact of the death penalty for contumacious atheism, and, more generally, the broadening of the concept of impiety to a point where a significant number of citizens (who can guess the number?) could finish up executed. Not that the death penalty for atheism is a new idea; many Greek societies had this among their statutes, including Athens. What is new is Plato's rationale for it: one dies for contumaciously continuing to reject clear evidence presented by the observation of *nature* (this time nature as observed in the orderly, perfectly circular movements [as he understands them to be] of the heavenly bodies), and for refusing to accept arguments from authority about how the gods relate to us.

What can be said, by way of final assessment, about Plato's last, twelve-book statement on what constitutes a good society? One can begin with his contention that it will be a mixture of monarchy (which he sometimes calls, more generally, 'autocracy') and democracy. In so speaking he propounds a view which went on to have a long life in antiquity (as the prototype of a so-called 'mixed constitution') and an even longer life since then. I merely note this in passing; my views on various features of Plato's own version of the mixed constitution will emerge as I come to each.

Let me begin with a list of ideas in the *Laws* which seem to me ones which any rational agent could accept.

1. The common good. The good of the community as a whole will be the overall goal of Magnesia.
2. Access to office will turn on election, not on membership of a supposed 'political class.'

3. Accountability. Those who hold office, up to and including the most senior office, will hold it for a limited term, and will be subject to careful scrutiny by auditors upon leaving office.
4. There will be a 'quantum' property system for all citizens, such that any rational agent would be willing to live at the level of a person possessed of the lowest quantum, and also *forgo* all holdings that would take him beyond the value of the highest allowed number of quanta.
5. There will be universal education, for all females as well as all males.
6. Punishment for crime will be, as far as possible, remedial.
7. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into account in trials.
8. Every law will be accompanied by an explanation why it exists, and what it hopes to achieve within the framework of the common good.

In setting out this list, I am of course aware that in various parts of the world some people claiming to be rational agents will vigorously deny the worth of at least one item on it. Many, for example, place a higher value on freedom of the individual than on a supposed common good. Others are clearly committed to a vengeance theory of punishment. Others (mercifully few in number but greatly troublesome) think that no *female* should be educated. Others think that there should be no maximum to the permitted accumulation of wealth. I make no comment on this, other than to express the hope that, some day, the holders of such views will one day see the error of their ways, and to re-iterate my own belief that on all eight points Plato is on absolutely the right track. The 'quantum' theory of property in particular seems to me well worth looking at, containing as it does incentives to work vigorously for self-betterment while carefully safeguarding against a modern plague, the growing impoverishment of the many in face of the growing enrichment of the few.

Let us pause for a while over this. In the new society there will be equality of opportunity (744b), but an *inequality* in wealth accumulated. There will, however –and crucially– be no penury (i.e., complete destitution) permitted, and there will be a cap placed on wealth. The possession of the basic one quantum of property will guarantee a reasonably good life, even if it might be deemed poverty by contrast with those who possess wealth valued at four quanta. The possession of wealth to the value of two, three, or four quanta will clearly offer opportunities for further satisfactions for some people, but the reasonable quality of life at even the lowest level will be never in doubt. And finally, if anyone accumulates wealth beyond the value of four quanta, he will by law consign the surplus to "the state and its gods" (745a1-20). While Plato does not spell this out in detail, one can assume that some of the surplus wealth that devolves to the state goes to the all-important maintaining of the value of the one basic quantum of property, to ensure that no citizen holding this single quantum will ever see the basic good quality of his life eroded. Certainly, Plato is sufficiently confident that his system would protect the basically good quality of life of all citizens that he says *begging* will be forbidden, with the penalty of expulsion from the state for anyone who attempts to

do so, in order that, he says, in disheartening language, “our land may be entirely cleansed of such creatures” (736c).

The principle underlying this vision is a concept of ‘justice as fairness’ that readers of John Rawls will immediately recognize.¹ A good society, says Rawls, is one where any rational agent would be willing to live at the level of its least advantaged member.² And this seems to be exactly what Plato is after too. As it stands, it is not only democratic as an ideal, it is sophisticatedly democratic, possessing as it does incentives to wealth-accumulation by everyone but always within the over-arching constraint of the common good.

Let me now set out a list of commitments in the *Laws* on which a rational agent might wish to take issue with Plato.

1. The need for a supreme ruler who will *set up* the second-best society and its laws, and will apparently have *no* time-limit to *his* rule.
2. The necessity (apparently) that such a ruler, along with all in major governing roles, such as the Guardians of the Laws, will be male.
3. The need to use the lot-system as part of the final selection of the Guardians of the Laws.
4. The need for ‘beneficial acts of deception’ by the state.
5. The view that the primary purpose of the arts is their service to the state.
6. The need to use belief in benevolent, non-corruptible gods as the grounding of citizen-virtue.
7. The need to believe that the operations of the natural world are in significant respects an expression of the divine will with regard to conduct.
8. The need for a series of punishments consequent on the above –such as deprivation of civic rights for homosexuals and the death-penalty for contumacious atheists.
9. The continuation of a slave-system as the underpinning of the state.

On the face of it, Plato’s careful regulations concerning election of all public officials, and the necessity that such terms be limited and be followed by scrutiny of how such officials conducted themselves while *in* office, would appear to be enough to safeguard the state. And Plato’s commitment, in the *Laws*, to education for all females as well as males would appear to be enough to ensure that there would be a plentiful supply of females as well as males for potential election to all the various offices of state. As he himself put it: to fail to educate women is to fail to use half of society’s talent. Or as another ruler was to put it later: women hold up half the sky. But in practice, despite his statement that women in Magnesia would be eligible to ‘enter office’ (*archas*) at age forty (785b), the offices in question do not appear to include any *major* offices of the state. The Minister of Education, for example, a post which Plato describes as ‘the most important of the highest offices of the state’ (765e), is by statute a ‘father of a family.’ The Guardians of the

¹ See M. Younesie, “A Profile of Justice in Plato and Rawls,” *Philotheos*, 9 (2009), 45-56.

² J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (revised edition) (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), and *Justice as Fairness: A Re-statement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Laws Plato refers to unequivocally as ‘men’ (*andrasi*, 755b5). The all-important Auditors of those finishing their term of office are all ‘men’ (*andras*, 946a1). And the members of the Nocturnal Council are clearly men too, being comprised of ten Guardians of the Laws (all male), a Minister and an unspecified number of ex-Ministers of Education (all male), an unspecified number of (male) *priests* of distinction,³ and a number of junior members, who, being by statute aged between 30 and 40, are also clearly each one of them men, women being forbidden access to office before the age of forty. The only *other* major public office left to which citizens are elected is the Advisory Council. We cannot be certain whether Plato intended women to form part of it, but the fact that those who, in final conjunction with a use of the lot-system, elect its *members* are once again ‘men’ (*andra*, 756e4) offers little reason for thinking it likely. If we add to this the fact that only males in Magnesia are entitled to hold property, and that women continue to have their marriages arranged by male relatives, it looks highly unlikely that, by contrast with contemporary Athens, females have been granted *citizenship* (814c4) in Magnesia, as some understand Plato to be saying.⁴ If there is any political break-through for women in the second-best society, it is at a level well below that enjoyed by male citizens.⁵

Given the heavy stress on virtue-as-efficiency in the *Laws* (as in the *Republic*), it will also seem, in the eyes of many people, counterproductive on Plato’s part to use the lot-system in the final round of selection for membership of the Advisory Council. His argument in favor of the move is that it will please the democratically-inclined in Magnesia, who will see it (as contemporary Athens did) as a healthy safeguard against the possible rise of a self-styled ‘natural’ ruling class. But it will also be achieved at a cost, and that is, the presence at all times in the Advisory Council of a number of members who, while no doubt talented *enough*, and no doubt broadly representative of

³ At *Meno* 81a10 Plato clearly distinguishes priests and priestesses; the word ‘priest’ is not a generic term covering both. See also *Laws* 800b1, 828b4, 909d9; *Phdr.* 244b1; *Rep.* 461a7. As far as Magnesia is concerned, priests and priestesses are chosen by lot (759c), must be over sixty years of age, and hold office for one year.

⁴ In distinguishing ‘*politides*’ and ‘citizens’ Plato is distinguishing between ‘free females dwelling in the *polis*’ and ‘citizens’ –who are free, *male*, and have *all the rights of full citizenship*. See *S. El.* 1227, *E. El.* 1335, where no one would ever infer from the use of the word *politides* that the women in question enjoy the privileges of citizenship, even if, out of camaraderie, they address one another warmly as ‘*politides*.’

⁵ While it is possible that the several references to ‘*andres*’ are just slips on Plato’s part, this seems very unlikely, given the various other instances of high office where males and only males seem to be involved. A more likely explanation, it seems to me, is that women’s ‘entering office’ (785b5) simply means their ‘entering public service,’ without specification of what the range of such service might be. An example of it would be membership, if elected, of the board of ‘female overseers’ of Magnesia’s marriages, something mentioned in the immediately antecedent paragraph, at 784a1-2. But this does not compare with the *major* offices open exclusively –apparently– to men.

the will of the populace (they had, after all, reached the final round by standard electoral procedures), were possibly not *as* talented for membership of such a body as a number who, at the last moment, had seen their own equally legitimate candidacy vanish by the use of lot-system. It seems, on the face of it, almost a guarantee of ongoing feelings of anger and resentment, at any given time, on the part of a number of citizens, frequently very talented citizens, at how they have been treated by the system, and something more likely than not to work *against* rather than in *favor* of that overall harmony of parts which Plato takes to be an essential feature of a good society.

As far as so-called ‘beneficial acts of deception’ by the state are concerned, the problem with them in the *Laws* is the same as it was in the *Republic*: does a noble end –the common good– justify a means which to many people looks like an infantilization of the state’s citizens, even if a well-intentioned one? Most would continue to say No, and demand that Plato’s rulers employ the same respect (*aidos*) for the ruled as he himself demands that the young demonstrate towards their elders. Such respect will no doubt on occasion (such as when a justified war is going badly) be compatible with *withholding* some unpleasant truths for a while, or (in the same circumstance of war) with active attempts to deceive the *enemy*. But few will be willing to concede to Plato that there will ever be circumstances when a state will be allowed to deceive its *own people* into thinking something to be true which it, the state, knows full well to be false. But there *is* such a circumstance, Plato would undoubtedly reply, and that circumstance is when it is for the *good of the state* that citizens be told as a truth what the state knows to be merely a story. Which is why, in the *Laws*, he talks carefully about *beneficial* acts of deception. It is the heart of his case, and we must engage with him on it, not least because of its implications for so much else in his political theory.

Much turns on whether we agree or disagree with Plato on a fundamental metaphor he uses to describe the virtue of a state or a person, and that is the metaphor of *health* for the virtue (or efficient functioning) of either and the metaphor of *ill-health* for the vice (or inefficient functioning) of either.⁶ If we see merit in this metaphor, and in particular if we accept the Greek notion of health as a functional balance of parts in an organism, we are likely to accept his view that virtuous action is self-evidently beneficial. (Who, after all, except a person who is deranged, would choose *ill-health* over health?) But if such a person is actively adopting beliefs and making choices which –*did he but know it*– militate *against* his own and, more broadly, the state’s virtue, he is unwittingly opting for his own and the state’s *ill-health* rather than health. So corrective procedures by the state-as-doctor are called for, even if the patient has no idea that he *is* ill or heading towards illness. And any procedure, however drastic or however strange-looking, will be acceptable as long as the patient’s health is achieved (or re-gained). One such procedure, suggests Plato, will be the story of a Divine Chess-Player.

⁶ For a detailed discussion of what he calls ‘medical penology’ in the *Laws* see T. Saunders, *Plato’s Penal Code* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 139-211.

There is good reason, however, to doubt the appropriateness of Plato's metaphor, based as it is on what seems to be much too inward-looking an understanding of virtue. If virtue is much better described in terms of how we *relate to others* than of how balanced the parts of our psyche are one with another, the metaphor of *health* (in the Greek sense of balance of parts within an organism) to describe virtue is seen at once to be misleading, along with all talk about the putative acceptability of any and all *means* necessary to achieve such health. The use of, on occasion, a 'medicinal deception,' such as the story of a Divine Chess-Player, is for Plato one such means; but, like any other such 'beneficial deceptions,' it is as inappropriate as the metaphor which sustains it.

The same thing happens in reverse when it comes to the arts. This time we are dealing with the medicinal *concealment of truths* which might induce sickness in the soul and, by extension, and very importantly, in society. Such as the truth that the wicked frequently do prosper, and die in their beds extremely content with their wickedness. But to believe such things, claims Plato, is to have a 'lie in the soul,' to quote a famous phrase from the *Republic*. And *this* is to be in the sickest state of all, sickness in one's *thinking self* (*logistikon*). So no portrayal, in drama or poetry, of a wicked man who dies happy will be allowed in Kallipolis or Magnesia. What is more, a definition of happiness will be taught which states that it is a state of the psyche which goes hand in hand with virtue; the wicked man who looks 'happy' in the traditional sense of the words is not *really* happy in the genuine, Platonic sense of the word—he is in fact the worst-off of all men, being thoroughly sick in his soul and not knowing it. And what rational man would ever prefer ill-health to health? etc.

But this idea too is deeply problematic. Just as a misleading metaphor was the driving force behind Plato's definition of virtue, and of the supposed need for the occasional medicinal untruth, the same metaphor is now the driving force behind his definition of happiness (*eudaimonia*) in terms of a state of the *organism* rather than a *feeling* of some sort, and the supposed need for the occasional medicinal *suppression* of a truth. In each instance, however, Plato's goal is achieved by a use of private language, so private that he can finish up denying that *feeling* happy is sufficient grounds for claiming that one *is* happy, and expecting *anyone* (apart from his well-chosen interlocutors in the *Republic* and *Laws*) to believe him on the matter.

We come finally to a third, critical instance of things which Plato maintains all citizens must believe if the whole state is to prosper. And this time we are dealing, not with medicinal untruths, or medicinal suppression of truths, but (forgoing all metaphors) with a set of assertions which *Plato* is convinced are true but may in fact very likely not be. I refer to the assertions that there are gods who care for us and are incorruptible; that their existence is provable by astronomical observation and the drawing of rational inferences from this; and that their message to us, through the operations of nature *qua* productive, is the basis of sound conduct in the area of sexual behavior.

Underpinning these claims is an argument for the presence of rational soul in the universe, a soul Plato equates with God. This argument turns, however, on his assumption that circular movement in the macro-cosmos is a manifestation of the presence of rationality there. But the evidence he uses with a good deal of confidence to establish this turns out to be groundless; all of that circular movement he thinks he sees in the sky is, unfortunately, not circular but elliptical. As for his confidence that a putative immaterial object (a soul) can move a material one, there are very few philosophers who share it, and I would say understandably so.

None of this would of course be too significant if it were simply Plato expounding his private views on theology. But its consequences are devastating, as we have seen, for atheists and homosexuals in his society.

On the continued belief by Plato, too, in the need for a slave-base to underpin even his justest society I have no comment, except to applaud the breakthrough of his contemporary, the sophist Alcidas, in suggesting that it is unsupportable by right-thinking people.

In order to state my case clearly, and with the best arguments I could, I have of course taken more time over items that seem to me problematic (not to say –at times– horrifying) in Plato’s account than over items which seem to me self-evidently right and to be applauded. Among these, as we saw, were such things as the need for universal education; for accountability for those entrusted with public office; and for remedial rather than vengeance-driven punishment. If we can draw the two sets of commitments, praiseworthy and problematic, together and try offer a name for what has been achieved, we might wish to describe the package as a particularly severe version of the ‘big stick’ model of democracy, where –despite everything– the major features of what we would consider the heart of democratic life, such as education for all, free and fair elections, a term to all office, accountability for things done in office, and so on, are all prominently the case. While a good deal is also there which not too many thinking people of our own time would ever wish to see implemented, I should like to end by stressing again those ideas –mentioned earlier on in my paper– which have in fact gone on to become part of the common consciousness of people calling themselves democrats, along with a couple of ideas which in my opinion ought to become so –the quantum idea of wealth-accumulation which I compared to the view of Rawls, and accessibly written preambles to all laws. If they come accompanied by a few noxious items, they remain a major contribution in any search for the best instantiation of the democratic ideal.

The Meaning of ‘Crisis’ in Ancient Greek Thought: Some Considerations

HELEN A. KARABATZAKI

“The beginning of education is linked to the knowledge of the meaning of a word” Socrates and his pupil Antisthenes, the founder of the Cynic school, first claimed in the late Classical period.¹ But what does this saying mean? Among others, it implies that we must be aware of the transformations of the meaning of language-terms through history. The presently celebrated and much debated concept of *crisis* is one of these terms. A quite Greek word, like thousands of others, it was introduced to Western languages through the intervention of Latin writers.² But what does it mean today and what did it signify in antiquity?

The purpose of this paper is to shortly discuss some of its varying semantic meanings in ancient thought, hoping that a comparison with its modern understanding and interpretations, which are at the centre of this conference, will clarify conversions and/or diversions. Further this means that I will concentrate on its semantic aspects leaving aside sociological analyses dealing with modern social crises, such as Marxist, functionalist, structuralist, post-modern approaches, and so on.³

How is ‘crisis’ defined today? According to a widely accepted definition, a *crisis* is any event, that is, or is expected to lead to, an unstable and dangerous situation affecting individuals, groups, communities, or a whole society. According to another definition, *crisis* means: a) A stage in the sequence of e-

¹ “Καὶ τίς ἐστὶν γεγραφώς ὅτι ἀρχὴ παιδείσεως ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπίσκεψις; Σωκράτης δ’ οὐ λέγει; καὶ περὶ τίνος γράφει Ξενοφῶν, ὅτι ἦρχετο ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπισκέψεως.” [H. Schenkl (ed.), *Epicteii Dissertationes ab Arriano digestae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1916; rpt. Stuttgart 1965)]; See E.J. Bakker and A. Kahane, *Written Words, Spoken Signs* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).

² It is an early 15th century Latinized form of the Greek word *crisis*, which basically meant the turning point of a disease (see etymology online at Dictionary.com). For a brief but concise analysis of the history of the term, see R. Koselleck, “Crisis,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400. See also his extended work *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society (Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought)* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1998). See also N. Tsouyopoulos, “Krise,” in J. Ritter et. al. (eds.), *II Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 4 (Stuttgart: Basel, 1971), p. 1240; D.Z. Rich, *Crisis Theory* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1997).

³ On these views, see, among others, M. Perelman, *Marx’s Crises Theory: Scarcity, Labor, and Finance* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1987); C. Polychroniou and H.R. Targ (eds.), *Marxism Today: Essays on Capitalism, Socialism, and Strategies of Social Change* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996); A. Care, *Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis* (London: Routledge, 2006); S. Sim, *Irony and Crisis: A Critical History of Postmodern Culture* (London: Icon Books, 2002); T. Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics* (Stanford CA: University of California Press, 1977).

vents, at which the trends of all future events, especially for better or worse, is a more or less determined turning point. b) A condition of instability or danger, as appearing in social, economic, political or international affairs, leading to decisive changes. c) A dramatic emotional or circumstantial upheaval in a person's life.⁴ This means that *crisis* is seen as having psychological, epistemological, social, political, even metaphysical aspects, which are viewed under two perspectives. With crises in any case being considered as barometers of impending changes, one rather positive view focuses on the need for small range changes brought piecemeal, while a second rather negative aspect targets on the necessity of large scale changes imposed abruptly. This view, of course, reflects unstable situations of complex systems, whose poor structural functions call for often painful decisions.

What did *crisis* mean in ancient Greek? The noun *κρίσις* derives from the verb *κρίνειν* (judge, separate, decide), as well as its many derivatives, such as *κρίσιμος* (critical), *κριτική* (critique), *κριτής* (critic), *κριτήριο* (criterion), and many synthetic ones, such as *ἀπόκρισις* (response), *ὑπόκρισις* (hypocrisy), *διάκρισις* (distinction), *σύγκρισις* (comparison), *ἀνάκρισις* (interrogation), *πρόκρισις*, *ἔγκρισις*, *ἐπίκρισις*. There are also many prepositional verbs, such as *διευκρίνειν* (distinguish, dispute, accurately examine), *ἐγκρίνειν* (approve), *εἰσ κρίνειν*, *ἐπιδιακρίνειν*, *ἐπικρίνειν*, *κατακρίνειν* (condemn), *προκρίνειν* (pre-judge), *συγκρίνειν* (compare), which are abundant in ancient Greek texts, particularly medical, rhetorical and philosophical ones. As Koselleck aptly observes (2006, 358), the origin of the term *crisis* has been medical from Hippocrates up to Galen, as both physicians have written a work *Περὶ κρίσεων* (*De crisisibus*), in which they examine cases of disease-crises. Galen clearly defines its meaning from the medical point of view as follows: “εἴτε τὴν ἀθρόαν ἐν νόσῳ μεταβολὴν εἴτε τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ βέλπιον ῥοπήν μόνην εἴτε τὴν προηγουμένην αὐτῶν ταραχὴν εἴτε καὶ τὴν λύσιν ἅπασαν τοῦ νοσήματος εἴτε καὶ ταύτης μόνην τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἐθέλοι τις ὀνομάζειν κρίσιν” (*crisis is called either a rapid (worsening) change of a disease, or only the improvement, or the pre-existing turmoil, or even the entire outcome of the disease, or only the benign one*).⁵ The word *crisis*, of course, as has been said before, comes from the verb *krinein*, which means to separate, choose, judge or decide. As far as its use is concerned, these multiple meanings reflected many sides of the structural and institutional context of the ancient Greek world. It is clear that the term *crisis*, as the ancient physicians perceived it, meant a sudden and rapid change of disease ending up either in recovery or death. In this struggle, if nature prevailed, the patient was saved. If she succumbed, the outcome was death. In a

⁴ www.dictionary-reference.com. See also M. Brecher and J. Wilkenfeld, *A Study of Crisis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).

⁵ Galen, *De differentiis februm*, liber II, 7.302.2; C.-G. Kuhn, *Claudi Galeni Opera Omnia*, v. 7 (Leipzig, 1824; rpt. Hildesheim: Olms, 1965). Strato of Lampsacus, a Peripatetic philosopher, had written a work *On Crises* (Diogenes Laertius –Loeb ed. [1964], Vol. 1, 5.59). See M.-L. Desclos and W.W. Fortenbaugh (eds.), *Strato of Lampsacus, Text, Translation, and Discussion*. Rutgers University Press Studies in Classical Humanities, V. xvi (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2011).

more limited application, the term was frequently used to signify a secretion of some of the humors, through which the morbidity might be extinguished. In most medical texts, however, the verb means the good or bad blending of body-elements, and the epithet *εὐκρινεῖς* is defined in the Suda lexicon as following: “*συνήθως ἄνθρωποι οἱ ἐξ ἀρρωστίας ὑγιαίνειν λέγεται, διὰ τὸ εὖ κεκρίσθαι*” (*the term is usually used to denote people recovering from a disease, because they are well blended*).⁶ In the medical use of the term there is emphasis on its objective, physical dimension, because the healer had to understand the causes and the course of a disease and decide about its outcome and the remedies to be used. From the rhetorical point of view, however, it meant the hearing of many aspects, and making the *right*, mostly subjective, political and/or judiciary decision, while philosophers linked it with *logos* (reason) and the search of truth.

Seen from any point of view, however, (medical, rhetorical, philosophical, even poetical) *crisis* works almost hand in hand with the term *logos* (reason), with which it was tightly interrelated in contrast to *πάθη* (*passions*). But in ancient Greek language, with the exception of the purely medical perspective, which is still used (we speak of the crisis of a disease, of epileptic and psychological crises), the word was excessively used in political terms during the Classical era in conjunction with important functions of direct democracy, while in the following Hellenistic times an epistemological meaning dominated. In the Classical period it was actually the emblem of democracy, since a sound *crisis*, as a sound judgement was necessary for a right decision at the *voule* and the *ecclesia of demos*. A sound verdict in the form of an objective judgement was required, at least in principio, in the great jury, and in the contests of the Agora. Needless to say, of course, that the ancient *Agora*, unlike the modern one, was principally the center of multiple human activities serving as a market, and as the landmark of social, and political activities. *Agora* was a place, in which *homo politicus*, not *homo economicus*, was trained, and activated.⁷

In almost every Classical text a right crisis, with the guiding of reason, was considered to lead to right decisions, while a wrong one under the impulse of negative feelings and passions caused damage to both public and individual life. We see this pattern even in the mythological cases presented by poets, such as Homer's *Iliad* (the crisis-judgment of Paris, the crisis for the possession of Achilles' weapons) and the tragic poets, and Plato, as in the eschatological crisis of Minos, Radamanthys, and Aiakos.⁸ In every such case

⁶ Suda E 3547. See *The Writings of Hippocrates and Galen*, trans. R.J. Coxe (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1846).

⁷ See M.M. Austin and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece: An Introduction* (Stanford CA: University of California Press, 1980); M.H. Hansen and K. Raaflaub (eds.), *More Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, Vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1996); D. Burr Thompson, *An Ancient Shopping Center: The Athenian Agora*, Vol. 12 (Princeton, N.J.: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1993).

⁸ See Euripides' *Helen* 678: “ὄμοι ἐμῶν δειῶν, λουτρῶν καὶ κρηνῶν, ἵνα θεαὶ μορφὰν ἐφάιδρυναν, ἔθθεν ἔμολεν κρίσις” (*alas for my terrible fate, the baths and springs, where the*

crisis signifies a decision through a critical assessment of different possibilities and demands, which have created an *ἀμφισβήτησις* (disagreement). This is clearly an ideological reflection of the gnosiological aspect of the term, which was dictated by the structure of ancient democracy. Ancient democratic ethos demanded discrimination, i.e. training of the mind in the process of *discrimen iudicii*, i.e. the ability to evaluate the pros and cons among many options, and to make the most appropriate decision, i.e. the decision serving best both the city and the individual. *Crisis* in its highest was seen as a political action, linked to the competitive activities of the ancient Agora, in the framework of which a sound crisis-judgement was thought as feature of a competent citizen, while the opposite *ἀκρισία* (lack of judgement) was the characteristic of the idiots, i.e. those not politically involved.

In the Suda lexicon linguistic references clarify the political shade of the word *crisis*, which goes together with *ἐξέτασις* (examination), *ψῆφος* (vote), *ἐλεγχος* (control), *βάσανος* (definition of decorum), which fired by *ἀμφισβήτησις* (disagreement) leads to a sequence of political actions: “*ἡ ἀμφισβήτησις κρίσει ἀναρτάσθω, ἡ δὲ κρίσις τοὺς ἐλέγχους βασανίζετω, ἡ δὲ βάσανος τὸ δέον ὀρίζετω, ὁ δὲ ὄρος γεγράφθω, τὰ γεγραμμένα κυρούσθω, τὰ δὲ κυρωθέντα βεβαιούσθω τοῖς ἔργοις. Καὶ πᾶσα ἀψιμαχία οἰχέσθω καὶ πάλιν φιλίαν χορευέτω. Καὶ οὐ δεῖ κρίσιν ἀπερισκέπτως ποιεῖσθαι*” (*let the disagreement depend on a verdict, let the verdict test the argument, let the test set the boundaries of what is necessary, let the boundary be written, let what is written be validated, let what has been validated be corroborated in deeds, and let all quarreling disappear and let friendship parade back on. And it is necessary not to give judgments thoughtlessly*).⁹ The process of basic ancient democratic practices is plainly evident, with emphasis on the role of crisis as *discrimen temporis* for a thorough rational testing through *ἐλεγχοί*, from which the practice of political responsibility –*τὸ λόγον διδόναι* (giving account for)– depended.¹⁰

goddesses brightened the beauty from which the judgment came) [G. Murray (ed.), *Euripidis Fabulae*, 2 Vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902); see also Plato, *Gorgias* 525 c5 [J. Burnet (ed.), *Platonis Opera*, Vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903); *Minos* 318 d6 (ib. Vol. 5), 1907), *Laws* 948a. The tragic authors, inspired by the medical case, presented heroes and heroines in states of severe psychological crises, such as Euripides’ *Medea*, Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound*, Sophocles’ *Oedipus*, Sophocles’ *Ajax*, and so on –see J. Joyanna, *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen. Selected Papers*, trans. N. Allies (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012), p. 71.

⁹ *Suda Lexicon* A 1766.1. It is interesting to note the etymology of the word *βάσανος*, which in modern Greek means torture: “*Βάσανος λίθος ἐστίν ἢ ὁ χρυσίον παρατριβόμενον δοκιμάζουσα. Οὕτως Ἀντιφῶν καὶ Πίνδαρος καὶ Σοφοκλῆς... (καὶ μεταφορικῶς) ἐπὶ τῶν ἐξεταζόντων ἐν λόγοις καὶ ἔργοις*” (*basanos is a stone which by rubbing is testing gold. This is the meaning given by Antiphon, and Pindar and Sophocles (and metaphorically) it is used for speech and deeds testing* –*Suda*, 1 766.2).

¹⁰ *Logon didonai* initially meant the obligation of each magistrate to present for inspection the financial account of everything he had administered during his office (see among many others P. Fröhlich, “Governmental Checks and Balances,” in H. Beck (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Greek Government*, ‘Blackwell Companion to the Ancient World’ (Oxford: Wiley and Sons, 2013), 252-266, ch. 1. Philosophers, especially Socrates and Plato,

The political abuse of these democratic processes, however, through the development of rhetorical and sophistic subtleties and fallacies, and emphasis on the purely persuasive arguments led to a long-lasting dispute between philosophy and rhetoric-sophistic (*ars bene dicendi and persuendi*),¹¹ as far as the truth-value of political *crisis* is concerned. With the orators and most Sophists firmly defending an instrumental application of *crisis* focusing on the criterion of winning in the political and/or judicial arena, philosophy, especially from Socrates and Plato onwards, defended truth at a metaphysical, ontological and scientific level. In this way Socrates proposed universal, ethical terms (*ῥογος*), introducing his dialectical method of using critical arguments for testing false conceits of knowledge.¹² The greatest sign of a serious political crisis, according to the philosophers of the Classical epoch, was political *apathy* manifested in the pursuit of private interests. So Demosthenes, though a politically involved orator, clearly supports the priority of defending public versus private issues: “οὐ ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς διανοίας δεῖ τάς τε ἰδίας καὶ τὰς δημοσίας (i.e. δίκας) κρίνειν” (*we should not judge private and public court-cases with the same mind*).¹³ Since, *ex definitione*, rhetoric had as its main task the defense of partial interests, philosophy undertook the task to promote collective interests, those of the greater number of citizens first, of the whole humanity later. Plato throughout his works contradicted most Sophists and their views as a deep crisis of philosophical responsibility, while Aristotle argued in his *Politics* that man is an exclusively political animal in the service of his fellow citizens.¹⁴ In the Hellenistic times, though the city-states had more or less lost their political autonomy, the Stoics developed a highly sophisticated system, in which *logos*-reason became the key-ontological, gnosiological, and ethical component of their thought.

It is worth observing, however, that *crisis* did not have the various implications of *logos*, which had many significances, such as argument, calculation, word, sentence, speech and mode of discourse. In the same vein the meaning of the philosophically important derivative *criterion* changed. In the Classical times –and Plato attests to it– *criterion* had political hints, but in the Hellenistic epoch individual right judgements (*orthae criseis*) were treated as the only reliable criterion to control personal and public affairs in the best

used the phrase in moral, even metaphysical terms (see Plato, *Phaedo* 76b; *Politicus* 286a; *Symposium*, 189b).

¹¹ See S. Ijsseling, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict: A Historical Survey*, trans. P. Dunphy (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1976), p. 1; R.A. Chervitz and H.W. Johnstone Jr (eds.), *Rhetoric and Philosophy* (New York-London: Routledge, 2014).

¹² See *Republic* 515c; *Sophist* 259d; *Gorgias* 471e.

¹³ *Peri stephanou* 210.1 (*De corona*): S.H. Butcher (ed.), *Demosthenes orations*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903).

¹⁴ Aristotle, *Politics* 1253 a 3 [W.D. Ross (ed.), *Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957)]. Aristotle elsewhere relates lack of education to a weakness for right judging: “ἀπαιδευσία γὰρ ἔστι περὶ ἕκαστον πρᾶγμα τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι κρίνειν τοὺς οἰκείους λόγους τοῦ πρᾶγματος καὶ τοὺς ἀλλοτρίους” (*lack of education in respect to each subject is the inability to distinguish proper arguments to the subject from those foreign to it*) [F. Susemihl (ed.), *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1884) 1217a 8].

possible way. The problem of rightly *krinein*, which further meant understanding the true causes of events, required the elaboration of right criteria as *organa judicandi*, i.e. means by which the apprehension of true propositions was possible. Those criteria were defined by different Stoics as empirical observations and rational thoughts, clear sense-perceptions, apprehensive representations. And moving to the moral sphere, the Stoics supported the view that any unexpected and difficult life-circumstance has painful effects, only if we do not realize its real causes. It is characteristic that the Stoics and Epicurus, following Democritus, who had written a work *on Logic or Criteria of Thought*, systematically developed arguments on the criteria of true knowledge. So Epicurus wrote a work *On the Criterion* (*Περὶ κριτηρίου ἢ Κανῶν*), focusing mostly on the moral point of view, while the middle Stoic Posidonius of Rhodes had written a work *On the Criterion* (*Περὶ κριτηρίου*) in order to attack the refusal of knowing the truth and the existence of criteria of knowing supported by the Sceptics.¹⁵

The Classical political view of crisis was transformed in the Hellenistic times to the view of the right crisis of all people, a view gradually transformed to God's crisis-judgement.¹⁶ This change of meaning in combination with the ever-present medical perspective led to its modern meaning as a challenge or time for a change in a society through the balancing of opposite elements. In a text of Galen the semantic change of the term is obvious: “Κανῶν δ’ ἦν αὐτοῦ καὶ κρίσις ἢ τῶν στοιχείων ἰσομοιρία, δι’ ἣν καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐσχάτων ἀπάντων ἀκριβῶς μέσον ἀποτελοῦν εὐκκραστὸν τε καὶ σύμμετρον ὀνομάζεται” [*It was his (i.e. Hippocrates’) canon and judgment the equal of the elements, because of which the exact middle of all extremities is called well-blending and symmetrical*].¹⁷

¹⁵ See among others M. Tuominen, *Apprehension and Argument: Ancient Theories of Starting* (Netherlands: Springer Science and Business Media, 2007); R.W. Sharples, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics: An Introduction to Hellenistic Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1996); B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹⁶ “οὐαί, οὐαί, ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη ἢ Βαβυλῶν, ἡ πόλις ἡ ἰσχυρά, ὅτι μὲν ὄρα ἤλθεν ἡ κρίσις σου” (*alas, alas, you great and powerful city Babylon, here is the time of your crisis –i.e. God’s judgment for destruction*) [K. Aland, M. Black et al. (eds.), *The Greek New Testament (Apocalypse Joannis)* (Stuttgart: Wuerttemberg Bible Society, 1968²), 18.101]. The economy of this paper does not allow further analysis of this important transformation of the term *crisis*, for which see, among many others: A. Hastings et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Companion of Christian Thought* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000); J. Larke, *The Way to Christianity: The Historical Origins of Christianity* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2014).

¹⁷ Galen, *De temperamentis* 1.573.4, ed. G. Helmreich (Leipzig: Teubner, 1904), 1.573.4. It is worth stated, though in passu, that the modern meaning of *crisis*, i.e. as the socially critical point requiring changes, in ancient Greek language was expressed by different terms, such as *καιρός*-time-moment of opportunity, *ἀνομαλία*-anomaly, *ἀταξία*-disorder, *στάσις*-rebellion. See among others C.R. Sarai, *The Emergent Metaphysics in Plato’s Theory of Disorder* (New York: Lexington Books, 2006); H.-J. Gehrke, *Stasis: Untersuchungen zu den inneren Kriegen in den griechischen Staaten des 5. und 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* (Münich: C.H. Beck, 1985).

In our time E. Husserl is considered as the modern philosopher, who extensively discussed the problem of crisis in philosophy as crisis of reason and responsibility.¹⁸ But it is generally overlooked that a similar problematic had arisen in the Classical and Hellenistic times, first with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and afterwards with the Stoics. Socrates and Plato were the first to support the view that any crisis is a crisis of responsibility: psychological and moral, as well as political. So, these Greek philosophers saw it as their task to work for the resolution of these crises, and they did it in many ways, which greatly influenced western philosophy. The answer of the Pre-Socratics to the social and political problems of their time was the discovery and development of a scientific spirit, i.e. the training of mind in the 'right' judgement, namely one based on experience, observation, and logical argumentation. Socrates introduced the so-called *anthropocentric* turn of philosophy, pursuing and teaching in his unique dialectical method *ἐπιμέλειαν ψυχῆς*, i.e. that all people can discover and use right judgements in political and ethical issues. Plato, long before Husserl, argued that the resolution of any crisis is related to *μνήμη* -memory, and the training and political involvement of men and women with right education. Aristotle, as the philosopher of real-politic, saw the answer in the training in *mesotes*, i.e. avoidance of extreme behavior, while the Stoics preached the model of the wise man, i.e. a person with free, rightly judging, non-alienated mind. After all every Greek philosopher seems to agree with Euripides' view that "οὐ γὰρ ὀφθαλμὸς τὸ κρίνειν, ἀλλὰ νοῦς" (*we do not judge with the eye, but with the mind*).¹⁹

A question related to the utilitarian ideology of our times is the following: Is there any relevance of the ancient Greek concept of *crisis* for today? From a semantic point of view, the ancient Greek medical meaning of the term is still extant today with the due ramifications. From an ideological or deontological point of view, an *eikos* according to Plato, i.e. plausible, answer is probably the following: at an epoch in which mind-manipulation structurally, politically and psychologically applied worldwide and tending to create alienated individuals satisfied with an 'idiotic,' in the ancient meaning, life with shallow interpersonal relations and minimal political awareness, the maxim of Plutarch, which reflects almost all Greek philosophy "τὸ λογίζεσθαι καὶ κρίνειν" (*thinking and judging*)²⁰ has never been more relevant than it is today.

¹⁸ See E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, ed. W. Biemel, Husserliana VI (Hamburg: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1954); see also R.P. Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992).

¹⁹ Fr. 909, 6 (A. Nauck).

²⁰ Plutarch, *De virtute morali*, M., ed. Pohlenz, *Plutarchi Moralia*, 3 Vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1929), 447 B 5.

The Emergence of Philosophy from the Crisis of the Homeric Way of Life

NIKOS PSARROS

Philosophy and Human Life

The term 'Philosophy' has many meanings in everyday life: There is the 'individual Philosophy' that epitomises the personal ideals and the way of life of each person who makes the effort of refraining even for a short period of time from her daily routine and turning her attention to the very form and the content of her life. There is also the 'particular Philosophy' of a collective enterprise, be it the 'corporate Philosophy' that defines the object of 'our' company and the way in which this company appears and acts in the public space, the Philosophy of 'our' school, which we have jointly founded with those with whom we share our pedagogical ideals, or the Philosophy of 'our' sports club.

Not far removed from this, we encounter the realm of Science and we find therein Philosophy as a science among the other sciences: Philosophy is taught and practiced at the university, and academic philosophers participate as peers in the institutional hierarchy of the academic sciences –they are professors, doctors, lecturers and researchers. They are awarded honours, offices and prizes, and they have also to ensure scientifically sustained criticism. However, in the sciences, we encounter another meaning of the term. Apart from Philosophy as the characterisation of an autonomous science, there are also the 'Philosophies' of the particular sciences: the Philosophy of Physics, of Chemistry, of Mathematics, of Psychology and so forth.

For the majority of people, although science is not their focus, their everyday lives take place within the far reaching scope of science. That is, we are primarily interested in the ways and methods that lead to the achievement of our ends (and we are in possession of a vast amount of knowledge about these methods). However, we always resort to science when a method fails to help us achieve our ends, and we are then confronted with what the Ancients called 'aporia': the lack of means or the ignorance of methods. Science helps us past this impasse by providing us with the appropriate resources –the knowledge of the reasons and the causes of the success or failure of the methods. The methods we use involve, on the one hand, the utilisation of things and processes and, on the other hand, dealing with various phenomena. Therefore, the knowledge of the reasons, which science provides us, is the knowledge of the 'nature' of these things, processes and phenomena. To sum up, the particular sciences provide us with knowledge about the nature of the things, processes and phenomena that make up the various realms of what I call here the 'Ob-

jective World.¹ The knowledge provided by the sciences finds its application in the methods we use to ‘tame’ the Objective World and subdue it to our will. It is this successful application that determines its value as knowledge about the Objective World.

At this point, we observe two interesting issues. First, if we accept that the particular sciences provide us with a system of knowledge that is exhaustively sufficient for the subjection of the Objective World, then the definition of philosophy as science is rendered void: There is no place for Philosophy in the system of the particular sciences because there is no element of the Objective World that is not the object of a given particular science. Additionally, the term ‘Philosophy of Science’ is rendered absurd, since, according to the aforementioned definition, the particular sciences are themselves not part of the Objective World, so there is nothing about them that is empirical or opaque to human knowledge. Thus, the effort to determine the ‘nature’ of the sciences is futile and absurd.

Second, if the very fact of the successful application of scientific knowledge for the subjection of the Objective World to our will is sufficient in order to determine their scientificity, and if solely the deliberate choice of the particular ends, i.e. solely our will, is sufficient to determine the range of the phenomena, things and processes that are in need of scientific treatment—that are sources of scientific knowledge—, then the nature of the things, i.e. the object of the sciences and the content of scientific knowledge, is determined by the nature of our ends, and vice versa.

However, we have to take into consideration that the initial motive for our scientific endeavour was that the success of the methods we employ to achieve our ends depends partly on the Objective World in its totality, i.e. that this success is partly opaque to the knowledge of the methods we employ for achieving our ends. In other words, the sole knowledge of the nature of the involved things, processes and phenomena is not sufficient to guarantee the success of the methods. This means that the mutual reference between the achievement of a particular end by a given method, on the one hand, and the successful application of scientific knowledge that leads to the success of this particular method, on the other, is not only insufficient for the characterisation of a knowledge as scientific, but in fact solicits a criterion for scientificity that is completely independent from this mutual reference and is necessary and sufficient for explaining and proving the necessity of this mutual reference. We call this criterion ‘The Truth.’ Because The Truth is the necessary and sufficient condition for the scientificity of scientific knowledge, the determina-

¹ The term ‘Objective World’ as I use it here, refers to the circumstance that the content of this world is, in a very fundamental sense, independent of our will and opaque to our understanding, and embraces in this sense not only the objects of the so called ‘natural sciences,’ but also social and psychic phenomena—the objects of the ‘humanities.’ The common trait of all the objects that make up the ‘Objective World’ is that they appear in the shape of and as the content of experiences and not as ends, contents of ends or objects of actions.

tion of its nature cannot be the object of a particular science, be it a natural science or a science of the humanities.

The Truth has a nature, and the nature of things is the object of scientific endeavour. Thus, apart from the particular sciences of the natural world, there has to be a science, one of the objects of which is the exploration and determination of the nature of Truth. This science is Philosophy.

Before we commence an exploration of the nature of Truth, we have to explicate what we mean with the term 'nature.' With this term, we refer to what is 'hidden behind' the appearance of a thing (or a process, or a phenomenon) and determines in an absolute sense 'what it should be,' its 'idea' or its 'plan.' How do we know, however, that behind the appearance of each thing a specific 'nature' is hidden, and how do we know that the 'nature' of a thing is not identical to its appearance and does not exhaust itself in the totality of its perceptible characteristics?

The answer to this question is the core of philosophical research, and its specific content determines, among other things, the nature of Truth itself. Since the aim of this paper is not an exploration of this particular question, it will be sufficient to answer it with the following words: Knowledge about the existence of what is here called the 'nature of a thing' stems from immediate knowledge of the existence of the nature of ourselves or of the existence of Human Nature. This knowledge is immediate, in the sense that we acquire it without the involvement or the mediation of a specific sensory or any other specific organ and in the sense that its acquisition is not the result of a specific experience that we have to have in order to acquire this knowledge, but that it is an integral part of our intellect: at the very first moment of her thinking, a human person has the immediate knowledge of the fact of the existence of Human Nature.

Knowledge of the fact of the existence of the Human Nature determines the fundamental 'epistemico-existential' situation of every human person, which we call *self-consciousness*. As self-conscious beings, we also possess immediate knowledge of the fact of our self-consciousness, which renders us 'rational animals,' i.e. animals that are in possession of what modern philosophical terminology calls 'Rationality' or 'Reason.' As 'rational animals,' we seek behind the occurrences of our daily lives the reasons of these occurrences, which lie in the nature of the things. Thus, Science as exploration of the nature of the things and Philosophy as the science of the exploration of the nature of Rationality, are at the centre of human existence, and they constitute its nucleus.

Philosophy as a Historical Phenomenon

From the aforementioned reflections, we can conclude that Science and Philosophy are integral parts of human existence, regardless of the level of its historical development. In other words, at every moment of the historical existence of humanity as a species of 'rational animal,' this existence is charac-

terised in the totality of its daily routine by the exercise of scientific and philosophical reasoning.

On the other hand, it is common knowledge that neither scientific nor philosophical reflection has always been 'visible' as an institutionally defined space in human everyday life, both in its synchronic and diachronic dimensions. In the synchronic dimension, we realise that the degree of development and the practice of the sciences and of philosophy is not equally distributed across the contemporary world: there are states and societies that are scientifically and philosophically more advanced than others, so they then set the standards for both the institutional and the material practicing of scientific and philosophical reasoning. In the diachronic dimension, the sciences of History of Science and History of Philosophy, as well as the broader awareness of what we commonly call 'scientific and philosophical tradition,' reveal that both the institutional framework as well as the concrete content of scientific and philosophical thought are subject to a historical evolution: the present institutional and material state of affairs of the sciences and of philosophy are the result of past states of affairs.

Thus, while 'philosophising' is an integral part of human 'reasoning,' its expression as a particular social and institutional entity with its particular structure and its specific rules of practice can be traced back to a definite historical moment, i.e. it is the result of a preceding state of affairs that rendered necessary its emergence and that determined its specific form.

The Homeric and the Political Way of Life

The historical event that determined the emergence of science and of philosophy as definite social and institutional entities with forms that can be regarded as the precursor of the contemporary institutional form, both of the particular sciences as well as of contemporary philosophy, is a transition of the human way of life. It was a transition (in a region from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean to the fertile plains of China, including even the Nile valley) from a form that I call here the 'Homeric Way of Life' to a form that I call the 'Political Way of Life.' This transition lasted several centuries and can be located chronologically between the ninth and second century BC. This era has been referred to as the 'Axial Period,' a term coined by Karl Jaspers.² In this period, the four main cultures of antiquity were constituted and consolidated: the Chinese, the Indo-Iranian, the Jewish and the Greco-Roman or Occidental culture. Their common trait was the organisation of social life based on the idea that the Being is stratified in three levels that are hierarchically interconnected but nevertheless existentially absolutely separated: the divine, the human and the natural level. The fundamental nucleus of human life in every variant of the axial civilisations is the awareness of the fact that humans are the sole authors of their actions and absolutely responsible for the organisa-

² K. Jaspers, *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte* (Zürich: Artemis Verlag, 1949), pp. 19-42.

tion and the preservation of their way of life.³ Thus, a separate realm in the material world is constituted that is organised and administered solely by humans and is defended against the spreading of the influence of the Natural World, the latter comprising all the phenomena and the states of affairs that cannot be regarded as direct results of the intentional human activity.

The term for this perceptible and practical realisation of the human realm in the Greco-Roman/Occidental civilisation is 'polis,' in the Jewish 'people' and in the Chinese and the Indo-Iranian 'kingdom' (a later term used especially by historians is 'empire'). The polis (I use this term also as an umbrella term embracing the particular terms 'polis,' 'people' and 'kingdom') is not simply a settlement or an ensemble of settlements, or a group of nomadic tribes who roam the plains and the steppes with their mobile possessions. It is a 'landmark' that defines the separation of the natural and the human level on the one hand and of the human and the divine level on the other hand. This landmark has the form of a material border, e.g. of a wall (serving only a secondary aim defence purpose), that surrounds an area (the Greek 'asty,' or the Latin 'urbs,' here translated as 'city'), in which the human activity par excellence, namely the deliberation about common affairs, takes place. The wall surrounds also the objects and the buildings that serve exclusively for worshipping and communicating with the divine level of Being. Another common trait of the 'political' world is that the Divine –the Jewish only God, Yahweh, the gods of the Greco-Roman and of the Indo-Iranian pantheon and the Heaven of the Chinese– does not intervene actively with human fate and life, but only remotely monitors humans and their actions, sometimes sending its commandments or revealing itself, either via oracles and auspices, or by mediation of prophets, families of specialised 'divine communicators,' like the Jewish Levites or consecrated priests.⁴

The preceding state of affairs, referred to here as the 'Homeric World,' is characterised by the idea of 'ontic continuity' and unity between the Natural, the Human and the Divine. The Homeric man has, on the one hand, contact with the Divine on a daily basis, with the latter intervening actively in his life, and exists on the other hand as an integral part of Nature. The gods of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are responsible for the outbreak and the duration of devastating wars, partake in battles on the side of their human favourites, cheat, betray, lure into traps, kill and save humans. They are identified with natural phenomena, animals and plants.⁵ The biblical Yahweh intervenes at least three times in his own creation, when he realises that things go astray –the Cataclysm, the Tower of Babel and Sodom and Gomorrah– and he ceases his direct interventions only after his night-time fight with Jacob, which marks the

³ Odysseus, Penelope, Jacob, Ruth and Esther are representative specimens of political people.

⁴ One could argue that in the later, more mature forms of the political world, the task of reading the divine message has been entrusted to the natural scientists and the theologians.

⁵ Such 'material manifestations' of the gods still survive into the political era, e.g. the holy Oak of the Dodona oracle.

end of the Homeric period of the Jews and the beginning of their political era as the 'People of Israel.'

The Homeric society is open against nature (the celebrated great Walls of Troy are a historical anachronism). The archaeologist's spade has uncovered intricate complexes of Homeric settlements that are made up of living, working and worshipping spaces arranged around a religious-political centre, the sessions of which are presided over by a king priest or a queen priestess. These residential-economic-religious complexes of the Homeric 'palaces' do not possess a definite border, but dissipate into the surrounding area and mix with fields and the rest of the nature. Even the arrangements of 'privat spaces' confirm this peculiar organisational chaos: In a Neolithic house excavated on the island of Naxos, for example, we find that its tenants used the tombstone of a grave that was placed in their 'kitchen' as a dining table—the dead shared the same space with the living.

In contrast, the organization of the living and working space in the household of the Political man reflects the absolute separation of the three levels of Being: The atrium and the chambers are at the sole disposal of the humans for carrying out their human activities. The Divine is worshipped in a space especially reserved for this purpose, containing a shrine, and Nature performs its processes either in the spaces housing the animals of the household, or in the fields that belong to it and that are normally located in other parts of the polis, outside of the city walls, which are more suitable for agriculture, or in the workshops, where natural objects and processes are tamed and subjected to the human will.

The Destruction of the Homeric and the Transition to the Political Way of Life as a Crisis Phenomenon

The Axial Period marks the end of the Homeric and the beginning of the Political World. The events that led to the downfall of the first and the emergence of the second are various and heterogeneous: natural disasters, migration of populations accompanied by wars, a demographic explosion in Homeric communities that necessitated the introduction of new methods of agriculture and stock raising, and as a consequence a new way to confront Nature. Memories and residues of these events survived in the myths and the cosmogonies of all the nations and particular cultures that emerged after the transition. The particular outcome of the destruction of the Homeric World varies according to the particular prehistory and the development of the particular communities, but cannot be further discussed here. However, an important aspect that led to the emergence of Science and Philosophy as distinct social and institutional phenomena is that the downfall of the Homeric World was experienced in a certain region of this world—namely at the shores and the islands of the Aegean sea—as a *crisis* in the double meaning of the term: as a separation at the ontic and as a judgement at the epistemic level of human existence. The downfall of the Homeric world was experienced as a separation of the levels of Being, as malfunction and collapse of the hitherto 'nor-

mal' life, as *penía*, as poverty, i.e. as shortage of means of life, and as existential crisis of persons, groups and communities. The overcoming of this catastrophe required decisions based on the insight into the nature of the events, judgements and critical faculties.

We will probably never know why the downfall of the Homeric world was experienced as a crisis solely in this region and was overcome by developing the human critical faculties, resulting in the autonomisation of these faculties and their realisation as Science and Philosophy. The reason may have lain in the influence of the geographic environment, as Plato and Hegel believed,⁶ in the specific constitution of ways of production and trade⁷ or in a combination of the aforementioned and other hitherto unknown factors. The 'effective cause' of the emergence of Science and Philosophy on the shores and the islands of the Aegean is historically inaccessible and philosophically irrelevant.

The relevant aspect of this event is the way in which, in the course of the critical overcoming of the crisis, 'philosophising' and 'reasoning' gradually become conscious and are explicated as separate aspects of human self-consciousness – a process that finds its first institutional culmination in Plato's and Aristotle's philosophical schools.

Philosophy as the Metaphysical Overcoming of the Separation of the Levels of Being

The uniqueness of philosophical thought, as it was constituted at the specific time and place of its origin, consists in the fact that it was not confined to the practical dealing with the crisis that followed the separation and autonomisation of the three levels of Being – by issuing, for example, laws and rules of proper conduct, acquiring knowledge about Nature –, or to the effort to keep alive the memory of the lost unity and to foresee its eschatological reunification – as reappearance of a Messiah or as sublimation into Nirvana. However, it also aimed at proving that the experience of this separation is only apparent and that both the experience of the destruction and the discontinuity of human life, as well as the success of the measures of alleviating it, were due to the fact that 'in reality' the continuity of the levels of Being has never been disrupted – it still exists under the veil of a mere apparent discontinuity.

The first efforts to prove this claim, made by the so-called 'Ionian Natural Philosophers,' are far from perfect, being confined within the framework of the material and perceptible world: Water, Air, the Infinite, Seeds, and Elements are successively declared, supported by various arguments, as the princi-

⁶ Plato discusses in length the influence of the location of a *polis* on the spirit, the customs and the virtues of its citizens in the *Laws* 704a - 707d; Hegel maintains that the geography of the natural environment plays an important role in the way the 'Geist' manifests itself in a given part of the world, explaining thus why the various civilizations achieved only a certain degree of spiritual maturity [G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1994), pp. 187-241].

⁷ G.D. Thomson, *Studies in the Ancient Greek Society*, Vol. II: *The First Philosophers* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1955).

ples of the underlying metaphysical continuity of the Being. However, after only two generations, the philosophical reasoning reaches its first degree of maturity when Parmenides recognises that the principle of the unity of the Being cannot be anything other than the Being itself, which is identical with the 'Reasoning,' i.e. with thinking as such, so that the object of rational thinking is its identity with the Being. According to Parmenides, the identity of thinking and Being is the definition of Truth –thus, Truth is recognised as the object of philosophical thinking and as the foundation of any knowledge about the world.

Philosophy thus developed in the Ionian world and its colonies laid the foundations for the consolidation of the Political Way of Life, first in the Greek and then in the broader Mediterranean region, because Philosophy paved the path to the proof that the practical applicability of a rational judgement is based on its truth, i.e. on its reference to the Being.

However, the consolidation of the Political Way of Life in its Mediterranean version of the city-state led to a second crisis, this time within its very framework. The cause of this crisis was due to the still imperfect and immature knowledge of the foundations of Truth, which among the members of the politically and economically powerful classes of the Greek city-states (especially of Athens, the superpower of that time) was identified with the practical success of the methods applied to accumulate wealth and political influence. The so-called Sophists were the heralds of the new science of 'political virtue' which was achieved by applying the 'techniques' taught by the 'master,' against a handsome fee. This turn of events very soon brought into play those thinkers who, still loyal to the philosophical tradition of the Ionians and of Parmenides, challenged and overthrew the Sophistic dogma of the definition of Truth as practical success of the method –names and persons are known.

The overcoming of the second crisis resulted, on the one hand, in the dissolution of the model of the city-state and the end of the Axial Period in the Mediterranean region. On the other hand, this crisis led to the institutional consolidation of Philosophy as science and to the ultimate definition of its object –the Nature of Truth.

Epilogue

The precursor of the modern Way of Life, the Political Way of Life, emerges as the result of a crisis and its successful overcoming by virtue of the critical faculties of the 'rational animal.' In the form of the institutionally and socially consolidated Philosophy as Science of the Truth, since then, human critical thinking has accompanied and shaped the Political Man. Historical experience teaches us, however, that the critical faculty of the rational animal is not only the result, but also the cause of the crisis of each concrete historical phase of the Political Way of Life. The critical faculty overcomes each crisis only to lead into the next.

Shall we conclude from this that we, as rational animals, are condemned to live in an endless sequence of crises, without any possibility of escape? Is

the best that we can achieve the accumulation of successful methods for the solution of definite problems? This could be the case if we were not in possession of self-awareness, if we were not in possession of Reason. We are, however, aware of the very fact of our nature, we are conscious of the very fact of our limits, and we are aware that our limits can be overcome. The opacity of our situation is not absolute. The very fact that we are aware of it as opacity is the proof. And so opacity becomes transparent. And the Truth becomes visible.

Plato's and Aristotle's Response to the Crisis of Their Contemporary *Polis*

VASILIKI P. SOLOMOU-PAPANIKOLAOU

The Nature of the Polis

The *polis* was the characteristic form of community and the typical form of state in ancient Greece, which, by common assent, nourished every distinctive feature of the Greek culture. The emergence of the *polis*, sometime between 800 and 700 B.C.,¹ was the beginning of essential innovations, which effectively moulded the Greek outlook of life. Traditional patterns of moral and intellectual attitudes underwent radical changes and new ideas were introduced to define the framework of behavior and thought. This does not mean, of course, that the *polis* discarded all preexisting attitudes and outlooks. Many of them endure, although they acquire a new significance as they become part of the spiritual orbit of the *polis*. However, the originality of the *polis* consists in certain characteristics and trends that were not found in the tribal stage of Greek society, which was based mainly on kinship and loyalty.

In the early classical age the *polis*² had already reached its complete development and its peculiar values and features were clearly delineated. It is worth

¹ This dating is accepted by many scholars, although the question when and where the *polis* first appeared has given rise to much controversy. For the specific period of the origin of the *polis*, see V.L. Ehrenberg, "When Did the Polis Rise?," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 57 (1937), 147-159; M.B. Sakellariou, *The Polis-State: Definition and Origin* (Athens: Research Centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity, National Hellenic Research Foundation, 1989), pp. 335-419. Sakellariou defends the view that the creation of the first *poleis* took place in Attica and Euboea c. 1000 B.C. Afterwards, as he notes, "the phenomenon intensified, spread to other areas and continued to occur until the loss of self determination by the Greeks" (p. 418; cf. p. 473). On the historical development of the *polis*, see, among many others, C.G. Starr, *The Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece. 800-500 B.C.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 31-34, 98ff.; M.M. Austin and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece: An Introduction*, trans. and rev. M.M. Austin (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 49-53; M.H. Crawford and D. Whitehead, *Archaic and Classical Greece. A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 27-51.

² For interesting and detailed discussions of the complex issue of the *polis*, see, for instance, G. Glotz, *La cité grecque. Le développement des institutions* (1928; Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1968); L.H. Jeffery, *Archaic Greece: The City-States c. 700-500 B.C.* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976); Sakellariou, *The Polis-State: Definition and Origin*; O. Murray and S. Price (eds.), *The Greek City: From Homer to Alexander* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); P. Flensted-Jensen (ed.), *Further Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000); M.H. Hansen and T.H. Nielsen (eds.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); M.H. Hansen, *Polis: An Introduction to the Ancient Greek City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); M.H. Hansen (ed.), *The Return of the Polis: The Use and Meanings of the Word Polis in Archaic and Classical Sources* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007); P.J.

noting that, in mainland Greece, Sicily, Southern Italy, the islands and Asia Minor, as well as in other areas of the Mediterranean world and in the coasts of the Black Sea, there were, during the Archaic and Classical period, 1035 communities labeled as *poleis*, as Mogens Herman Hansen³ has shown. The *poleis* had certainly many differences in their structure and constitution. However, in spite of the dissimilarities, they had a number of common features that allow us to use the word *polis* as an abstraction and to proceed to certain generalizations.

The Greek word *polis* signified in general an independent political, economic, religious and social unit, with a limited population and a restricted geographic area. As for its regional organization, the *polis* consisted of an urban centre (ἄστυ) and surrounding land (χώρα) but, in actual fact, the *polis* was not so much a territorial entity. Above all it was a political community of citizens⁴ with a deep consciousness of the value of common life. For instance, the *polis* was considered primarily to be the Athenians or Spartans and secondarily Athens or Sparta. As the historian Thucydides explicitly states, “It is the men who are the polis” (*History*, VII. 77. 7).⁵

The *polis* assumed an identity and a form which reflected the totality of its adult male citizens as a body regardless of their individual inclinations, their ancestral origins, their professions or their social positions. The citizens were all free men and equal among themselves; through their general assembly they regulated the domestic and foreign policies of their community. According to Aristotle, “what effectively distinguishes the citizen proper from all others is his participation in giving judgement and holding office” (*Politics* 1275 a 22). Since the holder of state sovereignty was a community of citizens and not a single person, the *polis*, “shorn of all private and personal character,”⁶ was the embodiment of the concept of the “common.” That the citizen assembly knowingly identified itself with the *polis* becomes manifest in the phrase “the polis decided” (ἔδοξε τῷ πόλι...),⁷ which was a decree-formula meaning that the approved resolutions expressed the will of the citizen body.

Rhodes, *The Greek City States: A Source Book* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007²).

³ Hansen and Nielsen (eds.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, particularly p. 6 and p. 53 (from Part I: “Introduction,” written by M.H. Hansen).

⁴ Cf. M.I. Finley, *The Ancient Greeks: An Introduction to Their Life and Thought* (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), p. 39 and E. Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and His Predecessors* (1960⁵; rpt. Suffolk: Methuen, 1964), p. 28.

⁵ Cf. Alcaeus, fr. 426 LP, trans. D. Page: “Cities [*poleis*] are not stones or logs or the handiwork of carpenters; but wherever there exist true men who know how to defend themselves, there will be found a city and wall”; Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 56-57: “Neither walled town nor ship is anything at all if it be empty and no men dwell together therein.”

⁶ J.-P. Vernant, *The Origins of Greek Thought*, trans. from the French (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 47.

⁷ See, for example, W. Dittenberger, *SIG3*, no. 121. Cf. R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 2, no. 2: “the city thus decided;...” (ἄδ’ ἔφαδε/πόλι...). Equivalent decree-formulas were the phrases “the *dēmos* decided” (ἔδοξεν τῷ δήμῳ) –in decrees and inscriptions the term “*dēmos*” meant the people constituting the citizen assembly– and “the council of the citizen assembly and the *dēmos* decided” (ἔδοξεν τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ).

The citizens were obliged to continuous and intense political activity,⁸ because the *polis* was governed in a direct and not in a representative way. That is why leisure (σχολή), which stood for a state of release from compulsory or productive work,⁹ was a necessary element for the functioning of the political community.¹⁰ It was considered to be an exclusive condition of the citizen. It is obvious that leisure was bound up with the public sphere, in contrast with the age we live in, where, as Janet Coleman¹¹ remarks, “‘free leisure time’ is squeezed into a private sphere.”

The idea of the *polis* did not allow any citizen to retire into private life, that is to be unconcerned or non-participant in the public life of the state. Its tenet was a life dedicated to public-political matters, a life devoted to the public weal of the community. In this context, privacy¹² had a degrading meaning, and as Hannah Arendt remarks, “A man who lived only a private life, who like the slave was not permitted to enter the public realm, or like the barbarian had chosen not to establish such a realm, was not fully human.”¹³ In the words of Pericles, if we are to believe Thucydides, “he who takes no part in the affairs of the polis is not regarded as someone who minds his own business (ἀπράγμων), but as a useless man (ἀχρηϊός).”¹⁴

For numerous ancient written testimonies denoting the identification of the *polis* with the citizens or with the citizen assembly, see Sakellariou, *The Polis-State: Definition and Origin*, pp. 191-203.

⁸ N.D. Fustel de Coulanges presents in a descriptive and colorful way the politically active life of a citizen [*The Ancient City: A Study on the Religion, Laws, and Institutions of Greece and Rome*, trans. W. Small (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1956¹²), pp. 334-336]. In Athens, for example, according to M.B. Σακελλαρίου [*Η αθηναϊκή δημοκρατία* (Ηράκλειο: Πανεπιστημιακές Εκδόσεις Κρήτης, 1999), p. 165], from 432 B.C. onwards, the working days of the council (βουλή) in a political year –consisting of 354 days– were 244 and there were also 40 regular gatherings of the citizen assembly.

⁹ See J.L. Stocks, “ΣΧΟΛΗ,” *The Classical Quarterly*, 30 (1936), 177-187 and particularly pp. 181-182.

¹⁰ Although the philosophers tried to give a new meaning to the concept of leisure by associating it with the *vita contemplativa* (see, for instance, Plato, *Theaetetus*, 172 d - 176 a, and *Phaedo* 66 b-d), they never ceased to treat leisure in its widely accepted sense of time assigned to political activities. This can be attested by the following passage from Aristotle's *Politics*: “leisure is necessary both for the development of virtue and the performance of political duties” (1329 a 1-2). Cf. Plato, *Laws* 832 d, where Magnesia is described as the *polis* with the “greatest...leisure” («σχολήν...μεγίστην»), which means that its citizens have ample leisure time to fulfill their public duties and to cultivate virtue.

¹¹ *Ancient Greek, Modern and Post-Modern Agonisms: The Possibilities for Democratic Toleration* [C.T. Dimaras Annual Lecture, 2007] (Athens: Institute for Neohellenic Research–National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2008), p. 116.

¹² In the ancient Greek language there were in use several terms, such as “ιδιωτεία,” “ιδιωτής,” “ιδιωτικός,” “ιδιωτεύειν,” “ιδιος,” with a meaning related to the meaning of the terms “private” and “privacy”. All these terms, which were expressing the opposite of what was common and public and were connected with the family and household sphere, seen through the point of view of the public domain they were not in great esteem.

¹³ *The Human Condition* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 38.

¹⁴ *History*, II. 40. 2. Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 550 a and 620 c - d1.

The distinction between the “private” and the “public” domain, that is between the household and the family life on the one hand and the public or the distinctly political life on the other, arose for the first time in history within the context of the *polis*. Everything that concerned the citizens as a whole belonged automatically to the public sphere. J.-P. Vernant holds rightly that “the *polis* existed only to the extent that a *public* domain had emerged,” that is an “area of common interest, as opposed to private concerns, and open practices openly arrived at, as opposed to secret procedures.”¹⁵ Likewise, in H. Arendt’s view, the *polis* stands for the authentic public realm.¹⁶

The public domain gave birth to what we call human dignity since it bestowed on man as a citizen a unique value. Thanks to this domain, the citizen broke through the boundaries of self-centered life into a realm which was primarily concerned in the advancement of the public good. He became involved in a life-pattern which demanded openness to the needs and desires of others and “delivered him from the narrow circle of personal interests into a sphere of wider views and higher aims.”¹⁷ The public domain was never compromised with a conception of private life in which one has the right to do what one pleases, disregarding the common values of his society, and without thought to social service. The public life of the *polis* implied a common life, the dimensions of which are hardly intelligible to a modern man saturated by a pattern of private life and actuated by the “ideology of intimacy.”¹⁸

The public domain, within which *isonomia* (equality of civic rights and equality before the law) and *isēgoria* (the equal right of any citizen to speak in the assembly) were prevalent, could also be considered as the realm of *logos*,¹⁹ of freedom and equality,²⁰ of genuine communication, as well as of per-

¹⁵ *The Origins of Greek Thought*, p. 51.

¹⁶ See *The Human Condition*, p. 41. For an interesting interpretation of Arendt’s conception of the public realm, see M. Canovan, “Politics as Culture: Hannah Arendt and the Public Realm,” *History of Political Thought*, 6 (1985), 617-642.

¹⁷ G.L. Dickinson, *The Greek View of Life* (1896; London: Methuen & Co., 1905⁴), p. 122.

¹⁸ For more details on this issue, see R. Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Random House Inc., Vintage Books, 1978), esp. pp. 3-32, 259-268, 337-340. On the appearance, transformation and disintegration of the bourgeois public sphere in modern era, see J. Habermas’s influential work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. T. Burger with the assistance of F. Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1989).

¹⁹ The term “logos” was one of many senses. For a detailed survey of what this word meant in the fifth century B.C. or earlier, see W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. I (1962; rpt. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 420-424. Here it is used in the sense of speech as a coherent and rational arrangement of words, or of thought articulated in speech. For the prominent position of speech in the context of the *polis*, see Vernant, *The Origins of Greek Thought*, pp. 49-50; Arendt, *The Human Condition*, pp. 25-27; P. Vidal-Naquet, *Le chasseur noir. Formes de pensée et formes de société dans le monde grec* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1981), p. 22, where the author states that “the *polis* [...] is speech (parole), indeed speech, which was effective in the *agora*.”

²⁰ For freedom and equality as “the prime political sentiments or slogans of the ancient Greeks,” see P. Cartledge, “Greek Political Thought: The Historical Context,” in C. Rowe and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*

sonal stance. It was a common belief that outside its boundaries the “good life” could not be accomplished.

The afore-mentioned distinctive features of the *polis*, together with its steady claim for justice, moderation, friendliness and concord among the citizens, were conducive to the creation of its uniqueness as a form of social and political association.

Polis and Crisis

Unfortunately, from the last third of the 5th century B.C. onwards, the Greek world fell into a deep economic, socio-political and moral crisis, which was mostly due to the Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.), “which was waged by the Peloponnesians and the Athenians against one another.”²¹ As described by Thucydides, the Peloponnesian War was excessively destructive and subversive of the political stability. In his words, this war was “the greatest movement that had ever stirred the Hellenes, extending also to some of the Barbarians, one might say even to a very large part of mankind” (*History*, I. 1.2).

The post-war state of Greek society was disordered and turbulent. Xenophon, for example, in his *Hellenica* (VII. V. 27) declares that the years following the battle of Mantinea, which took place in 362 B.C., were especially extreme as evidenced in his statement: “But there was even more confusion and disorder in Greece after the battle than before.” The first half, then, of the fourth century B.C., during which Plato reached intellectual maturity and Aristotle reached manhood and became a scholar of promise, was a period of deep crisis²² for the *polis* and its institutions. We must not also forget that Pla-

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 11-22, particularly p. 16. The family and household domain, which was the place to produce children and to secure life's necessities, represented, as Arendt has pointed out, the space of the lack of freedom and the “center of the strictest inequality” (*The Human Condition*, p. 32), since relations of domination –of master over slaves, husband over wife, father over children– are unavoidable in this domain.

²¹ Thucydides, *History*, I.1.1. For recent general accounts of the Peloponnesian War, see D. Kagan, *The Peloponnesian War: Athens and Sparta in Savage Conflict, 431-404 BC* (New York: Viking, 2003); J.F. Lazenby, *The Peloponnesian War: A Military Study* (London: Routledge, 2004); L.A. Tritle, *A New History of the Peloponnesian War* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010). For the turbulent last decade of this war, see Σ. Καραμούτσου-Τέζα, *Ο Θρασύβουλος και ο Πελοποννησιακός πόλεμος*, Διδακτορική διατριβή (Ιωάννινα, 2004).

²² On the critical situation of the Greek world after the Peloponnesian War, see, for instance, C. Mossé, *La fin de la démocratie athénienne. Aspects sociaux et politiques du déclin de la cité grecque au IV^e siècle avant J.C.* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), pp. 30-31, 224-227; Glotz, *La cité grecque*, pp. 326-334; Austin and Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece: An Introduction*, pp. 131-155, 334-383; G.R. Morrow, *Plato's Epistles: A Translation with Critical Essays and Notes* (Indianapolis, New York: Bobbs-Merril, 1962), pp. 123-130; K.-W. Welwei, “The Peloponnesian War and Its Aftermath,” in K.H. Kinzl (ed.), *A Companion to the Classical Greek World* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 526-543; S. Hornblower, *The Greek World 479-323 BC* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002³), pp. 184-209. On the contrary, P. Cartledge refuses to accept the “assumption” of “a general ‘crisis’” during the fourth century [“The Effects of

to grew up during the eventful period of the Peloponnesian War,²³ while Aristotle saw the growing power of Philip of Macedon and Alexander's expansionist policy. In addition, it should be said that Plato discerned early how harmful the ideas of the Sophists, whose movement²⁴ coincided with the Peloponnesian War, could be for ethics and politics. For this reason he fought until the end of his life against subjectivism, relativism and skepticism, which constituted, in his opinion, the core and the essence of Sophistic teachings.

The afore-mentioned crisis left its imprint on Plato's and Aristotle's thought. Both philosophers witnessed harsh confrontations between the *poleis*, civil strifes of long duration,²⁵ exaltation of passions within the political community and the rise of hedonism and individualism,²⁶ which, as ways of life, undermine political consciousness. Also they witnessed the misdirection of the body politic (*δημος*), through the deceptive eloquence of the demagogues,²⁷ the destruction of the middle class,²⁸ which was the stabilizing fac-

the Peloponnesian (Athenian) War on Athenian and Spartan Societies," in D.R. McCann and B.S. Strauss (eds.), *War and Democracy: A Comparative Study of the Korean War and the Peloponnesian War* (Armonk New York/London, England: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), 104-123]. Cf. J. Davies, "The Fourth Century Crisis: What Crisis?," in W. Eder (Hrsg.), *Die athenische Demokratie im 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr.: Vollendung oder Verfall einer Verfassungsform?* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1995), 29-36. On the way the theoreticians of the fourth century B.C. confronted the crisis of their epoch, see C. Mossé, *Histoire des doctrines politiques en Grèce*, 'Que sais-je? No 1340' (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), pp. 50-93.

²³ For symptoms of the social and moral crisis in Athens during the last third of the 5th century B.C., see, for example, R. Waterfield, *Why Socrates Died: Dispelling the Myths* (New York - London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2009), pp. 139-154; J. de Romilly, "La condamnation du plaisir dans l'œuvre de Thucydide," *Wiener Studien*, 79 (1966), 142-148.

²⁴ For interesting and detailed discussions of the Sophistic movement, see, for example, W.K.C. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971). Initially it was published as the first part of the Volume III (1969) of Guthrie's work *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vols. I-VI (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962-1981); G.B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); B.A. Κύρκος, *Αρχαίος ελληνικός διαφωτισμός και Σοφιστική* (1987¹; Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Παπαδήμα, 1992²); H. Tell, *Plato's Counterfeit Sophists* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2011).

²⁵ For the civil strifes (*στάσεις*) as an endemic phenomenon of the Greek *poleis*, see, for example, H.-J. Gehrke, *Stasis: Untersuchungen zu den Inneren Kriegen in den griechischen Staaten des 5. und 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* (München: Beck, 1985); M.H. Hansen, "Stasis as an Essential Aspect of the Polis," in Hansen and Nielsen (eds.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, 124-129 (part of the "Introduction," written by M.H. Hansen).

²⁶ On this issue, see V. Solomou-Papanikolaou, *Polis and Aristotle: The World of the Greek Polis and Its Impact upon Some Fundamental Aspects of Aristotle's Practical Philosophy* (Ioannina: University of Ioannina, 1989), pp. 44-45.

²⁷ On the demagogues and their destructive action in Athens, see M.I. Finley, "Athenian Demagogues," *Past and Present*, 21 (1962), 3-24. Rpt. and rev. in M.I. Finley, *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (London: Hogarth Press, 1985), 38-75 and in P.J. Rhodes (ed.), *Athenian Democracy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 163-184; J. de Romilly, *Problèmes de la démocratie grecque* (Paris: Hermann, 1975), pp. 43-47. M. Lane in her article "The Origins of the Statesman-Demagogue Distinction in and after Ancient Athens,"

tor of the *polis*, as well as many other manifestations of decadence of their age. However, since the *polis* “remained the focus of their loyalties and their thinking”²⁹ and they never ceased to regard it as being the final and ideal state of socio-political development, they consciously put their practical philosophy into the service of the *polis*. Both responded to the crisis of the *polis* in a spirit of optimism, because they shared the belief that things could ameliorate.

Plato's Reaction to the Crisis

Plato in the *Seventh Letter*,³⁰ which is considered to be his autobiography, confesses³¹ that, when he was young, he wanted to enter public life but in the end he was discouraged to do so. The reasons for this discouragement were the unsettled political situation in Athens after the Peloponnesian War due to the regime of the Thirty Tyrants,³² which was supported by the oligarchs, and mainly Socrates' unfair condemnation to death, for which the democratic regime was now responsible.

However, as he says, he did not completely abandon the idea of getting involved in politics, neither did he lose his interest in the political affairs of Athens or cease “to reflect on how an improvement could be brought about.” In the end, after realizing that the existing *poleis* in Greece were misgoverned

Journal of the History of Ideas, 73 (2012), 179-200, asserts that “there is no pejorative meaning of the words *dēmagōgos*, *dēmēgoros*, or their cognates, in any of the dramatists, orators, or historians whose works survive” (p. 180) and that the pejorative concept of the demagogue is due to Plato, Aristotle and especially to Plutarch (pp. 181, 183). For Aristotle the demagogue “is a flatterer of the people” (*Politics* 1313 b 40). Cf. *Politics* 1304 b 20 - 1305 a 15, where Aristotle speaks pejoratively against the demagogues and considers them to be a destabilizing factor of democratic regimes). For Aristotle's attitude towards the demagogues, see R. Zoepffel, “Aristoteles und die Demagogen,” *Chiron*, 4 (1974), 69-90. Plato in the *Gorgias* (502 d - 503 d) refers to the political oratory as a form of flattery.

²⁸ See Aristotle, *Politics* 1296 a 23-24, where Aristotle notices that “in most *poleis* the middle stratum is small” (in his days). Aristotle is convinced that “where the middling element is numerous, factional conflicts and splits over [the nature of] the regimes occur least of all” (*Politics* 1296 a 8-9, trans. C. Lord).

²⁹ C.M. Bowra, *The Greek Experience* (1957; London: Cardinal edition by Sphere Books Ltd., 1973), p. 80.

³⁰ The *Seventh Letter* (*Epistula Z*) is almost unanimously considered an authentic Platonic work, but some scholars have the opposite view, such as, for instance, L. Edelstein in his work *Plato's Seventh Letter* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966). One should at least accept that even if the authenticity of this *Letter* is doubted, we should nevertheless recognize it as an important historical source, because, as H. Thesleff notices, “if not by Plato, the letter was evidently written by somebody who knew Plato and his life, thoughts and intentions very well” [*Studies in Platonic Chronology* (Helsinki-Helsingfors: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1982), p. 201]. Cf. R. Hackforth, *The Authorship of the Platonic Epistles* (1913; Nachdruck, Hildesheim, New York: G. Olms Verlag, 1976), p. 84.

³¹ See *Epistula Z* 324 b - 326 b.

³² For the cruelty of this regime (404-403 B.C.) and its crimes, see P. Krentz, *The Thirty at Athens* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982); Σακελλαρίου, *Η αθηναϊκή δημοκρατία*, pp. 115-119; J.L. Shear, *Polis and Revolution: Responding to Oligarchy in Classical Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), esp. pp. 166-187.

(*Epistula Z 326 a*) and that this ugly situation should be rectified, he came to the conclusion that true philosophy alone could lead to the betterment of public life. Thus, he formed the opinion that “the ills of the human race would never end until either those who are sincerely and truly lovers of wisdom come into political power, or the rulers of the *poleis*, by the grace of God, learn true philosophy.”³³ This opinion, which suggests that philosophers should rule, was Plato’s revolutionary and remedial proposal for the restoration to health of his contemporary political culture.

From the above testimonies in the *Seventh Letter* it could be inferred that Plato’s motives for practicing philosophy were basically political, since it is evident that the problem of the right government of the *polis* prevailed from the beginning in his thought,³⁴ and he believed that he could contribute to its solution by means of philosophy. His desire to see the Greek world overcome the moral and political crisis, into which it had fallen, affected his whole intellectual development. Due to the firm political background of his thought,³⁵ Plato founded the Academy (around 387 B.C.), shortly after returning to Athens from his first trip to Southern Italy and Sicily,³⁶ in order to serve not only theoretical but also practical aims, and he introduced not an abstract-contemplative metaphysics but a metaphysics with a socio-political and anthropological perspective.

As is evident from the Platonic dialogues, which allow us to reconstruct to a certain extent the Academy’s syllabus,³⁷ apart from the teaching of mathematics, astronomy and the dialectic, as well as other branches of knowledge, emphasis was laid on the branch of political theory. By teaching political theory Plato wanted to make his students aware of the principles of the right politics, so that they could be able to practice the art of politics, when the time comes, in such a way that the manifold crisis which scourged the Greek *poleis* would come to an end and the well-being of the political society as a whole would be secured.

³³ *Epistula Z 326 a-b* (trans. G.R. Morrow). Cf. *Republic* 473 c-e, 487 e, 501 e, 540 d-e; *Statesman* 294 a: “but the best thing is not that the laws should prevail, but rather the kingly man who possesses wisdom” (trans. C.J. Rowe); *Laws* 712 a: “whenever the greatest power coincides in a man with wisdom and temperance, then the germ of the best polity and of the best laws is planted; but in no other way will it ever come about” (trans. R.G. Bury).

³⁴ On this, see W. Jaeger, *Paideia. Die Formung des griechischen Menschen*, Bd. I-III (1933-1947¹; Berlin-New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1973⁴), Bd. II (1944¹), p. 270.

³⁵ This background was obviously owed to the political tradition of his family (see Diogenes Laertius III, 1) as well as to the cultural tradition of the *polis*, in the context of which the most important duty of the citizen was to actively participate in public life.

³⁶ The most probable dating of this trip is 388/387 B.C. On Plato’s trips to Sicily, see G. R. Levy, *Plato in Sicily* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), esp. pp. 31-45, 78-91 and 105-118; K. von Fritz, *Platon in Sizilien und das Problem der Philosophenherrschaft* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1968), mainly pp. 5-62.

³⁷ On the methods of teaching and the syllabus of the Academy, see, for instance, G.C. Field, *Plato and His Contemporaries: A Study in Fourth-Century Life and Thought* (1930¹; London: Methuen, 1967³), pp. 37-45.

From the *Crito*, the *Gorgias*, the *Republic*, the *Statesman*, the *Laws* and other Platonic dialogues one could infer that it was Plato's intention to enable the graduates of the Academy to put into practice the political theory they had been taught³⁸ and to play a vital role in their *poleis* not only as politicians but also as lawmakers or even as advisers to the governors.³⁹ According to Plutarch (*Reply to Colotes*... 32. 1126 c-d), Plato's philosophy implanted in his pupils the passion for active participation in politics, which had, as Plutarch says, a beneficial effect on the political life of many city-states. This and other similar ancient testimonies⁴⁰ in combination with the Platonic texts of political content led many scholars to claim that the Academy had a stable political orientation,⁴¹ which was not restricted only to theory but it extended to the kind of action that was in accordance with the spirit of *Realpolitik*.⁴² Besides, something that we should not forget is that the ruling element in Plato's thought is the unity of theory and praxis. This unity is based on his views on human psychology, where the reasoning part of the soul has a theoretical and at the same time a practical dimension⁴³ and is personified in the *Republic* by the philosopher-king or in the *Laws* by the "Nocturnal Council,"⁴⁴ a commit-

³⁸ In *Epistula Z* (327 a) Plato says characteristically that he did not simply teach young Dion what he believed that was "best for mankind," but he also prompted him to "realize it in action," which contributed somehow to the overthrow of tyranny in Syracuse some years later.

³⁹ Cf. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vol. IV (1975), p. 23.

⁴⁰ On Plato's pupils that undertook an active participation in politics, according to ancient testimonies, see E. Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, Drei Teile, jeder Teil in zwei Abteilungen (1922²; unveränderte Auflage, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963), Zweiter Teil, Erste Abteilung, pp. 420-422, note 1. However, it is worth mentioning that the validity of these testimonies is not incontestable, which means that they should not be used without reservation.

⁴¹ See, among many others, G.R. Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City: A Historical Interpretation of the LAWS* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 5-10; A.-H. Chroust, "Plato's Academy: The First Organized School of Political Science in Antiquity," *The Review of Politics*, 29 (1967), 25-40; R.F. Renehan, "The Platonism of Lycurgus," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 11 (1970), 219-231; S. Dušanić, "Plato's Academy and Timotheus' Policy, 365-359 B.C.," *Chiron*, 10 (1980), 111-144. Rpt. in S. Dušanić, *Plato's Dialogues and Athenian Politics: A Historian's View* (Belgrade: Zavod-The Serbian Textbook Company, 2011), 295-339; T.J. Saunders, "The RAND Corporation of Antiquity? Plato's Academy and Greek Politics," in J.H. Betts, J.T. Hooker and J.R. Green (eds.), *Studies in Honour of T.B.L. Webster*, Vol. I (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1986), 200-210. On the idea that Plato did not aim to prompt his pupils to active participation in politics, see P.A. Brunt, "Plato's Academy and Politics," in P.A. Brunt, *Studies in Greek History and Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 282-342, esp. pp. 330-332; on a similar view see M. Schofield, "Plato and Practical Politics," in C. Rowe and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 293-302. On important comments on this issue in general, see also S.S. Monoson, *Plato's Democratic Entanglements: Athenian Politics and the Practice of Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), esp. pp. 137-145.

⁴² On this issue, see Dušanić's enlightening book *Plato's Dialogues and Athenian Politics: A Historian's View*.

⁴³ See *Republic* 439 d, 441 c, 441 e, 442 b-c, 580 d, 581 b.

⁴⁴ On the "Nocturnal Council," which, according to Plato, is the "intellect" (965 a) and the "anchor of the whole polis" (961 c), see *Laws* 961 a-c, 962 b-d. For a fuller information

tee consisting of a few select members who have an advisory, at least, role in the administration of the *polis* and at the same time they are occupants of philosophical education. Furthermore, Plato's second trip to Sicily (367-365 B.C.), as well as his third (361-360 B.C.) and his sojourn in Syracuse in the court of Dionysius the younger in an attempt to actualize, as he says in the *Seventh Letter*, his political visions so as not to blame himself later on for being a man of words and not of deeds,⁴⁵ indicate that Plato wanted to be consistent with the ideal of the unity of theory and praxis.

From the afore-said, we draw the conclusion that Plato was an optimist because he neither lost his interest in public affairs nor did he cease to struggle during his lifetime for the improvement of the human condition.⁴⁶ Through the prism of his optimism we should understand as well the fact that he did not hesitate to assign to the dialectic, which for him is the supreme science of the true being and of the Good, and the coping stone of all sciences (*Republic* 534 e), a socio-political mission, since only its possessor is able to accomplish right action.⁴⁷

His optimism also becomes apparent in his trust in reason⁴⁸ as the most efficient element for the salvation of the *polis*. Reason for Plato is a spark of the divine intelligence within the human soul.⁴⁹ Thanks to reason man is akin to

on the institution of the "Nocturnal Council," see G.R. Morrow, "The Nocturnal Council in Plato's *Laws*," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 42 (1960), 229-246 (rpt. in his book *Plato's Cretan City*, pp. 500-518); L. Strauss, *The Argument and the Action of Plato's Laws* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 174-186; G. Klosko, *The Development of Plato's Political Theory* (New York and London: Methuen, 1986), 234-237; M.E. Lenzi, *The Virtues of the 'Laws'*, unpubl. PhD diss. (University of Pennsylvania, 1989), esp. pp. 181-195; V.B. Lewis, "The Nocturnal Council and Platonic Political Philosophy," *History of Political Thought*, 19 (1998), 1-20; Θ. Σαμαράς, "Η φιλοσοφική σχέση της Πολιτείας και των Νόμων του Πλάτωνος," *Δευκαλίον*, 17 (1999), 23-49, esp. pp. 37ff.; C. Bobonich, *Plato's Utopia Recast: His Later Ethics and Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), pp. 391-395.

⁴⁵ See *Epistula Z* 328 c.

⁴⁶ Even in his last years when he was writing the *Laws*, Plato, as G. Vlastos remarks, "is as much in earnest about reforming the world as he had ever been, and far more patient than ever in his efforts to understand it" ["Socratic Knowledge and Platonic 'Pessimism'", in G. Vlastos, *Platonic Studies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981², 1973¹), 204-217 and particularly p. 216. Originally published in the *Philosophical Review*, 66 (1957), 226-238]. On Plato's belief in social progress, see E.O. Bassett, "Plato's Theory of Social Progress," *International Journal of Ethics*, 38 (1928), 467-477; L. Edelstein, *The Idea of Progress in Classical Antiquity* (Baltimore, Md: The John Hopkins Press, 1967), pp. 102-118, 121-123.

⁴⁷ On the political value of the science of dialectic, see, for instance, *Republic* 484 c-d, 500 b - 501 c, 517 c, 519 c - 521 a, 540 a-b.

⁴⁸ As for his trust in reason, Plato follows his teacher, Socrates, who claimed that in the area of praxis reason is the best guide (Plato, *Crito* 46 d). On this, see G. Vlastos, *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 170-171; X.A. Τέζας, "Δυνατότητα και όρια της γνώσης κατά τον Σωκράτη," in *Ξανά για τον Σωκράτη. Αφιέρωμα στον Ομότιμο Καθηγητή Νίκο Κ. Ψημμένο, Επιστημονική Επετηρίδα Δωδώνη*, Παράρτημα Αρ. 72 (Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, 2004), 59-94, esp. p. 91.

⁴⁹ On the divine descent of reason, see Plato, *Republic* 611 e; *Timaeus* 44 d - 45 a, 90 a, 90 c-d; *Laws* 713 e - 714 a.

God. Since God is absolutely good, according to Plato, and does not have any relationship with evil,⁵⁰ it follows that human reason has an innate moral character; thus, it can direct man to what is actually good and beneficial for him.

By connecting the human with the divine mind Plato wanted to empower the authority of reason, that had been injured due to the overall cultural crisis of that period and the Sophists' ability "to make the weaker argument stronger,"⁵¹ and to obviate the danger of misology (μισολογία), which was for him the worst thing that could happen to a human being.⁵² Reason had been transformed by the sophistically trained orators into a kind of instrument for the satisfaction of human desires, especially those for power and control, and had been used in the service of egocentrism, unrestrained ambition and arrogance. By means of philosophical education human reason should cease to be the slave of the passions, rediscover its moral quality, break away from selfish interests, and express common postulates again, because only then will reason be able to prevent the disintegration of the *polis*. In Plato's conception, the rule of reason either in the soul or in the *polis* ensures justice,⁵³ which is the corner stone of the *Kallipolis*⁵⁴ and the necessary prerequisite to attain psychic and political harmony or individual and political happiness.

From the afore-said, it can be inferred that for the overcoming of the crisis, apart from philosophical dialectic, reason ought to be mobilized as well. Reason is found in its perfect development and maturity in the figure of the philosopher-king⁵⁵ in the *Republic* or in the figure of the ruler-scientist in the

⁵⁰ On this, see *Republic* 379 b-c, 380 c, 381 b-c; *Phaedrus* 246 d-e; *Theaetetus* 176 b-c; *Timaeus* 29 e - 30 a; *Laws* 904 c-e. On the Platonic theodicy, see E.Π. Παπανούτσος, *Τὸ θρησκευτικὸ βίωμα στὸν Πλάτωνα* (Αθήνα: Ἐκδόσεις «Δωδώνη», 1971), pp. 137-147.

⁵¹ See Protagoras, DK 80 A 21 and DK 80 B 6 b. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 267 a-b.

⁵² See *Phaedo* 89 d. If someone ends up hating reason as reasonable discussion and rational argument, he will be "deprived of truth and knowledge of reality" (*Phaedo* 90 d).

⁵³ On Plato's conception of justice as "doing one's own" (οἰκείοπράγία), see *Republic* 433 a-b, 433 d, 433 e - 434 a, 434 c, 435 b, 441 d-e, 443 b. On justice in the *Republic*, see, among many others, G. Vlastos, "Justice and Happiness in the *Republic*," in Vlastos, *Platonic Studies*, 111-139; G. Vlastos, "The Theory of Social Justice in the *Polis* in Plato's *Republic*," in H.F. North (ed.) *Interpretations of Plato: A Swarthmore Symposium* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977), 1-40; J. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (1981; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 153-169; N. Pappas, *Plato and the Republic* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 81-98.

⁵⁴ This is the name that Plato ascribes to the *polis* with the ideal constitution in Book VII of the *Republic* (527 c).

⁵⁵ For a brief presentation of the features that one must have, in order to be eligible for the class of the philosopher-kings, see *Republic* 487 a. For interesting discussions on Plato's political proposal concerning the philosopher-king, see among others, K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. I: *The Spell of Plato* (1945¹; rev. ed. 1966⁵; rpt. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 138-156; C.D.C. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), esp. pp. 191-195; J. Wubnig, "The Philosopher-King in Plato's *Republic*": Totalitarian Dictator or Fallibilist?," in K.J. Boudouris (ed.), *Platonic Political Philosophy*, Vols. I-II (Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, 1997), Vol. II, 227-241; Y.N. Maniatis, "Plato's Political Theory of the 'Philosopher-King': Soteriological Meditations

Statesman.⁵⁶ In the *Laws* reason is embodied in law,⁵⁷ that constitutes the sovereign power under the prescriptions of which the *polis* must be governed, as well as the standard of what is right and wrong. Plato's trust in reason is closely related with his trust in science (ἐπιστήμη), which is for him infallible and "the most powerful of all faculties" (*Republic* 477 d). This is the reason why he regards science "as the single most important criterion for proper rule"⁵⁸ and considers scientific rulers both in the *Republic* and in the *Statesman* to be the saviors of the *polis*. He also has an implicit confidence in education.⁵⁹ Plato believes that men become virtuous by means of the proper education.⁶⁰ The ethical flourishing of the citizens and consequently the political health of the *polis* are promoted by a well-organized educational program inspired by the wise and scientific leaders who know how to rule and to do whatever is best for the *polis* and the overall happiness of the citizens. On the contrary, bad education can corrupt and render evil even the most intelligent souls (*Republic* 491 e) and make man "the wildest animal on the face of the earth" (*Laws* 766 a).

For Plato, not only the rational part of the soul is susceptible to education, but also the irrational one. This is another indication of his optimism. The education of spirit and desire, which has been described by G. Vlastos as "the hygienic conditioning of the passions,"⁶¹ can be attained by means of the proper "musical" education, as it is inferred from the *Republic* (401 c - 402 a) and the *Laws* (653 cff.). This kind of education, which must start from early childhood, can implant the right beliefs about the good and the bad in human souls, beliefs that can deter young people from anything shameful and make them love everything beautiful.⁶² "Musical" education is also able to adjust the feelings of pleasure and pain by making virtue the inexhaustible source of

on the Future of Humanity," *Skepsis*, 12 (2001), 50-64; R.K. Balot, *Greek Political Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 205-209.

⁵⁶ On this theme, see F.D. Miller, Jr., "The Rule of Reason in Plato's *Statesman* and the American *Federalist*," in D. Keyt and F.D. Miller, Jr. (eds.), *Freedom, Reason, and the Polis: Essays in Ancient Greek Political Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 90-129, esp. pp. 94-107.

⁵⁷ For law as the embodiment of reason, see *Laws* 644 d, 645 a, 713 e - 714 a.

⁵⁸ Balot, *Greek Political Thought*, p. 210.

⁵⁹ On Plato's account of education, see R.D. Lodge's classic in its field book *Plato's Theory of Education* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1947).

⁶⁰ See, for instance, *Republic* 424 a. On the opposite view, according to which Plato was a pessimist about moral education, see D. Scott, "Platonic Pessimism and Moral Education," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 17 (1999), 15-36.

⁶¹ *Socrates*, p. 88.

⁶² On the final aim of the "musical" education, see *Republic* 403 c: "for it ought to end in the love of the beautiful." Beautiful (καλόν) here does not denote, as J. Adam indicates, the idea of beauty, the conception of which would require high intellectual training, but "beauty as it is revealed in Nature and in Art" [*The Republic of Plato, Edited with Critical Notes, Commentary and Appendices*, Second Edition with an Introduction by D.A. Rees, Vols. I-II (1902¹; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963²), Vol. I, p. 170, comments on 403 c 16]. On the "musical" education, see also I. Vasiliou, *Aiming at Virtue in Plato* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 216-232.

the pleasant and vice the source of the unpleasant and painful.⁶³ This is especially important for Plato, since, in his conception, morality depends on the direction that will be given to the feelings of pleasure and pain.

We may then conclude that Plato's antidotes against his contemporary crisis were: a) his proposal for the philosopher-king, in whose person political power coincides with philosophical knowledge, b) the teaching of the principles of the true politics in the Academy, so that his disciples will be capable of statecraft, c) his stable faith in the unity of theory and practice, and d) his perfect trust in reason, science and education, as irresistible weapons for political salvation.

Aristotle's Reaction to the Crisis

In the second half of the fourth century B.C., we have the failure of the institution of the *polis*,⁶⁴ which for more than three centuries had inspired the great pedagogues and philosophers of Greece. The battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C., which was meant to be the final triumph of the Macedonians, the subsequent League of Corinth (338 B.C.), that was imposed upon the Greek city-states by Philip, as well as the destruction of Thebes in 335 B.C. by Alexander, delivered the *coup de grâce* to the sovereign independence and the autonomy of the *poleis* and made them parts of a large-scale state.

At a time when Philip and Alexander were changing the face of the ancient world and were promoting the cosmopolitan ideal, Aristotle, as it is proved by his writings, remained deeply attached to the idea of the *polis*.⁶⁵ Some accused Aristotle that although he was on the threshold of a new era, he did not manage to conceive its message. However, Aristotle knowingly refused to accept what he thought to be contrary to the realization of the good life. His profound knowledge concerning the life and the constitutions of the various Greek *poleis*⁶⁶ had persuaded him that only in the context of the polit-

⁶³ See Plato, *Laws* 653 c. Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1104 b 11-13, 1172 a 20-23.

⁶⁴ For the opposite view, according to which the Hellenistic period did not witness the devaluation and the failure of the *polis*, see, for instance, Field, *Plato and His Contemporaries*, pp. 114-115; E.S. Gruen, "The Polis in the Hellenistic World," in R.M. Rosen and J. Farrell (eds.), *Nomodeiktēs: Greek Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 339-354. Cf. Hansen, *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, pp. 19-20 (from Part I: "Introduction," written by M.H. Hansen).

⁶⁵ No trace is found in Aristotle's writings indicating that he envisaged a national state comprising all the Greeks. I. Düring is right, when he asserts that "the influence of Macedonian politics on his political thinking was faint" and that "his social and political outlook was determined by the conditions prevailing in the small city-state" [*Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition* (Göteborg: Elanders Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, 1957), pp. 287-288].

⁶⁶ In the catalogue of Aristotle's writings transmitted by Diogenes Laertius a work entitled "Constitutions of 158 Cities, in general and in particular, democratic, oligarchic, aristocratic, tyrannical" (V, 27) (trans. R.D. Hicks) is included. From these constitutions the only one that has survived is the *Constitution of the Athenians*, first published in 1891 by F.G. Kenyon. On this work, see, for example, K. v. Fritz and E. Kapp, *Aristotle's Constitution of Athens and Related Texts*, Translation with Introduction and Notes (New York: Haf-

ical society could the exercise of virtue reach its climax and the contemplative life flourish. In Aristotle's conception, the political life, that is "the life of virtuous public service,"⁶⁷ as well as the contemplative life are the only ways of life that can lead to happiness (eudaimonia),⁶⁸ which is the highest of all goods achievable by action (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1095 a 16-20), the ultimate good which man should aim for and the end of political science (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1094 a 25-28).

Aristotle's antidote to the crisis of his time consists in his projection of the "middling ideology."⁶⁹ Aristotle emphatically asserted that "in all things the observance of the mean is to be praised, while the extremes are neither right nor praiseworthy, but reprehensible."⁷⁰ Even his ethics is imbued with this ideology, as it becomes apparent in his definition of virtue as a "mean state towards two vices, one of excess and one of defeat" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1107 a 2-3). According to H.F. North's characteristic words, "the traditional Greek feeling for moderation [...] finds its most comprehensive expression in Aristotle's theory of Mean."⁷¹ In his decision to adopt the mean as a central theme

ner Publishing Co., Inc., 1950); P.J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981; reissued with addenda 1993).

⁶⁷ For this characteristic phrase, see D.S. Hutchinson, "Ethics," in J. Barnes (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 195-232, particularly p. 204.

⁶⁸ On the essence of happiness in Aristotle, see, for example, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1098 a 16-18, 1102 a 5-6, 1177 b 19-25, 1178 b 32; *Eudemian Ethics* 1219 a 38-39; *Politics* 1325 a 32, 1328 a 37-38, 1332 a 7-9. For interesting discussions on Aristotle's view of happiness, see, among many others, D. Devereux, "Aristotle on the Essence of Happiness," in D.J. O'Meara (ed.), *Studies in Aristotle* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1981), 247-260; J.O. Urmson, *Aristotle's Ethics* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1988), pp. 118-127; R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); S.A. White, "Is Aristotelian Happiness a Good Life or the Best Life?," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 8 (1990), 103-143; C.D.C. Reeve, *Practices of Reason: Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 139-189; D.K. O'Connor, "The Ambitions of Aristotle's Audience and the Activist Ideal of Happiness," in R.C. Bartlett and S.D. Collins (eds.), *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1999), 107-129; R. Heinaman, "Eudaimonia as an Activity in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1. 8-12," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 33 (2007), 221-253; C.D.C. Reeve, "Beginning and Ending with Eudaimonia," in R. Polansky (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 14-33.

⁶⁹ On this ideology and its deep roots in the cultural tradition of the polis, see, for instance, R.A. Prier, "Some Thoughts on the Archaic Use of *Metron*," *Classical World*, 70 (1976), 164-169; P. Cartledge, *Ancient Greek Political Thought in Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 52-53; M. Porubjak, "Theognis and the Social Role of Measure," *Electryone*, 1 (2013), Iss. 1, 54-65 (<http://www.electryone.gr>).

⁷⁰ *Nicomachean Ethics* 1108 a 15-16; cf. 1106 b 24-27. See also Cleobulus, DK 10 A 3; Phocylides, fr. 12 (Diehl).

⁷¹ *Sophrosyne: Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 200. On Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, see, among many others, W.F.R. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 129-151; J.O. Urmson, "Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 10 (1973), 223-230; U. Wolf, "Über den Sinn der aristotelische Mesoteslehre," *Phronesis*,

in his practical philosophy, the era in which he lived, lacking in measure and moderation, was also instrumental. The spirit of extremity and faction ought to be expunged from the *polis*, both for its salvation and for the good life of its citizens.

Aristotle was highly concerned with the problem of social conflict.⁷² In Book V of the *Politics* he examines in depth the causes of political change, the most extreme form of which is sedition or civic strife (στάσις), since it destroys any sense of unity and concord among the citizens and renders violence, cruelty and total dissolution as the prevailing elements in the *polis*. In Aristotle's view "conflicts and quarrels arise when those who are equal possess and are awarded unequal shares, or those who are unequal receive equal shares" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1131 a 22-24).⁷³ This way of distributing goods, offices and honours was widely applied by the existing forms of government and it was perceived as injustice either by democrats or by oligarchs, according to the criteria of justice each side had.⁷⁴ The feelings of injustice and inequality were thought by Aristotle to be the primary cause of *stasis*.

The cure that Aristotle proposes for securing political stability and concord and averting civic conflict is polity (πολιτεία), the constitution of the economically middle citizens or of the middle class, which is essentially a mixed constitution⁷⁵ combining both oligarchic and democratic elements (*Politics* 1293 b 33-34). In his conception this is the best constitution⁷⁶ for most of actual *poleis*, because it realizes justice as a proportional equality, in the sense that equal things are given to equal people, fulfilling in this way the mean between the two extremes of oligarchy and democracy. As he strongly believes, only within such a constitution, civic strife, the endemic disease of

33 (1988), 54-75; J.E. Tiles, "The Practical Import of Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean," in R. Bosley, R.A. Shiner, J.D. Sisson (eds.), *Aristotle, Virtue and the Mean* (Edmonton: Academic Printing and Publishing, 1995), 1-14; E. Moutsopoulos, "Measure, Mediety, Moderation: A Lesson in Politics from Aristotle," in E. Moutsopoulos, *Thought, Culture, Action: Studies in the Theory of Values and Its Greek Sources* (Athens: Academy of Athens-Center for Research on Greek Philosophy, 2006), 279-286.

⁷² For a fuller exposition and defense of this view, see B. Yack, "Community and Conflict in Aristotle's Political Philosophy," *Review of Politics*, 47 (1985), 92-112. Rpt. in Bartlett and Collins (eds.), *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle*, 273-292. Cf. R.K. Balot, *Greek Political Thought*, pp. 230-234.

⁷³ Cf. *Politics* 1302 a 24-28.

⁷⁴ For more details, see Aristotle, *Politics* 1301 a 2 - b 4.

⁷⁵ On polity as a mixed constitution, see E. Barker, *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1959), pp. 477-478; C.-A. Biondi, "Aristotle on the Mixed Constitution and Its Relevance for American Political Thought," in Keyt and Miller, *Freedom, Reason and the Polis*, 176-198, esp. pp. 183-190.

⁷⁶ Polity, as A.C. Bradley rightly notices, is Aristotle's "practical ideal." The "ideal state" for him "is the true aristocracy; a government of *complete aretē*, a government of the best men (*aristoi*) for the best end (*ariston*)" ("Aristotle's Conception of the State," in Keyt and Miller, *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, 13-56, p. 53). For a description of polity, see Aristotle, *Politics* IV.11 (=1295 a 25 - 1296 b 12). For interesting comments, see R. Kraut, *Aristotle: Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 438-444.

the *polis*, could be prevented.⁷⁷ Aristotle does not hesitate to offer remedies even for the preservation of some actual deviant constitutions on the basis that “living under such constitutions is better than living in the nightmare that is anarchy.”⁷⁸ This shows his optimism concerning the possibility that faulty constitutions can also be cured up to a point.

Among the practical remedies for the avoidance of *stasis*, Aristotle includes political friendship, the cultivation of which ought to be one of the main targets of the political art.⁷⁹ Friendship for Aristotle is of great political significance. He regards it as the bond that holds citizens together, as a factor that strengthens the tendency towards moderation, promotes popular consent and concord and averts the danger of civil war.⁸⁰ Political friendship, as Aristotle conceives it, is not the kind of friendship that unites two individuals in one soul, but the friendly disposition of each citizen towards his fellow-citizens, which leads to less passionate and more reason-governed relationships and secures a warm human coexistence.

Aristotle holds political science in great respect. In his conception politics is considered to be the major practical science (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1094 a 26-28), capable of conducting public matters successfully and controlling all of life’s activities within the political community. However, politics for Aristotle is not restricted to our narrow sense of the “political.” As J. Owens⁸¹ points out, “Aristotelian political science [...] is the science of living in a *polis*” and “in this sense it is the science of moral living.” Politics is the specific knowledge proper to the statesman or legislator and is inseparable from ethics,⁸² because it grasps the non-referential human good and provides the means for realizing it. In other words, politics exists for the sake of human

⁷⁷ See *Politics* 1296 a 7-9: “The mean condition of states is clearly best, for no other is free from faction; and where the middle class is large, there are least likely to be factions and dissensions” (trans. B. Jowett). Cf. *Politics* 1295 b 3-6, 1295 b 33-38.

⁷⁸ Biondi, “Aristotle on the Mixed Constitution and Its Relevance for American Political Thought,” p. 186.

⁷⁹ On this, see *Eudemian Ethics* 1234 b 22-23; cf. *Nicomachean Ethics* 1155 a 22-26.

⁸⁰ For the relationship between political friendship and concord in Aristotle’s political theory, see, for instance, E. Leontini, “The Motive of Society: Aristotle on Civic Friendship, Justice, and Concord,” *Res Publica*, 19 (2013), 21-35, esp. pp. 29-32. On Aristotelian civic friendship, see also M. Schofield, “Political Friendship and the Ideology of Reciprocity,” in M. Schofield, *Saving the City: Philosopher-Kings and Other Classical Paradigms* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 82-99 (notes: pp. 208-211); R. Mulgan, “The Role of Friendship in Aristotle’s Political Theory,” in P. King and H. Devere (eds.), *The Challenge to Friendship in Modernity* (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd, 2000), 15-32; J.M. Cooper, “Political Animals and Civic Friendship,” in J.M. Cooper (ed.), *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 356-377.

⁸¹ *A History of Ancient Philosophy* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959), p. 336.

⁸² On the unity of ethics and politics in Aristotle, see, for instance, Barker, *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle*, pp. 240-241.

happiness.⁸³ The law is one of the means that political science uses for developing the citizens' morality.⁸⁴ The other is a system of public education.⁸⁵

Aristotle's trust in politics is another indication of his optimism. This trust was due equally to the tradition of the *polis*, in the context of which politics was regarded as the culmination of all human activity, and to his great esteem for Lycurgus the orator, his old fellow student in the Academy, who after the battle of Chaeronea was primarily responsible for the reconstruction of Athens, and "many of the polis' affairs managed to improve"⁸⁶ in a short span of time. Moreover, Aristotle's definition of man as a "political animal"⁸⁷ was his revolutionary signal for the reawakening of the political consciousness at the time when Lycurgus was attempting to re-instill the civic virtues into men's souls and to achieve the political education of the youth.⁸⁸ Aristotle, by remaining faithful to the *polis*, had to extol the science of politics and to re-pose his hopes in politics and in its chief branch, the art of legislation, for the salvation of the political community.

On the basis of the above, we could conclude that Aristotle's ethico-political teachings served, on a large scale, the needs of the *polis*, for the moral and political restoration of which he aimed. His practical philosophy must be regarded, according to W.K.C. Guthrie, "as the final flowering of Greek thought in its natural setting, the city-state."⁸⁹

⁸³ For a defense of this view, see, for example, R.G. Mulgan, *Aristotle's Political Theory: An Introduction for Students of Political Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 3-12.

⁸⁴ According to Aristotle, "lawgivers make the citizens good by training them in habits of right action –this is the aim of all legislation, and if it fails to do this it is a failure" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1103 b 3-5, trans. H. Rackham).

⁸⁵ For an interesting discussion of Aristotle's proposal that education must be common and public, see, for instance, Kraut, *Aristotle: Political Philosophy*, pp. 206-210.

⁸⁶ Pseudo-Plutarch, *Lives of the Ten Orators* (Z' Lycurgus), 841 C-D. On this, see also W. Jaeger, *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of His Development*, trans. R. Robinson (1934; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948²), pp. 326-327; Σπ. Δ. Κυριαζόπουλος, *Πολιτικά αίτια της ήθικης του Αριστοτέλους* (Ιωάννινα, 1971), p. 47.

⁸⁷ See *Nicomachean Ethics* 1097 b 11, 1169 b 18; *Politics* 1253 a 2-3, 1253 a 7-8, 1278 b 19.

⁸⁸ Σπ. Δ. Κυριαζόπουλος, "Εκ της πολιτικής πρὸς τὴν θεολογίαν," in Σπ. Δ. Κυριαζόπουλος, *Λόγος καὶ ἦθος. Φιλοσοφία τοῦ ἀρχαίου ἐλληνικοῦ πνεύματος* (Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ἰωαννίνων, Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς Δωδώνη, Παράρτημα Ἀρ. 6, 1976), 132-145, p. 144. For the restoration of the civic morality in the life of the Athenians attempted by Lycurgus, see V. Tandoi, "Le donne Ateniesi che non devono piangere (a proposito di Lycurgo, In Leocr. 40), *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica*, 42 (1970), 154-178.

⁸⁹ *The Greek Philosophers: From Thales to Aristotle* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 160.

Plato, Aristotle and Today's Global Crisis

CHRISTOS A. TEZAS

1. Introduction

This paper examines how one could judge and evaluate today's crisis based on the views of Plato and Aristotle.¹ Some of its readers might reasonably object because it is not possible to evaluate today's global crisis using the ideas of two philosophers, who lived more than two thousand and three hundred sixty years ago in an entirely different economic, social, cultural and political environment. Such an objection could possibly be justified by the fact that globalization, as noted, "marginalizes not only Plato's and Aristotle's philosophy but also the classical tradition as such."² For this reason, it is important to first understand how to judge and evaluate today's situation with the aid of Plato and Aristotle. Secondly, if the crisis's evaluation is negative, it is important to investigate whether it is possible to draw useful conclusions from the perspective of these two great philosophers, who were especially interested in the right organization of their contemporary political society, which was in a state of crisis, too. It could be said that this was Plato's and Aristotle's main concern, as it can be attested by what Plato writes in the *Republic*, the *Statesman*, the *Seventh Letter* and the *Laws*, and by what Aristotle says in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics*. As to Aristotle, it is argued that he influenced modern "financial reality."³

Our investigation would perhaps be unnecessary if today's global system was not shaken by a severe crisis.⁴ This crisis is the result of an attempt to

¹ The abbreviations used for Plato, Aristotle and their works are the following: Pl. (Plato), *Charm.* (*Charmides*), *Euthd.* (*Euthydemus*), *Gorg.* (*Gorgias*), *Phdo* (*Phaedo*), *Phdr.* (*Phaedrus*), *Rep.* (*Republic*), *Tim.* (*Timaeus*), *Laws* (*Laws*), *Let.* (*Letters*), *Arist.* (*Aristotle*), *An. Post.* (*Posterior Analytics*), *Cael.* (*On the Heavens*), *EE* (*Eudemian Ethics*), *Met.* (*Metaphysics*), *NE* (*Nicomachean Ethics*), *Phys.* (*Physics*), *Pol.* (*Politics*), *Rhet.* (*Rhetoric*), *SE* (*Sophistical Refutations*). The translations used are mainly those by P. Shorey for the *Republic* of Plato, by D. Ross (rev. J.L. Ackrill and J.O. Urmson) for the *Nicomachean Ethics*, by B. Jowett (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1922) and by H. Racham (Loeb) for the *Politics* of Aristotle.

² J.P. Anton, "Πολιτική παιδεία και πολιτική της παγκοσμιοποίησης," in X.A. Τέζας (ed.), *Αναγόρευση του Καθηγητή John P. Anton (Ιωάννη Π. Αντωνόπουλου) σε επίτιμο διδάκτορα Φιλοσοφίας του Τμήματος Φιλοσοφίας, Παιδαγωγικής και Ψυχολογίας (18 Μαΐου 2005)* (Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, 2006), 25-36, p. 26.

³ See Σ.Π. Σπέντζας, "Η επίδραση της αριστοτελικής πολιτικής φιλοσοφίας στη σημερινή δημοσιονομική πραγματικότητα," in Δ.Ν. Κούτρας (έπιμ.), *Η πολιτική φιλοσοφία του Αριστοτέλη και οι επιδράσεις της (Aristotle's Political Philosophy and Its Influence)* (Athens: Έταιρεία Αριστοτελικών Μελετών «Τὸ Λύκειον» 1999), 365-388.

⁴ For the different meanings of the term "crisis" in the course of history up to now, see R. Koselleck, "Crisis," trans. M.W. Richter, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400. G. Soros, one of the most important managers of investment capital, argued for the

build a new world on a chaos, which is due to many and different factors,⁵ and without any specific aims and plans; unless, of course, there is one and only aim: profit, and all means used for its achievement are determined each time by the prevailing state of affairs.

As a preliminary and general observation we could say that “the ongoing expansion and the rooting of the liberal capitalist system worldwide”⁶ is the worst form of capitalism since it began. One of the main differences between today’s globalized capitalism and the previous form of capitalism is the domination of investment capital over productive capital and the prevalence of finance capitalism over the productive one.⁷ The former serves “a globalization of chosen conveniences,”⁸ that has no concern for the progress of humanity towards something better and worthy of a rational human being.

Global economic governance that became an aim and a necessity, and is one of the most challenging, if not the most challenging, problem of the globalized world, no longer depends only on the governments of the states, not even on the most powerful ones, but it also, more or less, depends on the markets. And this complicates things.

“crisis of capitalism” before the 2008 financial crisis burst [G. Soros, *The Crisis of Global Capitalism: Open Society Endangered* (N. York: Public Affairs, 1998)].

⁵ For such factors see, for example, M. Roche, *Le capitalism hors la loi* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2011); R. Peef, *Unholy Trinity: The IMF, World Bank and WTO* (N. York: Zed Books, 2003; 2009²), where it is claimed that IMF, World Bank and WTO are undemocratic institutions that have been established for the interest of the globalized system and their aims differ from what their memorandum proclaim; M. Lewis, *The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2010). Although many companies bankrupt and close, their managers get millions of dollars (or euro) annually. Apart from the objective factors, there are also subjective ones to be considered concerning the increasing crisis, such as mental and physical illness of the leaders of big states, during periods that they dealt with important matters that affected millions of people. For recent discussion on this issue, see D. Owen, *In Sickness and in Power: Illness in Heads of Government during the Last 100 Years* (London: Methuen, 2008). In 2000 the former Chancellor of Germany, H. Schmidt [*Die Selbstbehauptung Europas* (Stuttgart/Munchen: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt GmbH, 2000)] said that “Europe should be self-sufficient” and saw from a different and new perspective the modern problems that Europe dealt with at the time, problems that are aggravating today. Although A. Touraine [*Après la crise* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2010)] sees crisis as an opportunity, from 2008 onwards, the crisis has left its marks on many constitutions, although the reaction to this crisis differs, depending on how deep the crisis is and on the way the leaders confront it: a) adjustment (in the case of Ireland, Italy, Letonia, Spain, Great Britain), b) subjection (Portugal, Greece), c) collapse (Island), and d) duration (USA). On this issue, see X. Contiades (ed.), *Constitutions in the Global Financial Crisis* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013). Moreover, it is feared that institutions, such as the European Union, operate in favor of a few or one state instead of the many.

⁶ Π.Β. Ρουμελιώτης, *Παγκόσμια οικονομική διακυβέρνηση* (Αθήνα: Εκδοτικός Οργανισμός Λιβάνη, 2006), p. 11.

⁷ In any case, the 85 richest people in the world, who possess funding capital and wealth, own, according to OXFAM, the money that half of the population of the world owns, and this is a rather negative fact for humanity and causes great crisis. This is the result of globalization, which leads to the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few.

⁸ Anton, “Πολιτική παιδεία και πολιτική της παγκοσμιοποίησης,” p. 25.

Given that the markets push for larger profits, which they regard as their most significant value, and given that the markets constantly force political leaders to retreat in order to achieve the aims set out mostly by the markets, I have chosen to analyze the following two topics concerning the global crisis: a) The problem over the values (especially the most significant value) to be achieved, and b) the problem of real leadership in the different countries, which is a problem that involves the tendency of the system to change or to substitute leaderships around the world (as was the case in November 2011 with the leaders of Greece and Italy, two countries that belong to the Eurozone) or to harm their reputation, as in the case of the President of France, François Hollande.⁹ In this analysis Plato's and Aristotle's views on the individual as well as the *polis* and its constitutions will take a central position and by considering today's situation we will attempt to draw some useful conclusions.

2. Values

Although many claim that “the homogenization of modern values of globalization (dominance of the markets, maximization of profit) must be rejected as a perspective if globalization creates new inequalities,”¹⁰ I believe that it is reasonable to claim that profit is rather the most important value in the modern globalized world,¹¹ to some as an end in itself, and to others as a means to achieve further ends, which sometimes are good, that is beneficial to society as a whole, and other times are bad¹² and harmful or even disastrous.

2.1 Values in the State

The historically unprecedented attempt to apply a uniform economic system all over the world affects the value system as well, so that the economic system remains as it is and fulfills its purposes.¹³ As mentioned above, the basic value is profit, the maximization of which demands high competitiveness,

⁹ On May 2013 Fr. Hollande expressed his wish to bring in proposals for the economic governance of the European Union and mostly of the Eurozone, but, two months later, on June 2013, the Credit Rating Agencies degraded French economy from AAA to AA+, and in November 2013 to AA, and thus the French President had to confront a new situation.

¹⁰ Ρουμελιώτης, *Παγκόσμια οικονομική διακυβέρνηση*, p. 274.

¹¹ See, among many others, M.C. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

¹² Of course, the same person may manage funding capital and earn lots of money and at the same time preserve community institutions in many countries, as G. Soros does.

¹³ This pursuit is well known in the history of humanity. Plato notes in the *Republic* (Δ 435e): “we are surely compelled to agree that each of us has within himself the same parts and characteristics as the city”; H 544 d-e: “And do you realize that of necessity there are as many forms of human character as there are constitutions? Or do you think that constitutions are born from oak or rock and not from the characters of the people who live in the cities governed by them, which tip the scales, so to speak, and drag the rest along with them?” See also the opposite order in *Rep.* 434 e - 435 a.

which is partly secured by internal devaluation, in most countries, and thus by economically impoverishing the many in favor of the few.

Let us now see Plato's and Aristotle's views on money and profit. First of all, we should notice that the term "art of gaining money" (*χρηματιστική*) is present in both Plato (*Gorg.* 477 e; *Euthd.* 307 a etc.) and Aristotle.¹⁴ Plato, for whom the accumulation of wealth satisfies necessary but mostly unnecessary needs, discerns, with the exception of the *right constitution*,¹⁵ four mostly,¹⁶ faulty ones, which correspond more or less to the four historical constitutions of the Greek city-states, that is *timocracy* or *timarchy* or *Cretan or Laconian city*,¹⁷ *oligarchy*,¹⁸ *democracy*¹⁹ and *tyranny*.²⁰ Not only the *right constitution* but also the *faulty* ones are mainly logical constructions.²¹ The *right constitution*, which is sketched in a unique way in the *Republic*,²² is Plato's greatest conception: an ideal constitution that never existed historically. The *faulty constitutions* are *aberrations*²³ from the *right constitution*, that refer, as mentioned above, to the constitutions of the Greek *poleis*, which were familiar to Plato, as inferred from his reference to the Cretan and Laconian constitutions as examples of timocracy. Aristotle seems to be more familiar with the historical constitutions of his days.²⁴ In the *Republic*, the afore-mentioned

¹⁴ See esp. *Pol.* A 3, 1253 b 14 ff.; 8-11, 1256 a 1 - 1259 a 6 and *SE* 11, 171 b 28; *NE* Γ 5, 1112 b 4; *EE* A 4, 1215 a 31, 7, Γ 4, 1217 a 39, 1231 b 39 - 1232 a 8, H 9, 1241 b 26.

¹⁵ See E. Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and His Predecessors* (1918; rpt. London: Methuen and Co Ltd, 1964 [1960⁵]), pp. 168-252; K.I. Δεσποτόπουλος, *Πολιτική Φιλοσοφία τοῦ Πλάτωνος* (1957; Αθήναι: Ἐκδόσεις Παπαζήση 1980²), pp. 53-140; J. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (1981; rpt. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 101-189, esp. 170-189; N. Pappas, *Plato and the Republic* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 99-124.

¹⁶ On other constitutions, such as the *dynasties and purchased kingships*, which are to be found among the barbarians and not among the Greeks, see *Rep.* H 544 c-d.

¹⁷ See esp. *Rep.* 544 c - 550 d and *passim*.

¹⁸ See esp. *Rep.* 550 c - 555 d and *passim*.

¹⁹ See esp. *Rep.* 555 b - 562 a and *passim*.

²⁰ See esp. *Rep.* 544 c, 562 a - 569 c, and Θ 571 a, 576 a and *passim*.

²¹ See Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, pp. 187-190, 283; J. P. Anton, "Plato as Critic of Democracy: Ancient and Contemporary," in K.J. Boudouris (ed.), *Platonic Political Philosophy*, Vols. I-II (Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture and K. B., 1997), Vol. I, 11-20, p. 16.

²² For Plato's *Republic*, see, among many others, J. Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, edited with critical notes, commentary and appendices, Vols. I-II (1902; rpt. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1905-1907); Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*; R. Kraut (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato* (1992; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), esp. pp. 311-337, 514-516, 553-555; G. Santas (ed.), *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006); G.R.F. Ferrari (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 474-526, esp. p. 477ff, and the website www.platosociety.org.

²³ See Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, pp. 283ff, 290-301.

²⁴ With the aid of his pupils, Aristotle collected, studied and recorded the constitutions of 158 Greek cities. Only the *Athenian Constitution* has survived for its most part, which was probably written by one of Aristotle's pupils (between 332-322 B.C.). Both Plato and Aristotle had a great –and tragic– experience of many and different constitutions of their time.

constitutions are described consecutively,²⁵ and while this succession is not a strict one from a historical point of view, it can be viewed as the substitution of one logical construction from another, whose psychological elements have a different meaning and priority. These clarifications are necessary for a better understanding of our investigation and we should bear in mind that this description does not accurately correspond to historical reality.

According to Plato, the existence of the right constitution and the four deviant ones, as well as the societal division of the ideal city in three social "classes" (philosopher-kings, auxiliaries, farmers and craftsmen) are based on the tripartite division of the soul, a theory which is fully²⁶ developed in Books Four and Nine of Plato's greatest political work, the *Republic*,²⁷ and reappears in the *Phaedrus* (246 a-b, 253 c - 254 e) and the *Timaeus* (69 c - 70 b, 89 e).

Via the tripartite division of the soul, Plato expresses all desires and needs of the human soul and all activities of human being and therefore of the human body, which in his conception wins sufficient recognition.²⁸ Consequently, the soul is divided in three parts, in the same way as the *right city* is divided in three "classes."²⁹

The three parts of the soul, in an axiological and descending order, are the rational (or *reasoning* or *reason*³⁰), the *spiritual* (or *spirit*³¹) and the *desiring*

²⁵ On the Platonic theory of constitutions, see, among many others, Δεσποτόπουλος, *Πολιτική Φιλοσοφία του Πλάτωνα*, pp. 141-166, 183-185; E. Μικρογιαννάκης, *Παθολογία πολιτευμάτων στην αρχαιότητα* (Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Καρδαμίτσα, 1996); E. Μικρογιαννάκης, "Πολιτειακή παθολογία κατά τον Πλάτωνα της Πολιτείας," in Γ. Αραμπατζής (επιμ.), *Πλάτων* (Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Παπαδήμα, 2002), 245-259; H. Σημαιοφορίδης, "Πλατωνική πολιτειολογία," in Αραμπατζής (επιμ.), *Πλάτων*, 261-283.

²⁶ For a prelude to this theory, see Pl. *Phdo* 68 b-c, 82 c. See also B.Π. Σολωμού-Παπανικολάου, *Ανθρώπινος βίος και ηδονή κατά τον Πλάτωνα*, unpubl. PhD Dissertation (Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, 2003), p. 77, note 102.

²⁷ See Pl. *Rep.* Δ 435 d - 441, Θ 580 d - 581 b. For a careful discussion of the three parts of the soul in Plato, see Σολωμού-Παπανικολάου, *Ανθρώπινος βίος και ηδονή κατά τον Πλάτωνα*, pp. 77-85, where one can also find an extensive bibliography on the relevant subject.

²⁸ For a defense of this view, see C.J. de Vogel, *Rethinking Plato and Platonism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986), pp. 171-177.

²⁹ See Pl. *Rep.* Θ 580 d 2-4, cf. Δ 441 c 5. Maybe the course of thought should have been reversed, i.e. the tripartite division of the soul should lead to the respective division of the city. Plato bases the division of the society on the myth of the metals (*Rep.* Γ 415 a-c). On the relation between the soul and the city, see K.I. Βουδούρης, *Ψυχή και Πολιτεία. Έρευνα επί της πολιτικής φιλοσοφίας του Πλάτωνα* (Αθήνα: ΕΚΠΑ-Φιλοσοφική Σχολή, 1970); T.J. Andersson, *Polis and Psyche: A Motif in Plato's Republic* (Göteborg: Elanders Boktryckery Aktiebolag, 1971); G.R.F. Ferrari, *City and Soul in Plato's Republic* (2003; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); N. Blossner, "The City-Soul Analogy," in Ferrari (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*, 345-385 and many other publications.

³⁰ See, e.g., Pl. *Rep.* Δ 439 d 1, 440 e 4, 441 a 3, c 1-2, 442 b-d, Θ 580 d, Θ 580 d, 581 b. For interesting comments on the passages above, see Adam, Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, pp. 125-126.

³¹ See, e.g., Pl. *Rep.*, Δ 439 e 2-3, 440 e 2, 441 a 2, 442 c 1, Θ 581 a 10. For comments on these passages, see Adam, *The Republic of Plato*; Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, pp. 126-128.

part.³² These three parts reside in the soul of every man, but not in the same degree.³³ Furthermore, each man and each “class” or social group of the right constitution is ruled by the part of the soul that characterizes the man or the social group. Man learns with the *rational* part of the soul, he feels anger and rage, and he senses injustice with the *spirited part*, while the *desiring* part is multiform, and the Platonic Socrates claims that he had difficulty in finding a suitable name for it, so he named it after the part’s strongest element; he called it the *desiring part*, because of the intensity of its appetites for food, drink, erotic pleasures and all the things associated with them; he also called it *money loving*, because the desires of this part are mostly satisfied with money.³⁴

However, although the three parts of the soul ontologically express man as a whole, their axiological order (*rational, spirited, desiring*) may refer to people as well as to constitutions. When the right order prevails, which means that the *rational* part of the soul governs, then both the personal and the political life are best organized, as we shall see onwards.

The prevalence of the *reasoning part* is the main characteristic of the *right constitution*, because this part³⁵ guides the rulers, who regulate both personal and political life as best as possible, thus insuring justice (*Rep.* Δ 432 a-434 c), which is defined as “doing one’s own work and not meddling with what isn’t one’s own” (433 a).³⁶ In the right constitution the bearers of the rational part of the soul are mainly the rulers, who also possess the “guardian art” (*φυλακίη*³⁷). This art is tantamount to the science of “good judgement” (*εὐβουλία*) as well as to wisdom (428 d 6, e 7), which emanates from the rational part and renders the city “wise” (428 b 4, 12, c 3, e 8). Moreover, in the right constitution, the *spirited part* of the soul is the characteristic mainly of the auxiliaries, the *victory loving* and the *honor loving*, who possess the political virtue of bravery,³⁸ and because of these the city may be called “brave” (429 a 9, 430 b, e 8). Finally, the *desiring* part of the soul characterizes (mainly) the *farmers* and the *craftsmen* (431 e - 432 a, 434 a 9). The third “class” (the *craftsmen* and the *farmers*) concern themselves with money and profit, in a moderate

³² See, e.g., *Pl. Rep.* Δ 439 d 6-8, e 4, 440 e 2, 442 a 5. On further reading, see Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, comments on the relevant passages; Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic*, pp. 128-152.

³³ Plato explicitly claims (*Rep.* 442 a 5-6) that the desiring part is “the largest part in each person’s soul and is by nature most insatiable for money.”

³⁴ *Pl. Rep.*, Θ 580 d 10 - 581 c 5; cf. Δ 436 a-b, 439 d-e; see also 440 b, 440 d, but also *Timaeus* 70 a, *Phdr.* 253 a.

³⁵ The *reasoning part* is wise, because wisdom depends on it (*Rep.* Δ 428 b-429 a) and provides for the other two parts as well (*Rep.* 442 c).

³⁶ Cf. *Rep.* 433 d 8-9, 433 e - 434 a, 434 c 7-9, where similar definitions of justice are formulated. On Plato’s conception of justice, see, for instance, G. Vlastos, “The Theory of Social Justice in the *Polis* in Plato’s *Republic*,” in H.F. North (ed.), *Interpretations of Plato: A Swarthmore Symposium* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977), 1-40; Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic*, pp. 153-169; Pappas, *Plato and the Republic*, pp. 81-98.

³⁷ See *Rep.* 428 d, where it is said that the “guardian art” or “guardianship [...] is possessed by those rulers we just now called complete guardians.”

³⁸ See *Rep.* Γ 415 a 5, 416 d-e, Δ 429 a-b, esp. 429 b 2.

way, since they lack political power, and they have to support –due to their moderation or temperance (432 a)– the other two classes, which cannot have private property, movable or immovable, as well as a nuclear family (*Rep.* 457 c - 466 d). Plato believes that if the guardians (auxiliaries and rulers) occupy themselves with the accumulation of riches and if they pursue material goods, they shall serve their own interest and not the common one, and they shall become tyrants and enemies of the people instead of their allies and friends (416 d - 417 b, esp. 417 a-b). The coexistence of political, military and economic power leads, in Plato's conception, to the total destruction of the state.

All of the regulations of the *right constitution*, according to Plato, are based mainly on the political virtue of wisdom or prudence, which, as mentioned above, the rulers possess. But its regulations are also based on two other cardinal virtues: on moderation,³⁹ and mostly on justice,⁴⁰ which is the fundamental prerequisite not only for political virtues but also for the virtues of the individual (433 a, 434 c - 444 a). Those who possess the virtue of moderation (431 c 6, 432 a-b), and justice (433 a-b, 433 d - 434 a) are all the citizens of the *right city*. Thus, the *polis*, with the primary aid of justice, acquires its perfect virtue (427 e 7), because this political virtue, namely justice, is the very basis for acquiring all other political virtues (430 c 8 - d 1). In Plato's *right constitution* reason and justice predominate and they constitute the highest values.

If a person or a constitution departs from the claims of reason, the result is decay both on a personal and political level. On the political level, the outcome is the formation of the afore-mentioned *faulty constitutions*. Each of these constitutions, as it departs from reason, is guided by the other two parts of the soul. However, this does not mean that all citizens in a faulty constitution are ruled by the part of the soul that characterizes the constitution in question, although for Plato there is a dialectic relationship between the morals of the citizens and the character of the constitution.⁴¹

In *timocracy* (*Rep.* 545 c - 550 c), the first faulty constitution according to Plato, the *spirited part* prevails, and the highest good is the love for victory and the love for honor (548 c), but there is also hunger for money, due to the *desiring* part of the soul, which finally prevails and causes *timocracy's* to turn

³⁹ *Rep.* 430 d - 432 b, esp. 430 e 1-7, 431 b 5-7, c-d, e 1-8, 432 b.

⁴⁰ *Rep.* 432 b - 434 c. For interesting comments on moderation and justice in Plato, see, for instance, Λ.Κ. Μπαρτζελιώτης, *Πόλις και πολιτική επιστήμη* (Αθήνα: Τυπωθήτω-Γ. Δαρδανός, 1997), pp. 45-49.

⁴¹ See *Pl. Rep.* 544 d-e; cf. note 13. For interesting comments on this theme, see Α. Μπαγιόνας, *Ιστορία της αρχαίας ελληνικής ήθικης από τους Προσωκρατικούς ως την Αρχαία Ακαδημία* (Θεσσαλονίκη, 1978), pp. 236-241. A close relationship between the citizens and the city is also present in Aristotle. On this issue, see E. Barker, *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1959), pp. 291-292. On the notion of the "citizen" in general, in ancient Greek philosophy, see E. Moutsopoulos, and M. Protopapas-Marneli (eds.), *Η έννοια του πολίτη στην αρχαία ελληνική φιλοσοφία (The Notion of Citizenship in Ancient Greek Philosophy)* (Athens: Academy of Athens-Research Centre on Greek Philosophy, 2009); on the notion of "politics," M.I. Finley, *Politics in Ancient World* (Cambridge: 1983; rpt. Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. pp. 50-96.

into *oligarchy*,⁴² the second constitution in the axiological order. In this constitution (*Rep.* 550 c - 555 b) the desiring part of the soul prevails (although the spirited part plays its role) and wealth is considered to be the highest good of all; those who possess it, the *money lovers* and the *lovers of making money*,⁴³ are primarily concerned with the accumulation of wealth instead of spending it on satisfying desires. They despise the poor, whom they keep away from power (550 c, 551 a-b, 553 a), as well as from virtue (550 e, 553 c), and especially from prudence (555 c-d), so that the city is divided between the city of the poor and the city of the wealthy.⁴⁴ All these, along with idleness and incapability of effort, both mental and physical (556 b-c), lead to the abolition of oligarchy and the constitution turns into democracy (555 b).⁴⁵

In *democracy* (*Rep.* 555 c - 562 a) the *desiring part* of the soul does not aim at greediness for money or wealth but at greediness for freedom and equality (558 c), so that “the city is full of freedom and freedom of speech, and everyone in it has the license to do what he wants” (557 b 4-6); hence, political operations collapse. The form of government seems to be *delightful* (*ἡδεῖα*), but also *anarchic* and *motley* (558 c); it distributes “a kind of equality indiscriminately to equals and unequals alike” (558 c); this feature, which constitutes the magnanimity of democracy, from our own point of view, is an error according to Plato, because it violates the principle of justice. Freedom and equality (which are unquestionable heritage for humanity, but which Plato evaluates differently in the *Republic*, than in the *Statesman* and the *Laws*⁴⁶), as experienced in excess in democracy, lead to the abolition of the democratic constitution⁴⁷ and the constitution then turns into *tyranny*. In Plato’s conception, it is a law of nature (organic and inorganic) and of constitutions (563 e - 564 a), that any excess leads to its opposite and hence the excess of freedom leads to total subjection.

The citizens’ excessive subjection to their desires and pleasures, which are unnecessary and more importantly lawless (*Rep.* H 571 b ff), is the characteristic feature of *tyranny* (H 562 a - 569 c and Θ 571 a - 576 c), the final and worst *faulty constitution*, according to Plato (544 c 7). He describes *tyranny* in the most derogatory terms and shows that in such a political community citizens are extremely unhappy (569 b-c, 571 a - 572 b) and the tyrant is miserable (566 d ff). The tyrant is possessed by erotic desire (573 d), the strongest of lawless desires, which directs him to the acquisition of measureless and limitless sensual pleasures, and completely rejects any effect of the *rational* part of

⁴² Pl. *Rep.* 550 d. This change or succession is viewed according to the afore-mentioned remarks about logical constructions.

⁴³ Pl. *Rep.* 551 a, d-e: see also 552 a-b, 555 d - 556 a, but also Θ 572 b-c.

⁴⁴ Pl. *Rep.* Γ 551 d.

⁴⁵ For a somewhat different explanation of the transition from *oligarchy* to *democracy*, see Pl. *Rep.* 557 a.

⁴⁶ See Anton, “Plato as Critic of Democracy: Ancient and Contemporary,” p. 16.

⁴⁷ On the notion of equality as a cause of revolts, i.e. constitutional and social subversions, see A. Μπαγιόνας, “Η τοῦ αἴσου ὑπόληψις» ὡς αἰτία τῶν στάσεων στὰ Πολιτικά τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλη,” in Δ.Ν. Κούτρας (ἐπιμ.), *Ἡ κατ’ Ἀριστοτέλη πολιτικὴ ἰσότης καὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ τὰ προβλήματα τῆς σύγχρονης κοινωνίας* (Ἀθήνα: Ἐταιρεία Ἀριστοτελικῶν Μελετῶν «Τὸ Λύκειον,» 2000), 335-347.

the soul. In such a regime citizens are led to madness and frenzy, lacking any good desire and prudence,⁴⁸ and the tyrant uses every legal and illegal means in order to grasp and keep his authority. He may even use power against his own father (569 b 7 ff) or ask help from outside members and he is indifferent to freedom or friendship (575 a 4-6). Additionally, he uses every fair or unfair means in order to grasp money and satisfy his unspeakable desires (573 c - 575 c). This is one of the reasons for which Plato detests money as the final and ultimate good.

From what has been said so far, we could make the following remarks: In the *right constitution* Plato assigns the third class, the *farmers* and the *craftsmen*, with the concern for material goods and money. In the first two, and less faulty constitutions, *timocracy* and *oligarchy*, wealth and irrational love for it—especially in oligarchy, where wealth is the supreme good, while in *timocracy* the supreme good is honor—lead to the abolition and the transformation of these constitutions into worst forms of constitution. In *tyranny*, the fourth historic constitution, wealth is not directly considered as the supreme good and is not accumulated as it happens in *oligarchy*, but indirectly, because wealth is the *sine qua non* precondition for the satisfaction of the *tyrannical man's* every desire, especially of the tyrant's himself. For this and other reasons Plato characterizes tyranny as the *worst disease of the city* (544 c 7).

Therefore, it could be said that, for Plato, today's global state of affairs would be related more to an *oligarchy* or to a *tyranny*; democracy nowadays provides a greed for freedom, but its function depends mostly on money. As for equality, it is theoretically acceptable, but in fact it is absent. It is also important to notice Plato's view on wealth as a cause that abolishes constitutions and turns them into even worse forms of constitution, that end in *tyranny*, where the lust for acquisition of money leads to the worst of crimes. Plato was convinced that wealth, luxury and intemperance are interrelated and lead to the disintegration and decay of the political community. In his conception, not only wealth, but also poverty is a cause of many evils. For this reason, the guardians of the ideal state should never allow poverty or wealth to enter the city (*Rep.* Δ 421 e - 422 a).⁴⁹

2.2. Values in Personal Life

From the investigation on the faulty constitutions it becomes apparent that all of them represent forms of injustice. This ascertainment motivates Plato to explore (*Rep.* Θ 576 b - 592 d) whether the unjust man, who forms his character and his identity within the framework of these constitutions, is happy or miserable.

Plato strongly believes that the just man is happy and the unjust is miserable, and this has to be proved. In his effort to prove this, he develops three

⁴⁸ See Pl. *Rep.* 572 d 8 - 573 b 8; see also 573 b 10 - d 9.

⁴⁹ On Plato's attitude towards wealth and poverty, see A. Fuks, "The Conditions of 'Riches' (πλοῦτος) and 'Poverty' (πενία) in Plato's *Republic*," *Rivista storica dell' Antichità*, 6-7 (1976-77), 63-73; Σολωμού-Παπανικολάου, *Ανθρώπινος βίος και ηδονή κατά τον Πλάτωνα*, pp. 167-168.

arguments, which, according to J. Adam,⁵⁰ could be characterized as “the political” (*Rep.* 577 b - 580 c), “the psychological” (580 c - 583 a) and “the metaphysical” (583 b - 587 b) argument. All these arguments lead to the conclusion that justice is the only road to happiness and that unhappiness depends on the extent that injustice has entered the soul.

From the tripartite division of the soul into the *rational*, the *spirited* and the *desiring part*,⁵¹ three kinds of people emerge: the *philosopher*, the *lover of victory* and the *lover of gain*⁵² and thus three corresponding ways of life,⁵³ each one with its own pleasures and desires.⁵⁴

Let’s begin with the kind of people that are governed by the *desiring part* of the soul, because this intrigues us most in today’s society. We could claim that these people desire not only food, drink, sexual pleasures and the similar, as in Plato’s time, but also material goods such airplanes, helicopters, jets, space trips and other things that are the object of vain gloriousness. Furthermore, as Plato correctly observes, one needs money in order to satisfy these needs.

The second kind of people are characterized by the *high-spirited element* of the soul, *that is wholly set on predominance and victory and good repute* (581 a 9 ff.); that’s why it is called *ambitious* and *covetous of honour* (581 b 3). The desires of the *spirited* part of the soul are characteristic in modern society of those who also possess large capital.

The other kind of men, that axiologically comes first, is the kind that *loves to learn* (581 b 6), and *to know the truth* (582 b 7). For this reason it is called *lover of learning* (581 b 10) and *lover of wisdom* (581 b 10).

The general conclusion is that the philosopher’s *life* (*the man of intelligence* 583 a 8), which is the life of real justice, is the happiest and *the most pleasurable* (583 a 3), since, according to Plato, “the pleasures available to a philosopher exceed everyone else’s pleasures in both truth and purity (583 b).”⁵⁵ Then comes the *life* of the *warrior and honor-loving man* (583 a 8) and last comes the life of the *money-maker* (583 a 9) and *the lover of gain* (583 a 10).

Aristotle,⁵⁶ under Plato’s influence, develops similar views concerning the ways of life, but he does it with a rather different argumentation in the *Nico-*

⁵⁰ *The Republic of Plato*, Vol. II, p. 334 (comments on 577 cff).

⁵¹ The soul’s features, reason, spirit and desire, which make people love wisdom, victory or money, according to Plato (*Rep.* Δ 435 d 9 - 436 a 3) characterize and affect people because of the latitude of the place where they live. With this view (which comes from Hippocratic writings), Aristotle also agrees in general (*Pol.* 1327 b 18 - 1328 a 21.) On this, see also the comments by R. Kraut, *Aristotle: Politics*. Books VII and VIII. Translated with a Commentary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 91-97.

⁵² See *Pl. Rep.* Θ, 581 c 5; cf. 581 a 7. The *gain loving part* of the soul is also called *money-loving* (581 a 6) and the corresponding class *money-making* (Δ 434 c 7, 441 a 1).

⁵³ *Pl. Rep.* Θ 581 c 10. See also K. Boudouris, “The Kinds of Life and Ways of Life, Desire and the Good,” in Boudouris (ed.), *Plato’s Political Philosophy and Contemporary Democratic Theory*, Vol. I, 30-51.

⁵⁴ *Pl. Rep.* 580 d 6, 581 c 7.

⁵⁵ Pappas, *Plato and the Republic*, p. 167.

⁵⁶ For Aristotle and esp. the *Politics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, see, among others, D. Keyt, and F.D. Miller, Jr. (eds.), *A Companion to Aristotle’s Politics* (Oxford-Cambridge,

machean Ethics (A 3, 1095 b 14 - 1096 a 10). According to Aristotle, *happiness*,⁵⁷ which is the final and supreme human good, depends on one's *way of life*.⁵⁸ For both Aristotle and Plato there are three ways of life. For Aristotle, out of the three *lives*, i.e. the *life of enjoyment*, the *political life* and the *contemplative one*,⁵⁹ only the first aims at *pleasure*.⁶⁰ This one is the *life* of the many and the vulgar, which are slightly different to animals.⁶¹ The second *life*, the *political one*, aims at *honor* (and glory), almost like the *life* of the kind of people who, according to Plato, are dominated by the *spirited* part of the soul. Aristotle says that this way of life is chosen by people of *superior refinement* and of *active disposition* (*χαρίεντες* and *πρακτικοί*), because *honor* is the aim of *political life* (NE A 4, 1095 b 22 ff.). Aristotle does not consider that honor is the good we are seeking, because honor depends mostly on those who confer it rather than on those who are honored, while, in his view, the good is inalienable and must belong to us (NE 1095 b 24-26). However, as he points out, given that the followers of *political life* want to be honored by men who know them, and mostly by the reasoned ones (*φρονίμους*), it could be claimed that they may pursue being honored for their virtue (1095 b 28-30). Due to this fact, we could conclude that virtue may be the aim of political life as well,⁶² although this conclusion is, according to Aristotle, open to many objections.

Mass.: B. Blackwell, Inc., 1991), esp. pp. 381-407; J. Barnes (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), esp. pp. 300, 372-374, 388-392; the Volumes in "Clarendon Aristotle Series" on the *Politics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*; R. Kraut, *Aristotle: Political Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), esp. pp. 483-520.

⁵⁷ On the Aristotle's conception of happiness (*eudaimonia*), see, among many others, A. Kenny, "Aristotle on Happiness," in J. Barnes, M. Schofield and R. Sorabji (eds.), *Articles on Aristotle. 2. Ethics and Politics* (London: Duckworth, 1977), 25-32; W. Kullmann, *Η πολιτική σκέψη του Αριστοτέλη*, μτφρ. Α. Ρεγκάκος (Αθήνα: Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Έθνικης Τραπέζης, 1996 [1992¹]), esp. pp. 30-32; D.S. Hutchinson, "Ethics," in Barnes (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, 195-233; Α. Μάνος, "Η εὐδαιμονία ὡς θεωρία κατὰ τὸν Ἀριστοτέλη," in Δ.Ν. Κούτρας (ἐπιμ.), *Η ἀριστοτελική ἠθική καὶ οἱ ἐπιδράσεις της* (*The Aristotelian Ethics and Its Influence*) (Αθήνα: Ἐταιρεία Ἀριστοτελικῶν Μελετῶν «Τὸ Λύκειον» 1996), 176-182. For further reading on *eudaimonia* in Aristotle, see Barnes (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, pp. 361-363; R. Kraut, *Aristotle: Politics. Books VII and VIII* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 123-133; R. Heinaman, "Eudaimonia as an Activity in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1. 8-12," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 33 (2007), 221-253.

⁵⁸ See, for example, J.L. Ackrill, *Aristotle's Ethics* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp. 18-21; Hutchinson, "Ethics," pp. 204ff.

⁵⁹ See, among others, P. Defouny, "Contemplation in Aristotle's Ethics," in Barnes, Schofield, and Sorabji (eds.), *Articles on Aristotle. 2. Ethics and Politics*, 104-112.

⁶⁰ See, among many others, Ackrill, *Aristotle's Ethics*, pp. 33ff.; G.E.L. Owen, "Aristotelian Pleasures," in Barnes, Schofield and Sorabji (eds.), *Articles on Aristotle. 2. Ethics and Politics*, 92-103; Μ. Πέλλος, "Η ἡδονή κατὰ τὸν Ἀριστοτέλη," in Κούτρας (ἐπιμ.), *Η ἀριστοτελική ἠθική καὶ οἱ ἐπιδράσεις της*, 285-291.

⁶¹ Arist. NE A 4, 1095 b 21-25.

⁶² As it is well known, Aristotle constructs his ethical theory on the mental virtue of *prudence* (*phronesis*) and on ethical virtues; see Δ.Ν. Κούτρας, *Η πρακτική φιλοσοφία τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους*, Τόμ. Α: *Ἠθική* (Αθήνα, 2002), p. 40.

In Book K of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle explicitly states that happiness consists in contemplation (1177 a 18-19); this means that the best life is in his conception the contemplative life. However, Aristotle does not hesitate to acknowledge another kind of happiness, which is purely human and derives from the exercise of moral virtue in conformity with prudence (1178 a 9-10). This entails that practical life leads to happiness, too.⁶³

While these are Aristotle's views in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in the *Politics*, and mainly in Book H, which (along with books Θ and Α) were written before the *Nicomachean Ethics*,⁶⁴ an attempt is made to answer the following questions: *which is the more choice-worthy way of life* and *which regime and which state of the city are to be regarded as best*.⁶⁵ The two lives under comparison are, on the one hand, the *political and practical life* and, on the other hand, the life that is not concerned with action and is dedicated to theory, i.e. the *theoretical life*, which is the life of the *philosopher* (1324 a 25-29). According to Aristotle, if happiness is to be regarded as equal to acting well (*εὖ-πραγία*), the best way of life both for every city and for every individual would be the *active life* (*πρακτικὸς βίος*). However, he clarifies that the active way of life is not limited to *political life*, but it is extended further to *theoretical life* and considers theoretical thoughts more active than practical ones. From this point of view "contemplation appears more paradigmatic of activity than does political engagement."⁶⁶

In view of the above we could conclude that in the *Politics*, like in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, happiness is ensured with the *theoretical life*, as well as with the *life of action*, which consists in the activity of the soul in accordance with moral virtue.⁶⁷ Aristotle believes that "it belongs to the excellent legislator to see how a city, a family of human beings, and every other sort of partnership will share in the good life and in the happiness that it is possible for them."⁶⁸

⁶³ On these two kinds of happiness, see, for instance, V. Solomou-Papanikolaou, *Polis and Aristotle: The World of the Greek Polis and Its Impact Upon Some Fundamental Aspects of Aristotle's Practical Philosophy* (Ioannina: University of Ioannina, 1989), pp. 66-68.

⁶⁴ On the line of thought and the chronological order of Aristotle's works, see, among many others, W. Jaeger, *Aristotle. Fundamentals of the History of his Development*, trans. R. Robinson (1934; rpt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 228-258 for the *Ethics*, and pp. 259-292 for the *Politics*; Sir D. Ross, *Aristotle* (1923; rpt. London/N. York: Methuen 1985 [1949⁵]), pp. 235-237; I. Düring, *Aristoteles. Darstellung und Interpretation seines Denkens* (Heidelberg: C. Winter Universitätsverlag, 1966), pp. 48-52; Keyt and Miller (eds.), *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, pp. 3-8.

⁶⁵ *Pol.* H 5, 1324 a 13-18; trans. C. Lord, *Aristotle, The Politics*. Translated and with an Introduction, Notes, and Glossary (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984).

⁶⁶ D.J. Depew. "Politics, Music, and Contemplation in Aristotle's Ideal State," in Keyt and Miller (eds.), *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, 346-380, p. 359.

⁶⁷ See mainly *Arist. NE*, K 7-8, 1178 b 7-32. The question whether Aristotle's *Ethics* is based on virtue is extendedly examined by Γρ. Σάντας, in his article "Εἶναι ἡ ἠθική του Ἀριστοτέλη ἀρεταϊκή;" in Δ.Ζ. Ανδριόπουλος (επιμ.), *Ἀριστοτέλης. Κοινωνική φιλοσοφία-ἠθική-Πολιτική φιλοσοφία-Αἰσθητική-Ρητορική, Αφιέρωμα στον J.P. Anton*, Τόμ. I-II (Αθήνα: Εκδ. Παπαδήμα, 2003³), Τόμ. I, 145-195.

⁶⁸ *Arist. Pol.* 1325 a 7-10 (trans. C. Lord).

Aristotle, like Socrates and Plato, advocates the *eudemonic axiom*, according to which all people pursue *eudaimonia*.⁶⁹ Aristotle engaged himself extensively with the issue of *eudaimonia*, as we have seen, for he considers it the *highest of all goods achievable by action* (NE A 2, 1095 d 16-20), the *best, noblest and most pleasant thing* in the world that is *proper to man*.⁷⁰ He also provided in depth remarks on the life values of man, as a reasoning human being and as a *political animal*.⁷¹ Thus *eudaimonia*, as mentioned above, consists in the life of theory and in the life of moral virtue.⁷²

Aristotle was also preoccupied with external goods, because he considers them necessary not only for *life* but also for the *good life*. However, he claims that man as a *political animal*,⁷³ is bound to form a political society, even if it is not necessary in terms of life's needs: "And therefore, men, even when they do not require one another's help, desire to live together."⁷⁴ Nevertheless, this happens for the sake of the general and personal interest. According to Aristotle, among the goods that man acquires, the highest ones for man's happiness are those *that have to do with the soul*⁷⁵ and the *most choice-worthy life* is the theoretical one,⁷⁶ as has been noted repeatedly. We come to the same conclusion from the degrees of wisdom as they are presented in the eighth fragment from Aristotle's *On Philosophy* (fr. 8 Ross), since the first degree of wisdom is to meet life's basic needs, and the fifth degree of wisdom is the preoccupation with the *divine and unchangeable things*. Certainly, Aristotle claims that *property*⁷⁷ is part of the household, and *the art of acquiring prop-*

⁶⁹ The importance of *eudaimonia* for man is clear from, among others, the United Nations' *World Happiness Report*, where (as much as *eudaimonia* is subjective) many scientists endeavour to define in the most clear and objective way, the factors that lead to happiness.

⁷⁰ Arist. NE A 2, 1099 a 24; EE A 1, 7, 1214 a 7, 1217 a 40, B 1219 a 29; Pol. H 8, 1328 a 37.

⁷¹ On its meaning, see, among many others, Γ. Αντωνόπουλος, "Ο άνθρωπος ως πολιτική ύπαρξη στη φιλοσοφία του Αριστοτέλη," in *ΕΕΠΑΣΠΕ* (Αθήνα: ΠΑΣΠΕ, 1981), 51-66; Α. Βαϊδή-Κόλλια, "Σκέψεις για τα βιολογικά στοιχεία στην κοινωνική φιλοσοφία του Αριστοτέλη," in *ΕΕΠΑΣΠΕ*, 167-176; W. Kullmann, "Man as a Political Animal in Aristotle," in Keyt and Miller (eds.), *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, 94-117; J.M. Cooper, "Political Animals and Civic Friendship," in R. Kraut, and S. Skultety (eds.), *Aristotle's Politics: Critical Essays* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 65-89.

⁷² Arist. NE K 6, 1176 a 31 and b 31; EE B 1, 1219 a 28; Pol. H 13, 1331 b 39.

⁷³ Arist. Pol. A 2, 1253 a 3, Γ 6, 1278 b 19.

⁷⁴ Arist. Pol. Γ 6, 1278 b, 20 and A 2, 1253 a 3.

⁷⁵ Arist. NE A 8, 1098 b 12-16. See also 1099 a 8 ff, Γ 13, 1117 b 27 ff. etc.

⁷⁶ See especially Arist. NE K 8, 1178 b 7-32.

⁷⁷ Arist. Pol. A 3, 1253 b 23. See also T.H. Irwin, "Aristotle's Defense of Private Property," in Keyt and Miller (eds.), *A Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, 200-226; F.D. Miller, Jr., "Property Rights in Aristotle," in Kraut and Skultety (eds.), *Aristotle's Politics*, 121-144; Π. Μπαλόγλου, "Οι περί πλούτου αντιλήψεις του Αριστοτέλους (με ιδιαίτερη αναφορά στο έργο του *Περί Πλούτου*)," in Α. Γλυκοφρύδη-Λεοντσίνη (έπιμ.), *Vita Contemplativa. Βίος θεωρητικός* (Αθήνα: ΕΚΠΑ, 2006), 349-363; Θ.Π. Λιανός, *Η πολιτική οικονομία του Αριστοτέλη* (Αθήνα: Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Έθνικης Τραπέζης, 2012), pp. 52-55.

erty⁷⁸ is a part of *household management* because, as Aristotle believes, without the *necessaries* (1253 b 24-25) *it is neither possible to live nor to live well*.

Regarding *the art of wealth-getting (the chrematistic)*,⁷⁹ Aristotle distinguishes between *wealth-getting* (A 9, 1253 b 20), which is identified with *natural wealth-getting* (1257 b 20) and belongs to *household management* (1257 b 20) and *wealth-getting by trade* (1257 b 20). The latter produces wealth, not indiscriminately but by the method of exchanging goods (1257 b 21) and it is thought to be concerned with money (1257 b 22).

In today's context, in the last few decades, we could say that this wealth is connected with dematerialized shares, on the basis of the existing, conventional and then immaterial shares,⁸⁰ which may be transferred from one end of the planet to the other with the press of a button. This possibility was forced by globalization, because the planet is supposed to be a uniform market, in which the capitals move freely in order to achieve easy and inconceivably huge profit.

According to Aristotle, the wealth deriving from this art of wealth-getting (*Pol.* A 9, 1257 b 24) is indeed unlimited (1257 b 24). *So this wealth-getting has no limit in respect to its end, and its end is riches and the acquisition of goods in the commercial sense* (1257 b 29). Aristotle despises this sort of wealth-getting, because for him *wealth* is not *the good we are seeking* (*NE* A 3, 1096 a 6), because, while it is useful, it is *for the sake of something else* (1096 a 7). As a matter of fact, in comparison to *pleasure* and *honor*, Aristotle finds *wealth* inferior,⁸¹ but he claims that neither *pleasure* nor *honor* could be considered as ends, despite the many arguments that had been wasted on the support of them (*NE* 1096 a 7-8). Besides, according to Aristotle, the money maker (the *χρηματιστής*), in other words the person who engages himself in money-making affairs, is violent (i.e., he acts, according to Rolfe's translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, contrary to nature) (1096 a 5). For this reason, wealth, as mentioned above, cannot be a superior good; for Aristotle the supreme good, that is *happiness* (*eudaimonia*),⁸² is to be found especially in theory and in activities *that accord with virtue*.⁸³

⁷⁸ Arist. *Pol.* A 3, 1253 b 24. See also T.J. Saunders's comments in Aristotle's *Politics*, Books I and II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), esp. pp. 83-103.

⁷⁹ Arist. *Pol.* A 9, 1257 b 18. On the importance of chrematistic in Aristotle, see also, among others, Λιανός, *Ἡ πολιτική οἰκονομία τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλη*, pp. 78-83.

⁸⁰ One could reasonably claim that the dematerialized shares remind us –*mutatis mutandis*– of the Ideas of Plato. Of course, Plato's Ideas and their knowledge render the human being, that comes to know these Ideas and mainly the Idea of the Good, superior and at the same time they force him, according to Plato (*Rep.* Z 519 c-520 e) to become the servant of the society and unpaid ruler of the political life. The dematerialized shares satisfy the selfish ambition of the few in against the nations (*Pl. Rep.* Z 519 c-520 e; see also ΣΤ 503 a).

⁸¹ Considering the inferiority of wealth in comparison to honor as a good, we could infer that Aristotle agrees with Plato.

⁸² Arist. *NE* A 2, 1095 a 18 ff, Z 13, 1144 a 5, H 12, 1152 b 6, H 14, 1153 b 11, I 9, 1169 b 29, K 6, 1176 a 31, K 8, 1178 b 7-32.

⁸³ Arist. *NE* A 11, 1100 b 10, 13; K 6, 1177 a 10 (cf. K 8, 1178 a 10), K 8 1178 b 7-32.

From the above, it is obvious that Plato and Aristotle disregard not only profit and wealth as supreme goods, but also the life of those who are guided by them.

3. Economic Governance and Political Power

In today's global world, political leaders attempt to economically govern the world. With this aim, the G8 (or G7) and the G20 (or G19) meet on a regular basis. These attempts from political leaders face many difficulties, because there is an unquestionable reality: the so called markets and especially one bank, that is said to govern the world,⁸⁴ although many economists –and many others– contest this role. The markets, whose members have accumulated huge investment and not productive capitals, offer loans through the banks (with low or high rate), depending on the credit-worthiness of the interested states. This credit-worthiness of a country is rated by Rating Agencies, which are by no means infallible. A characteristic example is the positive evaluation of the American Bank Lehman Brothers before its collapse in September 2008, and the well-known consequences for the economy all over the world.⁸⁵

The leaders of mainly the bigger states try to control this complicated situation; that's why the role of Finance Ministers is upgraded, while the role of Foreign Affairs Ministers, that always had precedence, is downgraded. Thus politics yields under the pressure of economy. This is the case of the European Union and mostly the Eurozone. While the Council of General Cases, i.e. the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, used to assemble and set out the general lines of each policy, now the Eurogroup, which consists of Finance Ministers, assembles on a regular basis and essentially decides on Eurozone's basic issues. These decisions are usually made on the basis of propositions submitted by the Euro Working Group, which consists of technocrats from the Finance Ministries, who may be very important, but are non-elected and unknown to the citizens of the Eurozone. This fact and many others, imply that there is a democratic deficit in the Eurozone and in the European Union in general. Ecofin, which meets the day after the Eurogroup's meeting, and which consists of Finance Ministers from all the countries of the European Union, also deals with issues of a mainly economic nature which concern all the countries of the European Union. The decisions of these institutional bodies affect the gen-

⁸⁴ See M. Roche, *Le Banque. Comment Goldman Sachs dirige le monde* (Paris, Editions Albin Michel, 2010). See also L. Ahamed, *Lords of Finance: The Bankers who Broke the World* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009).

⁸⁵ On this, see, among many other books and articles, P. Krugman, *The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2009); G. Brown, *Beyond the Crash: Overcoming the First Crisis of Globalization* (New York: Free Press, 2010); P. Askenazy, T. Coutrot, A. Orlean, H. Sterdyniak, *Manifeste d'économistes atterrés* (Paris: Les liens qui libèrent, 2010); A. Hemerijck, B. Knoppen, E. van Doorne (eds.), *Aftershocks: Economic Crisis and Institutional Choice* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009).

eral state of the Union. From all of the above we could infer that politics gave its place to the economy, and this is unacceptable for both Plato and Aristotle.

In particular, as it is well known, Plato believes that in the *best city* the *philosophers-rulers* have contemplated the Idea of the Good, and they should rule willingly or not, so that society can have a share of what they learned and felt during their viewing of the Idea of the Good (*Rep.* Z 519 c - 520 e).

The other regimes, the “historic” ones (timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, tyranny) (*Rep.* H 545 a 1-4) shall not share the same fortune. But the *polis* that will suffer the most is the tyrannical one (the worst regime⁸⁶), because it shall be governed by the tyrant, who embodies the appetitive man, the lover of gain, the lover of money, the money-maker. We have seen Plato’s views on the political condition of his time, which, one might say, greatly resembles today’s situation.⁸⁷ On the basis of the above we could imagine what Plato’s attitude would be towards today’s state of affairs. It is up to us to draw the necessary conclusions and show humanity the right direction concerning the contemporary economic, social, political and cultural reality. “Us” refers, of course, to the leaders of the strong states which are responsible for the future of humanity.

Aristotle, firstly, accepts the ancient Greek view on the hierarchy of the authorities in the Greek city-states. This becomes apparent from a phrase in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: “and we see even the most highly esteemed of capacities to fall under this (i.e. the politics), e.g. strategy, economics, rhetoric.”⁸⁸ The verb *ὀρώμεν* (=we see) confirms a situation which is well known in history and according to which, strategy, economics (meaning “public finance” and not “running the household”) and rhetoric fell under politics. In the city-states the politicians were also generals (because there was not a separate army class), who coordinated polemical actions and conflicts.

However, Aristotle provides a theoretical foundation for the precedence of politics over all other powers and sciences. According to Aristotle, every *society* (*Pol.* A 1, 1252 d 1), which is smaller than a political society, has been founded and aims at something *good* (1252 a 7). But the *state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good*,⁸⁹ because it comes into existence for the sake of life but it exists for the good life (*Pol.* A

⁸⁶ *Pl. Rep.* H, 562 a 4, whence it is ironically called *fairest polity* (*καλλίστη πολιτεία*). See also H, 545 a 5.

⁸⁷ On the differences between the ancient and modern democracy, and the influence of ancient democracy on the thought of modern thinkers, see. M.I. Finley, *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1985).

⁸⁸ *Arist. NE* A 1, 1094 b 2. The importance of rhetoric from the second half of the 5th century and mostly in the 4th century was outstanding. For this reason, probably, Aristotle wrote *Rhetoric*. On the importance of rhetoric, see, among others, L. Pernot, *La Rhétorique dans l’antiquité* (Paris: Librairie Generale Française, 2000); Δ.Γ. Σπαθάρας, Λ. Τζαλλήλα (επιμ.), *Πειθώ: Δεκατρία μελετήματα για την αρχαία ρητορική* (Αθήνα: εκδ. Σμίλη, 2003); Χ. Μπάλλα (επιμ.), *Φιλοσοφία και Ρητορική στην Κλασική Αθήνα* (Ηράκλειο: Πανεπιστημιακές Εκδόσεις Κρήτης–Εκδόσεις Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής, 2008).

⁸⁹ *Arist. Pol.* A 1, 1252 a 5-6 (trans. B. Jowett, “Cambridge Texts in History of Political Thought” series).

2, 1252 b 29-30). There is a deeper analysis in the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where it is pointed out *that every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good, and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim* (NE A 1, 1094 a 1-2).

While there are many goods, there is a hierarchy among them and man pursues some of these goods in order to acquire other ones, which he considers superior. This could lead to infinite progression (1094 a 20), but, since for Aristotle it is obligatory to stop at a certain point,⁹⁰ there must be a Good that we pursue on its own, and we pursue everything else for its sake. This is *the Good and the chief Good*.⁹¹ The knowledge of this Good drastically influences our lives, according to Aristotle.⁹²

Therefore Aristotle asks what this Good is and which science or faculty is concerned with it (NE A 1, 1094 a 25 ff.). Afterwards Aristotle claims that it is the work of the *par excellence* master science.⁹³ According to Liddel-Scott, master science (*ἀρχιτεκτονική*) is “the main science and art that prevails over all other sciences and arts that go under it, such as the architect dominates over the workers that follow his rules and guidance.”

After these clarifications, Aristotle claims that *the most authoritative science, the highest master science*, is politics (NE A 1, 1094 a 26-27). According to Aristotle, this is due to the fact that politics “ordains which of the sciences should be studied in a state and which each class of citizens should learn and up to what point.”⁹⁴ Thus, the theory justifies the praxis, the experience, the empirical observation, that the most honorable of faculties and sciences such as military, economics and rhetoric come under politics.

In other words, political leaders, according to Aristotle, define the values that the political society ought to pursue. Aristotle, therefore, points to the solution that shall help us overcome the crisis or improve the existing situation. Politicians must have the first word and define the aims and the values that must direct human life.⁹⁵ Certainly, this presupposes that politicians are wor-

⁹⁰ Characteristic is the phrase “there must, then, be some stopping-point” in *An. Post.* (A 13, 81 b 33) and in *Metaph.* (Λ 3, 1070 a 4. See also *An. Post.* A 19, 81 b 36, A 21, 82 b 11, A 22 83 b 29, 84 a 28, 84 a 39; *Phys.* H 1, 242 b 32-34, Θ 5, 258 b 5-9; *Cael.* (Γ 5, 304 b 27-305 a 1); *On coming to be and passing away* (B 5, 332 b 12); *Metaph.* B 4, 1000 b 28; *NE Z* 9, 1142 a 29.

⁹¹ Arist. *NE* A 1, 1094 a 12, 22; 1097 a 18-1098 a 20; *EE* A 1, 1214 a 8 ff.

⁹² Arist. *NE* A 1, 1094 a 22-23: “Will not then a knowledge of this Supreme Good be also of great practical importance for the conduct of life?”

⁹³ Arist. *NE* A 1, 1094 a 26 ff. See J.P. Anton, “Timely Observations on Aristotle’s Architectonic of Politike Techne,” in K.J. Boudouris (ed.), *Aristotelian Political Philosophy*, Vols. I-II (Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture and K.B., 1995), Vol. I, 11-22; K.I. Δεσποτόπουλος, “Η έννοια της Πολιτικής στον Αριστοτέλη,” in Κούτρας (έπιμ.), *Η πολιτική φιλοσοφία του Αριστοτέλη και οι επιδράσεις της*, 118-130.

⁹⁴ Arist. *NE* A 1, 1094 a 28 - b 2.

⁹⁵ The former prime minister of Italy (2011-2012), Mario Monti, who is an economist himself, wrote in the Spanish newspaper *El Pais* that “politics should return in Europe” («Τα Νέα», 25-11-2013).

thy of their role and place themselves in the service of public interest,⁹⁶ which must be considered as the greatest and most unique profit and honor.⁹⁷ As to this, Plato's view is also very useful: those shall be the ones that have seen *the Idea of the Good*,⁹⁸ the greatest teaching of all (*τὸ μέγιστον μάθημα*).⁹⁹ Given that the *Idea of the Good* has an ontological, gnosiological and moral content,¹⁰⁰ Plato's *philosopher-leaders* excel over others regarding real knowledge, which is the knowledge of the intelligible beings,¹⁰¹ and they are impeccable from a moral point of view. Aristotle agrees with the latter.

Admittedly today, political leaders cannot be like the *philosophers-leaders* of Plato, but they should be morally impeccable and have a deep knowledge of the composite global reality.¹⁰² In this way they shall become better claimants on the world's leadership compared to those who have as their supreme aim their personal interest and economic profit. The political leaders of mainly the larger states, who are responsible for the destiny of humanity, should share values in the interest of man as a reasonable human being and should resist to the pressure of the markets, like Pericles resisted to the desires of the Athenian people in the *Assembly* (Thuc. II 65). They shall not live in tents (and shacks)¹⁰³ like Plato's *philosophers-rulers*¹⁰⁴ and the auxiliaries (*ἐπίκουροι*), but they shall confine themselves to the necessary, according to modern needs. This way, they shall prove that the meaning of life is not economic profit but other values.

These could be, in brief, Plato and Aristotle's views on the two topics that are relevant to today's global crisis. And we would have no reason, as I mentioned earlier, to refer to them if it were not for the crisis, where the rich become richer and the poor poorer. Even the European Union, which used to be the shelter for the poorer states, has been economically and psychologically

⁹⁶ See, e.g., *Pl. Rep.* ΣΤ 503 a.

⁹⁷ According to Plato's definition (*Rep.* ΣΤ 503 d), the others ought to pose as a ruler that man who bears these virtues and render him –during his lifetime but also after his death– honors and awards.

⁹⁸ For this, good learning, memory, cleverness and acute spirit are necessary (see *Pl. Rep.* ΣΤ, 503 c).

⁹⁹ *Pl. Rep.* ΣΤ 504 d-e, 505 a 2, 505 e - 509 b.

¹⁰⁰ See esp. *Pl. Rep.* ΣΤ 508 d 10 - 509 b 4.

¹⁰¹ Of course, the *Good* (or the *Idea of the Good*) is not essence but still transcends essence in dignity and surpassing power (*Pl. Rep.* ΣΤ 509 b 3-5).

¹⁰² As it is well known, there is a "political economy" of the financial markets. See relatively J. Huffschnid, *Politische Oekonomie der Finanzmaerkte* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1999).

¹⁰³ See *Pl. Rep.* Γ 415 e, 419 a - 420 a, but also 416 c-417 b.

¹⁰⁴ For an interesting analysis on the features of the *philosopher-king*, see Γ.Χ. Κουμάκης, "Ο φιλόσοφος-κυβερνήτης στην *Επινομίδα* του Πλάτωνα," *Ελληνική Φιλοσοφική Επιθεώρηση*, 31 (2014), 3-26. Γ.Χ. Κουμάκης claims that the *Epinomis* is the alleged never written work, *Philosophus*. As it is well known, and as it can be reasonably inferred by many platonic passages (esp. *Sph.* 216 c - 217 a, 254 b 3-5; *Pol.* 257 a-c etc.), Plato was about to write a work titled *Philosophus* (in order to complete the trilogy *Sophist*, *Politicus*, *Philosophus*), but most modern researchers believe that Plato never wrote such a work.

divided,¹⁰⁵ because the crisis in the countries of the South brings profit to the countries of the North, especially to one of these which gained more than 41 billion euro (according to Bundesbank's calculations, and perhaps up to 100 billion according to other calculations) from the crisis of the countries of the South. This situation turns the economic crisis into a values crisis: Values are neglected and all that matters is profit.

To put it in other words, today's global crisis and the afore-mentioned situation in the European Union, mainly in the Eurozone, would be unacceptable for Plato (*Rep.* Δ 420 b-c, ΣΤ 519 e), who believes that the city as a whole should be happy instead of only a particular class: Plato and Aristotle claim that the city must have justice, without which nothing stands, while in the badly run city injustice rules; and this is the worst case for a city. Besides, for Plato, all citizens in a city, according to the myth of the metals, are *brothers* (Γ 415 a 2) and *akin* (415 a 7), and they have to share the same *pleasures and pains*, because this *binds the city together*.¹⁰⁶ In other words there is, in a rather metaphysical way, a total unity of the city, i.e. there is only one *polis*¹⁰⁷ that is formally and not essentially divided in social groups (rulers, auxiliaries, craftsmen). Indeed, there is a *science* (*ἐπιστήμη*), which only a few, the *perfect guardians*, master in the city, a science preoccupied with the city as a whole, that is how to arrange, as best as possible, not only its own internal affairs but also its affairs with other city-states (Δ 428 c 11-d 9).

Today, Plato's afore-mentioned views, in the frame of each state would lead to the highest degree of solidarity¹⁰⁸ between the social classes. In the context of the European Union and especially of the Eurozone, i.e. the countries that use the same currency, including all the political and, mostly, financial consequences that this bears, Plato's views would demand a high standard of solidarity between the countries.

Conclusions

From what has been said so far, one could unarguably conclude that both Plato and Aristotle would disagree with the values that prevail in today's global world, such as profit, money and wealth in general. Considering the second subject examined in this paper, i.e. the governance of the world, Plato's and Aristotle's views disclaim the interference of any economic factor, because for them only politicians must rule a city-state.

¹⁰⁵ This has been claimed by others and mainly by the former Prime Minister (2011-1013) of Italy, Mario Monti.

¹⁰⁶ *Pl. Rep.* Δ 462 b 4-6, Δ 462 c 9 - e 3.

¹⁰⁷ See *Pl. Rep.* Δ 422 e-423 d, esp. 422 e 5-423 a 1, 423 a 8, b 11, c 4, d 6; see also the previous footnote, but also Aristotle's criticism (*Pol.* B 2, 1261 d 13-b 24).

¹⁰⁸ The word *solidarity* does not occur in Plato and Aristotle, neither in any other writer in ancient Greece. In Hesychius (fifth century AD) the word *allyleggyon* appears (*sharing the same faith*) and in the law of Justinian *Novellae* the following phrase appears: *if someone considers some as fellow responsible*. However, Plato's afore-mentioned views, especially the phrase *sharing of pleasures and pains* presupposes the principle of solidarity.

Unlike Plato and Aristotle, today the world considers profit as the supreme value, and there is no political cultivation but only acquisition of skills¹⁰⁹ (however valuable these skills are). True education and higher values are unknown not only to the masses but also to the political leaders themselves. The world is run by the owners of huge investment capital, while political leaders are unable to control such owners. All these facts make us pessimistic about the present situation.

The inexorable question is this: what can we expect? The answer is: a dream, i.e. capable leaders, especially from the powerful states, leaders that can decide and impose an order and place everyone that presently participates, one way or another, in world governance, elected or not, in his/her suitable place. I am aware that this is a utopia, as the one that Plato formulates for the first time in the *Republic* (473 c-d), but also in the *Letter Z* (426 a-b) and partly in the *Laws* (Δ 711 c-d): “Until philosophers rule as kings or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is, until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, while the many natures who at present pursue either one exclusively are forcibly prevented from doing so, cities will have no rest from evils, Glaucon, nor, I think, will the human race” (*Rep.* E 473 c-d).

However, this coincidence, after more than two thousand and three hundred sixty years has not been achieved (but only partially and in a few cases).¹¹⁰ Nonetheless, humanity, during different periods and for different reasons, has gained from Plato’s utopia. Today, it is better to live with utopia and the continuous effort to find efficient leaders that shall put order in humanity than to surrender to the markets without a fight. If this happens, man will cease to exist as a rational being and he will not pursue his happiness in the life of theory or in the life of action, as Aristotle proposes, but only in the life of enjoyment, which is inextricably interwoven with money and profit. Instead of being a *homo faber*, a *homo technicus*, a *homo oeconomicus*, but mostly *homo sapiens*, man shall be exclusively a *homo oeconomicus*. And then he will be worthy of his fate.

¹⁰⁹ Anton, “Πολιτική παιδεία και πολιτική της παγκοσμιοποίησης,” p. 32.

¹¹⁰ On the influence of Plato in general, see, for example, W. Jaeger, *Paideia. Die Formung des Griechischen Menschen*, Bd. I-III (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1933-1947), Bd. II (1954²), pp. 130-140 (= “Plato’s Bild in der Geschichte”). See also Kraut (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, pp. 526ff; Ferrari (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato’s Republic*, pp. 509ff.

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***Phrónēma* as a Regulator in Life and a Countermeasure in Crisis**

APOSTOLOS N. STAVELAS

Introduction

The subject matter of any discussion as that of this conference brings up primarily the question on if, and how, philosophy can contribute, be employed as a quasi-sanctuary shelter or deliver for us some form of guidelines in relation to the contemporary sense of crisis and, more generally, in relation to any form of crisis and its consequences. In this way and from the very beginning, philosophy is called upon not as a way of contemplation and intuitive practice, despite the fact that intuition seems often to be a mode of enthymematic recollection and act of thinking. By “responding,” if asked, to the challenges suggested, philosophy is engaged in terms of its appeal, not to the scientists only, not to people philosophizing only, not only to some other, specific group of practitioners, but to people and civil society collectively and conclusively – essentially, to what we stereotypically apprehend as our *common sense*. In order that philosophical suggestions may appeal to our common sense one has not only to avoid bloated jargon and to seek for terms and concepts that are coherent, comprehensible and graspable by almost everyone interested; he has to draw the terms up from a glossary recognizable and memorable by everybody, even if it's being overlooked, disregarded or disremembered. The common mistake is to singularly, even conclusively, reflect upon the semantics of *crisis*: we think of it either (a) mostly, as a predicament of an emergency situation and a cause of a certain calamity or (b) rarely, in its positive sense as a positive prospect, suggesting an adjustment and a modification of our way of living¹ or (c) we think of crisis in the deceptive compliance of the two former implementations. Within this framework and in order to find the neglected or missing links of a mentality that easily can be termed, at least, as disoriented, one may inquire anew upon the notion of *phrónēma* and specify it by finding what this is, what it is not and which are the attributes of its texture. In its conception by our common sense, it becomes apparent, that we have to survey chiefly within language as the common ground of philosophy and literature.

A Semantic Account

Mainly in the military science and relatively in the historical texts, we find the affiliation between *phrónēma* and *morale*, as related to the notion of a unit-cohesion. It is the cohesion of a unit considered as a task force or other mili-

¹ “With what spirit, what heart, what desire and passion we lived our life: a mistake! So we changed our life” [“Denial,” in E. Keeley and P. Sherrard (eds.), *George Seferis: Collected Poems* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 235].

tary group, as an army with good supply lines, sound air cover and a clear objective, which can be said to possess, as a whole, “good” or “high morale” in their attempt to achieve victory.² The Christianised conception of *phrónēma* was introduced by Paul in his *Epistle to the Romans*,³ where the notion is differentiated between its human and its holy variation as an attribute of the Holy Spirit⁴ and where there is a discernment between *phronein*, *sophronein* and *hyperphronein*,⁵ as a reminiscence of the etymological derivation of the term in inquiry from its classical Greek philosophical implementation of *phronēsis* and *phronein*. Within the tradition of this religious and ecclesiastical text the appreciation of *phrónēma* was reduced, via the path of rhetoric theory,⁶ to a sense of humbleness or humility,⁷ from which one has to bear in mind primarily the notion of modesty. In its political perspective, there were several cases in which *phrónēma* was mistreated in the sense of a corrupted civil loyalty suggested mainly to the middle and low class citizens.

Semantic Diversities

On the question of what *phrónēma* is not, one has to take into account the dissimilarity between *phrónēma* and the subject matter of death. *Phrónēma* is observably something more, something broader and ampler than what is implied by Socrates, in the wording of Epictetus, when saying that Anytus and Melitus may kill him but they are unable to harm him.⁸ Additionally, the term in question has nothing to do with the notion of punishment and with the ways we may react to or receive it. Certainly, *phrónēma* is not a doctrine (*δόγμα*)⁹ either in its ecclesiastical sense, divine conceivably in its origin, or in the philosophical, Platonic sense of essential knowledge¹⁰ or in the poetic, tragic sense of divine laws,¹¹ or in its political exploitation as a means of certifying

² P.E. Legrand, *Hérodote, Histoires* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1963), 6.109, 21-23.

³ “For the *phrónēma* of the flesh is death; but the *phrónēma* of the spirit is life and peace,” Paul, *Epistle to the Romans*, 8:6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 8:27.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 12:3.

⁶ “Syriani, Sopatri et Marcellini, Scholia ad Hermogenis Librum Περὶ Στάσεων,” in C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1833), Vol. 4, 188, 3.

⁷ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου *Υπόμνημα εἰς τὴν πρὸς Φιλιππισίους Ἐπιστολήν*, J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus—series Graeca* (Paris: Migne, 1857-1866), Vol. 62, 221, 26.

⁸ Ἐπικτήτου *Περὶ εὐσταθείας*, H. Schenkl, *Epicteti dissertationes ab Arriano digestae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1916), 1.29.18.

⁹ Διοδώρου τοῦ Σικελιώτου *Βιβλιοθήκης Ἱστορικῆς Βίβλος Πεντεκαδεκάτη*, K.T. Fischer (post I. Bekker and L. Dindorf) and F. Vogel, *Diodori Bibliotheca Historica* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1964), 15.38, 3.10-4.1.

¹⁰ Γαληνοῦ *Εἰς τὸ περὶ Φύσεως Ἀνθρώπου Βιβλίον Ἰπποκράτους*, J. Mewaldt, *Galenii in Hippocratis de natura hominis commentaria tria [Corpus medicorum Graecorum 5.9.1]* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1914)], 68, 5-8.

¹¹ Αἰσχύλου *Προμηθεὺς Δεσμώτης*, D.L. Page, *Aeschylus Septem Quae Supersunt Tragoedias* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 376.

social behaviour. Certainly, it is not meekly a common belief or ideology,¹² it is not a social attribute by which a group of people or a society can validate its supremacy¹³ and it is not sheer prudence.¹⁴ It is not just personal and not just collective, as it is an effusive state of spirit, which creates a sense of discipline, of communal trust and of justified pride. It is not a mere emotional disposition, an actively established mind-set of how one allows himself to “feel” about something, as opposed to logical reasoning. It differs from *sophronein*¹⁵ as also from *mega-phronein*¹⁶ –a subjective dispositional aspect of *hýbris*, when suggested utterly in the form of a political view. It is not vain thoughts, since then it would also constitute *hýbris*.¹⁷ It is not simply moral law, it is not simply rational, it is not related just to faith. Finally, it is not an issue of the exclusive utilization of psychology, as it is more than a psychological inclination that makes a man more or less bold and decisive. This last semantic version, within the modern history of ideas and under the influence of the scientific method of the Enlightenment, led to the technical utilization of the term, distorting its semantic precision. Especially under the translational influence of the German term *gesinnung*, namely the morally good character or disposition which an individual adopts as his governing maxim and as his moral law for choosing all other maxims,¹⁸ this development led to the implementation of *phrónēma* as a permanent mode of empathy, as a compound psychological situation, as a feeling constantly associated to some representation (παράστασις). In this consideration, *phrónēma* has a certain value as an initiator of our will, which differs from our passions, as it is more everlasting compared to them.¹⁹

In the semantics of modern Greek language and as for the substitution of *phrónēma* within its scope, one may notice that the meaning of the term is indirectly reflected in the most official state document of the country, the *Greek Constitution*, where it is interpreted as a type of consciousness: in the 16th article of it *phrónēma* is epitomized as national and religious consciousness and is classified among other goals within the objectives of education as con-

¹² Σοφοκλέους *Αντιγόνη*, H. Lloyd-Jones and N.G. Wilson, *Sophoclis fabulae* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990), 353. Cf. “Teleclides Fragmenta,” in T. Kock, *Comicorum Atticorum fragmenta* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1880), fr. 14, 2.

¹³ Αἰσχύλου *Χοηφόροι*, Page, *Aeschyli Septem Quae Supersunt Tragoedias*, 593.

¹⁴ Σοφοκλέους *Οιδίππου Τύραννος*, Lloyd-Jones and Wilson, *Sophoclis fabulae*, 662.

¹⁵ Αἰσχίνου *Περὶ τῆς παραπρεσβείας*, G. de Budé and V. Martin, *Eschine. Discours*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1962), 4.11.

¹⁶ Θεοδώρητου *Ἑρμηνεία τῶν 14 Ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἀποστόλου Παύλου*, J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus - series Graeca* (Paris: Migne, 1857-1866), Vol. 82, 304, 39. Cf. D.L. Cairns, “Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 116 (1996), 1-32, p. 11.

¹⁷ Ὀρηνέου *Ἐκλογαὶ εἰς Ἰὼβ* (fragmenta in catenis, typus II, e codd. Marc. gr. 21), 538,” in Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus - series Graeca*, Vol. 17, 84, 35-38.

¹⁸ M. Caswell, “Kant’s Conception of the Highest Good, the *Gesinnung*, and the Theory of the Radical Evil,” *Kant-Studien*, 97 (2006), 184-209.

¹⁹ Ν. Ανδριώτη, *Ἑτυμολογικὸν Λεξικὸν τῆς Κοινῆς Νεοελληνικῆς* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Ἴνστιτούτο Μανώλη Τριανταφυλλίδη, 1967), p. 412.

ceived in the form of *paideía*.²⁰ But, in this sense, consciousness has only the connotations of perception, of awareness and of cognizance, namely of knowledge, rather than the meaning of something which can, as an aim of *paideía*, secure and forward a sense of inner and shared, amongst all, unanimity, a concordance not accidental and occasional but a sort of testament, from which may spring out, when needed, an agreeable sense (*homóthymon* and *homópsychon*), despite the multiplicity in opinions amongst us. This last sense was reflected only in the *Constitutional Act* of August 1st 1974, which followed the reintegration of democratic procedures within the civil life of Greece²¹ –a distant echo of the identification between the modern Greek semantic variation of *phrónēma* as high spirit (ὕψηλὸν φρόνημα) and the *volume* of *phrónēma* (*hógos phronématos*) detected during the Middle Ages by Michael Psellos.²²

Phrónēma in the Apprehension of Crisis

It can be broadly acknowledged that any form of crisis, personal or collective, financial or social, is a type of war occurring in the manner of a conflict, in which we are called to engage ourselves and react to it. It may also be conceded that any crisis has an impact upon the way of our thinking and that our ability to tackle with it depends upon our intellectual and emotional groundwork prepared in advance, often but misleadingly being called maturity. Additionally, no one can doubt that any crisis entails certain changes in our personal or collective being, and that the very notion of crisis should be thought of as something occurring not exceptionally in the form of an accidental event, but as a predictable and anticipated step in the course of ordinary life and its events. Occasionally, we refer to the military, the patriotic, the religious –in the sense either of the sacred or of the pious, to the civilian (*cosmicón*)– the humble or the high spirit. In our tradition of texts, though scarcely, we admit of *phrónēma* as an achieved state or condition of our affairs in life; it is the case of people assimilated with each other in virtue,²³ entitled the label of *pephronēmatisménoi*,²⁴ which semantically brings *phrónēma* closer to the idea of prudence. Within the semantics of our language and up to a point, *phrónēma* pairs with the condition of *phrónēsis*, not only in the degree in which the latter coincided with the notion of *agathón*.²⁵ It is related with the alignment

²⁰ Hellenic Parliament, *The Constitution of Greece, As Revised by The Parliamentary Resolution of May 27th 2008 of the VIIIth Revisionary Parliament* (Athens: Hellenic Parliament's Publications Department, 2008), pp. 32-34.

²¹ Κ.Γ. Μαυριά και Α.Μ. Παντελή, *Συνταγματικά Κείμενα Έλληνικά και Ξένα* (Αθήνα-Κομοτηνή: 1990), p. 294.

²² Μ. Ψελλοῦ, *Χρονογραφία*, É. Renauld, Michel Psellos. *Chronographie ou histoire d'un siècle de Byzance (976-1077)* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1926-1928), 1.3.8.

²³ "Chrysippi, Fragmenta Moralia", J. von Arnim, *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903), Vol. 3, 107, 3-6.

²⁴ "Tyrtaeus, Fragmenta" [: Ἀριστοτέλους, "Πολιτικῶν Ε'," 1306 b 28 - 29], F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* (Leiden: Brill, 1954-1969), fr. 1, 3-4.

²⁵ F.E. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms. A Historical Lexicon* (New York: New York University Press, 1967), p. 157.

of our will and of our deeds, it is expressed via the way our beliefs appeal to our habitual *acts* (*práxeis*) and way of living, it is an object of advice (*nouthesia*).²⁶ As a crucial constituent of social power and communal life *phrónēma* may counterweight the deficiencies of leadership. It cannot be reframed or restructured easily and, although it is substantiated out of the logical relation between true and false, it may be easily tested by refutations when being given the lie, as in the renowned saying of the “wolf in the herd”.

Given this substantiation and its semantic scope, *phrónēma* is related with certain aspects of the notion of spirit (*pnéuma*).²⁷ Seen in its philosophical perspective and in the civil practice,²⁸ it is related with the sense of morale. Seen in its employment within society it has become in its absence the main factor for our misconception of freedom as a boundary of the freedom of others and not as a mandatory sense of responsibility towards them.

It is within this conceptual framework, that the idea of *phrónēma*, overwhelms its modest and partial realisations²⁹ in the sense of a high lifted spirit, of an emotional inclination or tendency, of an over-all wish, of a sense of right judgement or of its being the starting point of varied sorts of bravery, being them altogether. While all of these occur just as some of its evidences, the idea of *phrónēma* may be conceived as the most conclusive apparatus in our art of living, in the meaning of essential beliefs, principles and guidelines, which are constantly able to become actualised in our practicing life and are thus giving the sense of something almost utterly fixed, immovable and unalterable, as if it was the “cortex, namely a real organ, of our mind.”³⁰ It is the conclusive idea in which the core of our thoughts and the core of our actions not merely coincide but identify with each other, by transcending the circumstantial while infusing into it a sort of vitality, lastingness and durability. As a quasi-bearer of our virtues, *phrónēma* stands as the ultimate precondition of freedom³¹ and is, thus, conceived as a crucial issue in relation to philosophy, especially ethics, philosophical anthropology and philosophy of education. It is open to symbolism and thus open to myth in its constitutional sense,³² where myth stands as the essence of history,³³ superior to it as also to tales and legends, despite sharing with the last the possibilities of an utopia and despite being the crossroad at which our theory of life (*viotheoria*) and theory of

²⁶ Αιλίου Αριστείδου *Περὶ τοῦ παραφθέγματος*, W. Dindorf, *Aristides* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1964), 369, 7-8 and 40, 30-32.

²⁷ Κ.Θ. Δημαρᾶς (ἐπιμ.), “Ὁ Γιώργος Θεοτοκάς καὶ τὸ «Ἐλεύθερο Πνεῦμα»”, in Γ. Θεοτοκάς, *Ἐλεύθερο Πνεῦμα* (Ἀθήνα: Βιβλιοπωλεῖον τῆς Ἑστίας, 2009) p. ιζ’.

²⁸ Cf. the difference between *phrónēma* as civil courage and *pístis* as civil confidence: Ἀριστοτέλους, “Πολιτικῶν Ε’,” W.D. Ross, *Aristotelis Politica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 1313 b 2.

²⁹ N. Berdjajev, *Πνεῦμα καὶ Πραγματικότητα*, μτφρ. Α. Χατζηθεοδώρου, (Ἀθήνα: Ἐκδόσεις τῶν Φύλων, 1968), pp. 9-43.

³⁰ E. Harckel, *The Wonders of Life* (London: Watts & Co, 1904), p. 342.

³¹ Κ.Θ. Δημαρᾶς, Α. Ἀγγελου, Α. Κουμαριανοῦ καὶ Ε.Ν. Φραγκίσκου, *Ἀδαμάντιος Κοραΐς. Ἀλληλογραφία* (Ἀθήνα: Ὁμίλος Μελέτης τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Διαφωτισμοῦ, 1966), Vol. 2, p. 369.

³² Θ. Λίπβατς, *Ἡ Ψυχοπαθολογία τοῦ Πολιτικοῦ* (Ἀθήνα: Ὀδυσσεύς, 1994), p. 146.

³³ Δ. Λιαντίνη, *Homo Educandus. Φιλοσοφία τῆς Ἀγωγῆς* (Ἀθήνα: 1984), p. 42.

the world (*cosmotheoría*) cross each other. Unlike the texture of a tale, a legend or a myth, and at the same time opened to the utopia of the legend, *phrónēma* is profoundly expressed in the persona of Vasilios Digenis Akritas, a Promethean byzantine character of *phrónēma* concrete³⁴ (*sterrón*).³⁵ Consequently, *phrónēma* should be conceived as a well-shaped metaphysics of resistance, an allegorical bridge, defined as the road to return and as a form of our identification³⁶ with each other when, nailed to the spot,³⁷ we are facing the inevitable.

³⁴ On the identification of *sterrón* with *emvriθés* (*έμβριθές*), see Πλουτάρχου *Γάιος Μάρκιος* (*Κοριολανός*), in K. Ziegler, *Plutarchi vitae parallelae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1964), Vol. 1.2, IV.1.4-7.

³⁵ E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis. The Grottaferrata and Escorial versions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 4.31.

³⁶ On this notion of identification in the consideration of Panagiotis Kanellopoulos according to which “Greece has to start from itself,” cf. Δ.Π. Αλικανιώτη, *Τὸ Σχέδιον Συντάγματος τοῦ Ἐθνικοῦ Ἐνωτικοῦ Κόμματος* (1937) (Ἀθήνα: Ἐταιρεία Φίλων Παναγιώτη Κανελλόπουλου, 2013), p. 85.

³⁷ Κ. Τσάτσου, *Ἰωάννης Καποδίστριας. Διακόσια Χρόνια ἀπὸ τὴ Γέννησή του: 1776-1976* (Ἀθήνα: Ο.Ε.Δ.Β., n.d.), p. 29.

Soul in Crisis: The Negative Function of Desire in Plato's *Republic* and in Epictetus' Philosophy

GEORGIOS LEKKAS

The aim of this paper is to see how exactly Epictetus makes creative use of some of the important tools of Platonic psychology found in the *Republic*, such as rational judgement, courage and desire, in the monistic context of traditional Stoic psychology,¹ in order to describe both the normal and the abnormal functioning of the rational human soul.

In chapter II.1 of his *Discourses*, the Stoic philosopher states that the rational human soul functions normally only when it attends to those things that depend exclusively on itself (*proairetika*) and at the same time shows courage when confronting whatever does not depend on itself (*aproaireta*).² More precisely, when the single –not multiple,³ as in the *Republic*– rational soul⁴ chooses to occupy itself with what depends exclusively upon itself, this, according to Epictetus,⁵ results in the soul confronting with courage ('confident because of our caution' [Oldfather]) those things which are not under its control, such as death, hardship, condemnation, imprisonment and disrepute.⁶ Equally, as the same text suggests, courageously confronting the things that are not under the control of our rational self permits us to pay unimpeded attention to everything that is ours, which in the final analysis is none other than that which lies within the province of our moral purpose.⁷ This circumstance permits the rational human soul to function as a closed self-perpetuating system in accordance with the Socratic-Platonic principle of the unity of the virtues.⁸ It also guarantees the freedom of the rational soul from its passions,⁹ for when it functions in this manner, says Epictetus, it is always in a position on the one hand to avoid the evil that lies within the province of the moral purpose, and on the other to face with courage the evils that lie outside the province of the moral purpose.¹⁰

¹ See A.A. Long, "Stoic Psychology," in K. Algra, J. Barnes, J. Mansfeld and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 560-584, p. 570.

² *Disc.* II, 1, 39-40 (Loeb Classical Library 131:218).

³ *Rep.* IX, 580d-e; cf. N. Pappas, *Plato and the Republic* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 90.

⁴ M. Erler, "Death is a Bugbear: Socratic 'Epode' and Epictetus' Philosophy of the Self," in T. Scaltsas and A. Mason (eds.), *The Philosophy of Epictetus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 99-111, pp. 109-110, note 53.

⁵ *Disc.* II, 1, 5-7 (LCL 131:208).

⁶ *Disc.* II, 1, 35 (LCL 131:218).

⁷ *Disc.* I, 1, 23-24 (LCL 131:12).

⁸ See W.K.C. Guthrie, *Σωκράτης* (Athina: M.I.E.T., 1991), p. 183 and G. Vlastos, *Πλατωνικὲς Μελέτες* (Athina: M.I.E.T., 1994), pp. 321 and 579-586.

⁹ *Disc.* II, 1, 21-23 (LCL 131: 212).

¹⁰ Erler, "Death is a Bugbear," p. 103.

In contrast, by unlawfully choosing to attend to things that lie outside the moral purpose, the rational soul, according to Epictetus, becomes over-bold about that which lies *within* the province of the moral purpose and timid about what lies *outside* it. In other words, by attending to what lies outside our control, such as the acquiring of money, unrequited love for a woman or the esteem of the tyrant and his friends,¹¹ we are bound to end up in a condition of fear and cowardice, since as these things are outside the sphere of moral purpose, we are not in a position to manage them through our moral function. At the same time, by being over-confident about what is within our control rather than about what is not, we end up being rash and wanting to gain precisely those things which are harmful.¹² And it is because of this unlawful behaviour that the rational human soul condemns itself to a condition of fear, sorrow and agitation, and ultimately loss of freedom.¹³

Consequently, concentration on the part of the single rational soul on what lies within the province of the moral purpose and courage about what lies outside that purpose constitute, says Epictetus, the proper philosophical attitude¹⁴ to ensure the soul's unity and freedom,¹⁵ which are put at risk every time man becomes enslaved to the usually material objects of his desire, that lie outside the province of his moral purpose.¹⁶ For the cause of the spiritual turmoils which Epictetus calls 'the passions',¹⁷ is the desire for objects which are outside the province of the moral purpose, and which as a rule we are unable to satisfy, precisely because such satisfaction is not within our control.¹⁸

In contrast, however, to Plato's *Republic*, which locates the root of evil desires in the appetitive part of our multiple soul,¹⁹ for Epictetus the original cause of the evil desires (i.e. of what lies outside the moral sphere) of our single soul is located in our moral purpose. More precisely, for the Stoic philosopher, man, who is naturally good ('gentle,' 'affectionate' and 'faithful' [Old-father]),²⁰ is governed above all by his moral choice.²¹ In this context, as we know, moral choice is not one part of the soul's form or function, but its true

¹¹ *Disc.* II, 1, 28 (LCL 131:214).

¹² *Disc.* II, 1, 8-20 (LCL 131:208, 210, 212).

¹³ *Disc.* II, 1, 24 (LCL 131:214).

¹⁴ *Disc.* II, 1, 29-30 and 36-39 (LCL 131:216, 218); cf. Erler, "Death is a Bugbear," pp. 101-102.

¹⁵ B. Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987²), p. 159.

¹⁶ *Disc.* II, 2, 25-26 (LCL 131:224); cf. A.A. Long, *Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), p. 221.

¹⁷ *Disc.* III, 2, 3 (LCL 218:22).

¹⁸ *Disc.* I, 27, 10-11 (LCL 131:170); cf. C. Gill, "The School in the Roman Imperial Period," in B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005²), 33-58, p. 42.

¹⁹ *Rep.* IV, 442a-b; cf. T. Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 192-193.

²⁰ *Disc.* IV, 1, 126 (LCL 218:286) and II, 10, 23 (LCL 131:274).

²¹ *Disc.* II, 10, 1 (LCL 131:268).

self,²² through which man positions himself positively or negatively in relation to the material world and the images it creates within us which Epictetus calls 'fantasies.'²³ The self, guided by moral purpose is under its own control²⁴ and it alone can injure itself.²⁵ This being the case, man's enemy is situated in the hard core of himself which can only be perverted²⁶ –what Epictetus elsewhere calls an 'aberration from reason' [Oldfather]²⁷ – if he himself chooses to make base use of his fantasies or else to confront 'external matters' irrationally.²⁸ Here, therefore, in contrast to Plato, the cause of evil desires (and of the undesirable actions that proceed from them) does not stem from the nature of our ensouled self but from its mistaken judgement²⁹ in regarding things 'not our own' as 'under our control' and in wishing to falsely identify with them.³⁰ This false choice on the part of the moral self to favour 'external matters' is also responsible for all human passions –which are always acquired³¹– as well as for the character of each individual man, free or enslaved.³² Specifically, according to Epictetus, whoever makes the mistake of regarding as good anything that falls outside the scope of his moral purpose, envies, yearns, flatters and feels disturbed, just as anyone who makes the mistake of regarding as evil what falls outside that scope will sorrow, grieve, lament and be unhappy.³³ Thus, man has to choose between the freedom of his moral purpose, conceived as detachment with regard to 'external matters,' and adherence to them.³⁴ By attempting to satisfy his desires for what lies outside the moral purpose, he inevitably loses his freedom,³⁵ and conversely, by insisting on the freedom of his moral purpose he protects himself from enslavement to anything not his own.³⁶ It thus becomes clear that in contrast to Plato, for whom the root of evil is situated in an ontological error, for Epictetus the true cause of evil lies in an error of knowledge. That is to say, in Plato's *Republic* the soul is at the service of the body (i.e. of sensible things) when its

²² *Disc. I*, 29, 6-8 (LCL, 131:184); cf. G. Lekkas, "Από την αυτοαναφορικότητα στην έτεροαναφορικότητα του ανθρώπου. Η έννοια της 'προαιρέσεως' στην φιλοσοφία του Επίκτητου και του Ώριγένη," *Θεολογία*, 84 (2013), 189-210, pp. 189-196.

²³ *Disc. IV*, 3, 7 (LCL 218:310); cf. Long, *Epictetus*, p. 214 and G. Lekkas, *Liberté et progrès chez Origène* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), pp. 108-109.

²⁴ *Disc. II*, 23, 17-19 (LCL 131:400, 402).

²⁵ *Disc. III*, 19, 2-3 (LCL 218:114) and *I*, 29, 12-13 (LCL 131:184, 186).

²⁶ *Disc. II*, 23, 19 (LCL 131:402).

²⁷ *Disc. IV*, 3, 4-5 (LCL 218:310).

²⁸ *Disc. III*, 10, 16-17 (LCL 218:76); cf. Long, *Epictetus*, p. 217.

²⁹ *Disc. I*, 11, 32-33 (LCL 131:86) and *III*, 9, 4-5 (LCL 218:64); cf. Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action*, p. 168 and M.C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 386.

³⁰ *The Encheir.* 1, 3 (LCL 218:482); cf. Sorabji, "Epictetus on *Proairesis* and Self," in *The Philosophy of Epictetus*, 87-98, p. 89.

³¹ *Disc. IV*, 5, 12-13 (LCL 218:334).

³² *Disc. IV*, 7, 9-11 (LCL 218:362, 364).

³³ *Disc. III*, 11, 1-3 (LCL 218:78).

³⁴ *The Encheir.* 13 (LCL 218:492).

³⁵ *Disc. IV*, 4, 33-34 (LCL 218:324, 326).

³⁶ *Disc. II*, 16, 28 (LCL 131:320).

rational part submits to its two lower faculties³⁷ (ontological error); but according to Epictetus the soul is at the service of the body (i.e. of external matters) when it mistakenly regards external matters as its own business and wishes to identify with them (error of knowledge).

In other words, man's mistaken choice to consider as his own those things that lie outside the moral purpose, and to identify with them, fragments his inner unity³⁸ in that it obliges him to engage in too many occupations (*polypragmosyne*) and inner conflicts, with the result that he is unable to attain the happiness for which he is ontologically designed. For as Epictetus reminds us, citing the example of the cynic Diogenes, the free and happy man is not he who does anything he pleases while concerning himself with things outside the moral purpose. The free and happy man is he who is able to do what is right while attending to his moral 'duties,'³⁹ regardless of external factors such as heat, sadness and lack of sleep, which as a rule tend to make him go counter to what is right.⁴⁰

Likewise, however contradictory it might appear, detachment with regard to what lies outside the moral compass (such as country, friends, wife, children, fortune) and focusing on the inward man (and here Epictetus gives his own interpretation of the negative example of Plato's tyrant),⁴¹ are indispensable for maintaining the best relations with others, whether this other is God or a fellow-human. In the absence of detachment regarding whatever lies outside the moral sphere, man is inevitably mean, hypercritical, quick-tempered and cowardly,⁴² and consequently we cannot expect from such a man either true friendship⁴³ or true reverence.⁴⁴

Epictetus also employs the Platonic image of inner conflict⁴⁵ to demonstrate the chaotic consequences for the rational soul and its relation with other

³⁷ Cf. M. Dixsaut, *Platon. Le désir de comprendre* (Paris: Vrin, 2003), pp. 187-189.

³⁸ *Disc.* III, 15, 12-13 (LCL 218:102, 104) and I, 1, 14-15 (LCL 131:10). See also *The Encheir.* 29, 3 (LCL 218:508).

³⁹ See Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action*, pp.116-119.

⁴⁰ *Disc.* I, 24, 7-8 (LCL 131:150); cf. Gill, "The School in the Roman Imperial Period," pp. 48-49 and M. Schofield, "Stoic Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, 233-256, pp. 234-235.

⁴¹ *Rep.* IX, 579d-580a and 577e; cf. J. Chanteur, *Platon, le désir et la cité* (Paris: Sirey, 1980), pp. 78-87.

⁴² *Disc.* III, 2, 13-15 (LCL 218:26).

⁴³ *Disc.* II, 22, 15-20, 26-29 and 33-37 (LCL 131:386, 388, 390, 392, 394); cf. J.-J. Duhot, *Ὁ Ἐπίκτητος καὶ ἡ στωϊκὴ σοφία* (Ἀθήνα: Ἐνάλιος, 2003), pp. 209-214 ; W. Stephens, "Stoic Love according to Epictetus," in K. Βουδούρης (ἐπιμ.), *Ἑλληνιστικὴ φιλοσοφία* (Ἀθήνα: International Centre of Greek Philosophy and Culture, 1994), 332-345, p. 342 ; R.W. Sharples, *Στωϊκοί, Ἐπικούρειοι καὶ Σκεπτικοί: Εἰσαγωγή στὴν ἑλληνιστικὴ φιλοσοφία* (Θεσσαλονίκη: Θύραθεν, 2002), p. 180.

⁴⁴ *Disc.* IV, 7, 9-11 (LCL 218:362, 364) and *The Encheir.* 31, 1-2 and 4-5 (LCL 218:510, 512, 514); cf. L. Edelstein, *The Meaning of Stoicism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 80 and Duhot, *Ἐπίκτητος καὶ ἡ σοφία στωϊκὴ*, pp. 214-219.

⁴⁵ *Rep.* IV, 444a-e, IX, 580e-581e and VI, 488a-489a; cf. J. Annas, *Εἰσαγωγή στὴν Πολιτεία τοῦ Πλάτωνα* (Ἀθήνα: Καλέντης, 2006), pp. 176-177 and T.M. Robinson, *Plato's Psychology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995²), pp. 43-46.

beings, brought about by its mistaken focus on things outside the moral purpose.⁴⁶ But unlike Plato, Epictetus transfers the field of spiritual conflict from within the manifold soul as described in the *Republic*⁴⁷ to the hard core of our single –because uniquely rational– self.⁴⁸ As a result, what Plato depicts as conflicts between the soul's different elements are transcribed by Epictetus in terms of conflicting rational judgements and the desires these judgements uphold. Indeed, in this case the erroneous choosing of what lies outside the moral sphere is the result of ignorance (Socrates) not of the conflict between the contending powers of the soul (Plato), so that it is always easily corrected with the appropriate philosophical teaching.

This philosophical therapy starts with the realization, through dialectic, of the inner turmoil we experience⁴⁹ when we wish for one thing and do another⁵⁰ by reason of conflicting rational judgements. It then becomes possible for our desire for the things that lie outside the moral sphere to be curbed,⁵¹ since the fulfilment of our desire, according to Epictetus, is necessarily achieved through destroying that desire,⁵² that is, through our refusal to satisfy any desire we may have for these things.⁵³

Needless to say, the final aim of philosophic therapy, according to the Stoic, is to concentrate on one's own business (*oikeopragia*)⁵⁴ which, in contrast to Plato,⁵⁵ is here defined as a return to the constitutionally simple and entire self of each one of us.⁵⁶ Epictetus' philosophy as the art of living aims, therefore, not at a more profound reading of philosophical texts but at the preservation of the true self⁵⁷ from anything that is external to it,⁵⁸ through purification of the moral purpose, correct handling of our fantasies, detachment from what lies outside the moral sphere, and finally surrender to the 'becomings' (*gignomena*) as ordained by God.⁵⁹ For as Epictetus characteristically says, the philosopher who is more concerned with 'words' than with his self is in danger of being 'brutalised' [Oldfather].⁶⁰ Echoing the philosophic exam-

⁴⁶ *Disc.* II, 26, 1-2 (LCL 131:422).

⁴⁷ Cf. Pappas, *Plato and the Republic*, p. 85.

⁴⁸ *Disc.* II, 26, 3-7 (LCL 131:422, 424).

⁴⁹ *Disc.* II, 12, 6-7 (LCL 131:284).

⁵⁰ *Disc.* III, 23, 34-35 (LCL 218:182).

⁵¹ *Disc.* II, 18, 8-10 (LCL 131:342).

⁵² *Disc.* IV, 1, 175 (LCL 218:304).

⁵³ *Disc.* III, 9, 21-22 (LCL 218:70); cf. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, pp. 396-398.

⁵⁴ *Disc.* III, 22, 97 (LCL 218:164).

⁵⁵ *Rep.* IV, 443d-444a and IX, 589b; cf. Annas, *Εἰσαγωγή στήν Πολιτεία τοῦ Πλάτωνα*, pp. 170-172.

⁵⁶ *Disc.* III, 23, 16 (LCL 218:174) and IV, 4, 7 (LCL 218:314).

⁵⁷ *Disc.* I, 4, 22-23 (LCL 131:32) and 25, 31-32 (LCL 131:160).

⁵⁸ *Disc.* I, 29, 24-25 (LCL 131:188); cf. D. Blakeley, "Ἡ στωϊκὴ θεραπεία τῶν παθῶν," in Βουδοῦρης, *Ἑλληνιστικὴ φιλοσοφία*, 25-42, pp. 33-34.

⁵⁹ *Disc.* II, 23, 40-42 (LCL 131:408); cf. K. Ierodiakonou, "The Philosopher as God's Messenger," in *The Philosophy of Epictetus*, 56-70, p. 63.

⁶⁰ *Disc.* I, 5, 9-10 (LCL 131:38); cf. Duhot, *Ὁ Ἐπίκτητος καὶ ἡ στωϊκὴ σοφία*, pp. 178-183, Edelstein, *The Meaning of Stoicism*, p. 46 and Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire* pp. 330-331.

ples of Socrates and Diogenes, for whom the overcoming of individual self-regard is realized through submission to supra-individual entities such as the city or the law,⁶¹ Epictetus appears to maintain that the philosophical formation of a man equates to his receptiveness to a supra-individual self, which is an indivisible part of the cosmic whole.⁶² In this perspective, all the tribulations faced by man during his mortal life are welcomed as ways whereby to reach agreement with his true self,⁶³ just as death itself is hailed by the philosopher⁶⁴ as the last –and most decisive?– philosophical means of our restoration to the truth of our supra-individual self.⁶⁵ So in contrast to the Platonic conviction that the soul is fully nourished only by what is superior to it (ideal of contemplation), for Epictetus the soul is fully and solely satisfied through its total immersion in its supra-individual self (ideal of tranquillity). The soul derives the greatest possible pleasure⁶⁶ not from the contemplation of supernatural beings, as in Plato,⁶⁷ but from its tranquillity,⁶⁸ since the wise man's solitude, like God's, is not seen by Epictetus as forlornness but as dignified self-sufficiency.⁶⁹

We saw that for Epictetus good and evil desires arise out of corresponding judgements, correct or incorrect. The theme of the relation between the desire, particularly evil desires, and the corresponding judgement is developed at length in Book 9 of Plato's *Republic*. One example is the passionate love for the ghost of Helen in Troy, as described by Stesichorus, which is the result, according to Plato,⁷⁰ of a mistaken judgement as to who the real Helen is and where it is merely her phantom that appears. Except that here, as opposed to what we saw in Epictetus, the wrong judgement is a consequence of the irrationality of a disordered multiple soul. More precisely, the wrong judgement of the Greeks and Trojans described by Stesichorus is the result, says Plato, of the dominance of the irrational appetitive part of their souls. Wrong judgement as to how one should act in a particular situation can also be ascribed, according to Plato,⁷¹ to disorder in the soul of the man who is overly ambitious, and whose passionate side, being puffed up, acts in opposition to the rational part of his soul. In other words, for Plato right judgement is impossible when within the soul the passionate or the appetitive side is master. More specifically, when the appetitive part rules, the lover of money cannot have right judgement because he judges by the yardstick of his possessions and profits;

⁶¹ *Disc.* IV, 1, 158-160 (LCL 218:298).

⁶² Sharples, *Στωϊκοί, Ἐπικούρειοι καὶ Σκεπτικοί*, p. 136.

⁶³ *Disc.* I, 12, 16 (LCL 131:90, 92).

⁶⁴ Cf. J.M. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 251-252.

⁶⁵ *Disc.* I, 1, 32 (LCL 131:14).

⁶⁶ *Disc.* III, 7, 6-7 (LCL 218:50).

⁶⁷ *Rep.* IX, 582c and 583a-b; cf. Chanteur, *Platon*, pp. 166-167.

⁶⁸ *Disc.* III, 3, 18-19 (LCL 218:34) and II, 17, 29-33 (LCL 131:336).

⁶⁹ *Disc.* III, 13, 1 and 6-7 (LCL 218:88); cf. Lekkas, "Ἀπὸ τὴν αὐτοαναφορικότητα σὴν ἑτεροαναφορικότητα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου," p. 204.

⁷⁰ *Rep.* IX, 586c.

⁷¹ *Rep.* IX, 586c-d.

similarly, when it is the passionate part which rules, the ambitious man cannot judge rightly because he judges by the yardstick of success and honour.⁷² For Plato, only the lover of wisdom, in whom the profit-loving appetitive side and the success-loving passionate side are subject to the rational intelligence, is *able* to exercise correct judgement about which desires should be satisfied and to what extent, and which should not, in order for the entire soul to be happy in the satisfaction of each of its elements, relative to the value of their respective functions.⁷³ Consequently, in Plato's view the soul's orderliness leads to right judgement and this in turn leads to right action, which maintains and increases order in the multiple human soul.⁷⁴ Of course, this view presupposes the Socratic concept of the malleable and vulnerable soul whose character, as Aristotle was later to say, is ultimately formed by its actions.⁷⁵ Thus the Socratic conception, according to which the soul can only be conquered by its evil self, would appear to permit the convergence of two different psychologies in the context of the radically different corresponding philosophies of Plato and Epictetus, one a philosophy of transcendence and the other of immanence. Evidence of this convergence is the fact that a radical ontology such as Plotinus',⁷⁶ which aspires to be Platonic, owes so much to the ethics of Epictetus. But that is a subject for another paper.

⁷² *Rep.* IX, 582d-583a.

⁷³ *Rep.* IX, 586d-587a and *Phaedrus* 247e; cf. Robinson, *Plato's Psychology*, pp. 57-58 and Dixsaut, *Platon*, pp. 195-196.

⁷⁴ See Vlastos, *Πλατωνικές Μελέτες*, pp. 189-190 and 201-202; Annas, *Εισαγωγή στην Πολιτεία του Πλάτωνα*, pp. 204-208 and Pappas, *Plato and the Republic*, p. 88.

⁷⁵ *Rep.* IX, 589d, 590b and IV, 444c-d; cf. A. Nexamas, *Η τέχνη του βίου. Σωκρατικοί στοχασμοί: από τον Πλάτωνα στον Φουκώ* (Αθήνα: Νεφέλη, 2001), pp. 41 and 244.

⁷⁶ G. Lekkas, *Πλωτίνος. Πρός μία όντολογία του τρόπου* (Αθήνα: Παπαζήσης, 2009), pp. 55-78.

Stoic Philosophy as a Way of Life for the Citizen of the Hellenistic Era: Affinities to the Present Social, Cultural and Ethical Crisis

MARIA PROTOPAPAS-MARNELI

The subject of this paper is to trace, within its restricted length, the affinities existing, arguably, between the general status of the citizen of the Hellenistic era living in the aftermath of Alexander's *imperium*, the times of the sovereignty of the State over the individual, and that of twenty-first century Man living in a similar sociopolitical context, in our times of Globalization. In this sense, I will attempt to reveal those affinities by looking, more particularly, into various perspectives, mainly sociopolitical, cultural, and moral bound to emerge in the course of such a broader comparison.

The Man of the Hellenistic period lived in the turbulent times that followed the death of Alexander the Great (323 B.C.) until the subjugation of Greece to the Romans (146 B.C.). The new political equilibrium and state of affairs that followed Alexander's military conquests brought in the dominions of his heirs, as expected, a sociopolitical upheaval and all kinds of change throughout the political and cultural domains of the Greek world and, at the same time, it greatly affected the lives of the citizens. Man lives amid a general crisis and is called upon to survive through it, by adapting himself to that new reality. In order to explain those changes, it is, initially, worth pausing for a moment to supply some essential data in order to place our topic in the right socio-historical perspective. More precisely, I will focus to how Stoicism attempted to resolve the deadlocks of the socio-political and moral crisis of that era, which might be useful for the present day.

According to the German historian Johann Gustav Droysen, Hellenization was coined to denote the expansion of Hellenic language, culture, and, undoubtedly, population throughout the former Persian Empire following Alexander's conquests. That this expansion, and in many respects export of Hellenic ways of life and mentality, actually took place is undoubted.¹ It is well established that, in the past, Greek thought had passionately focused on and debated upon the issue of the perfect system of government. This passionate debate, however, started waning gradually due to the political events that determined the way of life of the citizen in Greece in the 4th century. Alexander's conquests generated radical changes in the ancient world. A striking example of this, regarding the material and financial status of the Athenian citizens, is that those among them who belonged to the landless peasantry and were, therefore, unable to meet their taxation obligations, were *personae ingrate* in

¹ Cf. Plutarch, *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*, I et II, 329 A-C. Cf. G. Perrota, *Storia della letteratura Greca* (Milano: Giuseppe Principato, 1954), Vol. III, p. 1; cf. M. Schofield, *The Stoic Idea of the City* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 23-24.

their own city. Like today's people uprooted from their homeland now roaming beyond the boundaries of traditional, currently waning, nation-states for employment and bare survival, the citizens of Hellenistic times had to roam about as well and seek new places to live.

What Alexander's Macedonian phalanx did to visibly trample over the walls and armies of ancient City-States, and in effect, of practically all autocratic Empires of the East, today's obscure financiers also do, though stealthily and invisibly, taking advantage of the collapse of national barriers between modern states. The newly-established Successor states in the Hellenistic era, states which were often at war with each other, had to recruit mercenaries to man their armies. As a result, the Greeks offered their paid services to the masters of their new vast homeland, the latter being, perhaps, inhospitable and impersonal, but offering, at least, a way of survival as their city was unable to support them any longer. This necessary, inevitable immigration of populations from Greece to Egypt and Asia Minor and vice-versa, broadened considerably, in effect, the economic and sociopolitical perspective. The human being of those times, who, as a citizen, used to participate in public affairs and control the course of events regarding the city, suddenly became entangled among the tentacles of the emerging bureaucratic states. Isolation and alienation of those roaming human beings was the painful, yet inevitable, corollary of their unhappy situation, Man was caught in the snares of a fast-evolving inner and external crisis.² The successor states, whose administration was noticeably influenced by autocratic oriental regimes, were literally vast compared to the restricted size and, consequently, to the easier management of the old City-States. Those new states were also expressly opposed to any active intervention of the citizens in public affairs. At the same time, the state was averse to any interventions of the philosophical kind.³ Plato's perfect city proved to be impossible to materialize; yet, Socrates was to accept death without objection because for him it was imperative that "the country [should] be honored more than the mother, the father, and all the ancestors, that is more to be revered and more sacred, and that it counts for more among the gods and sensible men, that we must worship it."⁴ But in Hellenistic times such views were long obsolete. On the one hand, Man as a former citizen of the disappearing City-State, a characteristically political being, is desperately trying, in practical terms, to conform to the new reality. On the other hand, however, those socio-politically uprooted populations in attempting to adapt to the sweeping avalanche of universal changes affecting their destiny and very identity, literally their understanding of themselves, tend to become much more mentally active. The citizen of the ancient polis would, eventually, suc-

² Cf. P. Aubenque, *Les Philosophies Hellénistiques*, in P. Aubenque, J. Bernhardt, G. Chatelet (eds.), *La Philosophie païenne* (Paris: Hachette, 1972), 190-227, pp. 190-192.

³ Cf. L. Geymonat, *Storia del pensiero filosofico e scientifico*, Vol. I: *L' antichità - Il medioevo* (Milano: Garzanti, 1970), p. 281.

⁴ Plato, *Crito*, 51 a-b, trans. G.M.A. Grube, rev. L.M. Cooper, in *Plato: Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo* (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2002), p. 54.

ceed in surviving in that new a-political world, while, at the same time, that socio-politically alienated being would transform from a citizen of the Ancient city into a citizen of the world.⁵ Responding to the needs of those times for attributing an ultimate purpose to the life of the human being, several philosophical schools would thrive alongside various religious sects of eastern origin and eschatological orientation.⁶

Generally speaking, the term *crisis* reminds us of a shock. One has to deal with events following unusual and irregular routes and generated by the fact that the ancient sociopolitical equilibrium got overbalanced, a painful realization taking on different forms of abrupt developments and aggressiveness, manifesting themselves in different forms in specific territories, persons or groups. These critical changes and major alterations are often unexpected and beyond any control. By the term *crisis* (κρίσις), in the Greek language, we also refer to the particular function denoted by the term, namely, to the process of intellectual activity.⁷ Every *crisis*, in the sense of disorder, is characterized by back and forth movements between pushing to disorder and re-establishing order.⁸ Thus, critical situations and the application, by analogy, of such movements on the evolutionary course of every event, need to be judged -in the sense of critical assessment- and evaluated. We believe that the evaluation of the sociopolitical state of affairs that started during the second half of the 4th century, will lead to parallel considerations regarding the emergence of the crisis currently in process in our society. One, therefore, could manage to find a way out of the current crisis through the examination of similar events that unfolded towards the end of the 4th century B.C. All the above were the main characteristics of the alterations in the fundamental structures of the City-

⁵ H. Yamakawa, “‘Socrates Mainomenos’: Cynics and Stoics on Polis and Cosmopolis,” in K. Boudouris (ed.), *Polis and Cosmopolis: Problems of a Global Era*, Vol. II (Athens: Ionia, 2003), 177-203, p. 177: “When Diogenes of Sinope answered somebody’s ridiculous question ‘Where did you come from?’ with the word ‘κοσμοπολίτης’ ([I am] a citizen of the cosmos [Diogenes Laertius, VI, 63]) and when, on another occasion, concerning the same topic, he asserted that “μόνην τε ὀρθὴν πολιτείαν εἶναι τὴν ἐν κόσμῳ (the only true government is that which is in the cosmos [Diogenes Laertius, VI, 72]), what idea of the *πολιτείαν* (government) did he have? He was suggesting some positive ideas, which might prepare for the appearance of the Cosmopolis (= the state in universe; the universal state; the universal government), where all human beings were fellow citizens and could attain their freedom and happiness, even if Diogenes himself was never the historical author of *Republic*, based on which Zeno of Citium developed his own cosmopolitanism, and which was identified as a book conveying a proto-Cynic utopian thought.”

⁶ Cf. in a more general context, the discussion on similar ethical and axiological parameters by F. Zanuso, “Honeste vivere: La responsabilità e la coesistenza des hommes,” *Diotima*, 42 (2014), 23-33, pp. 23-24.

⁷ Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), lemma κρίσις, -εως: separating, distinguishing; decision, judgment; trial, to be put to one’s trial; result of a trial, condemnation; dispute; turning point of a disease; sudden change for better or worse.

⁸ Cf. A. Potamianou, “Crises et maladies,” *Revue Française Psychosomatique*, 12 (1977), 7-22, p. 7, 21; rpt. in Greek in A. Potamianou, *Against Ourselves* (Athens: Meta, 2008), p. 59.

State during the Hellenistic era. The Athenian Democracy was past and gone, but the citizen's undiminished interest in philosophy remained predominant. In a space which, for the world citizen in the successors' states, is merely a locality, an area of habitation, Man resorts to Philosophy, a much desired intellectual support, and through it s/he will learn new ways of behavior.⁹ The fact that historical development affects cultural development as well is a fact that should not be doubted. Philosophical Schools that emerge from this cultural and political crisis, pledge they possess the way to teach to the now disoriented citizen of the Hellenistic city an art of living leading to the achievement of an ultimate goal, 'the good life,' that is happiness: namely, *eudaimonia*. Every philosophical School proclaims a different way for Man to reach *eudaimonia*. In the Hellenistic city, after all, each one should support oneself in order to be protected from all the rest. The security that the City-State offered to the citizens was a thing already past.

As a result, all bygone education ideals were subjected to rigorous criticism. Cynics, Cyrenaics, and Sceptics,¹⁰ therefore, try to introduce a type of life distant from any established type of education aiming to incorporate a person into society. Thus, education is to blame for those Schools, since education itself seems to be the way in which man becomes subordinate to political stereotypes, namely, to the new tyranny to which he is bound. The Cynics, by their provocative behavior and the questioning of every authority, were discrediting all existing models to the point of perpetuating injustice against citizens.¹¹ Epicurus¹² used to reassure his disciples by stating that they will reach *eudaimonia* if they live in the protection his Garden would offer them as opposed to living in a society that is founded on education (in our contemporary meaning of school-provided education).

The Stoics, on the contrary, emphasized the power that cultivation of intellectual abilities and *paideia* could offer.¹³ We come to understand, then, that the Stoics kept clear from the principle of their contemporary philosophical schools and placed the human being together with his fellow-humans in a society governed by laws imposed by divine thought. It is a philosophy, conversely, according to which freedom and cosmic order, ruled by logic, are properly identified. At the same time, man is called upon to conceive the meaning of the cosmic becoming through his intellectual abilities that have been given to him by nature itself. In other words, the Stoics were teaching

⁹ Cf. F. Ogereau, *Essai sur le système philosophique des Stoïciens* (Paris: encre marine, 2002²), p. 68; É. Bréhier, *Chrysippe et l'ancien stoïcisme* (Paris: P.U.F. et Gordon et Breach, 1971³), p. 266.

¹⁰ P. Aubenque, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-192.

¹¹ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Vol. II, trans. R.D. Hicks, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1925), Book VI, *passim*. Cf. S. Husson, "'Revetir la vie des chiens,' L'animal comme modèle moral," *Archai*, 11 (2013), 69-78, p. 71 and the reference to D.L. VI § 25-27.

¹² Cf. H. Helmer, *Epicure ou l'économie du bonheur* (Neuvy-en-Champagne: le passager clandestin, 2013), pp. 14-15.

¹³ Cf. M. Pohlenz, *La Stoa. Storia di un movimento spirituale*, Vol. I, trans. O. De Gregorio (Florence: "La nuova Italia," 1967), p. 33.

that divine and human nature have a common characteristic, that is Logos;¹⁴ and it is exactly this feature that makes man differ from all other beings in the Universe.¹⁵ It becomes clear, therefore, that for a Stoic the natural environment that surrounds him (physics) and his subsequent understanding of the principles that govern it (logic) reveal to him the rules of co-existence with his fellow-humans in society (ethics). These three principles or sciences (physics, logic and ethics) form together the three parts of Stoic philosophy that are unbreakably connected to each other.¹⁶ Stoic philosophers founded their philosophical theories on the idea of unity and co-existence of the sciences, on the causes that keep man and his world integrally linked to each other and the world as a whole. This also includes the way that human beings view the Universe, their fellow humans and their own selves as well as the manner in which they actually handle related issues. Those philosophers teach that the ruling feature of everything is its uniqueness since, in nature, there is nothing identical to something else. This very important realization urged them to put down the rules according to which people co-exist in the world. Starting from the fact that this uniqueness is the major regulative characteristic of human behavior,¹⁷ they regarded each one's abilities as the basis for the formation of a common way of life. Those abilities are mutually formed by one's experience in life, following a logical elaboration. The terms "consciousness of our selves" and "moral conscience" originate from the writings of Stoic philosophers.¹⁸ Besides, Man sets his limits in space and among his fellow-humans and is pushed to action by self-consciousness.¹⁹ That action cannot be but good and virtuous.²⁰ The Stoics teach that getting to know myself, means getting to love myself;²¹ and love towards oneself creates the premise of loving the one beside me, the other. This is how Zeno's answer to the question 'who is a friend?' namely, 'another me,'²² may be explained. This is an answer that Christianity will adopt afterwards through the phrase: 'love your neighbor as thyself.'²³

Many thinkers try to offer the definition of what is morally good, namely, what is necessary for man's behavior in the world. Cicero, for instance, ex-

¹⁴ L. Edelstein, *The Meaning of Stoicism*, Greek trans. R. Bekner, ed. G. Karamanolis (Thessaloniki: Θύραθεν, 2002), p. 78.

¹⁵ Diogenes Laertius, VII, 86.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, VII, 86-87.

¹⁸ Cf. Aetius, *Plac.*, IV, 8, 7 (=S.V.F., II, 852). Cf. A.-J. Voelke, *Les rapports avec autrui dans la philosophie grecque d'Aristote à Panétius* (Paris: Vrin, 1961), p. 108.

¹⁹ Cf. M. Forschner, "Le portique et le concept de personne," in G. Romeyer Dherbey (dir.) and J.-B. Gourinat (ed.), *Les Stoïciens* (Paris: Vrin, 2005), 293-317, p. 298, n. 17.

²⁰ Cf. Porphyrius, *de Abstin.*, III, 19 (=S.V.F., I, 197): "οικειώσεως πάσης και άλλοτριώσεως ἀρχή τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι."

²¹ Cf. Cicero, *De finibus*, III, 5, 16.

²² Diogenes Laertius, VII, 23.

²³ Luke, *New Testament*. 10, 27. New International Version, 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica (<http://www.biblestudytools.com/niv/>).

presses in Latin the morally good by the word *decorum*, i.e. ornamentation.²⁴ Moreover, good actions and good relations between citizens form an ornament for the city. Long before Cicero though, Zeno, the founder of the Stoic School as well as his disciples Cleanthes and Chrysippus dedicated long periods of their lives to speculation and writing in order to define the state's relationship to the citizen and vice versa, namely, the principles of “ἄρχειν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι καὶ δικάζειν καὶ ῥητορεύειν.” It is worth noting that there emerges some persistence on issues regarding the regime and the laws of the state, in the texts²⁵ of the Stoics. They placed Man in a well-ordered society whose laws were given by Gods' Logos, conversely, by Nature. Their philosophy, therefore, identified individual freedom in cosmic order and, at the same time, invited Man to understand the historical developments as part of the wonder of the cosmic becoming through Man's own intellectual and *noetic* abilities. Man was gifted with *logos*. By attributing part of the cosmic logos to the human being, Man's effort consists in finding this supreme Logos in him in order to arrest it in the universe.²⁶ According to their teaching, human nature is formed of matter and spirit (logos) to the extent that logos, in the sense of a craftsman,²⁷ penetrates matter and gives it form. Accordingly, God is a craftsman that shapes matter internally, that is immanently, and differently from the Platonic god as we find him e. g. in the *Timeus*, where he is acting upon matter externally, like a carpenter working a piece of wood as D. Sedley correctly claims.²⁸ This double human existence made of logos and matter, imposed upon the human being by the very nature of logos, defines the double role that Man is called upon to play, acting in the best possible way. One role is common to all, since all people partake in logos, something that constitutes man's defining characteristic compared to the other living beings, while, at the same time, Logos imposes the rules during his performing actions. The other role is the one that nature attributes to each and every one of us: namely, the role we are invited to perform according to our abilities and special bodily and psychological characteristics that constitute our uniqueness.²⁹

The observation of physical phenomena and their logical succession drove the Stoics to admit that everything depends on a causal relationship connected to logic. Conversely, the perpetually changing Universe presents the observer with a dynamic process, in the context of which human existence constitutes a

²⁴ Cf. Cicero, *De officiis*, I, XXVII, 93.

²⁵ Viewing the catalogue of their treatises would suffice; see J. v. Arnim, *S.V.F.*, I, (Zeno: Appendix, pp.71-72; Cleanthes: Appendix, pp. 137-139); Chrysippus: in Diogenes Laertius, VII, 189 (=S.V.F., II, 13).

²⁶ Cf. Stobaeus, *Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus* (=S.V.F., I, 537): “ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ γένος εἶς ἦχου μίμημα λαχόντες.” Cf. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 119. Cf. Patrice Cambonne, “L'universel et le singulier. L'Hymne à Zeus de Cléanthe, Notes de lecture,” *Revue des Études Anciennes*, 100 (1998), 89-114, p. 96, n. 27.

²⁷ Cf. G. Romeyer Dherbey, “Art et Nature chez les Stoïciens,” *La Grèce pour penser l'avenir* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 91-104, p. 94.

²⁸ D. Sedley, “Les dieux et les hommes,” in J.-B. Gourinat et J. Barnes (dir.), *Lire les Stoïciens* (Paris: PUF, 2009), 79-97, p. 79.

²⁹ Diogenes Laertius, VII, 88.

vital part in a sequence of necessary events. In this context, namely, the context of total dependence of the human existence on the process and succession of Universal transformation (changes), Stoic philosophers tried to understand history and place their own limits on it. Consequently, Man can feel autonomous and, at the same time, unique. In this way, the Stoics expected to justify and reaffirm Man's existence and, also, reassure the human being in a world that is constantly changing and yet repeats itself in regular periods of time. According to the teachings of the Stoics, historical events are indeed repeated. They do so in such a regular manner that, as they claim, we will live again, in another historical period and we are going to have the same friends and enemies and we will perform the same actions. Consequently, as they believe, there will be a Socrates again, and a Plato, a Meliton and an Anytos and a Lycon that will, once more, accuse Socrates who will, again, be sentenced to death.³⁰ If the facts repeat themselves indeed and reemerge with such astonishing similarity, it follows that after our having presented the causes of the formation of the identity of the citizen in the Hellenistic era, a period of crisis, useful parallelisms could be made regarding the crisis in our contemporary societies. Today's citizen undoubtedly experiences, as already noted, a crisis in every aspect of life; and under the perspective of comparison, one may get to know to what extent there could be an identification or a potential deviation from the citizen of the Hellenistic era.

Zeno, in his *Republic*, the work of his youth, tried to give a shape to the perplexed dream of a perfect regime, based on the same rules that govern universal order.³¹ He was the first one to give a special meaning to the notion of wisdom as a tie of coherence among its possessors. The idea of wisdom was the basis for his concept and image of the Stoic Sage he created, as well as the connecting principle between the latter and the other sages, bonded to them with the ties of friendship and concordance in a new type of Ideal State. Nevertheless, in his *Republic*, citizens are not divided into classes by social discrimination, but they are distinguished into sage ones, (σοφοί), and into nefarious (φαῦλοι), namely the unwise and the vulgar.³² Zeno was well aware of the shortcomings and problematic structure of the existing state and wrote in the prologue of the *Republic* that he was providing the medicine for any unwelcome situation.³³ What is sought for in every well-ordered state, he argues, is the happiness of its citizens; thus, Zeno was inviting the citizens to avert their glances from the events that were happening in front of them and direct them to nature, in order to understand the wonderful sight of perpetual change

³⁰ Cf. Tatianus, *Adv. Graec.* C. 5 (=S.V.F., I, 109): "... ἀνίστασθαι πάλιν τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς, λέγω δὲ Ἄνυτον καὶ Μέλητον ἐπὶ τῷ κατηγορεῖν...."

³¹ Cf. Plutarch, *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute*, I, 6, 329, A. Cf. Iamblichus, *De anima apud Stobaeum ecl.*, II, 382, 18, W. (=S.V.F., I, 379). Cf. G. Boys-Stones, "Eros in Government: Zeno and the Virtuous City," *The Classical Quarterly*, 48 (1998), 168-174, esp. p. 168 and note 1.

³² Cf. S.V.F., III, 604- 636.

³³ Cf. Athenaeus, XIII 561, C. (=S.V.F., I, 263). H.C. Baldry, "Zeno's Ideal State," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 79 (1959), 3-15, p. 8.

that is taking place in the world. Indirectly and by analogy, he was urging them to understand their own place in the world. It is for this reason exactly that, Zeno, in his work, *On Human Nature*, writes that the goal (τέλος) is the “ὁμολογουμένως τῆ φύσει ζῆν.”³⁴ He was indicating, that is, a way of life entirely in accordance with logic that governs nature and identifies with virtue: “ὅπερ ἐστὶ κατ’ ἀρετὴν ζῆν.”³⁵ Ζῆν ὁμολογουμένως presupposes, therefore, a logical process of understanding and, in accordance with both, what is happening in the Universe and what is happening in the world of humans. This constitutes the “rule” of life that –as Epictetus,³⁶ the Stoic of the Roman period, used to teach– consists of constant *noetic* exercise so as to reject any choice opposite to reason. Hence, the likening of *eudaimonia* to the tranquil flow of the waters of a river (εὐροια βίου), is the strongest evidence of harmony between physics, logic, and ethics in the Universe and in Man.

The right co-existence of these three sciences guarantees *eudaimonia* to the sage, namely his being in harmony with the good demon (εὐ-δαίμων) of his life.³⁷ Zeno, who tried to develop a theory on natural justice in his *Republic*, gave a model of State in which only sages would live (alongside Gods): namely, those most excellent citizens, the ones capable of living according to natural law. He suggested, conversely, a way of life based on wisdom, because it is the only one offering the art of life (τέχνη τοῦ ζῆν). His disciple, Cleanthes, believed that practical application of the rules of nature is of utmost importance; but laws have necessarily been based on universal principles, otherwise they would be deprived of any value. Only the wise man has the ability to live according the laws of nature since the law is sage, it is Reason, that is the imperative logos of that which should be done and the prohibitory logos of what should not. For the Stoics the Law is ἀσπεῖος because it imposes the right behavior upon the citizens in the City (ἄστυ). Consequently, the sage is also ἀσπεῖος because he abides with the law. The agreement of his actions to the rules of nature constitutes the expression of nature itself in the world of humans.

Hence, the outstanding man lives his life under the rule of the identification of his logic with the divine logic (natural law) to the extent that each of his actions is the result of a correct interpretation of the divine will (πρακτικὸν τῶν ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ προσταπτομένων³⁸). It becomes obvious that these actions are dictated not only by morality but mainly by reason, since the Sage –through

³⁴ Diogenes Laertius, VII, 87. Cf. also G. Romeyer Dherbey, “‘Vivre en accord avec la nature’ ou vivre en accord avec Zénon ?,” *Philosophie Antique*, 5 (2005), 49-64, pp. 57-60.

³⁵ Diogenes Laertius, VII, 87.

³⁶ *Discourses*, I, 37-40; cf. T. Brennan, *The Stoic Life: Emotions, Duties and Fate*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 11-12; cf. also M. Schofield, “Stoic Ethics,” in B. Inwood (ed.), *The Stoics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 233-256, pp. 245-246.

³⁷ Stobaeus, *Ecl.*, II, p. 77, 20 W. (=S.V.F., I, 184).

³⁸ Stobaeus, *Ecl.*, II, p. 103, 24 W. (=S.V.F., III, 677); cf. Stobaeus, *Ecl.*, II, p. 7, 96 W. (=S.V.F., III, 631). Cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 268 d; cf. A. Tordesillas, “L’homme du monde; sur une condition de la bienséance cosmopolitique du sage stoïcien,” *Diotima*, 20 (1992), 62-68, *passim*.

his being completely harmonized to universal reason, namely *noetic* potential – is able to transform the logical order he gets from nature into moral actions. Natural law suggests rules of moral behavior that the sage understands, in contrast to the nefarious, who is incapable of understanding them and interpreting them correctly.³⁹ Keeping natural law in mind, Stoic philosophy of the first period (early Stoicism) develops rules of moral behavior which only the sage, no matter of how rare a kind he is thought to be,⁴⁰ is capable of following, as opposed to *the* common man, who is in utter confusion and weakness of understanding. By dividing citizens into two classes, the one of the important kind and the other of the nefarious one, the corresponding attributes that give them their particular characteristics become obvious. It is sufficient to look further back to the virtues of the sage as they are mentioned in Zeno's *Republic* to understand the absolute virtue, by which the sage is surrounded. Moreover, it should be stressed that Stoic cosmopolitanism is subject to certain limits and we must also emphasize the fact that the real *cosmopolis* is superior because it is the city in which universal reason holds sway. It cannot, therefore, bear any similarities with the city in its real form. Only the citizen of the Stoic *cosmopolis* is free, because freedom is the power of the sage to act for himself.⁴¹ Slavery and liberty function here as patterns expressing morality, not as ones reflecting the social structure of the City. They bear universal consequences, as Gods are supposed to live in it along with the sages.

Freedom is another way for the stoic sage to express obedience to divine law. Hence, it is clearly established that, according to the Stoics, reason is not common to Gods and men, but only to Gods and the sages, namely to men of Reason. Man's participation in the domain of *logos* constitutes a challenge that Gods gave to Man as a chance of the latter's living with them in the *cosmopolis*. Whoever succeeds in achieving his end (τέλος), namely co-existing with the Gods, acquires simultaneously all the divine properties: “Μόνος ἄρχων ὁ σπουδαῖος, μόνος δυνάστης, μόνος βασιλεύς, μόνος ἡγεμῶν πάντων, μόνος ἐλεύθερος, καὶ ὅτι πάντα τῶν σπουδαίων ἐστίν, ὅσα καὶ τῶν θεῶν· κοινὰ γὰρ τὰ τῶν φαύλων [...] πάντα θεῶν, πάντα καὶ σπουδαίων...”⁴² In this context, Zeno taught that science, which is knowledge *per se*, is the way to conciliate theory with action, to the extent that only science, namely knowledge, offers the art of living. Education (in its sense of formal school education today) acquires a meaning exactly from the moment that it paves ways of exercise in order to provide usable, practical life rules. This happens at the moment of the sage's moral obligation to behave towards his fellow men according to virtue. In the opposite case, inappropriate education has the power to divert reason away from its axis (ἔκφορος) and turn it towards fallacy, namely, a change its natural course, the course that is directed towards rea-

³⁹ Cf. V. Laurant, *La politique stoïcienne* (Paris : P.U.F., 2005), pp. 62-69.

⁴⁰ Alex. of Aphrod., *De fato*, cp. 28, p. 199, 7, Bruns. (=S.V.F., III, 658); M. Daraki, *Une religiosité sans Dieu, Essai sur les stoïciens d'Athènes et saint Augustin* (Paris: La découverte, 1989), pp. 163-165.

⁴¹ Cf. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 121.

⁴² Cf. Proclus, *in Alcib.*, pr., p. 164, ed. Creuzer (=S.V.F., III, 618).

son.⁴³ According to Zeno, the wise man is naturally social (ἀστέϊος),⁴⁴ friendly, gentle, rich, pleasant, noble.⁴⁵ The ties of friendship are especially important because they unite all sages.⁴⁶ On the contrary, absence of wisdom upsets all ties, changing even family ties from friendly to hostile ones.⁴⁷ The virtues of the wise man prove their excellence compared to the unwise that are deprived of virtue and freedom exactly because they are deprived of reason.⁴⁸ In order to correct the evils of the state and the erroneous tendencies of his fellow citizens towards the facts, the sage according to Zeno, if not hindered by any obstacle, must enter politics,⁴⁹ marry and have children.⁵⁰

It is at this point that a profound breach is revealed between the Stoics and the Cynics as far as the behavior of the citizen towards the institutions of the state is concerned. The Stoic Sage is included in the corpus of the city and he follows its function in order to contribute with his cultivation to the correction of mistakes; he does not wish to agitate the links between the City and its citizens and he firmly believes in the right use of education, in other words, in the fruitful *paideia*. On the contrary, the Cynic citizen of the world is not interested in the City or Polis (he is a-polis), because from the moment he does not deal with the affairs of the City, or he underestimates them, he undermines the structure and the status of the City. Zeno subdued the whole world to the rule of *noesis*, thus introducing the idea of natural law into Western culture,⁵¹ placing within all human beings under its boundaries, without any discrimination of city, race, or sex.⁵²

Summarizing, we should note that personal freedom absolutely depends on self-knowing deriving from its constant cultivation. Man feels free in a political context that at first sight appears to bind him. The concept of political and historical necessity, though, included in the natural context of cosmic evolution and change, for the citizen of the Hellenistic era, is at the same time an inevitable condition of life. Consequently, the Stoic sage does not oppose the evolution because otherwise, through an appropriate simile, he would look like a spectator who opposes the theatrical event during the performance.⁵³ On the contrary, he participates without passion and takes part in the flow of evolution as a structural factor, because he is fully aware of the whole process

⁴³ Cf. Posidonius apud Galenum, *De H. et Plat. Decr.* IV, 7, p. 291 Mü. (=S.V.F., III, 658); cf. Daraki, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-72.

⁴⁴ Cf. Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber* Vol. II, p. 454, 31 Mang. (=S.V.F., III, 363).

⁴⁵ Cf. Stobaeus, *Ecl.*, II, 7, p. 96, Wachsm. (=S.V.F., III, 613); cf. Stobaeus, *Ecl.*, II, 108, 5, W. (=S.V.F., III, 630); cf. M. Daraki, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-65.

⁴⁶ Cf. Plut., *De comm. not.*, cp. 22, p. 1068 F (=S.V.F., III, 627); Cf. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 124 (=S.V.F., III, 631).

⁴⁷ Cf. Seneca, *Ad Lucilium*, X, 81, 8; Cf. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 124 (=S.V.F., III, 631).

⁴⁸ Cf. Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.*, VII, 432 (=S.V.F., III, 657).

⁴⁹ Cf. Stobaeus, *Ecl.*, II, p. 94, 7, W. (=S.V.F., III, 611).

⁵⁰ Cf. Seneca, *De Otio*, cp. 3, 2, Gertz. (=S.V.F., I, 271): "accedet ad rempublicam (sapiens), nisi si quid impediērit." Cf. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 121 (=S.V.F., I, 270).

⁵¹ Cf. Pohlenz, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

⁵² Clemens AL., *Srom.*, IV, 8, p. 590, 592 (=S.V.F., III, 254).

⁵³ Cf. Epictetus, *The Enchiridion*, XVII.

and wishes to participate. The Stoics teach that only the sage is free; and freedom only leads to independent action.⁵⁴ Free action is, for the sage, the conscious participation in the inevitable –that is in the natural– therefore, in that which is harmonized with divine reason.

Turning to the problems of Man in our modern and post-modern era, who lives in a similar sociopolitical context of moving populations and ideas that are spreading fast in our times of Globalization through electronically released and communicated information, the parallelisms are obvious. Taking into account, additionally, a number of other serious problems that lead to a deep crisis, like energy-related ones, for instance, excessive gas and nuclear discharges into the atmosphere and the overall grave consequences to the environment, similarities appear to be striking indeed. Modern Man gets to know about all of that instantly, via the media, including twenty-first century state-of-the-art computing machines. Those super-modern electronic appliances, by their imposing powerful visual and acoustic stimuli upon the senses, may also transform the critical thought of the human being into a phobic introversion, thus resulting into a tendency towards phobic self-preservation. This may result, in turn, in an annihilation of even the common conception of friendship and the introduction of the lately so-called “electronic friendship.” Despite all this, Man is considered responsible for the way he chooses to adjust to these circumstances.⁵⁵ The frenetic pace of work disorients the citizen and turns him away from spiritual and intellectual progress, the indispensable premise for acquiring self-knowledge that guides to essential freedom. Given all that, Man may adopt anything that is offered to him without much critical thinking. He is dragged into a liquid, opportunistic and easily reversible relationship with space and time and desperately seeks ways and places of temporary survival and relief. Everyone behaves, in a context of never-ending mobility of populations, as a nomad who moves and survives in an, henceforth, open world, living in a context of Globalization. Man is of course, free to move, change partners, job environments and life conditions. In essence though, particularly under a Stoic perspective, this freedom is equal to slavery, since Man seems to enter a process of contradicting himself. This happens from the moment Human Beings may feel free to shape themselves at will. This is, however, the way to make themselves available without restriction, superficially, making use of their right to abandon, not always consciously, their old, individual tradition and civilization they have been actually living through, for new, ready-made life models: namely, models supplied and artificially made or “constructed” for contemporary Man by invisible masters in a Globalized world. The very etymology of the verb “to construct” introduces the distinction between the quite different meanings of the verbs ‘ποιῶ’

⁵⁴ Philo, *Περὶ τοῦ πάντα σπουδαῖον ἐλεύθερον εἶναι*, Vol. II, p. 45, Magn. (=S.V.F., I, 218); Diogenes Laertius, VII, 33 (=S.V.F., I, 222). Cf. Dio Chrysost., *Or.*, XIV, § 16 (Vol. II, p. 230, 17 Arn.) (=S.V.F., III, 356).

⁵⁵ Cf. M. de Certeau, “Ce que Freud fait de l’histoire,” in *L’écriture de l’histoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), p. 292, in C. Tsoukalas, *The Invention of Diversity* [in Greek: *Η επινόηση της ετερότητας*] (Athens: Kastaniotis, 2010), pp. 66-69.

(create) as opposed to ‘κατασκευάζω’ (construct), the latter denoting the existence of an outer agent who is preoccupied with the “construction” of our world. This notion absolutely opposes the Stoic notion of cosmopolitanism.

Regrettably, therefore, those new models do not seem to originate from the old ones in a functional, logical consequence. As a result, civilization currently denies *a priori* its own internal cohesion. One realizes, at this point, that the emerging problem partly arises as a result of multicultural toleration of moving populations only temporarily stopping, staying or living at places, vagrant and confused human beings experiencing a grim situation that no integration program, often internationally agreed upon by today’s states, could restore. Twenty-first century Man is still roaming intellectually disoriented, nearly aimlessly, in our vast, universal homeland. Should this go on at the present pace, the foundation of a personal, *noetic* and, more generally, intellectual freedom would be rendered unattainable. This is because it would look like a struggle to reach some kind of external, temporary recognition of vagrant people from an already collapsing, older frame of law, justice, citizenship and statesmanship to a new, in a sense historically inconsistent, mixture of everything and everybody: an artificially united ‘lot,’ leading, perhaps, to an artificially emerging civilization.⁵⁶

Returning, finally, to the concept of the citizen as viewed in Stoic philosophy, one realizes that personal freedom is acquired only by an internal, mental and, more generally, intellectual process, a never-ending struggle for shaping oneself, the effect of constant studying inspired by the unshaken belief in the potential of one’s mind. The Stoic sage *knows*; and with this knowledge given, he consciously enters into the existing social context and participates in an effort for the improvement of the precarious intellectual and ethical status of the citizen in the shifting sands of an ever-changing sociopolitical reality. In opposition to the Stoic logic in approaching such a crisis, the contemporary way of facing and coming to terms with the human predicament in the current context of Globalization should not just be blind and superficial toleration as a supposedly sound response to multiculturalism: even worse, to a multiculturalism that is not governed by common reason. Abiding by the law of reason can lead, according to the Stoics, to the way out of a cultural and ethical crisis, but it can be regarded, at the same time, ironically, even as culturally imperialistic. Man and his current civilization are, therefore, bound to fail while trying to function just as a contemporary fender against isolated problems, leading, through the supposedly unifying panacea of Globalization, to its opposite, namely, internal isolation and fragmentation, and a distinct type of cultural slavery. As a result, the eternal dream of the human being as a free agent, a yet unattained objective sought for by liberal, democratic societies, seems to have been thwarted. Patience and cultural tolerance, the universally respected, indispensable foundation stones of modern and post-modern civilized states with their various traditions and cultures, now tend, in our Globalized world, to internally fragment and disorient their citizens. This is a vicious circle of

⁵⁶ Cf. Tsoukalas, *Ibid.*, pp. 66ff.

sustained crisis threatening the very essence of freedom and, in effect, the essential rights of today's citizen, a social and political loophole, a tantalizing problem that has to be properly addressed. Turning a blind eye to the problem through a supposedly progressive and ultra-democratic rhetoric of denying its very existence fosters disaster.⁵⁷ The very fabric of social cohesion and existing social structures is in jeopardy, as new global models and ways of controlling human freedom are stealthily advancing.⁵⁸ If this is where things stand now, how can *eudaimonia* be achieved and what can philosophy, and particularly the Stoic perspective and art of life, suggest to the citizens today?

As a response to all of the above, there should be dawn a fresh, conscious glance inside, a new creative turn towards oneself: namely, a turn towards the cultivation of the mind, sound education (*paideia*), studying philosophy, an advancement of reason, a much more functional classification and imparting of knowledge as well as of those disconnected fragments of information. All of that is currently overflowing the mind and confusing today's citizen, blurring the understanding of his position in the world. The scientific observation⁵⁹ and preservation of nature, especially advocated by Stoic philosophers should be a guide, not an indirect way towards an inconsiderate and disastrous exploitation of natural resources. It is in such ways that a novel consideration of the notion of freedom can be developed that would not, in any way, be the source of loneliness or isolation. An attempt to enter, therefore, the current sociopolitical context with the aim of contributing with one's own personality to a substantial improvement in the evolving of all those issues, presupposes an essential decision: the citizen of the contemporary city must decide to enter into the serious and dedicated study of philosophy as well. This means that Man must study especially the sound ideas of the Stoic philosophers in order to form his own, unique *art of life*.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ A. Jarry, *Ubu Enchaîné* (Paris: Fasquelle éditeur, 1900); ("Père Ubu King becomes Ubu linked"), in C. Tsoukalas, *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Cf. Tsoukalas, *Ibid.* p. 132.

⁵⁹ P. Barker, "Stoic Contribution to Early Modern Science," in M.J. Osler (ed.), *Atoms, Pneuma, and Tranquility: Epicurean and Stoic Themes in European Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 135-154.

⁶⁰ Olympiodorus, *In Plat. Gorg.*, pp. 53, 54 (ed. Jahn nov. ann. philol. supplement. XIV 1848 p. 239, 240) (=S.V.F., I, 73): "... τέχνη ἐστὶ σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων πρὸς τὸ τέλος εὐχρηστον τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ."

PART IX

**Modern and Contemporary Philosophical
Perspectives on the Crisis**

Crisis and Critique: Friedrich Schlegel's "Happy Catastrophe" as a Hermeneutic Inversion of Rousseau

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Friedrich Schlegel's *On the Study of Greek Poetry* from the Perspective
of the Historiography of the Concept of Crisis

In 1784, Herder writes in his *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*: "If the semiotics of the soul should ever be studied, as the semiotics of the body, its proper spiritual nature will be so apparent in all its diseases that the conclusions of the materialists will vanish like clouds before the Sun."¹ Approximately ten years later, Friedrich Schlegel applies in his *On the Study of Greek Poetry* (abbr. *Study*)² this idea of an appropriation of the "semiotics of the body" for "the semiotics of the soul" and uses the notion of "crisis," i.e., a basic notion of 18th century's medical semiotics or hermeneutics,³ for

¹ J.G. Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*. Erster Teil (Riga and Leipzig: J.F. Hartknoch, 1784), p. 297. The opposition of spiritualism or idealism vs. materialism is still influential for historical thinking. For example, Koselleck's distinction between "social history" and "conceptual history" and his emphasis on the latter is conditioned by his theoretical opposition to materialism. See R. Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichten. Studien zur Semantik und Pragmatik der politischen und sozialen Sprache* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2006), pp. 71-72. According to the position of the present paper the attempt towards a theoretical grounding (as opposed to the empirical investigation) of history directly in terms of the opposition or of some kind of synthetic unity of spiritualism or idealism and materialism is at least from a critical, transcendental perspective insufficient due to the restriction to human reality. Gadamer indicates precisely in this sense the naturalistic, biological implications of Koselleck's relevant attempt and points to the need of its complementation through an ethical element, which, however, can only have the irreducible status of an ethical certainty. See H.-G. Gadamer, "Historik und Sprache. Eine Antwort..." in R. Koselleck, *Zeitschichten. Studien zur Historik* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2000), 119-127. Koselleck's latest published word on this issue seems to recognize this need, as he allows for a conception of history also under the theological notion of "katechon." This conception, which aims at the hindrance of the end of a historical time, is conditioned by the eschatological concept of "crisis." See Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichten*, pp. 216-217. On this issue, see further notes 17 and 27, below.

² F. Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2001). Schlegel's *Study* was published in complete form in 1797. However, the manuscript (with the exception of the "Preface") was submitted for publication already in 1795.

³ C. Frey, "Zeichen-Krisis-Wahnsinn. Fallgeschichten medizinischer und poetischer Semiotik (Philip Pinel, Jean Paul)," in S. Heiner und H. Nehr (eds.), *Krisen des Verstehens um 1800* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2004), 111-132, p. 132. "Semiotic is in the medicine of the 18th and early 19th century the usual term for the interpretation of symptoms" (*Ibid.*, p. 111, note 3). "[T]he theory of *Crisis* counts explicitly as 'part of the Semiotic'" (*Ibid.*, p. 117). Schlegel's use is being further documented in the second and fourth

his interpretation of the history of modern aesthetic culture with regard to the question of the overall progress or decline of the history of mankind.

Schlegel's Fictional Use of the Concept of Crisis: The "Happy Catastrophe"

Schlegel's specific application of the medical notion of crisis is being characterized by its complementation through the theatrical notion of "happy catastrophe," which means the decisive turning point of a plot from an unhappy to a happy situation or a happy ending.⁴ The use of the theatrical notion of "happy catastrophe," which allows for the possibility of Schlegel's positive prognosis on the crisis of modern aesthetic culture, clearly implies that his approach has a polemical or fictional character in the sense of Kant's "polemical use of Reason" for the "defense" of the "Critique" against its dogmatic opponents.⁵

The use of theatrical terminology in the field of history is certainly not an innovation of Schlegel. A relative clear precedent is Kant. In discussing Mendelssohn's opposition to Lessing's optimistic hypothesis regarding the moral progress of humanity, Kant refers to the circular or 'Sisyphean' conception of human history, which he attributes to Mendelssohn, as a "tragedy" that in the long run turns into a "farce."⁶ Kant mentions further the unhappy ending of the "punishment that comes at the end" in the sense of catharsis,⁷ but he restricts its use only to theater. Schlegel's use of the theatrical notion of "happy

section of the present paper. As it will be argued, especially in the fourth section, Schlegel does not accept Herder's dogmatic thesis concerning spiritualism.

⁴ Schlegel refers without doubt to the infamous issue of a happy ending in tragedy, which goes back to the opposition between Chapters 13 and 14 of the *Poetics* of Aristotle. Whereas in Chapter 13 Aristotle seems to argue for the unhappy ending as the best kind of tragic plot and thus to defend Euripides as the best tragic poet, in Chapter 14 he seems to argue against that. However, the argument of Chapter 13 is traditionally considered to express the orthodox or strict Aristotelian thesis. See M. Heath, "The Best Kind of Tragic Plot: Aristotle's Argument in *Poetics* 13-14," *Anais de filosofia clássica*, 2 (2008), 1-18, pp. 1-3. The term "catastrophe" does not appear in Aristotle's *Poetics* and it seems that it is being used as a term of the theory of drama for the first time in late antiquity by Euanthius and Aelius Donatus. See K.O. Eliassen, "Catastrophic Turns—From the Literary History of the Catastrophic," in C. Meiner and K. Veel (eds.), *The Cultural Life of Catastrophes and Crises* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2012), 33-57, pp. 37-39. Schlegel's use of the term is being further documented in the second section of the present paper.

⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. P. Guyer and A.W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 632, 643; I. Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. IV (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1903), 385-463, p. 459.

⁶ I. Kant, "Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in die Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. VIII (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1923), 273-313, p. 308. This is very probably an allusion to the so called "tragic-comedies."

⁷ An allusion to the strict Aristotelian or the Senecan tradition on the proper ending of tragedies.

catastrophe" is clearly an elaboration of Kant's abovementioned use of the theatrical vocabulary.⁸

In his recent contribution to the history of the concept of the "catastrophic," Eliassen opposes its specific modern or contemporary sense, according to which it means a "universal [historical, KP] disaster" or an event that produces history, to its specific ancient sense, which he restricts mainly to the physical or the theatrical meaning of the term.⁹ Eliassen refers to Rousseau's conception of human history as paradigmatic for the specific modern understanding of the term in the sense of "radical historical contingency." Following Derrida, he interprets Rousseau's catastrophic conception of the structure of culture and progress in an anti-optimistic direction, which, given Rousseau's 'negatively cathected'¹⁰ diagnosis of the crisis of modern culture, leaves open both the circular or 'Sisyphean' conception of history, which Kant attributes to Mendelssohn, and the conception of history under the notion of "unhappy catastrophe." Though Eliassen insists on the theatrical origin of the term, his Rousseauian determination of its modern sense does not sufficiently appreciate the differentiation between an "unhappy" and a "happy catastrophe," which is, however, crucial for the modern extension of the sense of the term to history, as it is incorporated in its theatrical meaning.¹¹ Most importantly, this differentiation supports the understanding of Schlegel's polemical use of "happy catastrophe" as a hermeneutic inversion of Rousseau's 'negatively cathected' interpretation of the crisis of modern culture. Rousseau's interpretation can be understood not only as pointing to the cyclical or 'Sisyphean' conception of history, but also as pointing to the strict Aristotelian or the Senecan tradition of "unhappy catastrophe" in tragedy. This latter alternative is supported by Rousseau's critique of French theatre in general and in particular of the phenomenon of "happy catastrophe" in French tragedies.¹²

⁸ The context of Kant's use of the theatrical vocabulary is obviously polemical. *Ibid.*, p. 309. By using the concept of "happy catastrophe" Schlegel takes the side of Lessing on the question of the progress of humanity, as Kant does before him in his own way. *Ibid.*, p. 307 f. However, on the question, whether the "catastrophe" in tragedy should be unhappy, as the strict Aristotelian or the Senecan tradition suggests, or could also be "happy," as Lessing suggests with special reference to Corneille, Schlegel's stance is more differentiated. See G.E. Lessing, *Werke*, Vol. IV (München: Hanser Verlag, 1973), pp. 458, 487-488. On Schlegel's stance on the latter issue, see note 12, below.

⁹ Eliassen, "Catastrophic Turns," pp. 35, 37, 39, 40-41, 45-46, 47-48.

¹⁰ I borrow this term from N. Kompridis, "Reorienting Critique. From Ironist Theory to Transformative Practice," *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 26 (2000), 23-47, p. 31.

¹¹ See Eliassen, "Catastrophic Turns," pp. 46-49.

¹² J.-J. Rousseau, "Letter to D' Alembert on the Theater," in *Letter to D' Alembert and Writings for the Theater*, trans. A. Bloom (Lebanon, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 2004), 251-352, pp. 271-274, 337 f. Rousseau's emphasis is on the "simple suffering humanity." *Ibid.*, pp. 274 and 338. Kant, who himself owned an exemplar of the German translation of Rousseau's infamous "Letter," seems to respond to Schiller's objections to his ethics exactly from this background: his reference to "Herkules Musagetes" allows precisely for the possibility of a happy ending. See I. Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. VI (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1914), 1-202, pp. 23-24, note. In what concerns Schlegel's

However, as suggested by Schlegel's self-critical afterthought concerning the uncritical objectivism or dogmatism of his *Study*,¹³ his approach is not wholly polemical, as his use of the medical notion of crisis also has a material basis that can be thought of as being to an extent common with the naturalistic basis of Rousseau's 'negatively cathected' diagnosis of the crisis of modern culture.¹⁴ This is important for understanding Koselleck's claim that the

stance on the issue of "happy catastrophe" in tragedy, the reference of the *Study* to Sophocles (pace the orthodox defense of Euripides in Chapter 13 of the *Poetics* of Aristotle) as the ideal of ancient tragedy shows clearly that he aligns in general with Lessing also on this issue. See Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 60-63, 77, 98-99. This alignment is further backed up by Schlegel's specific justificatory reference to "happy catastrophes" in tragedy. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75. In addition to that, Schlegel is on the contrary critical of Euripides. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72, 73. Finally, the *Study* contains also a critique of Aristotle and actually of the orthodox or strict Aristotelian tradition. *Ibid.*, pp. 85-87. However, his negative reference in the "Preface" to French tragedy, including Corneille, offers evidence that regarding French tragedy he is in disagreement with Lessing and in agreement with Rousseau. *Ibid.*, pp. 100, 92-93. Since, moreover, Schlegel considers the tragedy of Shakespeare and especially "Hamlet" as exemplary of the period of crisis of modern aesthetic culture, one could claim that his understanding of tragedy in this determinate period falls under the notion of "unhappy catastrophe." Although his justification of tragic-comedy seems to contradict this claim, it is, given Kant's abovementioned reference to Mendelssohn, not incompatible with it. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80. Despite this differentiation, Schlegel's overall emphasis is on the "happy catastrophe," both on the level of the development of the crisis of the history of modern culture and on the level of the theory of tragedy, as Sophocles serves as the ideal also for the "objective" period of modern poetry that follows according to Schlegel's optimistic prognosis after its current period of crisis. *Ibid.*, p. 293. This emphasis points clearly to the direction of an overall opposition to Rousseau that given the internal potential of the theatrical notion of "catastrophe" (unhappy, happy) can be understood even as an immanent hermeneutic inversion of Rousseau, who can be thought as interpreting the crisis of modern culture from the point of view of his opposition to "happy catastrophes" in tragedy. Schlegel refers to the "interesting" or "philosophical tragedy" of Shakespeare, which is paradigmatic of the period of crisis of modern culture, as the mirror opposite of the ancient ideal of "objective" or "aesthetic tragedy" of Sophocles, which allows for "happy catastrophes," even when things have gone bad. Contrary to this the "catastrophe" of the "philosophical tragedy" "is tragic" (though not the "philosophical tragedy" as a whole). *Ibid.*, pp. 32, 100. Rousseau's stance on tragedy and on the crisis of modern culture can thus be understood as essentially modern (i.e., as following the strict Aristotelian or the Senecan tradition concerning the ending of tragedy associated mostly with Julius Caesar Scaliger). In this sense, his approach falls together with the approach of Schiller under the category of the "interesting" or the "sentimental" as expressive of the period of crisis of modern culture. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98, 246 ff.

¹³ See F. Schlegel, "Critical Fragments," in *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. P. Firchow (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 1-16, pp. 1 and 8. The "Critical Fragments" were published in 1797 shortly after the complete publication of the *Study*.

¹⁴ "You trust in the present order of society without thinking that this order is subject to inevitable revolutions, and it is impossible for you to foresee or prevent the one which may affect your children. The noble become commoners, the rich become poor, the monarch becomes subject. Are the blows of fate so rare that you can count on being exempted from them? We are approaching a state of crisis and the age of revolutions. Who can answer for what will become of you then? All that men have made, men can destroy: the only inefaceable characters are those printed by nature" [J.-J. Rousseau, *Emile or On Education*,

concept of crisis actually contributed to the foundation as "self-standing sciences" of "areas of life" such as history, as Schlegel is immediately connected with this foundation.¹⁵ Yet Koselleck oversees the abovementioned polemical or fictional dimension of Schlegel's use of the concept of crisis,¹⁶ which is, however, of immediate importance from the perspective of Koselleck's abovementioned claim, since this dimension can be understood, as it will be further argued in the following and especially in the fourth section of the present paper, as aiming at the defense of a critical, i.e., judgmental, use of the concept of crisis in the specific sense of the openness of human history and of historiography to the Critique of Reason (also in the sense of the possessive genitive). In this sense and given the fact that Schlegel's *Study* is an expression of his early critical attempts towards a science of history that does not rest on theology or natural teleology, Schlegel's critical use of the concept of crisis is of systematic relevance also to the foundation of history as a science. The abovementioned openness points towards a rational standpoint (Critique) that can serve as the methodological ground for posing an open examination of the question concerning the specific rationality of human history or the

trans. A. Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 194]. "The study of philosophy and the progress of reason, having perfected grammar, deprived language of that lively and passionate tone which had at first made it so tuneful. [...] Ultimately the catastrophe occurred that was to destroy the progress of the human mind without removing the vices that were its work" [J.-J. Rousseau, "Essay on the Origin of Languages," in *Rousseau: The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, ed. V. Gourovitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 247-299, pp. 295-296]. See further Rousseau's rather negative prognosis by his application of the medical concept of crisis with regard to the organization of states: "Liberty may be acquired but never recovered" [J.-J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, in *The Social Contract and the First and Second Discourses*, ed. and intro. S. Dunn (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2002), 149-254, p. 184]. See also the corresponding passage in the "Letter to D' Alembert" (Rousseau, "Letter to D' Alembert on the Theater," p. 343). Rousseau's later works such as *The Social Contract* and the *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* document further his cultural pessimism. See J.F. Dienstag, *Pessimism. Philosophy, Ethic, Spirit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 49-50, 51-55, 72-75. In what concerns Schlegel see note 18, below.

¹⁵ Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichten*, p. 205. On Schlegel's early attempts towards a foundation of history as science see note 69, below.

¹⁶ Although Koselleck mentions in his famous article on the history of the concept of crisis *en passant* Schlegel's use of the term in the *Study*, he tends to reduce this use to the theological use of the term that is prominent in Schlegel's later phase. Thus he claims that "'crisis' plays only a peripheral role in the German Idealist philosophy of history in which the spirit (*Geist*) that drives reality naturally triumphs over any acute crisis" and opposes to this the centrality of the concept of crisis for the Young Hegelians. See R. Koselleck, "Crisis," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400, pp. 380, 384. Koselleck's claim might be valid from the point of view of "Absolute Idealism," but his tendency to reduce post-Kantian German Idealism to "Absolute Idealism" leads to a serious distortion of the history of the concept of crisis that is eventually identical to the consequences of Schlegel's theological use of this concept. Schlegel's use of the concept of crisis in the *Study* represents a clear falsification of the general thesis of his historiography of the concept of crisis in 18th century. See R. Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis. Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1988), pp. 158, 102, note 11.

actuality of the possibility of a specific rationality of human history, without dogmatically presupposing its answer (also in accordance with Schlegel's self-critical afterthoughts). As expressive of the fundamental transcendental-critical distinction between possibility and actuality or reality, the conception of this methodological ground under the notion of the question (Critique's open examination) is necessarily incorporated as its condition of possibility in the critical understanding of the concept of human history.¹⁷

Schlegel's Critical Use of the Concept of Crisis from the Perspective of Koselleck's Historiography

The eighteenth century and modernity in general are being characterized in the Kantian tradition leading up to Habermas as the epoch of the Critique of Reason in the double sense. With regard to history, the object of the Critique of Reason is the factual or actual, historical human reason or reality, in relation to which the Critique poses the open question concerning the actuality of the possibility of a specific rationality of human history. In opposition to this tradition stands their characterization by Koselleck as the epoch of "Critique and Crisis" that is being backed up by a reception of Rousseau's discourse on modern culture that points rather to Koselleck's "Critique and Crisis" scheme.¹⁸ The argument of the present paper is less concerned with the prob-

¹⁷ The systematic relevance of Schlegel's critical use of the concept of crisis consists in the implied possibility of a methodological foundation concerning the question of the reality of the possibility of a specific rationality of history. As this foundation is in itself not dependent on neither pole of the alternative of spiritualism/idealism or materialism (with regard to history itself), it allows to turn this polemical alternative as well as the polemical alternative of histories vs. history into an open question for empirical and (empirical) historical investigation, given the fact that this question cannot find (at least from a critical, transcendental perspective) a sufficient theoretical answer due to its restriction to human reason and historical reality. The necessity ascribed to the concept of the question as expression of the modal distinction between possibility and actuality derives from the fact that questions are logical structures (typically: A, -A) that ask for truth (actuality), but lack themselves truth values. The concept of question offers thus the perfect expression of the distinction between possibility and actuality that allows for a reconstruction of the concept of critical understanding of rationality in general that is not ontological or teleological, but strictly methodological. See note 1, above and further notes 25, 26 and 89, below. It is exactly the dogmatic objectivism of Herder's spiritualism that activates Kant's critique of Herder. See I. Kant, "Recensionen von J.G. Herders *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. VIII (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1923), 43-66, pp. 51-55. Herder makes a dogmatic use also of the term "catastrophe" [J.G. Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Zweiter Teil (Riga and Leipzig: J.F. Hartknoch, 1786), p. 300]. See further n. 23, below. Herder's use does not allow one to draw any clear relations to the theatrical meaning of the term. See, however, his interesting reference to Hercules. *Ibid.* Schlegel's use of the term "catastrophe" is, as it will be further argued in the second and fourth section of the present paper, critically informed.

¹⁸ See Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, pp. 69-70, note 16, 103-104 and 158 ff. What connects Rousseau's and Koselleck's understanding of culture is the common scheme of natural unity or natural unities on the one hand and artificial division or artificial unity on the other. Both of them, even if they envisage a synthesis between the natural and the artificial

lem of a "de dicto" interpretation of Rousseau than with the problem of Rousseauism in the sense for example of the reception of Rousseau by Koselleck or by Derrida¹⁹ –or in the case of Schlegel of the reception of Rousseau by Fichte.²⁰

According to Derrida, what Rousseau "would like to say," "what he wishes to say" and correspondingly "declares," is "that articulation and writing," that is, culture and reason or according to Koselleck's reception of Rousseau "Critique,"²¹ "are a post-originary malady of language."²² However, of equal importance for the systematic argument of the present paper is what, according to Derrida, "Rousseau describes," but "does not wish to say: that 'progress' takes place both for the worse and for the better."²³ At the same time. Which annuls eschatology and teleology."²⁴ What I would like to stress here, however, is the possibility of the conception of the alternative of "for the worse" or "for the better" under the methodological concept of question in the sense of the openness of the radical historical contingency and its interpretation (also in relation to the issue of progress) to the Critique of Reason in the double sense. A crucial methodological condition for this critical openness, i.e., the openness to the fundamental transcendental distinction between actuality and possibility, which is expressed through the concept of question, is that the specific rationality of historical reality or of human reason, which is being subsumed to the Critique of Reason (in the sense of the possessive genitive), is not being taken as a given.²⁵

pole of this scheme, regard as primary the pole of the (anthropological or traditional) natural unity or unities. *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117, 120-123, 1-2; Rousseau, "Letter to D' Alembert on the Theater." In opposition to that, Schlegel envisages a new artificial unity in the sense of a synthesis of the natural pole and the artificial pole under the primacy of the artificial pole. See Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 25-26 and 40-41.

¹⁹ Eliassen, "Catastrophic Turns," p. 46 ff. What is of interest for the present paper is the alternative that the "radical historical contingency" opens up in relation to the concept of "catastrophe," which is exactly being emphasized by Schlegel's distinction between an "unhappy" and a "happy catastrophe," given that Rousseau's approach leaves open the scenario of a cyclical or 'Sisyphean' conception or of an unhappy "catastrophe."

²⁰ J.G. Fichte, "Some Lectures concerning the Scholar's Vocation," in *Early Philosophical Writings*, trans. D. Breazeale (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 137-184, p. 177 ff. Schlegel refers explicitly in the *Study* to this work that was published in 1794. See Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 90 and 185, note 184.

²¹ See Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, pp. 103-104.

²² J.-J. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. G. Chacravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 229.

²³ Cf. Rousseau, "Essay on the Origin of Languages," p. 252. Although Herder puts forward a similar understanding of progress as "catastrophe," his emphasis lies dogmatically on progress. See Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Zweiter Teil, pp. 297-300.

²⁴ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, op. cit. As the case of Herder shows, this way of thinking is not in itself incompatible with teleology. See Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, Zweiter Teil, pp. 297-300.

²⁵ One could then add Derrida's abovementioned approach as a further alternative, although this conception can in the sense of a fundamental regularity or irregularity be thought as leading to the circular or 'Sisyphean' understanding of history and to its skepti-

The seemingly anachronistic character of the interpretation of Schlegel's use of the concept of crisis not only in the sense of an hermeneutic inversion of Rousseau, but also of Koselleck's "Critique and Crisis" scheme into the "Crisis and Critique" scheme²⁶ vanishes, since Koselleck's scheme refers to the post-Rousseauian 18th century and Schlegel's *Study* is part of the project of the post-Kantian German Idealism to defend Kant's Critique of Reason with regard to the "crisis" of modern culture (a project that is being motivated also by Kant's own inversion of Rousseau's interpretation of modern culture). The argument of the present paper concerns the function that Schlegel's use of the concept of crisis assumes in relation to this project that is still with us today. Moreover, as it will be shown in the second section of the paper, Schlegel sees in Rousseau's views concerning the crisis of modern culture a potential source of uncritical obstacles to the project of the Critique of Reason.

Following Kant and Schlegel, one could understand the critical response to the "Critique and Crisis" scheme as the diagnosis that the cause of crisis lies not in an excess of critical thinking, but in a way of thinking that is insuf-

cal, relativistic or naturalistic consequences. See notes 31 and 35, below. The systematic argument of the present paper confronts on the basis of the use of the concept of crisis by Schlegel not only Koselleck's "Critique and Crisis" scheme, but, moreover, Derrida's questioning in the tradition of Levinas of the logical character of the concept of question. See further note 89, below. However, there exists also agreement with Derrida's thought, especially concerning its anti-metaphysical strand, which he, however, tends to orientate in a sense against "Logos."

²⁶ As I found out during the conference, the title "Crisis and Critique" has an important precedent. See N. Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory between the Past and the Future* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2006), p. 3. Kompridis regards the connection between crisis and critique as internal to the concept of critique and conceives it in terms of the distinction between actuality and possibility. His emphasis lies on the dimension of receptivity. As he rightly points out in an earlier discussion of this connection that refers also to Fr. Schlegel, the attempts from Kant up to Habermas "to justify a faith, a confidence—a trust—in reason that makes no appeal to something outside reason" show that "there is a circular relation between trust and reason." See N. Kompridis, "Reorienting Critique. From Ironist Theory to Transformative Practice," p. 45, note 13. However, the reason of this circularity lies actually in the understanding of the distinction between actuality and possibility as a distinction pertaining only to human understanding or reason. The normative element of faith is then needed to safeguard human understanding or reason and further the history or culture of human reason from its naturalization. However, the distinction between actuality or reality and possibility could also be thought under the concept of question as the condition of possibility of critical understanding for rationality in general. Though in this way faith in human reason still remains a practically irreducible normative element, this normative element is not being understood as the fundament of rationality in general, but as the practical consequence of the condition of possibility of critical understanding for rationality in general with regard to the contingent character of the reality of human reason. The utopical element of alternative possibilities, on which Kompridis insists with regard to the elements of practical normativity and of receptivity, finds support in the non-teleological, strictly transcendental structure of critical understanding in general, though its actuality or reality is not entailed in (nor precluded by) it. See N. Kompridis, "The Priority of Receptivity to Creativity (Or: I trusted you with the idea of me and you lost it)," *Critical Horizons*, 13 (2012), 337-350, p. 349. Kompridis' critical thinking is throughout sensitive to the concept of question.

ficiently critical, as it dogmatically excludes alternative possibilities. Though Koselleck is right in criticizing dogmatic philosophies of history, his dismissal on that basis of the question of the actuality of the possibility of a specific rationality of human history that could present a real alternative to the "ontological difference" and its individualistic implications²⁷ is equally dogmatic. This complication motivates the fundamentally methodological character of the re-conceptualization of the modal transcendental distinction between possibility and actuality as a condition of possibility of critical understanding for rationality in general under the concept of the question, which leaves the question concerning the specific rationality of history that cannot be sufficiently answered—neither positively nor negatively—*a priori* (at least from a transcendental-critical perspective) open to empirical or (empirical) historical investigation.

Schlegel is very likely the first post-Kantian German Idealist²⁸ that uses the concept of crisis to confront the interpretation of modern culture in Rousseau's *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts*,²⁹ which points rather to the "Critique and Crisis" scheme, through its hermeneutic inversion that follows the

²⁷ See Koselleck's reference to Herder against Kant, which reveals Koselleck's insistence on the "ontological difference" and its individualistic implications [R. Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1979), p. 10].

²⁸ The claim is restricted strictly to published works of post-Kantian German philosophy and more precisely of post-Kantian German Idealism mainly after 1790. The following works or databases have been considered: J.G. Herder, *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität*, in *Werke*, Vol. 7 (Frankfurt a.M.: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1991); K.L. Reinhold, *Briefe über die Kantische Philosophie* (Leipzig: Georg Joachim Göschen, 1790); J.G. Fichte, *Fichte im Kontext I* (Berlin: Karsten Worm, 2002); F.W.J. von Schelling, *Sämmtliche Werke*, Vol. 1 (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta, 1856). Schiller uses the word in a strictly medical context. See F. Schiller, *Sämmtliche Werke in 5 Bänden*, Vol. V (München: Hanser Verlag, 2008), pp. 1062, 316 and 296. Its further use in the *Geisterseher* and in the *Philosophische Briefe* is of a rather very distant relevance. *Ibid.*, pp. 110, 137 and 342. The same holds for its single use in his *Geschichte des dreißigjährigen Kriegs*. See F. Schiller, *Sämmtliche Werke in 5 Bänden*, Vol. IV (München: Hanser Verlag, 2008), p. 740. Of course it is always possible that another, less prominent, post-Kantian German philosopher has made use of the term in a more relative sense before Schlegel. A possible important source for the concepts "crisis" and "catastrophe" is Goethe, "Das Goethe-Wörterbuch im Internet" (<http://woerterbuchnetz.de/GWB/>). Of significance is further the use of the concept of "crisis" by Iselin. Given the fact that he conceives his optimistic view on history in explicit opposition to Rousseau, this use supports the interpretation of Schlegel's use of the concept of crisis as an inversion of Rousseau. See I. Iselin, *Geschichte der Menschheit*, Vol. 1 (Basel: Johannes Schweighauser, 1779), p. 467.

²⁹ See J.-J. Rousseau, "Discourse on the Sciences and Arts or First Discourse," in *Rousseau: The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, pp. 1-28. The reference made here to this specific work rests basically on the fact that this work relates immediately Rousseau's general argument to the specific thematic interest of the *Study*. This is also the work that the title of the "Fifth Lecture" of Fichte's *Some Lectures Concerning the Scholar's Vocation* refers to. See note 20, above.

general scheme of Kant's previous response to Rousseau in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.³⁰

Koselleck's *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* can be understood as standing in opposition to Schlegel's interpretation of the crisis of modernity by emphasizing, on the contrary, Rousseau's rather 'negatively cathected' prognosis concerning modern culture. Contrary to Koselleck's thesis that the concept of crisis plays no role in post-Kantian German Idealism, the extended use of the concept of crisis in Schlegel's *Study* is, as I will further argue in the second and the fourth sections of the present paper, important for the history of the concept as it reveals the dimension of its critical use in the abovementioned sense.³¹ As this critical use is actually grounded on the fundamental transcendental distinction between possibility and actuality, it can function as the necessary methodological foundation of critical understanding in general and thus also of historical understanding – a foundation that is in itself due to its strict transcendental character (as valid for rationality in general) completely free of teleology or eschatology.³²

Although Koselleck's critique concerning Schlegel's theological use of the concept of crisis in his later phase could be thought to apply also to the strict or 'eschatological' alternative concerning the crisis of modernity that is being presented in the *Study*,³³ Schlegel is clearly substituting the medical sense of the term for the theological.³⁴ Moreover, his idea of an irreversible "happy catastrophe" can be interpreted in its relevance for his critical use of the concept of crisis along the lines of Kant's idea of a methodological "revolution of the way of thinking" that Schlegel holds to apply also with regard to art, taste and common sense, as well as with regard to the overall history of humanity. In this sense, the 'eschatological' implications of Schlegel's critical

³⁰ See I. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. P. Guyer and E. Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 299-301.

³¹ See note 16, above. According to Koselleck's suggestion the problem of "crisis" was structurally suppressed by "criticism." As it will be further shown in the second and fourth sections of the paper, Schlegel uses in the *Study* the concept of "crisis" to characterize modernity in order to offer in combination with the concept of an artificial "happy catastrophe" (as the possible alternative to a natural unhappy "catastrophe") a defense of modernity as the "epoch of Critique" that rationally reintegrates this "crisis" in a critical manner.

³² Whereas Koselleck tends to associate "critique" with "crisis," Schlegel associates the "crisis" of modernity (the artificial division of the natural unity) with relativism, individualism and arbitrariness and sees in "Critique" the possibility of their overcoming (in a third phase of an artificial unity). See note 18, above. Koselleck, however, allows for no such alternative, since for him "Critique" or "Reason" are identical to "relativism." See Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, pp. 107-112. This view is based, however, on a dogmatic presupposition of a natural (ontological-anthropological or traditional) connection between "Critique" and "Crisis," namely, of an "unhappy catastrophe" as a natural consequence of "Critique." *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 122-123 and 102, note 11.

³³ See note 16, above.

³⁴ See Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, pp. 103-104, note 15. In the *Study* Schlegel aims precisely towards a foundation of history as a science that does not rest on theology or natural teleology. See note 69, below.

use of the concept of crisis (either-or, yes-no) can be thought to rest purely on his scientific aspiration, which concerns also history as a scientific discourse. In addition to that, Schlegel's 'eschatological' idea of "happy catastrophe" could alternatively be understood as a polemical fiction against those, who (like Mendelssohn according to Kant) promulgate with dogmatic certainty an understanding of human history (namely the circular of 'Sisyphean' historical model) that corresponds to what Kant describes in opposition to the "secure course of a science" as "merely groping about"³⁵ that leads to sheer relativism.³⁶

Schlegel's Hermeneutic Inversion of Rousseau

The Common Material Basis of Rousseau and Schlegel: Modern Culture as "Disease"

Schlegel uses the concept of crisis mainly in its medical meaning as a sign of possible therapy and combines with it the theatrical notion of "happy catastrophe" in order to offer a diagnosis of the modern "fall" of "taste" or common sense, to highlight the chance for a therapeutic liberation of its hidden potential from the impediments of the past³⁷ and to creatively intervene in its further change and progress.³⁸

The medical meaning of crisis allows the connection with the "fact, reflected upon already by the most significant physician of the 17th century, Georg Ernst Stahl, that a sign of sickness, although it unequivocally refers to a malfunction of the body, [...] can also be a sign of [...] recovery."³⁹ Thus though Schlegel accepts, in the fourth, central and most extended part of the *Study* that responds within the historical framework of the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* to the critique of the party of the "ancients," the Rous-

³⁵ See Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 106.

³⁶ See notes 25 and 32, above.

³⁷ Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 21, 38-39, 41-42, 44-45, 89, 90-91.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

³⁹ Frey, "Zeichen- Krisis-Wahnsinn," p. 111. As Frey points out, Stahl connects "crisis" both with the 'battle' between the disease and the efforts of the body towards self-cure ("physis" or "energy") and with its outcome and refers to the "critical days" (*Ibid.*, p. 117). Frey emphasizes the importance that Stahl lays on the diagnosis of the "phase" of the disease in the sense of its "history" and mentions Karl Friedrich Gottlieb Ideler's Galenian division of the "history of disease" in four phases: "beginning, rise (coctio), high point (crisis), and fall (lysis)." *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118. Although this is a reference to a dissertation that appeared in Torun in 1794, this division and especially the traditional Galenian distinction of "crisis" and "lysis" are extremely important with regard to Schlegel's use. "Lysis" is the term in the *Poetics* of Aristotle that is replaced in the theory of drama of late antiquity and particularly in the works of Euanthius and Aelius Donatus by the term "catastrophe." Euanthius and Aelius Donatus recognize the following four phases in a drama: prologue, protasis, epitasis, catastrophe. See D. Galbraith, "Theories of comedy," in A. Legatt (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 3-17, p. 9.

seauian diagnosis of (modern) culture as source of “diseases,”⁴⁰ he interprets the referred signs of “fall” as “*favorable symptom[s]*” of a “passing beneficent crisis”, “to which only a weak nature succumbs.”⁴¹

Schlegel combines, moreover, the medical vocabulary of crisis with the theatrical vocabulary of “catastrophe” to counter all those who predict with certainty the definitive unhappy “catastrophe” of the “drama” of modern culture and the permanent loss of “aesthetic vitality,” with the claim that the “drama is far from over,” since “this vitality” “[r]ather” “lurks like a fire aglow under ashes and waits only for the opportune moment to flare up into a clear flame.”⁴²

The first clear use of a medical metaphor appears, however, already in the second part of the *Study* that focuses on the (“artificial”) character of modern poetry and especially on the peculiar interest of modern aesthetical “*praxis*,” i.e., of the taste of the artists and of the public for “*theory*,” which is being interpreted as a result of the “*inner principle*” of modern poetry, that is, of its “*artificial origins*.”⁴³ Schlegel refers there to the theoretically interested modern taste, which “demands of science not only an explanation of its edicts and elucidation of its laws, but [...] also [...] to be pointed to *the right direction*,” as the “diseased taste” that “lacking inner unity” and “inner resistance” “seems” to take “refuge in the prescriptions of a doctor or a quack, even if he can only deceive ingenuousness itself by means of a dictatorial presumption.”⁴⁴ Although this last ironic turn seems to raise doubt concerning the general applicability of the medical vocabulary in the *Study*, Schlegel’s talk of the threat of a coming “death” of taste throughout the *Study* and the equally extended use of the medical concept of crisis in the sense of the “*decisive mo-*

⁴⁰ Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 36-67; J.-J. Rousseau, “Discourse on the Origin and the Foundation of Inequality among Men,” in *Rousseau: The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, 111-188, pp. 136-138; Rousseau, “Letter to D’Alembert on the Theater,” pp. 318-319. See for the relevant critique of modern culture that goes back also to Rousseau the part of the *Study*, which is devoted to the “dark [...] historical portraits à la Rembrandt” that depict modernity “with hellish colors,” and especially the references to “awkward formality,” “*prose*” as “the true nature of the moderns,” the “barbarians,” the “Gothic,” the “Nordic,” the “winter” etc. See Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 36-38. Schlegel accepts the “truthfulness” of these “particular trait[s],” but objects that if one does not consider the complete picture, “then the whole is false.” *Ibid.*, p. 38. This inversion scheme is being repeated also with regard to the “*aesthetic prejudices*.” *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38. Schlegel actually refers to the “greatest aesthetic languorousness” as “a *favorable symptom* of the passing beneficent crisis of the interesting,” i.e., the aesthetic category that characterizes the current, individualistic or relativistic, phase of modern culture. *Ibid.* The reference to “the weak nature” can be understood not only literally, but also polemically, that is, as a provocation.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 45. Schlegel refers in the same passage to the “unequivocal symptoms” of the present time that indicate the forthcoming improvement of taste.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 23 and further p. 26.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

ment" with regard to the outcome of the disease of modern taste show that such doubt is ungrounded.⁴⁵

Schlegel refers to this threat for the first time shortly before the end of the first part of the *Study*, where he describes the phenomenon of modern taste, which is, its indifference for "form" and its "unquenchable thirst for content" and "interesting individuality" (i.e., for "aesthetic energy" or sheer sensual pleasure) in terms of taste's "vitality": "In cases of weaker own power and low artistic drive, sleepy receptivity subsides into an appalling impotence. Taste thus weakened ultimately desires no other fare than repugnant crudities, until it finally dies off and ends with a decided nullity. Even if vitality is not vanquished, however, little is gained."⁴⁶ This description is then followed by the crucial reference at the end of the first part to the "decisive moment" associated with the possibility of a "happy catastrophe," that is, the moment that will decide either the "full improvement" of the "diseased taste" or its lasting fall.⁴⁷

Schlegel's Polemical Use of Medical Semiotics

However, as already suggested, one should not fully neglect the abovementioned element of irony, especially in the sense of the self-critical element that is actually internally connected to the general polemical and practical character of the *Study*, whose philosophy of history is, as I will further argue in the fourth section of the present paper, critically informed. This character becomes obvious at the beginning of the third part of the *Study*, where Schlegel describes the history of the culture of humanity as a constant "life-and-death struggle" or "war" between humanity on the one hand and nature or "fate" on the other.⁴⁸

Interestingly enough, after having recognized (in the second part of the *Study*) as the inner principle of modern culture its "artificiality," which for Schlegel means that humanity (or freedom) has gained after the "fall" of the "unfortunate" or "unsuccessful [verunglückte] natural culture" of antiquity the upper hand in the struggle,⁴⁹ and following his reference to "the Gothic con-

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 89. Schlegel refers further to the "corrupted" or "decadent" taste and to the role of theory towards its restoration. *Ibid.*, p. 28. See also his reference to the "desperate convulsions of the sick" that "make more noise than the quiet but strong life of the healthy." *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22. Barnett translates "glückliche Katastrophe" as "felicitous catastrophe."

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26. – N.B. "Experience teaches us that praxis precedes theory [...] and that its formation [sc. of humanity, KP] found its origins in nature. [...] Art can only follow nature; an artificial cultivation can only follow a natural cultivation. In fact it can only follow an *unsuccessful* natural cultivation: for if man could progress without difficulty [...] on the easy path of nature, the assistance of art would be unnecessary and it would, in fact, not be clear what should induce him to strike a new path. [...] if it is not given a new direction by a change in its surroundings[,] [n]ature will remain the guiding principle of cultivation, until it has *lost* this right; and probably only an unfortunate misuse of its power will enable

cepts of the barbarian,”⁵⁰ Schlegel lays special emphasis on the presence of “[r]hyme” as an early historical document of the artificiality of modern culture, pointing thus to an element that is characteristic of Rousseau’s critique of modern culture.⁵¹

Schlegel, in a sense in accordance with Rousseau, thinks of the crisis of modern taste or common sense, whose cause lies, according to Schlegel, in the “predominance of the interesting,” that is, of individualism and relativism, as “a mere *passing crisis* of taste,”⁵² since “it must finally annihilate itself.”⁵³ But what he is emphasizing is exactly the “very different” “kind” of “the two catastrophes [...] [between, KP] which it [sc. “taste” or common sense, KP] has to choose,” namely, the direction of “aesthetic energy” or sensual pleasure, which leads to its “death,” on the one hand, and the direction of “philosophical content,” on the other.⁵⁴ What is needed is more theory or, more precisely, the right theory, but this is not the end of the story. According to Schlegel, following the latter direction can have as a result that “the striving force – after it has exhausted itself in the production of an excessive abundance of the interesting– will forcibly brace itself and move on to attempts at objectivity,” but this stands under the provision that its “nature is strong enough not to succumb to the most violent convulsions.”⁵⁵ This provision shows for Schlegel, who is here reformulating the concluding remark of the *Methodology of Taste* of Kant’s *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, that “genuine taste in our age is neither a gift of nature nor a result of culture alone,” but has as conditions of possibility “great ethical power”[“sittliche Kraft”] and “firm self-dependence”

man to *displace it from its office.*” *Ibid.*, p. 26. This whole passage can be plausibly understood as a secularized inversion of Rousseau’s views on culture. See further note 64, below.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27; C. Couturier-Heinrich, “Die Schriften Rousseaus als musikgeschichtliche Quelle für A.W. Schlegels Jenaer und Berliner Ästhetik-Vorlesungen,” in Y.-G. Mix and J. Strobel (eds.), *Der Europäer August Wilhelm Schlegel* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 185-197, pp. 195, note 35 and 190, note 20.

⁵² In the last part of the *Study*, which contains Schlegel’s division of the history of modern poetry or aesthetic culture in three periods and most importantly 6 of the overall 9 appearances of the word “crisis” in the *Study*, Schlegel refers 3 times to this “*passing crisis*” as “*crisis of the transition* from the second to the third period.” *Ibid.*, pp. 88-90. The medical connotations of the term are being preserved, since Schlegel refers also here to the “symptoms that characterize the crisis of th[is] transition” as being “everywhere evident” and refers once again to the scheme of the “critical moment.” *Ibid.*, p. 89. Perhaps the most interesting use with regard to the centrality of the concept of crisis for the *Study* is the last one, where the “crisis of transition from the second to the third period” is being applied to the very “*study of the Greeks* in general and of Greek poetry in particular” and consequently to Schlegel’s self-understanding of the *Study* itself. *Ibid.*, p. 90. In this sense his self-critical afterthoughts can be understood as a recognition of the insufficient overcoming of the crisis of modernity in the *Study*. See note 13, above.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* Schlegel refers at this point to “the harbingers of a near death” and “the last convulsion of a dying taste.”

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* See also notes 41 and 38, above.

["feste Selbständigkeit"].⁵⁶ These conditions coincide with the element of the practical decision, on which the outcome of the crisis depends. On the methodological level, this can be taken to mean that one should do anything possible to avoid becoming a self-fulfilling prophet.

Following this last remark and in correspondence with the traditional Galenian distinction between "crisis" and "lysis,"⁵⁷ Schlegel considers, at the opening of the central, fourth part of the *Study*, the objection that the transition from "diseased taste" to "health[y]" taste⁵⁸ "appears to be achievable only through a sudden leap," which leads at once to an objective fixation, and not through "the constant progression by means of which every skill tends to develop."⁵⁹ The overcoming of this difficulty on the basis of an argument, which rests on the historicist premise of the impossibility of an "absolute cessation of aesthetic development [Bildung]," puts forward the alternative idea of an "endless approximation" and raises the question of the possibility of a "move backward."⁶⁰ This question of historical (or natural) contingency brings forth in its turn the problem of the "futil[ity]" of the "human endeavors" that Schlegel is urging for, even if one accepts the prognosis of a "passing crisis" that eventually leads to "a more appropriate direction" of aesthetic culture.⁶¹ Schlegel emphasizes at this point specifically the element of the practical decision and effort that the possibility of recovery requires on the part of the patient and presents "the certain prospect of a beneficent catastrophe in the future" precisely as the "only" idea that "could assuage and reassure us about the current condition of aesthetic development" as the "passing crisis of taste."⁶² Moreover, he backs up the reality of this idea by pointing out the relevant "symptoms" in the present "crisis,"⁶³ amongst which the "remarkable and great symptom" of "Goethe's poetry" enjoys a prominent place.⁶⁴

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* Barnett translates "sittliche Kraft" and "feste Selbständigkeit" as "ethical vitality" and "established autonomy." Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, p. 230.

⁵⁷ See note 39, above.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 72, 42.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* Schlegel seems to argue here exactly against Rousseau. See Rousseau, "Lettre to D' Alembert on the Theater," p. 295 ff.; Dienstag, *Pessimism*, p. 72 ff.

⁶¹ Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, p. 36.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40, 45, 89.

⁶⁴ N.B. "This great artist opens up a prospect to an entirely new level of aesthetic development. His works are an irrefutable attestation that the objective is possible and that the hope for the beautiful is not an empty delusion for reason. The objective is attained here already. And because the necessary violence of instinct must lead every stronger aesthetic force (that does not wear itself out) out of the crisis of the interesting to the objective, the objective soon becomes more general [...] Then aesthetic development has attained the decisive point, where left to itself, it can never wane, but can only be halted in its progress through external violence, or completely destroyed by a physical revolution. [...] If nature does not receive sustenance—as in a physical revolution, which could also, of course, destroy all culture in one blow—humanity can progress in its evolution undisturbed. Artificial cultivation can at least not recede back into itself like natural cultivation." *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41. This passage can be understood as a continuation of the passage cited in note 49, above. It

After this crucial passage, Schlegel goes on with his “merciless” “fight” against the “dangerous” “*aesthetic prejudices*” of the party of the “ancients” that “restrict further evolution itself,”⁶⁵ exactly because their historical point of view is restricted. Interestingly enough, after the explicit connection with the concept of “crisis” in its specific medical meaning of a “*passing crisis*,” the scheme of “happy catastrophe” is next employed there against the prejudice, which following the “circular” conception of history suggests that European aesthetic culture has already reached its “*Golden Age*” and consequently interprets some “partial standstill” or some “occasional, apparent regression” as signs of decline.⁶⁶ This complication is interesting, because it can clearly be connected with Rousseau’s prognosis in *Émile* “that we are approaching a state of crisis and the age of revolutions.” Rousseau backs up this prognosis in the appended footnote with his claim that it is “impossible that the great monarchies of Europe still have long to last,” since “[a]ll have shined, and every state which shines is on the decline.”⁶⁷ That is a clear application of the (Aristotelian) circular conception of history and shows unambiguously that Rousseau’s diagnosis concerning the crisis of modernity offers clear evidence for its interpretation by Schlegel as leading, because of its restricted historical point of view, to a negative prognosis with regard to the crisis of modern culture.

Schlegel is inverting this kind of negative prognosis through a different diagnosis of the crisis of modernity that allows him to interpret from a systematically and historically enlarged point of view the “symptoms” of the present historical moment as “symptoms” of a possible recovery.⁶⁸ The scheme of artificial crisis and “happy catastrophe” that is further connected by Schlegel to the Kantian scheme of despotism, anarchy and revolution and, moreover, to the prospect of a forthcoming aesthetic, political and moral revolution, whereby Schlegel focuses especially with regard to the science of history

shows, moreover, that Schlegel does not hold a dogmatic view with regard to the question of the progress of humanity, i.e., one that rests on natural teleology or theology.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42. The first prejudice concerns the naturalistic view about ideal art as the natural product of a natural “*momentary epoch*.” This prejudice points without any doubt back to Rousseau.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45. The theme of “*Golden Age*” is being discussed by Rousseau (“Letter to D’Alembert on the Theater,” p. 270).

⁶⁷ Rousseau, *Emile or On Education*, p. 194.

⁶⁸ The famous reference of the “Preface” to the “*provisional validity*” of the “interesting” in analogy to the “despotic government” could also be understood as an inversion of Rousseau. *Ibid.*, p. 100. More concretely it could be understood as inversion of Rousseau’s reference to the need of a “master” in the case of reform or revolution of already existent states. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, p. 184. The same holds for Rousseau’s reference to the factor of maturity with regard to state reform or state formation and Schlegel’s repeated reference to the “maturity” of the present “moment” for a “revolution” or for the “happy catastrophe” of the “crisis.” See Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 45, 89. By now I think it should be more than clear that Schlegel is really aiming at an inversion of Rousseau or at least of Rousseauism. On the basis of this inversion lies Schlegel’s alternative progressive conception of history. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41, 44-45.

on the element of "communication"⁶⁹ among humans, functions in what concerns the element of "happy catastrophe" as a polemical fiction that reintegrates the crisis of modernity within the Critique of Reason by keeping the possibility of progress open against the alternative of a natural "unhappy catastrophe."

Excursus: Kant on Crisis

Following the project of a completion of Kant's *Critiques*, Schlegel sets his scheme of crisis and "catastrophe" in structural correspondence to Kant's application of the scheme of despotism, anarchy and revolution on philosophical discourse. This could raise the question about the existence of further correspondences to Schlegel's scheme by Kant. Although the term "crisis" does not appear in his published work,⁷⁰ Kant uses it in his private writings: e.g. in a letter to Lambert written in 1765, in a letter to Jacobi written in 1789 and finally in a reflection,⁷¹ which is considered to be part of his preparations of *The Conflict of the Faculties* of 1798, as it relates to the problem of the "historical sign" that Kant discusses in *The Conflict of the Faculties* with regard to the question of the moral progress of humanity.⁷²

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-22, 40-41, 45, 88-90, 91-94. Schlegel attributes to "communication" and "community" a central function with regard to the foundation of science as history. See F. Schlegel, "Versuch über den Begriff des Republikanismus veranlaßt durch Kants Schrift *Zum ewigen Frieden*," in E. Behler (ed.), *Kritische-Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*, Vol. VII (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1966), pp. 14-15. The starting point of his early attempts towards such a foundation is his critique of the elements of natural teleology and theology within Kant's philosophy of history. *Ibid.*, p. 23 f.

⁷⁰ The word "catastrophe" is used twice by the pre-critical Kant in the rather 'critical' sense of a natural disaster. See I. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. I (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1902), p. 454 and esp. pp. 459-461. A curious coincidence is the reference in a letter to Kant in 1766 to Rousseau's prosecution in 1762 as the "triste catastrophe de Mr. Rousseau." See I. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. X (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1922), p. 60.

⁷¹ I. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. XIX (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1934), pp. 604-612.

⁷² I. Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. M.J. Gregor and R. Anchor, in A.W. Wood and G. di Giovanni (eds.), *Immanuel Kant: Religion and Rational Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 233-327, p. 301 ff; K. Herb and B. Ludwig, "Kants kritisches Staatsrecht," *Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik*, 2 (1994), 431-477, p. 469, note 155. The dating of this reflection by Herb and Ludwig and its content raise –in combination with the relevant data of Kant's correspondence and the fact that excerpts of the *Study* were published already in 1796 in the journal *Deutschland* – the question of another possible influence of Schlegel on Kant that, however, requires a separate investigation. See Herb and Ludwig, "Kants Kritisches Staatsrecht," pp. 470-472; A. Arndt, "Naturgesetze der menschlichen Bildung," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 48 (2000), 97-105, pp. 100-101. Could Schlegel with his idea of a new era of continuous progress be counted amongst the "spectators" to which Kant refers in the *The Conflict of the Faculties*? An interesting element in this context is Kant's reference to the possibility of a "happy" ("glücklich") revolution. See Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, p. 302. Of interest is, moreover, the medical parable of the "Conclusion" that is most likely a late addition to the text. *Ibid.*,

Kant's early use applies the concept of "crisis" in its medical or, rather wider, biological meaning to the phenomenon of "scholarship" in a way similar to the later application of the term by Schlegel on aesthetic culture. Kant interprets the "crisis of scholarship" as the "euthanasia of false philosophy" and as the "best hope" that the "great revolution of the sciences lies no more far away," arguing that as "the complete dissolution" of "putrefaction" "always precedes, when a new creation begins," so "[b]efore true science comes to life, the old one must destroy itself."⁷³ The second use of 1789 refers to the "present crisis of Europe" and emphasizes the political importance of Aesthetics and aesthetic culture.⁷⁴ Finally, the third one follows an argument for the thesis that—in opposition to Rousseau—a large population is a factor that facilitates a reform or a revolution in a state and refers to the "crisis of the transformation of the French state."⁷⁵ Interestingly enough, Kant interprets the "*Fact*," which is "unmistakably" apparent in this crisis, of the enthusiastic public "sympathy" or "participation" of the "sole spectators (of the Revolution)" with regard to the positive outcome of the crisis as a "sign" of the objective reality of the progress of humanity.⁷⁶ Kant describes, moreover, the positive outcome of the crisis as a "rebirth of a state, to which this feverish movement [sc. of the "crisis," KP] brings not the death of a complete barbarism, but leaves intact all the arts that belong to culture," so that the new "constitution" can function as the historical turning point for a continuous progress of humanity.⁷⁷

The Hermeneutic Significance of Schlegel's Use of the Concept of Crisis

Whereas Kant appears to insist in *The Conflict of the Faculties* (1798) that the thesis concerning human progress is "not just a well-meaning and a commendable proposition in practical respect," but a "proposition valid for the most rigorous theory, in spite of all unbelievers,"⁷⁸ since it is based on "*empirical* data (experiences),"⁷⁹ Schlegel explicitly distances himself immediately after the complete publication of the *Study* in 1797 from its uncritical ob-

pp. 308-309. Kant presents there his argument as an alternative medical approach, while the opposite medical approach fits well with Schlegel's approach in the *Study*. Moreover, Kant combines this medical parable with elements pertaining to the theory of drama.

⁷³ I. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. X, pp. 55-56.

⁷⁴ I. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. XI (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1922), p. 75.

⁷⁵ I. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. XIX, p. 604; Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, p. 185.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 604-612. In this context Kant sets aside the "ethico-theological argument," which he now connects under the motive of a "*Deus ex machina*" in a pejorative way with his previous argument against Mendelssohn on this question, and restricts his investigation solely on "what human nature, as we know it, and its course, so long as we have taken notice of it, allows us to anticipate for the future." *Ibid.*, p. 605.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 607-608.

⁷⁸ Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, pp. 304-305.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 307: "the physical cause of our actions as these actually occur as phenomena."

jectivism.⁸⁰ However, as the use of the theatrical notion of "happy catastrophe" suggests, Schlegel's approach in the *Study* has from the beginning a clear polemical and practical character, that is, Schlegel makes use, already by the original composition of the text, of what he will later call a "polemical fiction."⁸¹ In any case, this is how one should interpret the *Study* according to the self-critical afterthoughts that were expressed publicly by Schlegel himself in 1797 shortly after the appearance of the *Study*.

The polemical and practical character of the *Study* is, however, as it has been already mentioned, present even before Schlegel's afterthought. It is exactly in the critically informed sense of a philosophy of history that is being conceived following Kant in practical intent that Schlegel refers in the *Study* to the possibility of an "unfortunate" or "unsuccessful natural culture," which is then followed by an "artificial culture," as a hypothesis which is not "improbable."⁸² The same holds, of course, for the hypothesis of the "happy catastrophe" of the crisis of modernity.

Near the end of the *Study*, Schlegel addresses the question that his recognition of the fundamental practical character of the issue of progress runs counter to the effort of a predetermination of "the future course of cultururation."⁸³ Schlegel accepts that such a determination is not possible in an absolute sense and that one can only make "probable conjectures" that are being "enforced" by the "needs of humanity."⁸⁴ These "needs" "justify and ground" his whole conception of history, which consequently rests on moral faith (ethical certainty). After this critical limitation, which is not without irony against dogmatic certainty, Schlegel attributes the lack of progress to the "unhappy" interventions of those who create obstacles to it,⁸⁵ thus pointing back to his declared "polemic" against the "aesthetic prejudices." Schlegel's phrase "Just let cultururation do its work, and then see if it is lacking in vigor!"⁸⁶ brings the scope of the *Study* to the point. From this background it is clear that Schlegel's use of the concept of crisis can be understood, especially given its combination with the theatrical notion of a "happy catastrophe," as leading away from the naturalistic connotations that determine the use of the concept from Rousseau to Koselleck's *Pathogenesis of Modern Society*⁸⁷ and towards its "critical" or judgmental connotations⁸⁸ that reveal its methodological meaning as openness of the radical historical contingen-

⁸⁰ See note 13, above.

⁸¹ F. Schlegel, "Kritische Fragmente," *Lyceum der schönen Künste*, 1 (1797), 133-169, p. 154.

⁸² Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, pp. 231-232.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ See note 18, above.

⁸⁸ See R. Koselleck, "Krise," *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 4 (Basel: Schwabe & Co Verlag, 1976), 1235-1240, pp. 1236-1237.

cy and its interpretation to the question of the Critique of Reason (in the double sense).⁸⁹

⁸⁹ The specific methodological use of the concept of “question,” which is compatible with Schlegel’s fundamental emphasis on the concept of “search” (“Suchen”), goes of course back to Neo-Kantianism. See F. Schlegel, “A Reflection,” in *Friedrich Schlegel’s Lucinde and The Fragments*, trans. and intro. P. Firchow (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), 118-120, p. 119; H. Cohen, *Kants Begründung der Aesthetik* (Berlin: Dümmler, 1889) p. 395; E. Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, Erster Teil: *Die Sprache* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1923²), pp. 263-264. Already by Cassirer the concept of question as the logical form of language expresses the “universal problematic” of “sense” (or of “understanding”) in its distinction from the “universal problematic of being.” See E. Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, Dritter Teil: *Phänomenologie der Erkenntnis* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2010), p. 162. However, contrary to Cohen and Cassirer, I understand the concept of question not in terms of human understanding and thus of human teleology (and eventually ethical faith), but in strict transcendental terms as the condition of possibility of critical understanding for rationality in general. Thus the fundamental transcendental modal distinction between possibility and actuality, which finds expression, as it is the case also with Cassirer, through the concept of question, is not being uncritically hypostasized as peculiar to human understanding, which is thus opposed to an equally uncritically hypostasized infinite understanding. This approach allows the methodological overcoming of the “ontological difference” in relation to the problems of “sense” and “being,” without presupposing with regard to human reality or history the reality of the possibility of a specific human rationality. Therein lies the justification for the use of the concept of the question. See note 17, above. The concept of question corresponds further to Pippin’s “reflective openness.” See R. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011), p. 59 and p. 84, n. 32. Pippin, however, still thinks this openness in terms of (human) teleology. *Ibid.*, p., 60. Eventually Pippin falls also under Kompridis’ premise concerning the presupposition of ethical faith (and the same holds also for Derrida as a follower of Levinas). See note 26, above.

Thus Spoke Nietzsche: Culture in Crisis

JOHN POULAKOS

Culture has always been in crisis (under judgment, in a quandary); and as long as the tyrannizing dictates of the “should” and the promising visions of the “better” are with us, culture will continue to be in crisis. Even a cursory look at the history of culture shows that many a form of human expression generally emerges in response to a crisis, or from the pursuit of new horizons of action, experience and understanding. Donning a set of new criteria, every sustained pattern of thinking, acting and creating typically judges the *status quo* as faulty, inadequate, or outdated. At the same time, it provides a novel orientation to the world, presumably designed to leave the crisis at hand behind and move into newly created spaces. In doing so, it creates a sense of uneasiness or turmoil in our consciousness by perplexing it with questions and doubts, and by prompting it to reconfigure prevailing ideas and practices. In such moments we are called upon to exercise our faculty of *krisis* (judgment), that is, to discern where we stand in the light of our culture, what its path “should” be, and what might make it “better.”

When reflecting on the crisis of our current cultural life, which includes the lack of uniformly accepted criteria and modes of interpretation, how are we to proceed given that we always exist within our culture? How are we to judge whether it is advancing, declining, or at a stalemate? Assuming that speculation is a slippery and insecure enterprise, one option is to turn to past cultural crises and attendant judgments even though our current predicament may not be exactly identical to that of our ancestors. In this essay, this is precisely what I propose to do. Specifically, I propose to address the crisis of our present ways of cultural life indirectly, by turning to Friedrich Nietzsche’s understanding of culture. This approach finds justification in his twofold assertion that, first, a given way of life is largely the result of the cultural milieu in which one thinks, acts, and creates; and second, the “should” and the “better” of another historical era and another culture afford us the requisite critical distance to make our own judgments on our own culture. As we will see, Nietzsche struggled with the very problem I have identified. As such, his example may very well serve as a guide to us, his intellectual heirs.

To appreciate what Nietzsche has to say about culture, it is important to keep in mind three things. First, he treats culture as an organism whose ideal state is that of vigorous health but whose actual condition is often fraught with sickness. Second, he posits that sickness and health cannot be studied separately if only because a culture’s susceptibility to illness and decline furnishes the condition against which it seeks to maintain its health and vitality. And third, Nietzsche views himself as a physician of culture intent on studying the symptoms of humans as both makers and outcomes of culture. As he explains in *Gay Science*, “I am still waiting for a philosophical physician [...]

one who has to pursue the problem of the total health of a people, time, race or of humanity –to muster the courage [...] to risk the proposition: what was at stake in all philosophizing hitherto was not at all ‘truth’ but something else – let us say, health, future, growth, power, life.”¹

In the absence of a “philosophical physician” (more precisely a cultural physician), Nietzsche takes it upon himself to articulate a diagnosis of the cultural illnesses of his age and write a prescription for their cure. In doing so, however, he does not advance a set of abstract notions regarding cultural health. Rather, he outlines two historically grounded interpretations (a critical one on the nineteenth century, and an affirming one on the fifth century BCE). Together, these two interpretations are meant to urge us to rethink our ways of living in our own culture; the ways we are affected by it, and the ways in which we can contribute to its creation and vitality or the ways in which we might be expediting its decline and destruction.

Nietzsche’s discussion of culture presents us with a striking antithesis. On the one hand, he examines his own Germanic culture in the late nineteenth-century European context; on the other, he studies the Hellenic culture before Plato. Adopting a clinical standpoint, he evaluates both cultures in terms of their relative strength and weakness, their health and sickness. As we will see below, his evaluation is that his own culture is suffering from a variety of maladies, and that the best way to a speedy recovery is through a self-conscious adoption of the best characteristics of the pre-Platonic culture of Hellas.

Even though Nietzsche does not always use the term “culture” consistently in all of his works, he does define it, if only reluctantly: “Culture is, before all things, the unity of artistic style, in every expression of the life of a people.”² In what follows, I concern myself more with three principal and interrelated domains of culture (philosophy, morality, and art) and less with culture *per se*.

Philosophy

For Nietzsche, philosophy is a subset of culture. As such it can thrive only in an atmosphere of robust cultural health. Conversely, it suffers considerably when it finds itself in the midst of a decadent culture. As he puts it in *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, “If philosophy ever manifested itself as helpful, redeeming, or prophylactic, it was in a healthy culture. [...] Philosophy is dangerous wherever it does not exist in its fullest right, and it is only the health of a culture [...] which accords it such fullest right.”³ With this postulation in mind, he turns to the examination of his own culture, which he finds gravely ill; and as one might expect, he also finds that the philosophy of

¹ F. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), p. 35.

² F. Nietzsche, “David Strauss: The Confessor and the Writer,” in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. A.M. Ludovici (online), ch. 1, section 5.

³ F. Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, trans. M. Cowan (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1962), pp. 27-28.

his age is in critical condition. This is so, he claims, because philosophy has attracted a multitude of second-rate minds serving the political ends of the state. For him, most “philosophers” are really academic laborers satisfying institutional mandates—they are not free spirits legislating life-augmenting values for the greater future of humanity. Their main preoccupation is with outworn values and questionable traditions, which they perpetuate habitually, that is, unthinkingly. Moreover, they have been seduced by the ascent of science and, as such, have abandoned their proper vocation, which should ask neither how nor what kinds of things can be known but what kinds of things are worth knowing. For Nietzsche the distinction between philosophy and science is crucial: “Philosophy is distinguished from science by its selectivity and its discrimination of the unusual, the astonishing, the difficult and the divine, just as it is distinguished from intellectual cleverness by its emphasis on the useless. Science [on the other hand] rushes headlong, without selectivity, without ‘taste,’ at whatever is knowable, in the blind desire to know all at any cost.”⁴

Because philosophy is in the hands of inferior intellects whose faith is more scientific than philosophical, she has lost her once glorious standing, and is now wandering about aimlessly, without an overarching vision or a central goal. In Nietzsche’s view, the degree of decline in philosophical thought is so high that if philosophy were to speak of its predicament, she would say: “Wretched people! Is it my fault if I am roaming the country among you like a cheap fortune teller? If I must hide and disguise myself as though I were a fallen woman and you my judges? Just look at my sister, Art! Like me, she is in exile among barbarians. We no longer know what to do to save ourselves. True, here among you we have lost all our rights, but the judges who shall restore them to us shall judge you too. And to you they shall say: Go get yourselves a culture. Only then you will find out what philosophy can and will do.”⁵

Specifying further his profound dissatisfaction with German philosophy, Nietzsche goes beyond its predicament and points to the consequences of that predicament: “German philosophy as a whole –Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, to name the greatest– is the most fundamental form of [...] homesickness there has ever been: the longing for the best that has ever existed. One is no longer at home anywhere; at last one longs back for that place in which alone one can be at home, because it is the only place in which one would want to be at home: the Greek world!”⁶ Despite his dire diagnosis, however, Nietzsche maintains a certain degree of hope: “Today we are getting close to all those fundamental forms of world interpretation devised by the Greek spirit through Anaximander, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Empedocles, Democritus and Anaxagoras –we are growing more Greek by the day...”⁷

⁴ Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, p. 43.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁶ F. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. W. Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p. 225.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 225-226.

This is not an argument for the superiority of the prior to the posterior; rather, it is a diagnostic pronouncement. In Nietzsche's mind, German philosophy has managed to alienate its readers by making them feel strangers in an inhospitable land of conceptual disorder and intellectual confusion. Sadly, there is no love of wisdom in German *philosophia*. Again and again, its students are plagued by a sense of homelessness coupled with the sentiment of homesickness for a place where they would feel alive and well. To offset this state of affairs, Nietzsche prescribes a self-conscious reconnection to the philosophical outlook of the pre-Platonic philosophers because it is in that very outlook that he finds the "highest authority" for "cultural health." In his words, "The Greeks, with their truly healthy culture, have once and for all justified philosophy simply by having engaged in it, and engaged in it more fully than any other people."⁸ A reconnection with them, Nietzsche seems confident, is not far from getting realized. And once it is, it will mark the end of the crisis in the philosophical mind, and by extension, in the German culture.

Morality

For Nietzsche, the task of culture is to produce strong individuals, free spirits constantly seeking to harness the creative energies of life and turning them into stimulants for inner strength, power and self-augmentation. However, when he looks into the history of European culture, starting with the advent of Christianity, he finds that the task of culture has repeatedly been frustrated and perverted by morality. From this observation, he generalizes that an uncritical acceptance of the prevailing morality of any epoch leads to nothing short of the disintegration and destruction of culture.⁹ For Nietzsche, the moralist, especially the Christian kind, "sullies and suspects the beautiful, the splendid, the rich, the proud, the self-reliant, the knowledgeable, the powerful—in *summa*, the whole culture...."¹⁰ The problem with morality as we know it is that it consists of a multitude of incompatible ideals dominated by humanitarian optimism, altruism, fear and pity. This incompatibility has led to a pervasive confusion and a general enfeeblement of human instincts and individual strength. Moreover, morality exhibits the inability to come to terms with suffering as a condition of life; instead of accepting suffering it tries to eliminate it. This is so, Nietzsche explains, because morality banks on the notion of the "beyond," a notion that puts life in the service of something non-existent (God) as well as authoritarian institutions like the Church and the State, rather than treating life as an end in itself, or an expression of the Will to Power.¹¹ Because morality refuses to treat the conditions of existence as givens, as those realities that furnish the ground upon which all human accomplishments

⁸ Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, p. 28.

⁹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 95, 117.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

are founded, it can only settle for self-preservation, which pales next to such goals as growth, power, achievement, life itself.

With this diagnosis in place, Nietzsche attempts to naturalize morality, to identify the physiological, that is, the extra-moral or non-moral, origins of moral ideas and virtues. In so doing, he seeks to show that morality is a system of evaluations that coincides, at least partially, with the conditions of a creature's life.¹² For example, he notes that "Pity and love of mankind [are] developments of the sexual drive. Justice [is a] development of the drive to revenge. Virtue [is] pleasure in resistance, Will to Power. Honor [is a] recognition of the similar and equal-in-power."¹³

In his discussion of morality, Nietzsche follows the same antithetical structure we have seen above regarding philosophy. After his diagnostic comments on the moral character of his own culture, he turns for a guide to moral health to the morality of the Greeks, a morality that manifested itself in their religion. Theirs, he observes, was a noble religion because it expressed gratitude rather than fear, and because it showed a self-respecting attitude. The Greeks humanized their gods, and idealized human passions in them. Their moral code did not include the sense of sin one finds in the Christian religion. As such, the gods of the Greeks were themselves capable of causing evil but showed their decency by accepting blame for their wrongdoings. The morality of Greek religion, in short, was a means of affirming, not denying or belittling, human life.

Nietzsche's prescription for moral health does not aim at a return to the polytheistic character of Greek religion. What he is prescribing is the search for a new morality, one that would elevate and strengthen the human personality by identifying norms higher than those in place for two millennia. What he has in mind is a morality that would allow people to think rather than obey unquestionably, to be critical of moral edicts in the light of nature and history, and to hold any moral configuration accountable for its failures.¹⁴ Such a morality would, finally, articulate a new mythology in the service of a stronger, healthier and more integrated culture. In Nietzsche's own words, "Without myth every culture forfeits its healthy, creative, natural power: only a horizon encompassed by myth locks an entire movement of culture into unity."¹⁵ The details of Nietzsche's thinking on how myth can unify culture aside, it suffices to say that the cultural unity he imagines for the future will be effectuated by the myth of the genius, the great man who espouses the Will to Power.

Art

As in the case of philosophy and morality, Nietzsche places art in the service of life, the cardinal value in his cultural perspective on the world. But unlike

¹² Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 148.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ F. Nietzsche, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 2-3.

¹⁵ F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 135.

philosophy, which is committed to questioning openly and freely, or morality, which is committed to censoring certain ways of acting, feeling, and thinking, art is committed to making, creating. This is another way of saying that art is dedicated to this twofold proposition: first, this world is forever incomplete and in constant need of furtherance and transformation, and second, man possesses the plastic powers to shape at least part of this world in his image or to create hitherto unfathomed realities. In and through art, people do not change the necessary givens of the world; rather they can begin to “see as beautiful what is necessary in things.”¹⁶

Although Nietzsche considers art a form of applied physiology, he does not limit it to the process of bodily exertion onto the materials of the world. Rather, he extends its formative power to the domains of philosophy and morality, in short, to every form of cultural expression. Recall that in philosophy’s soliloquy above, Nietzsche has philosophy speak of herself as art’s sister. This suggests that the artist can exist alongside the philosopher, much in the same way that Plato’s *philosophos* and *philomousos* occupy alongside one another the top of a hierarchy of nine human types in the *Phaedrus* (248d).¹⁷ But if this co-existence is to promote cultural health, Nietzsche’s philosopher must adopt or assimilate the perspective of the pre-Platonic philosophers, that group of thinkers he approvingly calls “the republic of creative minds.”¹⁸ More specifically, the philosopher’s starting point must be that “it is only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* that existence and the world are eternally *justified*....”¹⁹ In effect, Nietzsche’s philosopher must be an artist. This is so because, properly speaking, “The philosopher seeks to hear within himself the echoes of the world symphony and to re-project them in the form of concepts.”²⁰ In other words, the philosopher Nietzsche envisions is an aesthetic man. In his *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, Nietzsche elaborates: “Only aesthetic man can look thus [as an aesthetic phenomenon] at the world, a man who has experienced in artists and in the birth of art objects how the struggle of the many can yet carry rules and laws inherent in itself, how the artist stands contemplatively above and at the same time actively within his work, how necessity and random play, oppositional tensions and harmony, must pair to create a work of art.”²¹

Like his philosopher, Nietzsche’s moralist must also be an artist. But the morality of his art cannot, if it is honest, lead to the disintegration of culture. Rather, it must advance the human spirit by capitalizing on its capacity for aesthetic action. In other words, it must legislate by performing deeds that affirm and strengthen the individual. When locating difference among people or values, the moral artist should put them into competition with one another and

¹⁶ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, p. 223.

¹⁷ E. Hamilton, H. Cairns (eds.), *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 495.

¹⁸ Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, p. 32

¹⁹ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 52.

²⁰ Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, p. 44.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

help the stronger ones to prevail; and when detecting sameness among the many, he should advocate for the exceptionally strong, and let them lead not so much by commands as by example. In other words, rather than facilitate weakness and mediocrity, the moral artist should promote, it bears repeating, health as well as strength.

Nietzsche does not endorse any and all artistic endeavors –quite the contrary. The case of Richard Wagner, arguably the most famous musician/dramatist of his time, is a telling illustration. In his younger years, Nietzsche thought that Wagner’s art was making a substantial contribution to the cultural ethos of Europe. Later on, however, he thought that Wagner got caught in the cultural sickness and deterioration of his era: “We lack in music an aesthetic that would impose laws on musicians and give them a conscience; ... [W]e no longer know on what basis to found the concepts ‘model,’ ‘mastery,’ ‘perfection’ –we grope blindly in the realm of values with the instinct of old love and admiration; we come close to believing ‘what is good is what pleases us.’”²² This same diagnosis obtains when Nietzsche takes a look at his philosophical predecessors, particularly Kant and Schopenhauer. Their case, he concludes, is especially troublesome because they were mistaken about art, to wit, they began from the perspective of the knower and as such subordinated art to cognition. But, unlike the knower, who seeks to subdue things to his cognitive apparatus, Nietzsche’s artist seeks to create things out of interest in the enhancement of the life of art’s servants and beholders.

In order to prescribe a cure for the above musical malaise of the Germanic culture, Nietzsche does the same thing we have seen him do regarding philosophy and morality –he turns to the pre-Platonic Greeks. They, in contrast to his contemporaries, pursued art so as to mitigate the actualities of their life and, in so doing, make living possible. In other words, they looked necessity in the face and transformed it into beauty. That this is so is evident in their highest form of art, the art of drama. For Nietzsche, “The Greek knew and felt the terror and horror of existence. That he might endure this terror at all, he had to interpose between himself and life the radiant dream-birth of the Olympians.”²³ In effect, he overcame the cruelty of the forces of nature, and made existence bearable, by means of the artistic middle world of the Olympians. In their gods, the Greeks could “behold themselves in a higher sphere, without this perfect world of contemplation acting as a command or a reproach. This is the sphere of beauty, in which they saw their mirror images, the Olympians.”²⁴

The world of the Olympian gods, Nietzsche explains, is the result of the Apollonian drive, which he associates with such notions as individuation, order, clarity, harmony and stability. But next to the Apollonian drive Nietzsche places the Dionysian drive, which he links to the chaos of existence and the ecstatic state of intoxication obtained when the *principium individuationis* is

²² Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, pp. 440-441.

²³ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 42.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

suspended. For him, the dialectic tension between the two drives explains the phenomenon we call culture by pointing to the continuous discharge of Dionysian excessive rhythms in an Apollonian world of moderate images.

Conclusion

Precisely what Nietzsche encountered in his cultural moment that led him to pronounce the diagnoses and cures we have seen in this outline of his perspective on culture, we cannot tell with certainty. Nor can we tell what his specific methods as a “cultural physician” were –he does not shed much light on them. Even so, we can still follow his approach when exercising our own *krisis* on the crisis of our own age and culture. Yet, such exercise for its own sake is an empty undertaking. If Nietzsche’s views are any guide, cultural criticism must serve two higher purposes: first, eliminating those forces that weaken human life and second, capturing those energies that strengthen it.

Conatus and the Worth of Life in a Time of Crisis

ANA BAZAC

Perplexity as First Feeling in Front of the Crisis

In front of the present destructive phenomena worldwide, people and even philosophers enter a state of *perplexity*. What does this mean? They do not even believe the facts they see and bear, these are so distant from the ordinary common-sensical patterns of morals and behavior and, more, because of the ordinary presumptions that those from the leading stratum, although not being saints, would not behave as the most impudent scoundrels, that the first reaction is a *void* of reactions. “It is unbelievable”: it is so unbelievable that people need time to articulate their judgments, in short, their feelings.

Who are we speaking about, who are the perplex ones in front of the present aspect of society? They are, obviously, *those who can make the difference between the previous and the present situation*. Those who had an improved life before (as compared to their anterior status) and now experience its worsening: and have a *voice* which cannot be neglected, since it is the voice of the “mass support for governments in civilized, democratic countries.”

This remark is certainly important: because it pays attention, for example, to the hundreds of millions of “third world” people in sub-standard living conditions even during the post-war *État-providence* from the Western countries. And although the present crisis led to the worsening of conditions worldwide, thus including those hundreds of millions, the present deep *impression of de-structuring, of loss of every security the social settlements could supply, of an ill society that does not protect at all and damages even the most traditional institutions*, belongs not so much to the world under-middle class, but to those who have changed their lives and become *middle class* from the standpoint of a living standard (and have internalized the contradictory middle class conscience).

There is, however, a certain continuity of the sentiment of perplexity. Soon enough, the development of capitalism as a settled and victorious system has generated a feeling of *despair* as a result of the contradistinction between its former promises and the reality of individualistic fragmentation and cold pursuit of profit. At the bottom, the Western workers have shown opposition just in the name of their expectations meeting the utopian liberal promises: their presence in the British Chartist movement and their second upheaval in 1848th France were the sign of their despair. At the top, philosophers like Kierkegaard have transposed into the questioning of the single individual’s psychology their deep *anxiety*¹ which, at the last analysis, reflects not only the complexity of the human psyche but also the social atmosphere, *antagonistic with the human expectations*. For Kierkegaard, it seemed that all happened “as if

¹ See the development of this concept from Kierkegaard to Sartre.

God has withdrawn into himself.”² God was for Kierkegaard not so much as – let us say in the later words of criticism of religion– an alter ego lain in the depths of man and personalizing his human possibility and aspiration,³ but rather a close friend to whom one may confess and who is called as a witness of the despair one feels in front of “the absurd” (let us use the word of Camus). In all of these appearances, *despair was the result of perplexity; it was its rapid transformation*. People did no more lie in the first phase of their feelings in front of the existence, here –that of *perplexity*, than in the second one, that of conclusion– which was that of *despair*.

Lastly, perplexity is both a preceding feeling to that of anxiety and despair, and a component of these feelings. The problem is: what is the scope of these attitudes and to which are they related?

Normalcy

The subtext of perplexity is a *comparison* between the present state of things and the previous. This former moment is considered by those who make the comparison as normal, while the present –as abnormal, thus an accident. But what does normalcy mean?

It is, first of all, the negation of the scientific objective normal state. While this state is the result of the behavior of the considered natural system according to the laws already discovered and demonstrated –i.e. it is a repeated behavior as long as its conditions do not change–, the social system involves relations of forces representing interests of human persons equipped with reason, language, sentiments, consciousness and will. As a result, on the one hand, what seems to be normal to some could seem quite the opposite to others and, on the other hand, the behavior of the social system as such is characterized as normal or not, merely from specific precise standpoints of different people. The concept of normalcy is *subjective*.

Then, the concept of social normalcy reflects the social *attitudes* and *feelings* people have regarding the general state of society, considered as constituting good or bad conditions for human life. The concept is the transfiguration of the *habits* people had in a time when they did experience lesser inconveniences than at present. And thirdly, the idea of social normalcy results from social *relations* and *actions*, it reflects them.

Consequently, the concept of social normalcy is *ideological* and *historical*. It reflects so strongly the social divisions that it is at least suspect for social theory. It is used by the conservative viewpoint exalting the good old times.

However, the present crisis seems to put “normalcy” as a landmark not just for the conservatives. The crisis is an *event* (Badiou) to which people are positioning consciously, but this situation of positioning is, on the one hand,

² S. Kierkegaard, *Works of Love* (1847), ed. and trans. H.V. Hong and E.H. Hong (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 301.

³ The aspiration toward perfection and, also, toward unity and coherence of society and the single individual.

not the result of their former social conscience (the crisis is an exterior and “objective” datum) and on the other hand, might only lead to bifurcation if people assume the decisions without which any event does not take place. Anyway, “before the crisis” is to some tantamount to the “normal” times when one could live without the torments they face nowadays. *Lesser socially generated suffering*: this seems to be the peculiarity of normal times leading up to the time of crisis. The social subject who represents this standpoint is, obviously, the big number of the *former middle class* living in a stronger or weaker welfare state. The economic crisis is for all of them a social de-structuring and fitting out. And certainly it is, but, at the same time, there is some *continuity* between the previous state of things and the present crisis, and not only *discontinuity*. I dare to add that by grasping only the discontinuity, the damaged people are less able to assume this event, namely to control and orientate it.

However, the fact that people grasp more so the discontinuity is not determined only by their weak memory and strong manipulability, but by the suffering they bear and confront. If so, the present state of emergency is bigger than we thought and its big problem is that of the *subject* able to dislocate this state: if this subject does not transcend the boundaries of thinking and criteria it was accustomed to using, it will remain captured by the empirical struggle for life designed *within* this system. The only alternative for it is the assumption of a more complex struggle aimed at *transforming* the conditions of life.

OK with all of these. But the feeling that the present time is not normal – the previous thought was, when people have already arranged their duration and society have them supplied a certain security and so they considered their condition as acceptable – does not necessarily lead to the desire to go forward and change things in a *not yet existent state*. Rather people receive the ideology from above: that the present time of crisis is abnormal, but an accident that will somehow be surpassed.⁴ And if people were used to living in a time of crisis, if they are born in this time and no longer have (generational and cultural) connections with the previous “normalcy,” they will consider just the time of crisis as normal. In addition, if the leading strata consider the present time of crisis as abnormal not because of the difficulty to survive but because of the threat of protests let us say “inexistent” before, the concept of normalcy appears once more lacking of significance.

There is a point, however, where the present time of crisis is novel: it is, *from the top*, the *relativistic* framework of the approach of life. It has substituted the former post-war *universalism*, seeming to spring just because of the welfare state. The shrinking of this post-war social politics was and is accompanied and supported by ideologies exalting differences and particular situations legitimating the social asymmetrical relationships, the power and rights asymmetry. But *from the bottom*, the present time of crisis could be the time of the rediscovered universalism (that which does not annul diversity but allows its real fructification, at the same time not drowning itself in it). Because

⁴ They think in the long tradition questioned and explained by La Boétie (1549/1574).

the capitalist view about diversity is a *supplementary means of atomizing the dominated classes*, the new political counter-positions generated by the crisis may emphasize both the common class ground of the culturally differentiated groups and the common human basis that denies the legitimacy of the capitalist motivation of any kind of subjugation.

Consequently, normalcy –reflecting the habits people forge and accustom themselves to, thus even a *habitus* generated in different spatial-temporal frames– is not the concept better explaining people’s feelings and reactions in the present time of crisis, but rather those that describe and correspond to the general state of man.

But before focusing on these concepts, let me mention that if we face the *inertia* of the *post-war social-democratic consensus* related to the maintenance of the welfare state, this inertia is at the same time shattered by the present crisis and nevertheless strong enough in order to stop the *resistance* against the deep causes of the acceleration of the welfare state’s flight. What I am saying is that, if the post-war social-democratic consensus was one of the *normal* features of the time, at present there is a different “normalcy.” But our time of crisis –still very short– is only that when *everything is shaken, but not yet re-formed*: the present “normalcy” is only figuring out the former illusions and their persistence, and at the same time the backwardness of the historical subject who is or should be the judge and creator of a new normalcy.

Indeed, there is, on the one hand, a continuation of the illusions of the welfare state period (that social inclusion would be possible through equal opportunities in education and consumerism and that the tradition of class struggle would no longer be relevant) and, on the other hand, the inertia of resistance in the old pattern specific to the welfare state. This is the reason that, neither before nor currently, the world resistance concerning global problems –warfare in “far away” countries, human rights infringement in those countries not only because of the local tyrants and bureaucracy but foremost because of neo-colonialism, Western intervention and aggression, eco-systems’ destruction etc. –was and is neither principal nor does it constitute a unified and constitutive pattern for the internal defense of welfare. The welfare state seemed to represent the highest confirmation of the *fragmented* view of “capitalism in a single country.”

Nowadays, the main slogan of *fragmented* manifestations and protests all over the world –against austerity, for jobs and decent wages – illustrates the former manner of social struggle as a simple relation of forces “in a country” specific to the “national capitalism”⁵ era. But, contrary to the welfare state when generally this struggle was successful (and more, it was prevented by social measures reflecting both the economic interest of capital to have demand and the political striving to consensus), at present we confront rather with *voces clamantes in deserto*. In other words, even though times have changed, the social-democratic set of illusions proves to remain powerful.

⁵ The capital-labour relationships took place “in a country.”

Thereby, though “the power structure [...] is inconsistent,”⁶ it is opposed by new power vectors⁷ which only virtually constitute the challenge and the alternative to the “already done.” It is always good to experience resistance, but as long as it continues the traditional social-democratic position inside the power structure, it instead integrates within the endeavour of this structure to last, it is its instrument. This transitional moment of reclaiming *the boldness to oppose* shows the weakness of both the persisting illusions –as the one according to which “it was better before the crisis”– and the historical subject *in statu nascendi*.

But while the latter has room for its development (that is in no way predetermined), the former prove to be the constituents of a *false event*: that which does no longer call any fidelity (Badiou). On the contrary, this fidelity is called just in a process *not yet came into view*, forcing every creativity and removing the *resignation to what is given*. Or, the event –the real one, aiming at bifurcating the course of things⁸– requires *fidelity*, because it is something which “is not what arrives, but what must arrive so that there can be something else.”⁹ This other thing is the “good life” (Aristotle) of every man, but the striving for it is more palpable than the result.

Finally, Antonio Negri’s reading of the parable of Job¹⁰ helps us to confront once more the ideological character of the concept of normalcy. People either conform to the conservative type of considering society as “normal” – by accepting its asymmetry and injustice, thus by accepting the socially generated suffering– or they counter-pose a new vision, necessarily collective, where the destiny is subordinated to the *potency* or potentiality of man. In this last hypostasis, a new ontology –i.e. understanding of being– and a new epistemology arise: that of a critical approaching of both the positive and the negative thinking and that of the creation through which the *fate to suffer as constitutive to man* transforms into the *creative process re-defining man*. Indeed,

⁶ S. Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder: An Essay on Schelling and Related Matters* (London: Verso, 1996), p. 3.

⁷ Who are these vectors? See for example, S. Gökarıksel, *A Report from the Uprising in Turkey*, 1 June 2013 (<http://www.criticatac.ro/lefteast/a-report-from-the-turkish-uprising/>): “Who is protesting in Istanbul? Anyone who had enough of this government: from anarchist, socialist, and communist groups and parties, trade unions, feminists, environmental activists, LGBT activists to a huge number of soccer fans and nationalist-secularist groups. The most popular slogans are “unite against fascism” and “down with the government,” one which do not target any of the specific groups that are united for the uprising.” Are these enough?

⁸ A. Badiou, *Saint Paul. The Foundation of Universalism* (Cultural Memory in the Present) (1997), trans. R. Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 42 and 45: “one must proceed from the event as such, which is a-cosmic and illegal, refusing integration in any totality and signaling nothing [...] it is pure event, opening of an epoch, transformation of the relations between the possible and the impossible [...] in contrast to the fact, the event is measurable only in accordance with the universal multiplicity whose possibility it describe.”

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁰ A. Negri, *The Labor of Job: The Biblical Text as a Parable of Human Labor* (2002), trans. M. Mandarini (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

neither the approval of crisis within which the historical man is situated (accepting it as inevitable, thus “normal”) nor the grasping of contradictions, namely their criticism, help people to surpass suffering and the *status quo*. *The crisis is not “the first determination of reality,” i.e. not from it should we start in order to understand and control our lives.* On the contrary, we must do it from our human, specific need of social justice (need visible in the suffering of our bodies and minds): once more, not from the existing “normalcy,”¹¹ but from our human construction of alternatives *opposed* to the existing world. Our imagination, counteracting the “normal” injustice in a human manner (non-violent, but for the leading strata every real opposition is violent), is the battlefield for the reconstruction of the human being. Therefore, not the simple political radicalism –as “normal” reaction in exceptional/abnormal situations– but the *radicalism of the human alternatives* is that which is able to cope with the malformation of the normal capitalist system and to promote the *unexpected* and *unforeseeable*.

Conatus and the Worth of Life...

The ground of every inquiry upon the human condition is that of *conatus*. As we know, according to Spinoza, “Everything, in so far as it is in itself, endeavors to persist in its own being.”¹² Everything “is opposed to all that could take away its existence. Therefore, in so far as it can, and in so far as it is in itself, it endeavors to persist in its own being.”¹³ This profound impetus was known before Spinoza and after him (the Stoic *oikeiosis*, Hugo Grotius, Descartes, Hobbes, Leibniz, Schopenhauer).

Later on, Bergson has expressly defined the *élan vital* (1907) without which we cannot give worth to living beings, and especially to man. Because the result of the upsurge of life is just its specificity –that of *freedom*, of the *unexpected*, of *creation*–, the conscience is that which “materializes” and emphasizes the human creation: always through and with the conscience. This one means an “effort” that is painful without its “materialization” and both the effort and its material result constitute the *obstacle*, the *instrument* and the *stimulus* of the human conscience.

If so, the highest creation of man is the “creation of the self by the self”: of something ineffable realized “from nothing or from very little,” but constitut-

¹¹ Related to other things (law and warfare), Carl Schmitt has suggested that the normalcy may be understood starting from the *exceptional* moments: in a situation of war the state can suspend the former rights because the priority is then the survival; the law corresponds to normal situations, but the law is better defined starting from exceptional moments and not vice versa. C. Schmitt, *Political Theology. Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (1922/1934), trans. G. Schwab (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1985), pp. 3-6, 13-15, 53-56. The “exceptional” moment of the present crisis lights the real normal mechanisms of capitalism: high competition, the present volatility in financial markets, etc.

¹² B. Spinoza, *The Ethics* (1677), III, Prop. VI (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3800/3800-h/3800-h.htm#chap03>).

¹³ *Ibid.*, Proof.

ing “the richness of the world.” The sign of man’s consciousness and *élan vital* is the “joy of life”: it is not “pleasure” since this is only the means nature gave to man in order to conserve his life, but the “announcement” that life has succeeded and that “there is creation.”¹⁴ The problem of the human *conatus* cannot thus be reduced to the inner vital force of every one. From this standpoint, thinkers like Kant and Marx have established new features of the human *conatus*.

Nevertheless, as we know, philosophers have not much preoccupied themselves with the vital impetus and the joy of life. First, these concepts and problems seemed presupposed –mainly promoted by science and scientific optimism– and after the Great War the thinkers were upset. For example and leaving aside the exceptional phenomenological development and focus on death, Heidegger has transposed his confusion of the treatment of death in an anti-vitalist manner.

The social condition of philosophers –resulting from *σχολή*, and not from want– made them less sensitive to the problem of the condition of life, of *vulnerability* within life, rather than only in front of death. And just because they have not confronted the real conditions and suffering of the ruled with the splendid concepts about the abstract man, they did not appreciate the alternative standpoint of judging the human ends and creation: that of the *necessity of the joy of life for every human being*. When God has disappeared “after Auschwitz and Hiroshima,”¹⁵ few were those who emphasized the unexpected and nonconformist ways to put the problem of *creation of the subaltern classes*.

The countless *existential failures* experienced by many thinkers were concealed under the safety given by abstract formalism. Only when the safety seemed to evaporate under the too near crisis, a significant number of thinkers seemed to see again the worth of human life. However, this worth of life of every man and woman is not fully grasped.

What does *conatus* mean except for the vital impulse? It signals the *prestige of life*, its worth as “existential,” if I may take over Heidegger’s concept. It means that man wants to live, he clings to life even when he is ill or has beastly conditions. But, pay attention, sometimes he kills himself. I obviously speak about healthy and sane persons killing themselves, not at old age, annulling the beauty of life made ugly by aging and illness, but in the fullness of their powers. Why do they commit suicide? The problem is vast. Though Camus seemed to speak only about the individual who lost his *passion to live* –

¹⁴ H. Bergson, “L’énergie spirituelle” (1911), *Essais et conférences* (Paris: Éditions Félix Alcan, 1919), pp. esp. 18–25. Before, Michel de Montaigne has used this concept: “The most manifest sign of wisdom is a continual cheerfulness (*esjouissance*); her state is like that of things in the regions above the moon, always clear and serene,” M. de Montaigne, *The Essays of Montaigne, Complete*, trans. C. Cotton, ed. W.C. Hazlitt, 1877, Book I, Ch. XXV (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3600/3600.txt>); see Montaigne, *Essais*, tome 1, livre I, ch. XXVI (Paris: Garnier, 1962), p.173.

¹⁵ Negri, *The Labor of Job: The Biblical Text as a Parable of Human Labor*, p. 82. But see also T. Adorno, “Cultural Criticism and Society” (1949), *Prisms* (1955) (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1981), p. 34: “writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.”

life is no longer worthwhile for him–, his phenomenological analysis of the sentiment of alienation from the habits of life because one can no longer explain life (until that moment familiar, since he/she has lost the landmarks and illusions and no longer has hope, thus the sentiment of *absurdity*) is quite suitable for the explanation of suicide. Indeed, if one kills himself/herself because he/she *lost his reason to live* –one did never commit suicide “because of the ontological argument”– and no longer has ideas or illusions supporting his reason to live, we should question the *social conditions which no longer offer hope*; and in fact Camus has observed that the most humble experience this situation.¹⁶ Indeed, and as Durkheim has showed, the social conditions of the capitalist first industrial revolution have transformed suicide into a *social* problem.

There is in this case an antagonism between the strict vital *conatus* and the worth of life given by society. The self-murderers do not resist within this antagonism: and sometimes they proceed in their radical manner as a *protest* against those who have generated the black hole swallowing them.

At present, this antagonism is much more profound than ever before: the capitalist use of technological discoveries no longer needs such extensive manpower, considered an excrescency of freed slaves demanding *panem et circenses*. In the eyes of the ruling stratum, the worth of life of these slaves is tiny¹⁷ and despises the many because they would behave in a minor manner, only according to the strict vital *conatus* and not to the human worth of life. But this possible behavior is socially generated. It is an *answer to the social conditions that frame them*. However, they can surpass it through *their conscious revolt*.

The worth of life means its *human richness/content*, including leisure time and creativeness, and not only the desire to live.¹⁸ This is the reason people *strive for this richness*: their struggle, following their revolt,¹⁹ opposes the absurdity of life in an *affirmative* and *creative* manner.

...and *Multitudo*

Multitudo was the name Hobbes and Spinoza used for the many. Hardt and Negri (*Empire*) but also Paolo Virno²⁰ have drawn attention to the difference between Hobbes' concept of *people* and Spinoza's *multitude*. According to

¹⁶ A. Camus, *Le mythe du Sisyphe: essai sur l'absurde* (Paris : Gallimard, 1942), ch. “L'absurde et le suicide”.

¹⁷ L. Penny, *The Eton Scholarship Question: this is how the British elite are trained to think*, 24-5-2013 (<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/05/eton-scholarship-question-how-british-elite-are-trained-think>).

¹⁸ The importance of the length of life results from this need of human richness of life.

¹⁹ See A. Bazac, “La révolte et la lutte: Albert Camus et Jean-Paul Sartre en dedans et en dehors de l'existentialisme”, *Revue roumaine de philosophie*, 2 (2010), 239-266.

²⁰ P. Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*, trans. I. Bertoletti, J. Cascaito, A. Casson [Los Angeles, New York: Semiotext(e)/Foreign Agents, 2004].

Hobbes, it is about a disciplined entity abstracted from the multitude and representing it; it is the reflection of the state, in fact its part and answer to the state: “if there is a State, then there are people. In the absence of the State, there are no people.”²¹ For the representative of liberalism confronted with the uprising of the English revolution, the multitude “shuns political unity, resists authority, does not enter into lasting agreements, never attains the *status* of juridical person because it never transfers its own natural rights to the sovereign. The multitude inhibits this ‘transfer’ by its very mode of being (through its plural character) and by its mode of behaving.”²²

In Spinoza, “the *multitudo* indicates a *plurality which persists as such in the public scene*, in collective action, in the handling of communal affairs, without converging into a One, without evaporating within a centripetal form of motion. Multitude is the form of social and political existence for the many, seen as being many: a permanent form, not an episodic or interstitial form. For Spinoza, the *multitudo* is the architrave of civil liberties.”²³

In fact, for both the multitude is, first of all, the unformed basis of a reasonable collective action for a lasting and well-ordered society, for a “commonwealth,” for a “social organization” or “state.”²⁴ Indeed, the first names remembered by Spinoza were “the mob,” “the masses,” or obviously, “the multitude” (as opposed to the “commonwealth,” or the “body subject of a dominion,” or “Citizens”).²⁵ In his turn, Hobbes made the difference between “the multitude of men ruling” –i.e. having *one* will, manifested in an Assembly or assumed by the One to whom they transferred the right to command, thus being “the People” or “the City”– and “the multitude ruled,” namely having as many wills as there are men contained in that multitude and being citizens, subjects (“a subjected People”), “but not a City.”²⁶ In both, the division between the people and the multitude corresponds to the original difference between the state of nature and the organized society, the civil state. But while Hobbes has considered the absolute monarchy as the best government because it promotes a single will in order to preserve the correctness of administration and the well-being of its subjects in front of other peoples,²⁷ for Spinoza democracy was the best government just because it may better reflect and manifest the real power “to exist and operate.”²⁸

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 23. See T. Hobbes, *De cive* (1642), XII, VIII (<http://www.constitution.org/th/decive12.htm>): “the Multitude are Citizens, that is to say, Subjects. In a *Democracy*, and *Aristocracy*, the Citizens are the *Multitude*, but the *Court* is the *People*”; in reality, there is an opposition between the *Citizens* and the *City*: “the *Multitude* against the *People*.” Somehow the same idea as Rawls’.

²³ Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*, p. 21.

²⁴ B. de Spinoza, *Tractatus theologico-politicus* (1670), trans. R.H.M. Elwes, Part I, Ch. III, 3.33, 3.34.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 54, 55, Part I, Ch. IV, 4.16 etc. Also Spinoza, *Tractatus politicus* (1675/1677), Ch. II, 17, 21; Ch. III.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, notes 1 and 2 in the Ch. VI.

²⁷ Hobbes, *De cive*, Ch. X (<http://www.constitution.org/th/decive10.htm>).

²⁸ Spinoza, *Tractatus politicus*, Ch. II, 3.

Though both have known that “every man hath a Right to preserve himself”²⁹ or “strives to preserve its own existence,”³⁰ Hobbes was not interested in developing this aspect: he aimed to explain and prescribe why the organized society and the one will are the most efficient in order to preserve the rights, *i.e. property*, and the coherent actions, since neither property nor actions are collective, they belong but to individuals.³¹ Indeed, “whatsoever therefore is done by the multitude, must be understood to be done by every one of those by whom it is made up.”³² But the City “is one Person,”³³ thus the wills of every citizen are not important, since they are dissonant and lead to war, not to peace. Hobbes’ political liberalism was rather dedicated to efficiency and subordinated to the economic individualism it carried on. This is the reason he was afraid of the multitude which he did not consider as an ontological subject of the politics.

But Spinoza has sketched out his picture of well-ordered society, from a “deviated” liberal standpoint: that of the *utopian* liberalism based on the hypertrophy of the individual abstract freedom. Property was not neglected, of course, but the individual *conatus* underlies his political liberalism. The unnamed humanism arising from his abstract individualism has led to the preference of Spinoza for democracy. Obviously, the different concrete historical conditions in which the two thinkers have lived have said their say, but this aspect is not important here. By starting from the efficient manner to ensure security and property, Hobbes has somehow removed the problem of deep social *contradictions* and has reduced the multitude and the individuals forming it to a single path and destiny: that is to obey. On the contrary, by starting from each man’s *conatus*, Spinoza has emphasized the difficulty to master the contradictions which cannot be tempered or annulled by ignoring them and promoting “one will.”

Though the idea that the multitude man “can ever be induced to live according to the bare dictate of reason”³⁴ is a “dreaming of the poetic golden age, or of a stage-play,”³⁵ the only means Spinoza has conceived of in order to determine this man to live according to the reason that does not contradict

²⁹ Hobbes, *De cive*, Ch. I, VIII,

³⁰ Spinoza, *Tractatus politicus*, Ch. II, 6.

³¹ Hobbes, *De cive*, Ch. VI, I.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ This requirement and description were ordinary from ancient times. See Heraclitus, *The Complete Fragments*, Translation and Commentary and The Greek text W. Harris, Middlebury College (<http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/Philosophy/heraclitus.pdf>): “2. We should let ourselves be guided by what is common to all. Yet, although the Logos is common to all, most men live as if each of them had a private intelligence of his own [...] 80. Thinking is common to all.” And later the famous phrase of Descartes’ *Discourse on the Method* (1637), I: “Good sense is, of all things among men, the most equally distributed; for every one thinks himself so abundantly provided with it, that those even who are the most difficult to satisfy in everything else, do not usually desire a larger measure of this quality than they already possess.”

³⁵ Spinoza, *Tractatus politicus*, Ch. I, Introduction, 5.

“the laws of human nature” –namely to “avenge to his heart's content all damage done to him, and in general to live after his own mind”³⁶ – was just to put him in the position of an *equal partner of collective dialogue and decision*. Since the reasonable socially good behavior –meaning one of accommodation and compromises, but never opposed to the “interest of all men,”³⁷ nor against them³⁸ – is, leaving aside the expected rewards, the hope or fear felt by people living under the dominion of a civil state and their accordance with the laws of reason, these laws are the most powerful, accredited by the collective debates and demonstrations.

Do not forget that the general rights are those which form “the Dominion”: in accordance with the laws of reason and human nature –these laws of human nature emphasizing the *conatus*–, the Dominion is “determined by the power of a multitude.”³⁹ But if so, “this charge” could but “belong to a council, composed of the general multitude”⁴⁰ –and not to a council “composed of certain chosen persons” or not the affairs of state resting with one man.⁴¹ Why is this? Because: the best dominion is established by a free multitude “guided more by hope than fear,”⁴² and for this reason those who call the populace a mob full of vices and without virtues, and depict it as being frightened and devoid of truth and judgement –in order to not inspire fear⁴³– are only those who attack the very power of the multitude. If “the chief business of the dominion is transacted behind its back, and it can but make conjectures from the little, which cannot be hidden,” “it is supreme folly to wish to transact everything behind the backs of the citizens, and to expect that they will not judge ill of the same, and will not give everything an unfavorable interpretation. For if the populace could moderate itself, and suspend its judgment about things with which it is imperfectly acquainted, or judge rightly of things by the little it knows already, it would surely be more fit to govern, than to be governed.” Even under a king can the multitude preserve enough freedom: if his power is “preserved by the defense of the multitude itself.”⁴⁴ But, since this is rather

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Ch. II, 9.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Ch. III, 7.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Ch. III, 8.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Ch. II, 17, Ch. III, 2. The rights and power of the multitude are connected as “the natural right of the individual is only limited by his power”; but if so, “it is clear that by transferring, either willingly or under compulsion, this power into the hands of another, he in so doing necessarily cedes also a part of his right”; just in order to preserve the rights of every individual from the multitude, the transfer of their power should be realised with the minimum of loss of this power; Spinoza, *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, Part IV, Ch. XVI, 16.44 (<http://www.yesselman.com/tpelws4.htm#CXVII%2817%29>).

⁴⁰ Spinoza, *Tractatus politicus*, Ch. II, 17.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, Ch. 5, 2. And the quote follows: “how cautious a free multitude should be of entrusting its welfare absolutely to one man, who, unless in his vanity he thinks he can please everybody, must be in daily fear of plots, and so is forced to look chiefly after his own interest, and, as for the multitude, rather to plot against it than consult its good.”

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Ch. VII, 27.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Ch. VII, 31

improbable, as Spinoza has shown,⁴⁵ democracy is the best government:⁴⁶ in order to avoid the multitude behaving in an irrational manner and, at the same time, to bypass the irrational commitments of the leadership.⁴⁷

But this is only one of the two reasons, the second one being that a government has not in its scope the efficient realization of some particular restrictive goals, as good as they are considered by those in power, nor “to change men from rational beings into beasts or puppets, but to enable them to develop their minds and bodies in security, and to employ their reason unshackled; neither showing hatred, anger, or deceit, nor watched with the eyes of jealousy and injustice.”⁴⁸ If this objective does not fulfill, the worst consequences arise: the duplicitous behavior of the many, “the corruption of good faith, that mainstay of government, and to the fostering of hateful flattery and perfidy, whence spring stratagems, and the corruption of every good art.”⁴⁹ In fact, the multitude may revolt.⁵⁰

Spinoza knew very well that this design of democracy is only ideal.⁵¹ But at any rate the possible arbitrariness of the leaders is the lowest just in democracy.⁵² And although no one could stop people’s murmuring against one aspect or another of the governance,⁵³ and even though the freedom of speech is not absolute because it could harm “the peace of the state,”⁵⁴ in democracy this freedom is the biggest, because the ultimate aim of this government is “not to rule, or restrain, by fear, nor to exact obedience, but contrariwise, to free every man from fear, that he may live in all possible security; in other words, to strengthen his natural right to exist and work –without injury to himself or others.”⁵⁵

Accordingly, for Spinoza, both the multitude man and the multitude itself are and constitute the *ontological being* as a “pure multiple,”⁵⁶ if I may borrow Badiou’s formula.

⁴⁵ Spinoza, *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, Part I, Ch. V, 5.47: “it follows, firstly, that authority should either be vested in the hands of the whole state in common, so that everyone should be bound to serve, and yet not be in subjection to his equals; or else, if power be in the hands of a few, or one man, that one man should be something above average humanity, or should strive to get himself accepted as such.”

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Ch. XVI, 16.62-16.63a.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.53.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Ch. XX, 20.19.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.44.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.46.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Ch. XVII, 17.1.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 17.110: “Those who administer or possess governing power, always try to surround their high-handed actions with a cloak of legality, and to persuade the people that they act from good motives; this they are easily able to effect when they are the sole interpreters of the law.”

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Ch. XX, 20.10; 20.14.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.17.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.18.

⁵⁶ A. Badiou, *Court traité d’ontologie transitoire*, coll. “L’ordre philosophique” (Paris, Seuil, 1998). But see first A. Badiou, *Being and Event* (1988), trans. O. Feltham (London,

But why would the concept of multitude⁵⁷ be so important for the present thinkers? As we know, Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt's second volume of their trilogy is dedicated just to the multitude after they focused on this concept in *Empire*. The main aspects I highlight here are:

- 1) the multitude is, in virtue of its original integration within the order of power and, at the same time, in virtue of its tendency to at least negotiate its place within this order, a *contradictory* entity from which the change of the social order as such could and will arise (as, before, the bourgeoisie was such a contradictory entity); but while the specific of the bourgeoisie have led to the basic continuity of class domination, the multitude is first and foremost the *bearer of discontinuity*. Just for this reason "because the very moment of self-constitution of the multitude must yield to a pre-constituted order, and because claiming that humans could immediately establish their freedom in being would be a subversive delirium";⁵⁸
- 2) the multitude is, as every social class –though it is a bundle of classes and groups all having a class character–, *explained through its relationships with its opposite*. Only together do they form "a contradictory co-presence" in society, where "the power wants to reduce it to the rule of one";⁵⁹ in this respect, as the capitalist sovereignty does not exist without working on the multitude in order to transform it "into an ordered totality,"⁶⁰ as the multitude cannot develop its autonomy, the *sine qua non* condition for its manifestation of creativity, without opposition in alternative ways to the power of capital.
- 3) Therefore, multitude does not mean classlessness. It is the other name of the former Marxian concept of *proletariat*: i.e. "subject of production and object of exploitation."⁶¹ Multitude is thus not homogenous, it includes and is composed of classes, strata, groups, which all must acquire the conscience of their position and interests. However,
- 4) The concept of multitude signifies that its components are not only collective, but also individuals. The multitude is the "whole of singularities,"⁶² the "finally developed" utopian liberal image of the individual and the unity between creation and every individual. The uniqueness of every individual is the big challenge of the Marxian perspective to the non-utopian liberal image of the lower classes and, at the same time, to the former Orthodox, Stalinist and social-democratic political representations and practice.

New York: Continuum, 2007), p. 54 (the pure multiple is the inconsistency re-presented by the nothing) etc.

⁵⁷ Or: *ordinary men*, see A. Bazac, "The Ordinary Men and the Social Development," *News and Views: The Journal of the International Academy for Philosophy*, 4 (2012), 98-125.

⁵⁸ M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Group, 2004), p. 79.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 87. Or, as in Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*, p. 333: "The sovereign is similarly constrained to negotiate a relationship with the ruled and solicit its consent."

⁶¹ A. Negri, "Approximations: Towards an Ontological Definition of the Multitude," *Multitudes*, 9 (2003) (<http://www.generation-online.org/t/approximations.htm>).

⁶² *Ibid.*

- 5) The multitude is not only a class concept, it is the name of the *immanent power* of those which cannot be grasped in terms of social contract: it is not a “social body” which can be disciplined and introduced in fixed rules; it is “an active agent of self-organization [...] it displaces all modern arguments premised on the ‘fear of the masses’ as well as those related to the ‘tyranny of the majority,’ arguments that have often functioned as a kind of blackmail to force us to accept (and sometimes even ask for) our servitude.”⁶³
- 6) The concept of multitude describes the *actor of the objective economic processes* “that went through the hegemony of the immaterial labor force and of cooperating living labor a real ontological, productive and bio-political revolution”⁶⁴ and
- 7) The *political actor who fine-tunes the governance with this technological and economic development*. This correspondence is made through his potency, namely creativity, thus nothing is done, fixed and finished, but experienced and thought.

The multitude is not at all the continuation of the *masses* or the *people*. It is related to the specific historical conditions of the systemic crisis of capitalism and the second industrial revolution generated by the present scientific-technological spring of microelectronics, IT, biology, etc. Consequently, “it is a historical exception, it is the product of a radical temporal discontinuity, and it is ontological metamorphosis.”

Instead of Conclusions

My paper, only gleaning some ideas in order to outline a sketch of the problem of the worth of life, criticizes the usual simple *exasperation* of both people and thinkers in front of crisis. It is not as though the crisis would fail to pose them and all of us in unexpected suffering, devolvement and indignation. But there is not only *discontinuity* between the former ante-crisis state of the world and the present one. I insisted on the *continuity* and its ground—the structural relations of capitalism—and I suggested the space that must be deciphered in order not only to alleviate the present situation but also to cope with it.

I underscored only a feeling generated by the avalanche of abnormal facts, *abnormal from the standpoint of natural human expectations*—resultant from both the human *conatus* and the modern culture imprescriptibly asserting the *dignity* and *rights* of the human individual. And I reached into the space of the *multitude* which is the only actor of the realization of these dignity and rights.

As we know, there were different critiques of the present philosophical thesis of multitude. It is sure that such a concept is less descriptive than prescriptive but, at the same time, has a strange correspondent in the social reality. The instruments and forms of its coagulation are still to happen (see Derrida’s *la démocratie à venir*). But precisely its openness and non-finished

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

character, as well as its potentiality and binding with that *which is not yet created but could be*, along with its result, legitimate it. I think that the potentiality of the multitude and the theoretical grasping of that which *does not yet exist but is nevertheless possible* are not of the order of prophecy or mysticism. The real protests of the multitude are not a mystique occurring in the absence of the usual well-ordered political negotiations in order to gain something. Nor are they corresponding to the weakness of the radical philosophical thinking, namely to its concepts and points of view.⁶⁵ Rather, this radicalism has both a function of *impulse*, thus preceding the real movement, and the function of *analysis*, following and learning from the protests. Grasping the meanings of that which is near-by the ordinary men—their deeds in society—is more difficult than analyzing that which is far away from them: because people lie in a different practical and direct relationship with history than with nature, namely *mediated by the illusion that they know it*, an illusion given to them by the dominant classes which supply them their own explanations of the history.⁶⁶ This is the reason of the necessity of “metaphysics,” said Althusser, of a philosophy which explores the meanings of the facts and only arrives at the understanding of the actors of history: not “man” is the creator of history, but “the concrete men,” i.e. the *multitude*. But this one is not a (classical) subject: it seems as if history would not have a subject, but indeed this subject exists, resulting from its own deeds and actions or, as Marx has said long ago, the subject is the result of the social relations.

Nowadays we face a strange situation. In a society twice based on the official theft of the life of the many,⁶⁷ through both normal capitalist relations “and” the corruption of the leading stratum, the external classes to this stratum have also used corruption in order to survive or to improve their conditions. They “democratized” the practice of the “elite,” which was not only an accomplice with this “ordinary corruption,” but *purposefully* has transferred its own corruption to the ordinary men (in order to destroy “the singular essence of the multitude,”⁶⁸ to unify and segment it according to the only focus on consume). This process took place especially in the last era of neo-liberal politics. With the present crisis, the watchword of the same neo-liberal politics is to fight and abolish the corruption from the bottom. Corruption is not normal and not moral: everyone knows that. But it was necessary. What is the solution? Obviously, not to annul the peccadilloes of the many by leaving untouched the high corruption. But the present politics just heads in this direc-

⁶⁵ This is Peter Sloterdijk’s standpoint. See *Against Gravity*, February/March 2005 (http://www.bookforum.com/archive/feb_05/funccke.html).

⁶⁶ L. Althusser, *Réponse à John Lewis* (Paris: Maspéro, 1973), pp. 36-37, quoted by P. Macherey, “*Verum est factum*: les enjeux d’une philosophie de la praxis et le débat Althusser-Gramsci,” in *Sartre, Lukács, Althusser: des marxistes en philosophie*, sous la direction de Eustache Kouvélakis et Vincent Charbonnier (Paris: PUF, 2005), 143-155, p. 146.

⁶⁷ I do not say with Proudhon that the private property is robbery. I follow Marx by mentioning that though it could result including from robbery, it is realized and maintained through the social relations of exploitation and domination which, however, include robbery.

⁶⁸ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, p. 391.

tion. It also waves the flag of modernizing economies and countries, but many of the economic policies head to opposite result.

Finally, the present “normal” politics of global warfare follows the capitalist logic and its conditions: the future is that of clashes and immense suffering generated by the so-called shortages of resources and climate change, and no “good governance” can annul this tendency.⁶⁹ Why would a philosophy of the human *conatus* not be a more credible alternative than that of *homo homini lupus*?

⁶⁹ M.T. Klare, *Entering a Resource-Shock World: How Resource Scarcity and Climate Change Could Produce a Global Explosion*, 21-4-2013 (http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175690/tomgram%3A_michael_klare%2C_the_coming_global_explosion/print).

The Role of the Philosopher in Times of Crisis: Wittgenstein and Spengler

ARCHONTOULA GIANNOPOULOU

Spengler's Theory of Cultural Decline

When the first volume of *The Decline of the West*¹ was published in 1918, it had a tremendous impact on the German public who were recovering from the First World War. However, Spengler's initial success was soon followed by a widespread disinterest that was evident in the reception of the second volume of *The Decline of the West*. How could this disinterest be understood? In his essay, "La vengeance de Spengler,"² Jacques Bouveresse, has produced an interesting explanation of this change of attitude towards Spengler's work. According to Bouveresse, the initial enthusiasm was largely due to a misunderstanding of the book's point. The author of *The Decline of the West* was not offering a catastrophic view of the First World War, but rather a synoptic view of its historical significance in the Western culture. From this point of view, the last preceding war takes the form of a significant event that is meant to determine the characteristics of a culture entering its ultimate historical phase. So we have reasons to think that the German public was never really interested in what the book was actually professing.

As far as Spengler's academic fate is concerned, it is important to note that the official German intelligentsia refused to attribute any scientific or philosophical value to his book, considering that the method he employs is flawed, and furthermore that his description of historical facts is inaccurate. According to Adorno, who had taken pains to read and write about Spengler, the indifference or contempt with which German philosophers treated the *Decline of the West* revealed their incapacity to produce strong arguments against Spengler's theory of cultural decline. As he puts it: "Spengler found hardly an adversary who was his equal; his oblivion is the product of evasion."³

Indications of Spengler's Influence on Wittgenstein's Thought

Wittgenstein seems to have been one of the German speaking intellectuals who had been attracted by the boldness with which Spengler described the destiny of the Western culture. We can collect some interesting information about Wittgenstein's attitude toward *The Decline of the West* from the conversations Wittgenstein held with Drury, one of his former students. According to

¹ O. Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, Vols. I-II (New York: Modern Library, 1965).

² J. Bouveresse, "La vengeance de Spengler," in *Essais II. L'Époque, la mode, la morale, la satire* (Marseille: Agone, 2001), 83-114.

³ T. Adorno, "Spengler after the Decline," in *Prisms* (Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 1982), 51-72, p. 54.

Drury's sayings, Wittgenstein is supposed to have advised him to read *The Decline of the West* in order to extract what is valuable in it. This is how Drury records their conversation: "Wittgenstein advised me to read Spengler's *The Decline of the West*. It was a book, he said, that might teach me something about the age we were now living in. It might be an antidote for my 'incurable romanticism'."⁴ After having read the book, Drury told Wittgenstein that he disagreed with Spengler's putting "history into moulds." On this occasion, Drury remembers Wittgenstein saying: "... you are right; you can't put history into moulds. But Spengler does point out certain very interesting comparisons. I don't trust Spengler with details. He is too often inaccurate. I once wrote that if Spengler had the courage to write a very short book, it could have been a great one."⁵ However exact these recordings may be, one must bear in mind that Wittgenstein does not mention Spengler's name in his later philosophical writings. For example, there is no mention of his name in the *Philosophical Investigations*,⁶ nor in his last writings collected in *On Certainty*.⁷ We can find one important reference to Spengler in a well-known passage from the *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*: The concept of perspicuous representation is of fundamental importance for us. It denotes the form of our representation, the way we see things. (A kind of "World-view [Weltanschauung]" as it is apparently typical of our time. Spengler.⁸)

What is the sense of mentioning Spengler in this passage? It is likely that here Wittgenstein is crediting Spengler with a contemporary use of the concept of world-view. Another way to see it is to interpret it as a debt to Spengler for being the source of a concept that had played an important role in Wittgenstein's own philosophical development.⁹ If we look at a similar passage in the *Philosophical Investigations* we will see that Spengler's name is not included.

The concept of a perspicuous presentation is of fundamental significance for us. It earmarks the form of account we give, the way we look at things. (Is this a "Weltanschauung"?)¹⁰ It looks as if this later version of Wittgenstein's passage

⁴ M. O'Connor Drury, "Conversations with Wittgenstein," in R. Rhees (ed.), *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Personal Recollections* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981), 97-171, p. 128.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, ed. and trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967³).

⁷ L. Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, ed. G.E.M. Anscombe and G.H. von Wright, trans. D. Paul and G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969).

⁸ "Der Begriff der übersichtlichen Darstellung ist für uns von grundlegender Bedeutung. Er bezeichnet unsere Darstellungsform, die Art, wie wir die Dinge sehen. (Eine Art der 'Weltanschauung' wie sie scheinbar für unsere Zeit typisch ist. Spengler.)" Ludwig Wittgenstein, "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*," in J.C. Klagge and A. Nordmann (eds.), *Philosophical Occasions (1912-1951)* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993), 118-155, pp. 132-133.

⁹ On this subject, see J.F. Peterman, *Philosophy as Therapy: An Interpretation and Defense of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophical Project* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1992), p. 61.

¹⁰ "Der Begriff der übersichtlichen Darstellung ist für uns von grundlegender Bedeutung. Er bezeichnet unsere Darstellungsform, die Art, wie wir die Dinge sehen. (Ist dies eine 'Weltanschauung'?)" Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 122.

is no longer affirming a Spenglerian type of world-view. The fact that Wittgenstein does not mention Spengler in the *Philosophical Investigations* seems to me to be significant. It could be that, in passing to the interrogative mode, Wittgenstein is distancing himself from his contemporaries who had wrongly understood the concept of world-view, Spengler being a typical example.

Wittgenstein's Criticism of Spengler's Worldview Conception

An interesting analysis as to why Wittgenstein was concerned to distinguish his own use of the concept of world-view from the use that characterizes his times is given by Judith Genova. According to Genova, "The reason for this is that for Wittgenstein a *Weltanschauung* forgets its status as a way of seeing and parades itself as *the way of seeing*. It takes itself too seriously, as the ultimate explanation and foundation of our convictions. In contrast, the concept of *Weltbild* completely avoids the knowledge game."¹¹

Following Genova's suggestion, I will attempt to show that Wittgenstein's concern to mark his distinction from Spengler's world-view conception reveals a deep concern for the role philosophy has to play in times of crisis. To this end, I will turn to a collection of remarks that are not, I may say, strictly philosophical, many of which illustrate Wittgenstein's attitude towards the cultural aspects of his environment. The collection is a chronological selection from Wittgenstein's notes that was first published by Georg Henrik von Wright in 1977 under the title *Vermischte Bemerkungen*. It was translated into English by Peter Winch in 1980 under the title *Culture and Value*.¹²

It is not exaggerating to say that Wittgenstein's criticism of Spengler's world-view conception is condensed in the following passage from *Culture and Value*. Spengler could better be understood if he said: I am *comparing* different cultural epochs with the lives of families; within a family there is a family resemblance, though you will also find a resemblance between members of different families; family resemblance differs from the other sort of resemblance in such and such ways, etc. What I mean is: we have to be told the object of comparison, the object from which this way of viewing things is derived, otherwise the discussion will constantly be affected by distortions. Because willy-nilly we shall ascribe the properties of the prototype to the object we are viewing in its light; and claim "*it must always be...*"

This is because we want to give the prototype's characteristics a purchase on our way of representing things. But since we confuse prototype and object, we find ourselves dogmatically conferring on the object properties which only the prototype necessarily possesses.¹³

What is at issue here is Spengler's method of sorting historical epochs into cultures. Wittgenstein is criticizing Spengler for projecting his model of com-

¹¹ J. Genova, *Wittgenstein: A Way of Seeing* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 50.

¹² L. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, ed. G.H. von Wright, trans. P. Winch (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980).

¹³ Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, p. 14.

parison on the facts of reality. When we “dogmatically confer” on our object of examination the properties of our ideal conceptual scheme, this implies that our way of constructing links between the phenomena, our way of seeing matters, is *seen as the only way of seeing*. Thus our “Weltanschauung” is presented as a historical necessity. I think this is what Wittgenstein is referring to by the claim “*it must always be...*”

It is not clear how Wittgenstein uses the idea of “family resemblances” in the above passage. Why should Spengler have compared cultures with the lives of families? Spengler sorts historical epochs into clear-cut cultural entities that are totally independent from each other. Although Wittgenstein acknowledges that Spengler has made some interesting comparisons in *The Decline of the West*, he is not willing to endorse his absolute relativism. Wittgenstein seems to suggest that if Spengler had searched for resemblances within each culture as well as between the different cultures (instead of extracting the properties of each culture from a constructed “object of comparison” or a “prototype”), he would have escaped absolute relativism. It turns out that Wittgenstein’s criticism is targeting not only Spengler’s dogmatism but also his cultural relativism.

Spengler’s Morphological Method and Wittgenstein’s Quest for Clarity

It would be helpful, at this point of our analysis, to sketch a few elements of Spengler’s conceptual system. Spengler employs an all-encompassing concept of world-view that purports to capture all aspects of the life of a Culture. Each Culture is in itself a world-view, a particular way of seeing the expressions of human life in the arts, the sciences, and in every other activity which is thought to bear an essential meaning for shared life. This shared perspective must be unique, in so far as every Culture is an organic entity that has a unique soul: “... deep identity unites the awakening of the soul, its birth into clear existence in the name of a Culture.”¹⁴ The Culture’s soul cannot be understood by way of theoretical argumentation or scientific explanations, but only through an intuitive grasp of its prime symbol. According to Spengler, “... the prime symbol does not actualize itself; it is operative through the form-sense of every man, every community, age and epoch and dictates the style of every life-expression. It is inherent in the form of the state, the religious myths and cults, the ethical ideals, the forms of painting and music and poetry, the fundamental notions of each science –but it is not presented by these.”¹⁵

The notion of prime symbol is a central notion in Spengler’s morphological history of Cultures. As Spengler acknowledges, it is a notion that derives from Goethe’s plant-morphology, a study that concerns the archetypical form of plants. In comparing the life of a Culture with the organic life of a plant, Spengler allows himself to apply an “organic logic of existence” to all Cultures. This logic is expressed by the Destiny-idea, the idea that every Culture

¹⁴ Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, Vol. I, p. 174.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

is predestined to pass from a stage of maturity to a state of decline. When cultural decay occurs the organic soul of a Culture is transformed into a mechanistic and utilitarian Civilization in which the prime symbol no longer maintains its unifying role.

Von Wright has argued that Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblances is in some derivative way related to Spengler's idea of a prime symbol.¹⁶ This seems to me something of a stretch. Furthermore, it could turn out to be a misleading connection between Wittgenstein's and Spengler's thoughts.¹⁷ Whereas there is reason to think that there exists a certain relationship between the two concepts, we should be careful not to assume a direct affinity between them. Indeed, Wittgenstein is inspired by Spengler's morphological method of comparison, in so far as he sees it as a method of clarification. What inspires him is its capacity to grasp similarities in a glance without having to discover anything new; just by arranging what is already there. As Bouveresse says, Wittgenstein was impressed by Spengler's ability to gather a large quantity of unrelated, at first sight, facts into an illuminating arrangement.¹⁸ So we are now better placed to understand another important passage from the "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*," which follows immediately after the passage in which Spengler's name is cited.

This perspicuous representation brings about the understanding which consists precisely in the fact that we "see the connections." Hence the importance of finding *connecting links*.¹⁹ Having a clear view of the connections between our concepts, is one of the demands that Wittgenstein continually poses on his philosophy. But he does not regard clarity merely as a desired means of philosophical thinking. His approach goes further than that, as he opposes this demand to the idea of progress which he believes characterizes the thought of his times. We can see this clearly in the following passage:

"Our civilization is characterized by the word 'progress.' Progress is its form rather than making progress being one of its features. Typically it constructs. It is occupied with building an ever more complicated structure. And even clarity is sought only as a means to this end, not as an end in itself. For me on the contrary clarity, perspicuity, are valuable in themselves."²⁰

In this passage, Wittgenstein seems to make the Spenglerian distinction between "Culture" and "Civilization." But contrary to Spengler's "Destiny-idea," Wittgenstein's wants to liberate philosophy from a dominating world-

¹⁶ G.H. von Wright, "Wittgenstein in Relation to His Times," in B. McGuiness (ed.), *Wittgenstein in His Times* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 108-120, p. 116.

¹⁷ Especially if we bear in mind the passage I cited above where Wittgenstein employs the concept of family resemblances in order to show that Spengler's method is liable to dogmatism and relativism (see Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, p. 14).

¹⁸ J. Bouveresse, "L'animal cérémoniel: Wittgenstein et l'anthropologie," in L. Wittgenstein, *Remarques sur le Rameau d'or de Frazer* (Lausanne: L'Âge d'Homme, 1982), 39-124, pp. 86-87.

¹⁹ Wittgenstein, "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*," p. 133.

²⁰ Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, p. 6.

view perspective. The question that needs to be asked is: “What is the destiny of philosophy in an environment of cultural disintegration?” I believe that, for Wittgenstein, it remains an open question, while Spengler’s answer to this question is thoroughly determined by his idea of a world-view.

Cultural Decline and Philosophical Conservatism

It is interesting to have a look at some of Spengler’s statements on philosophy:

“Systematic philosophy, then, lies immensely far behind us, and ethical has been wound up. But a third –possibility [...] still remains to the soul-world of the present-day West, and it can be brought to light by the hitherto unknown methods of historical morphology. That which is a possibility is a necessity.”²¹

“In this work it will be our task to sketch out this unphilosophical philosophy –the last that West Europe will know.”²²

“Every philosophy is the expression of its own and only its own time, and –if by philosophy we mean effective philosophy and not academic triflings about judgment-forms, sense-categories and the like– no two ages possess the same philosophic intentions.”²³

The impression I gather from these remarks is that Spengler regards himself as a philosopher responding to a historical crisis. What he considers to be “unphilosophical” in his philosophy is its historical and relativist perspective. To him, the duty of the philosopher consists in revealing a historical reality and acknowledging it as a historical necessity. In this sense, an “unphilosophical philosophy” poses no other demand on the philosopher than that of being a true expression of his or her cultural history.

Now the question that awaits an answer is whether Wittgenstein’s general pessimism leads him to philosophical pessimism and even conservatism. In the preface to the *Philosophical Investigations* (viii), Wittgenstein writes:

“It is not impossible that it should fall to the lot of this work in its poverty and in the darkness of this time, to bring light into one brain or another –but, of course, it is not likely”.

Saying, on the one hand, that it is not impossible, and on the other that it is not likely is a strangely contradictory statement. It is as if Wittgenstein was wishing that his book brings light, but not permitting himself to express it. Whatever the case is, one is inclined to ask what the poverty of Wittgenstein’s work consists in. Is it due to the darkness of his time or is it related to the nature of philosophy, its limits and its potentialities? In my opinion it is both.

Wittgenstein thought of himself as in exile from his cultural environment. He regretted the fact that the scientific way of thinking was predominant in his times, and this he took as an obstacle to his philosophical thought. The following passage is illuminating:

²¹ Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, p. 45.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

“I realize [...] that the disappearance of a culture does not signify the disappearance of human value, but simply of certain means of expressing this value, yet the fact remains that I have no sympathy for the current of European civilization and do not understand its goals, if it has any. So I am really writing for friends who are scattered throughout the corners of the globe.”²⁴

Wittgenstein is making an important remark here. He is saying that the means for expressing human needs is an essential part of our forms of life. If certain means are lacking this does not signify that human value is lacking; not accepting this would be the expression of full-fledged pessimism.

The Notion of World-picture [Weltbild] and Its Anthropological Function in Wittgenstein's Philosophy

In this last section, I will try to sketch some grammatical distinctions that will be required in order to understand the way Wittgenstein uses the notion of world-picture. One has to bear in mind that the notion appears for the first time in his later writings (see *On Certainty*), even though it is closely related to his previous grammatical investigations. It is the outcome of a painstaking elaboration that has already taken place in his *Philosophical Investigations*.

In the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein undertakes the difficult task of establishing the autonomy of grammar, which, one may say, is the main postulate of his philosophical grammar. Autonomy of grammar is based on the logical distinction between grammatical and empirical propositions. In order to establish his postulate, Wittgenstein has to show that grammatical propositions cannot be reduced to empirical ones. When it makes sense to ask if a proposition is true or false, the proposition is empirical. For example, “The cat is on the table” is an empirical proposition. When a proposition is about language, in other words, when it informs us on the way we use language, we call it a grammatical proposition. For example, “The word ‘agreement’ and the word ‘rule’ are related to one another” is a grammatical proposition. Contrary to empirical propositions, there is no sense in trying to verify or falsify grammatical propositions as they are not concerned with truth or falsity. This is what makes them immune to reality.

Thus, it is by way of a logical distinction that Wittgenstein establishes the autonomy of philosophical grammar. But why does he have to postulate the autonomy of grammar after all? For Wittgenstein, the autonomy of grammar is a useful philosophical principle that attains its significance in the context of a wider philosophical world-view. He recognizes it as such in so far as it can be used in disentangling the linguistic confusions that one encounters in philosophical discourse. An example of this is given by Wittgenstein in his criticism of Spengler's morphological method.²⁵

It is important to note that Wittgenstein has been accused for linguistic

²⁴ Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, p. 6.

²⁵ Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, p. 14.

idealism on the basis of this postulate. His famous adage that philosophy “leaves everything as it is”²⁶ has been interpreted precisely in this negative sense. As I said above, Wittgenstein recognizes his principle for what it is and this is the reason why he is able to go beyond it. One can see this in the way he explains the notion of a world-picture. According to Wittgenstein, the propositions that constitute our world-picture are empirical propositions of a peculiar kind. As he says, “they have a peculiar logical role in the system of our empirical propositions.”²⁷ Let us consider the following propositions:

I have two hands.

The earth has existed for a long time.

Cows do not stand on their heads.

My name is A. G.

What is common in these propositions is that there is no sense in doubting them, while there may be certain special circumstances in which it makes sense to negate them. The fact that they are exempt from doubt is of fundamental significance for our language game of judgment. As Wittgenstein puts it, “... the *questions* that we raise and our *doubts* depend on the fact that some propositions are exempt from doubt, are as it were like hinges on which those turn.”²⁸

Although it is possible to negate “hinge propositions,” we rarely do so. Reflecting on this possibility of negating them is what allows Wittgenstein to trespass the frontiers of his postulate of the autonomy of grammar. With his various examples, Wittgenstein continuously invites us to imagine different language games and different forms of life. In doing this, he incites us to explore the limits of our concepts. I think this is what the following passage shows us:

“I am not saying: if such-and-such facts of nature were different people would have different concepts (in the sense of a hypothesis). But: if anyone believes that certain concepts are absolutely the correct ones, and that having different ones would mean not realizing something that we realize –then let him imagine certain very general facts of nature to be different from what we are used to, and the formation of concepts different from the usual ones will become intelligible to him.”²⁹

When Wittgenstein goes beyond the autonomy of grammar and focuses on the form of human life as a whole, he is interested in a variety of very general facts of nature, facts that may be physical, psychological, or anthropological. Although he does not think that there is a direct correspondence between natural facts (in the wide sense) and the grammar of our language, he does not deny that there is a relationship between them.

Wittgenstein’s notion of world-picture shows us that grammar and nature

²⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, § 124.

²⁷ Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, § 136.

²⁸ Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, § 341.

²⁹ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 230.

are related to each other in a harmonious way that makes our concepts seem natural and intelligible. However, this harmonious relationship remains essentially indefinable: it can be truly understood only when our language games lose their meaning, when they lose their special place in our form of life (as is the case during periods of major conceptual changes). What makes it indefinable is the under-determinacy that prevails in the way natural facts relate to human action.

Conclusion

Contrary to Spengler's logic of historical necessity, which governs the life of Cultures, Wittgenstein's idea of anthropological under-determinacy captures the significance of human needs and enables us to apprehend the subjective and objective constraints of human agency. If there is a sense in speaking about realism in Wittgenstein's later philosophy, it would be a *realism qualified by practical criteria*. In this sense, being a realist would be accepting that if we attempt to change our concepts, we cannot ignore the existence of very general facts of nature to which they are related, and therefore we could not do so without having to face more or less severe practical consequences.

A question remains to be answered: "Is Wittgenstein's realism dealing with a philosophical crisis?" To the extent that a crisis is a critical situation in which things turn out to be not what we expected, the word "crisis" is closely related to the word "judgment." In this sense, a crisis invites us to make a decision (or, if we prefer, a practical judgment) in order to confront the new situation that has been brought to view.

I believe that the philosophical crisis Wittgenstein is struggling with arises from the idea of philosophy as an all-embracing world-view. It is an idea that he himself had been seduced by in his earlier writings. The critical question that needs to be asked by the philosopher is whether he/she is prepared to accept the practical consequences of his/her world-view perspective when things turn out to be not what he/she expected. As I have attempted to show, Wittgenstein's anthropological realism invites us to make a decision regarding these practical consequences. The difficulty in philosophy is to accept that there is no ideal state of order in language that would free us from anthropological underdeterminacy.

A Chance of Searching New Methods in Philosophy: The Role of Metaphor in the “Crisis” of Concepts

ATHANASSIOS SAKELLARIADIS

To Harry Harisis

Wittgenstein’s famous challenging passage (*Tractatus* 6.54)¹ has been widely accepted by many scholars under a variety of philosophical interpretations. The enigmatic style of his philosophical thought despite the interpretive disputes by his commentators serves as an elucidatory guide in many aspects of the cognitive enterprise.

By using the so-called Tractarian term “ladder” –in the Wittgensteinian sense– we are saying or showing the meaningful aspects of the concepts.² Utilizing the above term as a signpost we will be trying to approach the function of the consciousness along with the linguistic phenomenon of metaphor conveying the thought’s ambivalence on how mental phenomena might be understood due to alternative readings. Paradoxically, even though consciousness as a mental phenomenon points to the awareness of one’s self, at the same time it shows its impotence to acquire that self.³

¹ “My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them. He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it. He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright.” L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness (London: Routledge, 1988, rpt.).

² The commentary of Wittgensteinian writings regarding the *Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations* alike, consists of two main readings: The “standard” and the “resolute.” According to the “standard” reading the world is made up of simple objects which can combine into facts, and language is made up of names which can combine into propositions. These two types of combination mirror each other and the fact that they do so is what says that proposition has meaning. Logical forms, which are the common element between the act of representation and the thing that is represented, are the possibilities of combination of the above relation, and here comes the famous showing/saying distinction which contingently depicts some metaphysical aspects. The so-called “resolute” approach claims that if we have the need to understand the meaning of the concepts then we will throw away the ladder and we will start philosophizing. The resolute thought is that the *Tractatus* combats as illusory the idea of an external standpoint on language (a vantage) from which we can provide a metaphysical account of connections between language and the world. Thus, the *Tractatus* delivers us from the illusion that we can do philosophy in a traditional way through its representation of nonsensical sentences which, to the extent that they seduce us, equip us to lead ourselves out of our state of illusion. It seems to be a “therapeutic” style if we realize the real meaning of nonsense which Wittgenstein ascribes in the *Tractatus*. For a complete account of both readings, see A. Crary and R. Read (eds.), *The New Wittgenstein* (London-New York: Routledge, 2000).

³ Another interesting subject would be the connection of the “nonsense” notion in the *Tractatus* with the functionality of consciousness in cases where the research of consciousness nature meets inescapable difficulties. Wittgenstein says that a combination of words we are tempted to utter in philosophy is nonsense, not that we know what the words at-

According to the above mentioned readings, especially that of the “resolute,” there is a strong tendency to call Wittgenstein’s philosophical attempt a “therapeutic” one. It is also known that the notion of “therapy” permeates all the Wittgensteinian writings, because his way of doing philosophy is an activity towards the self-preoccupations by means of language. As a social activity, language is embedding in a form of life and anyone who deals with language means to be critical of it. Consequently, linguistic phenomena like metaphor are of major concern because they mostly carry a lived experience which is linguistic and somatic as well. So, we may use the concept of metaphor in parallel with the therapeutic movement –I mean the way we express metaphors not only as linguistic utterances conveying a hidden meaning to substitute the literal one, but also as a serious ontological movement which has in fact therapeutic perspectives.

Furthermore, it would be possible to combine both readings by offering another reading in order to reveal a connection between the notions of metaphor and therapy in attempting a “quasi” alternative reading which itself has many affinities to those mentioned above. The attempt I am trying to make focuses on the notion of *metaphor*, which possesses a therapeutic importance. In addition, metaphorical terms could make the sense and the use of linguistic expressions more obvious and transparent. Wittgenstein undermines deliberately every philosophical procedure by the very process of doing philosophy. Of course, this is too *risky* because he may fall into it. Perhaps he fails at preparing us to avoid the danger, although he tries doing so by sending signals. This is his honest gesture to us: understanding the moment and judging it plus the transforming process –fitting if not surviving the meanings. If so, to describe the aim of philosophy could be an activity which means an acceptance of searching and hiding the meanings of concepts with a sense to reconsider them by revealing unforeseen traits. This is just a therapeutic activity which is definitely “before our eyes.”⁴

So far we have been talking about some of Wittgensteinian conceptions. Now, by coming to the meaning of consciousness, we realize that the investigation of the nature of consciousness is a fascinating condition, which contains serious epistemological and ontological perplexities in its interpretative status. There is a common acceptance that consciousness is a mental phenom-

tempt to say and that *that* cannot properly be put into words, but instead that those words do not say anything, that they haven’t yet been given any significant use. (The passage is taken from the introduction of the already above mentioned book written by A. Crary, *Ibid.*, p. 7.) Though the excerpt about nonsense does not explicitly mention anything about the existence and nature of mental phenomena it seems to me that is leading us towards realistic illuminative orientations.

⁴ A. Sakellariadis, “Some Thoughts on Wittgensteinian ‘Nonsense’ and the Use of Metaphor,” in H. Nemeth, R. Heinrich, W. Pichler, D. Wagner (eds.), *Image and Imaging in Philosophy, Science and the Arts*, Proceedings of the 33rd International Wittgenstein Symposium (Kirchberg am Wechsel, Austria: Ontos Verlag, 8-18/8/2010), 285-287. Also available in pdf by the University of Bergen (Wittgenstein Archives). On themes about Wittgenstein and Metaphor see also, A. Stroll, “Wittgenstein’s Foundational Metaphors,” in D. Moyal-Sharrock (ed.), *The Third Wittgenstein* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2004), 13-24.

enon evoking great discrepancies among philosophers who are trying to solve the puzzle of its sense in the early modern period, not forgetting our Hellenes ancestors.⁵

Tracing back to Descartes, we realize that the French philosopher gave further domination to the mind-body problem for centuries. The classical paradigm of the "mind's amphitheatre" on consciousness consists in our mental ability to overview and understand the thoughts occurring in our minds. Locke tried to clarify what is mental and what it is for someone to be conscious that something is mental. His efforts were focusing on the origin of thoughts and their inescapable connection to consciousness.

William James's conception on the problem of consciousness sounds differently. He considers consciousness as a stream of thoughts and such an opinion evokes a strong skepticism about the "entity" of consciousness. He has no doubts of its function but he is not convinced of its presence.⁶ So, if we come closer to his remarks we could say that it is possible for epistemic events to be narrated in a form containing many contingencies, asymmetries and meaningful coherences as well. Russell was in a parallel track, emphasizing the role of perception rather than the consciousness/awareness case.⁷

Another problem of consciousness is about the subjectivity and how it could be possible to speak of objective or public experiences once we realize that consciousness is an aspect of mental activity focusing on the private experiences of individuals. If we extend the argument to the conceptual area of intentionality, the conceivability of consciousness meets serious difficulties.

Consciousness as a cluster concept including the phenomenal, monitoring and accessing consciousness gained a strong respect among theorists for its logical coherence.⁸ However, the old problem of the connection/relation is always coming back between the mental and the physical, which, despite the naturalistic exegeses is always there challenging new, unexplored cognitive areas. Cognitivist aspects also stressing on semantics and language consider consciousness as a kind of component or aspect of information –processing models more akin to higher access and monitoring argumentation. Additionally, ontological questions of "What is it like to be in a conscious state?" or about the consciousness location in the brain are usually questions raised, and much skepticism remains about the delineation or the function of such mental states.⁹

⁵ Even though the consciousness theorist Guven Guzeldere, whom I strongly respect, says that the term was not of big concern in ancient philosophical literature, I keep my reservations, but this is not the point right now. For further information, see N. Block, O. Flanagan and G. Guzeldere (eds.), *The Nature of Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1998), pp. 1-68.

⁶ W. James, "Does Consciousness Exist?," in W. James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, ed. R.B. Perry (New York: Dutton and Co., 1971), 3-22.

⁷ B. Russell, *The Analysis of Mind* (London: Unwin, 1989), pp.16-24.

⁸ S. Guttenplan (ed.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 210-219.

⁹ T. Nagel's famous article "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?," in T. Nagel, *Mortal Questions*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 165-180.

The pivotal question on consciousness fully runs in focusing on how material things have conscious states and what we mean by attributing semantical properties to material things.¹⁰ Besides, there are several exegetical arguments considering consciousness as an additional ingredient to human physiology. The question becomes more pressing and puzzling about the nature of the consciousness mechanism and its contingent brain mapping along with the problem of seeking the ontology of what is like to be a conscious being. In a parallel line, there is also a “quasi” metaphysical aspect of a supposed connection between sensible matters and a sort of an indeterminate entity defining the concept of consciousness in a narrative scheme. Yet, such a narration also includes many relativistic tones.

There are also many dissenting voices of scientists claiming for a theory of social or cultural construction about consciousness whereas the importance of metaphor plus a narrative hint gain an important place in the scientific area. Julian Jaynes’s aspects examining the riddle of consciousness have much to say:

“It is not to be confused with reactivity. It is not involved in hosts of perceptual phenomena. It is not involved in the performance of skills and often hinders their execution. It need not be involved in speaking, writing, listening or reading. It does not copy down experience, as most people think. Consciousness is not at all involved in signal learning, and need not be involved in the learning of skills or solutions, which can go on without any consciousness whatsoever. It is not necessary for making judgments or in simple thinking. It is not the seat or reason, and indeed some of the most difficult instances of creative reasoning go on without any attending consciousness. And it has no location except an imaginary one.”¹¹

So what would be my point? Certainly, I do not deny the role of the overall exegetical theories about consciousness. I am just asking along with so many other thinkers whether or not there may be any other possibility for us to think differently by using one more interpretive narration among many others. Contingently, the reason for us to argue for the indeterminacy of the term of consciousness, as well as its non-existence, could be fertile and thoughtful

¹⁰ They have been many puzzles about the mind claiming on the rationality and the possibility of material things to have conscious states with semantical orientations. See also Searle’s reductionism and mild in its naturalistic character, that there is a conceptual connection between consciousness and intentionality that has the consequence that a complete theory of intentionality requires an account of consciousness –it must be accessible in principle to consciousness [R. Casati (ed.), *Philosophy and the Cognitive Science*, Proceedings of the 16th International Wittgenstein Symposium (Kirchberg am Wechsel, Austria: Hoelder, Pichler, Tempsky, 1994), pp. 1-11].

¹¹ J. Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of Bicameral Mind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1976), pp. 46-47. Jaynes’s book illustrates the concepts of consciousness far from dogmatic interpretations and typologies. His heretical interpretative aspect on what could or not be the consciousness by using the risky paradigm of bicameral mind scheme reveals an openness to the concept formation evoking remarkable and ambivalent effects.

arguments, giving us a unique experience for searching through new areas about the concepts' formation, not related to the overall epistemological tradition that points towards a deterministic orientation, along with the denial of any metaphorical conjecture.

By stressing the last phrase, let me say that probably what we have in mind about consciousness is a metaphoric tension or stream which permeates not only our embodied mind but our interactive relations with others as well. Could we state that everything about thinking and speaking of concepts are mere metaphors? By no means. So, what is it all about?

Many thinkers pay attention to the fact that a theory of metaphor has to do with the ontology of concepts. Philosophers and linguists such as Grunpe, Mauthner, Jacobson, Lakoff and Johnson and partly Jaynes have a lot to say about such cognitive areas. So if there is no place (locus) for consciousness in our mind –I mean in brain topology/mapping– it would be possible to say that searching for the nature of consciousness may be related to a familiar scheme with that of the "illuminating nonsense" in the spirit of Wittgensteinian standard reading. Specifically, the meaningfulness of consciousness could be seen as an unforeseen serendipity, which probably means an unexpected felicitous meeting of sensible events connected with something inexpressible or inef-fable, so called entity. I would also like to note that I am inspired by the way Diamond has been reasoned in order to give us the profound remarks of the resolute. What I am saying is that without keeping the mentioned readings at a distance, I will try to use some unorthodox ways (metaphor, narration) combined to the "Wittgensteinian" concepts which in fact support my interpretative approach to consciousness. What I hold from Wittgenstein is mainly a description of his idiosyncratic inclination towards philosophical argumentation in order to define the meaning of concepts.

The meaning of crisis, which is the keynote concept of the conference, not only focuses on the debts and the crucial falls of our society, yet it additionally shows towards a serious critique coming from a set of judgments within a form of life (*Lebensform*). The "spirit" of these judgments in being uttered in specific language games may be extended in order to provide new ideas and aspects to our narration for the explanation of various concepts of the mind. To me, the therapeutic reading means to find an alternative condition in the mainstream of philosophizing. What I mean by condition is something which might also be a tacit convention (although necessary), lawful and not law-like. If we pay attention to different narrations in the literature concerning the notion and the structure of argumentation of consciousness, we may think totally differently. There is a vast theory, since William James's writings to Lakoff's and Johnson's onward, over the fate of consciousness and it is too early to decide for the orthodoxy of its concept explanation by following slippery roads. To put it differently, dealing with metaphor even in ontological terms doesn't happen to be a philosophical sin or even an oversimplification by ignoring some accepted logical rules in order to save the so called economy for a concept formation. On the contrary, metaphor provides new ways of thinking in connecting us with analogy, rhythm and acquainted sounds even with the

strikes of far memories. Sometimes we put them all together taxonomically, other times we fail to delineate the concepts. But the challenge is there. Many scientists –mostly reductionists– say there is no mystery in consciousness if we reduce its meaning in strictly physiological terms. They are doing the same jump to the conclusion in order to search for its meaning. Probably, we are doing the same move referring to the “metaphor solution”. Our lived experience says that we have a long way to go.

In these days of crisis, especially in my country, we have to dare, to accomplish and follow many new and risky routes. Each one of us in his own field can create a motley or a variety of different versions in order to provide some kind of contingent explanation, a DEED in the specific form of researching life. That is philosophy and that is the reason we are happy with its activity, despite the difficulties of the times.

Crisis and the Challenge for a Noble Life in Ortega y Gasset

PANOS ELIOPOULOS

Ortega y Gasset, in *La Rebellion de las Masas*, recognizes a deep crisis in Europe, in the 1920's. Not a crisis of historical determinants solely, but one that affects the values of the epoch and the potentialities of the modern person. According to the Spanish philosopher, there is one fact which is of utmost importance in the public life of Europe at that time. This fact is the accession of the masses to complete social power. As the masses, by definition, he claims, neither should nor can direct their own personal existence, and still less rule society in general, Europe is suffering from the greatest crisis that can afflict peoples, nations, and civilisation. Its name is the rebellion of the masses.

Ortega does not see the matter as a political analyst, but as a philosopher in the purest Socratic sense: how is the modern European (or citizen of the world) to live? In my paper, I am going to argue that the above affirmations of Ortega offer a typical representation of our epoch as well as of his, due to the fact that those phenomena have been effectuated on a continuous basis since the industrial revolution, and also that the crisis, according to Ortega's analysis, comprises a unique opportunity to understand the reasons for its appearance so as, eventually, to find the remedy for its cure. His main thesis is that this crisis is the direct opposite of a noble life. What the Spanish existentialist proposes is another hermeneutics of the components of a crisis, so that a crisis is not considered to mean a financial or political crisis solely, neither a value crisis, but a crisis of the human factor on the whole. Ortega y Gasset understands reality as a perspective (*yo soy yo y mi circunstancia*). For him, a crisis is defined as present when the system of convictions in the transition between two worlds (for example, with the change of the generations) is not replaced by a new one in a positive manner.¹ The character of a change, while beneficial itself, demands the establishment of new orientations, therefore it demands a vital understanding of the epoch per se. This is not only a rational issue, or an issue of reason and reasoning. He theorizes strongly against rationalism, claiming that the fundamental error that rationalism allows is its own dominance on life, which means that life is deprived of the physical element and the human being is deprived of its vital potencies.² As a result, while the human culture in the West paeans on its spirituality, actually it is covered and impeded by only one side of life, rationality, thus not being rational at all, and

¹ J. Ortega y Gasset, *En Torno a Galileo (Esquema de las Crisis)* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente en Alianza Editorial, 1956), lección VI.

² *Ibid.*, lección V: "Lo humano es la vida del hombre, no su cuerpo, ni siquiera su alma."

certainly not complete.³ This wrong evaluation of rationality and of the role of rationality is the fundamental reason for the creation of the masses.

To be able to comprehend an era, Ortega suggests that one needs to focus on this vital sensitiveness,⁴ exactly the aspect that rationalism misses. Science, ethics, art, religious faith, justice, have escaped the place of subjective awareness and have obtained an objective utility that does not allow them to be functional and effective. An objective culture ends up against the subjective that gave birth to it.⁵ In other words, pure reason cannot be right reason, for Ortega.⁶ The modern European has gained technical knowledge but is a barbarian as regards his limited understanding of the driving forces of the creation of his culture. He is an ignorant, whose only knowledge refers to technical development, but misses the true essence of life, the morale behind the benefits, which is no other than obligation and commitment to a certain target.

Along with these historical and social dynamics, the philosopher from Madrid diagnoses an increasing homogeneity in the Western world, which is responsible for the creation of the deep crisis of the 20th century. “El hombre masa,” the mass-man, is responsible for this crisis. This type of man, the modern man, is made with haste, “empty of his own history,” characterized by the *idola fori*, with no internal reference whatsoever, so similar all over Europe, docile to the international imperatives of fashion, ways of life, current values, opinions, and ideas. This type of man is held accountable, by Ortega, for this “asphyxiating monotony” that has dominated Europe. The mass man can be formed according to anything, which makes manifest that he is a vacant being. Similarly, the world seems empty of purposes, anticipations, ideals. Nobody has concerned himself with supplying them, Ortega remarks.

The mass man preserves his right to appetites and rights but denies obligation. He is full of ideas whereas he is incapable of creating them. He is a snob but that does not render him a noble man.⁷ Practically, he lives in the darkness; he is gradually losing the potential to remain open to a superior level of life.⁸ In this epoch, the presence of a mass is more noticeable than that of any preceding period, but differing from the traditional type in that it remains hermetically enclosed within itself, incapable of submitting to anything or anybody, believing itself self-sufficient. In a word, Ortega says, it is a collectivity that remains indocile, but not in a creative and noble manner. The hermetic man, *el hombre masa*, among other things, most importantly loses his personal mark, his authenticity. So does the Western culture.

³ J. Ortega y Gasset, *El tema de nuestro tiempo* [*To thema tou kairou mas*], trans. C. Tsiropoulos (in Greek) (Athens: Oi ekdoseis ton Philon, 1971), p. 47.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

⁶ Cf. E. Guisán, *Razón y pasión en ética. Los dilemas de la ética contemporánea* (Barcelona: Ed. Anthropos, 1986), passim.

⁷ J. Ortega y Gasset, *La rebellion de las masas* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente en Alianza Editorial, 1979), p. 21.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

Quite disappointingly, even young persons do not have the vital space so as to create personal action. One's life suffocates, neighboring so close with the life of the other, in an overpopulated congregation, where free thinking, all things and all spaces, are burdened by huge numbers of people, whole crowds. Psychologically, this type of man is led to a deterministic adoption of the collective desiderata. By acting and demanding within collectiveness, his action becomes the action of the mass.⁹ This man, who stands far from nobility, is subdued to the influence of the demagogues, becoming the victim of a constant spiritual degeneration. The only hope for him is to become aware of the presence of historical reason. The modern man has realised his historical presence as a Cartesian man (*el hombre moderno empieza por ser el hombre cartesiano*)¹⁰ but Cartesian reason did not become sufficient for more than technological evolution.¹¹ This certain crisis, which comprises the revolt of the masses, is connected not only with politics and the intelligentsia but also with ethics, finances and religion.¹²

The main element of this crisis, that reveals itself among the masses, according to Ortega y Gasset, is not merely that every place is now inundated by crowds of people. He observes that these numbers may have pre-existed but they have never pre-existed as crowds.¹³ The problem is that this is a world where there are no protagonists, only the chorus is present. He clarifies, remarking that as a mass man, he practically means the average man. In this manner, what used to be only a quantitative definition is now also a qualitative one. This qualitative trait leads to the affirmation that each man is no dissimilar to others, therefore he belongs to a type of genus (*tipo genérico*). By this conversion of quantity into quality, there has been achieved a genesis of a type of human being, whose desires, ideas, ways of life, and every life reference that he has, coincide with those of the homogeneous massive collectivity of which he is also part.

Ortega further elucidates by saying that the mass is that thing that does not evaluate itself as something unique or special. As a consequence, the mass man is the man who "feels like everybody else" and who also feels at comfort with the admittance that he evaluates himself as almost identical with anyone else. On the contrary, the minority is governed by a system of ideas or features that make it distinct, and is separated from the mass due to the existence of this internal system. The member of such a minority (*el hombre selecto*) does not regard himself as superior to another human being. The criterion that substantiates his difference is that he claims difficulties and duties; he pursues perfection and nobility, even if he does not always come to the accomplish-

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁰ Ortega y Gasset, *En Torno a Galileo (Esquema de las Crisis)*, lección V.

¹¹ Ortega y Gasset, *La rebellion de las masas*, p. 38.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 46. Cf. J.T. Grahams, *The Social Thought of Ortega y Gasset: A Systematic Synthesis in Postmodernism and Interdisciplinarity* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2001), pp. 373-374. Also cf. Ortega y Gasset, *En Torno a Galileo (Esquema de las Crisis)*, lección VII.

¹³ Ortega y Gasset, *La rebellion de las masas*, p. 47.

ment of his demands.¹⁴ To avoid the pursuit of perfection comprises the foundation of the person's depersonalization.

Hence, the mass has developed great resistance to obedience to the minorities of the select. The mass does not respect them, does not follow them; on the contrary, it places them at the corner of history and the mass takes the place that the select, the people seeking for excellence, should have occupied.¹⁵ The vulgar soul, the soul of *el hombre medio*, while it is aware of its vulgarity, it proclaims, for itself, the right to vulgarity, and indeed imposes it everywhere and in every way.¹⁶ Thus the different, the individual, the capable, the noble, are disregarded, ignored, or rejected. Whoever is not like "everybody else," whoever does not contemplate like "everybody else," is in danger of being trodden upon, annihilated by the horde of barbarians, which is the mass. Ortega vehemently clarifies that he is not a devotee of aristocracy; he aims at analyzing how a society is deprived of its most essential potentialities if it does not seek within its core what constitutes the perfect and the noble.

In his theory, nobility is related to the awareness that the authenticity of life lies in its non-predictability, in its affluence of possibility, therefore in its contingent character.¹⁷ The world is the authentic surroundings of human life, its field of option. Among those options, the principal option is the realization of the human nature. As he explains in *El Esquema de las Crisis*, every person has to make his own decision on what he is to do, on what he is to become.¹⁸ The augmentation of today's world demonstrates, on a theoretical level, the subsequent increase of potentiality, a vast breadth of choice. For the fundamental innovations of this era that have caused this potentiality, Ortega holds responsible three distinct factors: liberal democracy, scientific advancement and industrialism. Those, in conjunction, placed the average man—the great social mass—in conditions of life radically opposed to those by which he had always been surrounded. As a matter of fact, they turned his public existence upside down. In the field of science, there are now more elements, more clues, more techniques and branches than ever before. While the traditional professions were very few, the fragmentation of science has now created relevant new professions.¹⁹ Even though we are in an era during which we have the knowledge and skills to achieve so much, it is apparent that we do not possess what is most crucial: a specific target setting process. This crucial absence of orientation leaves man incomplete, inauthentic. Nonetheless, parado-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁷ Cf. J.A. Rodríguez, "Ética, Razón vital y conciencia de Crisis en Ortega y Gasset; La influencia kantiana," *Revista Observaciones Filosóficas*, 2 (2006), 1-14, p. 1. Also cf. M.C. Paredes Martín, *Pensamiento y conciencia de crisis* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 1994), *passim*.

¹⁸ Ortega y Gasset, *En Torno a Galileo (Esquema de las Crisis)*, lección II: "El hombre, cada hombre tiene que decidir en cada instante lo que va a hacer, lo que va a ser en el siguiente. Esta decisión es intransferible: nadie puede sustituirme en la faena de decidirme, de decidir mi vida."

¹⁹ Ortega y Gasset, *La rebellion de las masas*, p. 71.

xically, despite the fragmentation of science and professions, the crowd appears as a singularity that has been conquered by the goods of the technological culture. The era of the vulgar mass is the era of the colossal. Goods, that before belonged to people with wealth or prestige, now come easily to the possession of the crowd. Man has prevailed over the material world but has not managed to prevail over himself, he has not achieved self-knowledge. Inside this almost unexpected abundance of tools, abilities and goods, provided by the technological culture, man stands aghast, bared from any aims and visions.²⁰ The world that surrounds him does not urge him to any kind of limitation; on the contrary it fosters his wishes, which now can be developed indefinitely.

For the Spanish philosopher, the modern European leaves the impression of a primitive man suddenly risen in the midst of a very old civilisation. In the schools, it has been impossible to do more than instruct the masses in the technique of modern life; it has been impossible to educate them. They have been given tools for a more intense form of existence, but no feeling for their great historic duties; they have been hurriedly inoculated with the pride and power of modern instruments, but not with their spirit. Hence the new generations are getting ready to take over command of the world as if the world were a paradise without trace of former footsteps, without traditional and highly complex problems. As he remarks in the *Esquema de las Crisis*, history ought not to be comprehended as a “mummy exposition”; it has to be lived and materialised as resurrection.²¹

The very perfection with which the 19th century gave an organisation to certain orders of existence has caused the masses benefited thereby to consider it, not as an organised, but as a natural system. The new masses find themselves in the presence of a prospect full of possibilities, and furthermore, quite secure, with everything ready to their hands, independent of any previous efforts on their part. Thus is explained and defined the absurd state of mind revealed by these masses; they are only concerned with their own well-being, and at the same time they remain alien to the cause of that well-being.²² The mass, which is the reason for the crisis of this era, is incapable of realising that the preservation of these privileges and benefits requires a huge as well as conscientious endeavour towards perfection. This type of person, who belongs to the mass, psychologically is a “spoiled child” (*niño mimado*), since his desires are subjected to no restraint, but also due to the fact that he feels no gratitude for what he has under his possession. This, in consequence, makes him feel no obligation for anything and that he is allowed everything. He becomes an individualist because no collectivity seems necessary for him,²³ other than his resemblance with the crowd. In this manner, he becomes isolated, trapped in the irrational feeling that nothing else, apart from his own private

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

²¹ Ortega y Gasset, *En Torno a Galileo (Esquema de las Crisis)*, lección V.

²² Ortega y Gasset, *La rebellion de las masas*, p. 87.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

welfare, matters, but he also continues to demand as if it were his natural right to do so.

So what would consist a fair challenge for a noble life? According to the Spanish philosopher, the militant attitude to life,²⁴ but not alone; it is also the ideal that moves us to progress, it is obligation, a focal interest outside the area of rights. The quest for the noble living does not belong to the market, it equals with the quest for perfection. The historic role of each generation is not fulfilled under the premises of a continuing process that passes no judgment, that sees not itself defended by new criteria. The vital potentiality of a society renders it capable of dealing with crisis, as crisis is meant to be the result of the misunderstanding of our historic and social roles.

Ortega y Gasset's reference to axiology principally aims at highlighting the philosophical perspective of the noble life, a life that, as he upholds, is a life of "servitude for something transcendental." The man, who is not vulgar, grows restless and invents some new gnomon, more difficult, more exigent, to adhere to, a life of obligation and duty. This is life lived as a discipline, life against the radical solitude (*soledad radical*) of the human being: the noble life. In this context, Ortega equates the so self-confident "common life" with a life of barbarism and juxtaposes it to a life of nobility so as to hold it, eventually, responsible for the deep crisis of the era.²⁵ For Ortega, the rebellion of the masses signifies their overall control and influence on everything, from politics to the value system and principles of the Western society, as well as on the orientation of technological advancement and of science. The arithmetic but also moral, political and cultural tyranny of the mass disassociates the human being from the awareness of the need of the subjectivization of the terms of his life, so that his life could retrieve its authenticity. The value problem is a problem at the roots of the human existence. Only by restoring an authentic relationship with prospectivity that will enhance his existential strife towards "vital potentiality" and excellence, will man be qualified for a noble life.

²⁴ Ortega y Gasset, *El tema de nuestro tiempo [To thema tou kairou mas]*, p. 48.

²⁵ Ortega's examination of the qualitative criteria, which should be supportive to the individual and collective effort for excellence, is taken from the point of view of vitalism and perspectivism, whereas it also confronts with the questions raised by the phenomenological approach of the common life.

PART X

Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives on the Crisis: Phenomenology – Deconstruction – Virtue – Theory

Crisis, Image and Mortality: Defining Iconic Capitalism

THEOFANIS TASIS

This paper attempts to understand the current global crisis as a function of late modernity's inherent shortcomings –specifically, its inability to create the imaginary social significations¹ necessary to reproduce institutions and allow people to live meaningful and authentic lives. In doing so, this paper draws on Arendt's reinterpretation of the Ancient Greek distinction between life as *zoe* and life as *bios*, and discusses the importance of the image in the public and the private sphere. Furthermore, it introduces the notion of iconic capitalism after it investigates the relation between the image and politics in the context of mortality. Finally, it also explores, as a possible way out of the current crisis, whether a new emancipatory project is possible by introducing the concept of a politics of bios. The politics of bios are based on a reinterpretation of the Ancient Greek notion of *ἐπιμέλεια εαυτοῦ* (self-care) and include a critique of the image. Please note that this paper describes a work in progress by outlining key concepts of my current research project,² and therefore will inevitably hold inconsistencies and weaknesses. I have to admit that between the high temperature of an exploration project of an unknown *topos* and the frozen geometry of delineating and classifying concepts, I unhesitatingly chose the former. Overall, I try to seek clarity in the use of concepts and rigorous arguments, without rendering a meticulous and inaccessible discourse. To this aim, I restrain myself in the use of footnotes and bibliographical references as much as possible. Similarly, I avoid adhering to an intrusive style, aiming at clear expression and fluid rhythm to deflect the type of rhetoric that often conceals verbosity or poverty of ideas.

1. *The Meaningful Life: Arendt's Distinction of Zoe and Bios*

The word 'crisis' corresponds to the Greek verb *krinein*, which means 'to judge,' 'to decide' or 'to separate.' Hence one could say that critical thinking is the ability to distinguish and to define concepts. In the history of modern philosophy, the concept of *bios* is usually confused with the concept of *zoe* since both are concepts subsumed within 'life.'³ Hannah Arendt is a notable

¹ See C. Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 1998).

² T. Tasis, *Politics of Bios: On Irony* (Athens: Eurasia Publications, 2012).

³ Although Giorgio Agamben initially uses Arendt's distinction between *zoe* and *bios* when he talks about biopolitics, he omits the question of the relationship between politics and bios. For Agamben the entry of *zoe* in the public sphere "is the decisive event of modernity and signals a radical change of political-philosophical categories of classical thought" [G. Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: Stanford University

exception. In her major work *The Human Condition*, published in 1958, she reintroduces the ancient distinction between *zoe* and *bios* as she attempts to develop an original political philosophy centred on the distinction between the private and the public sphere. Arendt adopts the notion of *bios* as well as well as the Ancient Greeks' view of its superiority over *zoe*.⁴ According to the Greeks, human life is not only about *zoe* –namely necessity i.e. bodily needs. For them, human life finds its fulfilment in *bios*– a meaningful life, a life in the polis amongst others, a life as a citizen engaged in political activity.

Based on this distinction between *zoe* and *bios*, Arendt warns that in modernity, the obsession of politics with *zoe* (i.e. the material aspect of life) has crucial consequences for the pursuit of liberty. In her work *On Revolution*, she compares the French and American Revolutions and notes that the emphasis placed by the French Revolution on equality in the social sphere (i.e. on meeting material needs) led to its degeneration into terrorism.⁵ Whereas the French Revolution was mainly about *zoe*, leading to a focus on economy and production for 20th century revolutions under the influence of Marx, the American Revolution was mainly about *bios*. In focusing on the political (i.e. on the concept of liberty), the American Revolution avoided degeneration by creating a democratic public sphere. It succeeded in this precisely because the debates of American revolutionaries evolved around civil rights, political representation, and the separation of powers in order to limit central government. In my opinion, the 20th century heirs of the French and the American Revolutions, due to the misconception of the terms *zoe* and *bios*, failed to engage in a productive dialogue.

Arendt was critical of Marx since he belongs to the tradition of philosophers who reduce *bios* to *zoe*, particularly the reproduction of material condi-

Press, 1998), p.10]. Hence Agamben develops an approach towards the political centered around *zoe* without paying attention to *bios*. In fact by biopolitics he means actually, repeating Foucault's mistake [see M. Foucault, "Politics and Reason," in L.D. Kritzman (ed.), *Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture. Interviews and Other Writings: 1977-1984* (London: Routledge, 1988), 57-85, pp. 60-63], zoepolitics because he emphasises merely the life of the body and not the meaningful life, *bios*. By confusing *zoe* with *bios* Agamben fails to recognize them as interrelated dimensions of mortality. For this reason, although he recognizes the importance of the body in politics, yet without investigating the function of bodily sensations, he is ultimately unable to theorize a conception of the public sphere except in a negative form as a camp. The misuse of the words *zoe* and *bios* can be seen in everyday language as well. Take for example the words biology and biography. The word biography describes the account of a person's life i.e. his actions and accords correctly to the word *bios*, the meaningful life, the human life. In this context biology should describe, since it derives from the words *bios* and *logos*, the discourse on life instead it describes the scientific study of all living organisms including their structure, function, growth, evolution, distribution, and taxonomy. So when we use the word biology we actually mean zoology.

⁴ Contrary to Agamben and Foucault, Arendt's conception of *zoe* and *bios* serves as a starting point for positive reinterpretation of the political.

⁵ H. Arendt, *On Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1962). See also H. Arendt, "Revolution and public happiness," *Commentary*, 30 (1960), 413- 422.

tions for the conservation and reproduction of labour power.⁶ Nonetheless, she shares with him the common belief that for human beings freedom arrives only once they leave the realm of necessity. This belief is due, as we shall see, to a problematic distinction between *zoe* and *bios*, enhanced by a conception of the body as a vessel of the self.

To describe briefly the term *vita activa* used by Arendt as the title for the German edition of *The Human Condition*, it primarily means that man has a body that labours, and is subject to necessity, decay and death. Life as *zoe*, as biological existence, unfolds in the form of labour, i.e. satisfying bodily needs in the private sphere. It includes all bodily functions and is the precondition of *bios*, with the latter taking place entirely in the public sphere that constitutes the domain of freedom. *Bios* thus is defined as “life in its non-biological sense, the span of time each man has between birth and death, manifests itself in action and speech”⁷ and constitutes “an autonomous and authentically human way of life.”⁸

However, one may have serious reasons to doubt Arendt’s strict distinction between *zoe* and *bios*. First of all, human needs are not met in the same way in different societies or in different historical times, not even within the same society. The reason for this is that human needs are always experienced and satisfied in a cultural context, through social significations. Let us take cooking as an example, which is representative of the entanglement between *zoe* and *bios*. Certainly, people have to satisfy their hunger in order to survive, but the fact that a devout Muslim would prefer to starve than to eat pork shows us that the satisfaction of biological needs is never conceptually neutral.

Contrary to what Arendt claims, human life is experienced always and everywhere at the same time as *zoe* and *bios* in all its manifestations. People do not just labour when they labour and they do not just work when they work. Since the dawn of history, women sang when weaving or washing clothes in the river, while men sang when toiling the earth as farmers, paddling as sailors or marching in battle as soldiers. A shepherd improvises on his flute while herding sheep, and a cook hums a tune while stretching the dough. Farmers tell stories while drying the tobacco leaves or dance in the must when making wine. It is difficult to understand why these activities are not “authentically human ways of life.”

The problematic distinction of the concepts *zoe* and *bios* has grave consequences. When Arendt defines *vita activa*, as opposed to *vita contemplativa*,⁹ she distinguishes three human activities based on the distinction between *zoe* and *bios* and the resulting distinction between the private and public sphere. The first is ‘labour,’ which, as mentioned above, corresponds to the biological

⁶ H. Arendt, “Karl Marx and the Tradition of Western Political Thought,” *Social Research*, 69 (2002), 273-319.

⁷ H. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 173.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁹ See H. Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*, 2 vols. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972).

activities of the human body. Secondly, 'work' corresponds to the production of material objects. Finally, there is 'action,' which corresponds to interaction between subjects. The first two activities are linked to *zoe*: labour because it is necessary for survival, i.e. for the preservation and reproduction of life both for the individual as well as the life of the human species; work, because it defines life quality, achieved through the production of objects and goods necessary for the preservation of biological functions. Action, the third human activity, is linked to *bios* because "action, in so far as it engages in founding and pre serving political bodies, creates the condition for remembrance, that is, for history."¹⁰

In Arendt's syllogistic these three fundamental human activities are defined by the presence of other human beings inside a triangle with *zoe*, *bios* and death as reference points. Although labour and work do not presuppose a coexistence with other human beings, since they can sometimes be performed in a condition of solitude, the lack of co-labourers and co-workers has as a price the loss of humanity. The man who labours alone becomes, according to Arendt, mean and evil, while the man who works alone cannot be regarded as a *homo faber*. As for the last activity, human action, it is absolutely inconceivable without the coexistence of other humans. Arendt locates the reason for the gradual assimilation of the political into the social, and the subsequent confusion regarding both concepts, in this particular relationship between action and coexistence.

Arendt distinguishes prudently between the coexistence of humans due to their biological need for companionship, a feature in common with the other animals that live in herds, flocks or swarms, and political life. The biological need for companionship is satisfied, as labour is as well, in the private sphere. This takes place within the *oikos* and family. Politics, on the other hand, takes place in the public sphere, established by action and *logos* (reason and language), properties that distinguish humans from other animals. Hence politics, i.e. life in the public sphere, is not only superior to life in the private sphere, but is also in stark contrast to it. This is mostly due to the fact that, for Arendt, *bios* is linked to the pursuit of immortality through aiming at posterity, which is obtained by performing memorable acts in the public sphere.

Therefore it comes as no surprise that Arendt traces the origins of the distinction between *zoe* and *bios* in the rise of the city-state.¹¹ The gradual depreciation of the *oikos*, caused by the dissolution of the traditional forms of social organization based on kinship, is followed by the emergence of the notion of *bios* as a contemplative life dedicated to the pursuit of immortality. So the creation of the public sphere is the expression of the pursuit of immortality and the area in which it takes place. This public sphere, which is instituted by a society aware of its temporality with citizens who define themselves as mortals, will be the starting point and the basis for the democratic organization of the polis.

¹⁰ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, pp. 8-9.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

The connection between the public and the private sphere is that the former is not dominated by the necessity and utilitarian thinking which are the main features of *zoe*. Instead, *bio* revolves around truth, beauty and the good. Moreover, in the public sphere people are persuaded not by violence, which battles against necessity in the private sphere, but by logos. Because of these two characteristics, which constitute the main features of *bios*, the public sphere constitutes the prime area of freedom as opposed to the private sphere, which is dominated by necessity and inequality. In this context, Arendt argues that inequality stems from the division of labor and is, for this reason, an intrinsic characteristic of the private sphere.

My thesis is that Arendt conceptualises the political as a public sphere strategy of transforming the mortal, vulnerable body to an immortal, unchanging image, through the preference of vision over hearing. In this context, I argue that the political dimension of the private sphere remained occluded to Arendt, who regarded necessity as a sufficient, but not a necessary condition for the creation of inequality. However, for Arendt, the importance of the public sphere lies in the fact that it establishes a space in which the acceptance of the abyss of the ultimate meaninglessness of the human condition is possible. Arendt argues that in Western civilization, the encounter with the abyss and the striving for immortality took place simultaneously on the public sphere arena which emerged for the first time in Athenian democracy, securing a space of visibility for all citizens by all citizens. Visibility was a condition for the pursuit of immortality through what is to come in posterity, an ordeal that was deemed achievable through extraordinary, and hence memorable, actions.¹²

2. *Rethinking the Political: Image, Meaning and Mortality*

The unique relationship between vision and democracy, through the establishment and functioning of a public sphere, is hard to find in other cultures. In the Jewish or Islamic cultures, for example, the dominating sense is hearing. Here, in the epicentre of social institutions lies not the image but the word of God or his prophet. It is for this reason that these cultures produced neither theatre and painting, nor a democratic public sphere. In this context, it is not accidental that the fertile assimilation of Ancient Greek culture by the Arabs did not include tragedy. In the phonocentric Arab culture, stories are narrated and heard: they are only made of sound, so they only require a narrator. These stories have no need for actors or *ηθοποιοί*, literally the “creators of an ethos” in Ancient Greek.

The concept of the viewer, as opposed to the listener, already contains a certain perception of the public based on a preference of vision over hearing, a preference that can be observed in the idolatry of the ancient Greeks. Once Christianity, with its promise of an afterlife, became prevalent in the West, the relationship between vision and hearing was disrupted. At the same time, both

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 55.

the public sphere and the possibility of achieving immortality through it disappeared, two factors which had previously served as an incentive for political action.

Nonetheless, the public sphere did re-emerge several centuries later in cities like Venice and Florence. The remaking of the public sphere in the West, following the rediscovery of Greek antiquity, was accompanied by a restoration of image and visuality. Renaissance painting and Renaissance theatre are characteristic products of this restoration process. This time, however, image and vision was given importance without attributing the function of immortality to the image. In antiquity, the image of a person perceived by others in the public sphere conditioned the person's remembrance by posterity. It is the image, not the voice or the scent, that others remember either in the political sphere or at the level of the subject.

In modernity, the process of image production speeds up.¹³ A peculiar feature of the modern society is that it institutionalizes itself increasingly through visualization. Since it cannot create new meanings, it is substituting social significations with images in order to compensate for its intrinsic denial of death. This repudiation of death exerts a gravitational force in the society, one that shows itself in the society's inability to create imaginary social significations. These significations would in turn allow the subject to experience the life of a citizen. Such an experience would entail the possibility of immortality, and ensure a symbiosis (in the sense of living and experiencing together) through meaning. What the modern society allows the subject, however, is only coexistence with other subjects within a non-political field of icons.

The aforementioned gravitational force transformed citizens to subjects by causing the collapse of social significations in modernity. This collapse accelerated the succession of historical events, which was also brought about by the contraction of social-historical time. This contraction refers to an accelerated creation and destruction of political, social and economic events. The hyper-sphere of modernity has had iconic capitalism as its most recent form. The term 'iconic capitalism' describes a mode of production that turns images into icons. This production mode is marked by the dematerialisation of goods and services, as well as the fusion of the private and the public spheres. Dematerialisation can be witnessed in the process through which books, newspapers, magazines, records, movies, money, work, communication, education, and social relations become increasingly more digital. Underlying this dematerialisation process through digitalized visualization is a sophisticated defense mechanism fashioned by iconic capitalism against the collapse of meaning, a collapse which marks the era of late Industrial capitalism. Iconic capitalism requires this sophisticated defense mechanism because it has to suppress death.

Today's crisis can be understood as this collapse of meaning and its substitution by image. It can be seen as the end result of a degrading process 'mean-

¹³ See *The Codified World*, in V. Flusser, *Writings* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

ing' has undergone, leading to the impossibility of conserving key values of the Western tradition, such as those of humanism, and to the replacement of these key values with merit-based signification. The degradation of meaning can best be seen in the case of education, which has been turned into an institution whose principles are constantly instrumentalized in favour of its financial benefits. The economic criterion, not the production of democratic citizens, is the primary principle when it comes to designing educational policies and research programs. The collapse of meaning is also evident in the incapability of Western societies to produce social significations suited at giving meaning to collective and individual life.

Iconic capitalism cannot manage to overcome the collapse of meaning because of its inability to produce an anthropological figure capable of reproducing its institutions. The figure of the teacher, for example, propagates values that are undermined by capitalism itself. The teacher, like many other anthropological figures, is not produced by the system. Since the values and the figures cannot be reproduced, the system looks for subjects that reproduce its institutions. The collapse of meaning is not overcome precisely due to the rejection of mortality intrinsic in the capital-producing mechanism. Recognition of mortality would reveal the contingency of institutions at work in iconic capitalism, hence undermining its legitimacy and its claim to universal validity. Death is not to be visualized, nor can it be turned into an icon. Thus, the increasing virtualization in iconic capitalism is *a priori* a doomed project: it claims to visualize what intrinsically escapes visualization. In short, the non-visualizability of death is the insurmountable limit of the virtualization process and the source of the project's inconsistencies and antinomies. At the same time, it is set as the project's ultimate aspiration. Conquering the realm of visualization pertaining to death would mean nothing less than accomplishing immortality.

Closer investigation allows one to see that the rejection of mortality is not due to death's unrepresentability. The inability to represent death is what distinguishes societies of iconic capitalism from societies before it. Previous societies attempted to visualize the unrepresentable by either explicitly or implicitly self-instituting imaginary significations of immortality. In other words, the great civilizations of the past were built, more or less, in the face of death. Their creations, arts and letters included an awareness of and a fear of mortality, while at the same time representing a longing of the mortal subject for immortality. These created entities would also provide the subject with a medium through which he strived for and claimed immortality. Gottfried Benn calls the struggle for immortality through creating objects an "inner mission" that masks the 'inhuman' within the human:

"All the great spirits of white people [meaning: from the Renaissance onwards] –this is quite obvious– not only felt an inner mission to fulfil their creative nihilism. This fundamental feeling that permeated the most diverse currents of modernity –the religious feeling in Dürer, the morale in Tolstoy, the epistemic in Kant, the anthropological in Goethe, the capitalistic in Balzac– was the fun-

damental element of all of their work. With tremendous attention it reappears constantly. With ambiguous queries and phrasings they are closing in on it on every page, on every chapter within each line. Not a moment they are not mistaken about the essence of their creative inner being. It is the abysmal, the void, the without purpose, the cold, the inhuman.”¹⁴

In Western civilization, the encounter with the abyss and the strive for immortality takes place simultaneously in the public sphere. Iconic capitalism suppresses death –its unrepresentable core– thereby pressing and reshaping the public and the private sphere, economy, religion and culture. In this context, the free market-based economic sphere’s increased domination corresponds to its intense resistance to the gravitational attraction (exerted by death at the core of the capitalist society) due to its material background. The economic sphere was founded primarily in *zoe* and only secondarily in *bios*, so the importance of icons was limited in its functioning until the rise of iconic capitalism and the transformation of the financial markets. The economic sphere does not constantly expand, colonizing the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) as Habermas argues, and it shrinks as well, like all the other spheres, though at a much slower pace. With the economic hyper-sphere shrinking, the realm of free market capitalism colonizes the lifeworld, with the latter’s much lower rate of contraction being the primary reason for the domination. However, as the economy is increasingly reliant on financial markets and the trade of finance products, and not on the production of goods, we observe a deformation of the economic sphere. The dematerialization of the economy creates a bubble economy. Such an economy cannot resist the gravitational pull of iconic capitalism and its rejection of death.

The only sphere capable of expansion during the shrinking process is that of technological science. The Internet is a characteristic expression of this expansion. As it expands, it also undermines the distinction between the private and the public sphere and creates a virtual space of public privacy. This virtual space diffuses increasingly in the real world, first as a bubble, and then in the form of a hybrid sphere inhabited by bodiless subjects that interact only through sight and hearing. A fundamental feature common to these residents, either as spectators, readers or listeners, is their gradual transformation into *atopos* beings, just as the Internet is literally a utopia (a non-*topos*).

The Internet as a hybrid sphere tends to homogenise all previous spheres. Two spheres which interest us here and which are primarily merged are the public and the private. In the private sphere, the Internet homogenises by attempting to gradually exclude labour and by radically reshaping many activities to take modern forms. For instance, reflection in the form of journaling, the cultivation of friendships and artistic creation have been replaced in the domain of the Internet by messaging, status updates on social networking sites, and video, photograph and music postings. In the public sphere, Internet

¹⁴ G. Benn, “Weinhaus Wolf,” in B. Hillebrand (ed.), *Prosa und Autobiographie* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1989), 129-148, p. 145.

-based social media are eroding the sphere's political function, transforming icons into spectacles (ephemeral images), and the public sphere into a space of public privacy and digital surveillance.

The Internet has intensified the trend towards virtualization. It makes up for iconic capitalism's defense mechanism and corresponds to the increasing dominance of vision over the other senses, as well as the gradual prevalence of the icon in the public sphere. In this context, the icon prevails, not as an image of the active citizen-subject, but as a substitute for meaning.

An offshoot of the virtualization process promoted by the Internet is the emphasis on *zoe*—life as the material dimension of mortality, as opposed to *bios*—life as the poetic dimension of immortality with an emphasis on the body. The body is no longer defined through biological needs, as it was more or less in earlier historical periods; rather, it is perceived as a source of pleasure, excited and satisfied by the consumption of both material goods and services.

From tattoos to cosmetic and sex reassignment surgery, from health food, organic food and veganism to vitamins and other diet supplements, from the apparent democratization of haute cuisine to the advance of multinational fast food chains, from fashion and the use of new materials for textile manufacture to the massive fitness and sport industry, from saunas, spas and massages to hairdressing and bejeweling, not to mention the sex industry and the modern slave prostitutes, we witness the return of the body. This return, if not celebration, questions the *de facto* sovereignty of vision and icons. In this context, consumption, which addresses all the senses, confirms through the physicality of the body the fragile reality of the subject in iconic capitalism.

We can understand devices like the iPad or the iPhone—devices in the working of which vision meets with the senses of hearing and touch. This engagement of more of senses is an attempt to make the user experience the Internet in a way that the resident of the hybrid sphere can reclaim the body. The overwhelming success of these devices is somehow reassuring: that the traditional practices of the subject's interaction with the material world will never disappear. While reading, a process of vision, will never disappear, writing by hand is likely to vanish, to be substituted by typing—an abstract undertaking when compared to handwriting, a process in which the whole hand and not only the fingers is engaged. Handwriting, with its fluidity of motion as a result of the constant contact between the body and the writing surface, engages the body through touch in a more intimate manner. This explains why typing as an iconisation of the writing process through immaterialization gains ground in iconic capitalism. It may as well be replaced by voice dictation in the continuing effort of iconic capitalism to generate novel and more attractive products.¹⁵ The effort goes hand in hand with consumption naively promising a sustained maximization of pleasure with each new product or service. Constant maximisation of pleasure is of course impossible

¹⁵ See V. Flusser, *Does Writing Have a Future?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

since the gradual mitigation leads to an inevitable saturation of the consumer and his senses. A direct consequence of this is the demand for increasingly stronger stimuli for gradually lower pleasure levels.

The promise of pleasure through consumption offered by iconic capitalism fails out of a different reason as well. On the one hand, it fails to provide meaning that is not scantily and negatively produced. It is incapable of transforming life as *zoe* into life as *bios*, the meaningful life, since it does not provide any prospect of immortality for the consuming subject. On the other hand, it offers only a transient, palliative effect against the subject's mortality. At the level of society as a whole, when we talk of the dominance of market economy over politics, we describe nothing more than a problem of temporality, i.e., an unconditional sovereignty of the present over the future and the past as a consequence of the absence of a politics of mortality.

A symptom of the sovereignty of the present in iconic capitalism is that the past and the future exist only as projections of the present. It entails that the principle of short-term benefit or management of direct and everyday issues –in conjunction with the complexity of the different interests as well as the liquidity (i.e. rapid change in economic, geopolitical and internal power relations) of situations– ultimately undermines the planning and implementation of any long-term policies. Therefore, an absence of a politics of mortality is felt, with the subjects as actors and society as a whole being aware of their own mortality. The existence of this recognition alone would enable the public sphere to take the past into consideration through history, to act in the present, and to plan for the future while enhancing the democratic ethos of citizens through the cultivation of self-limitation. For this reason, a politics worthy of its name always emphasizes mortality and therefore produces meaning instead of mere icons.

Unable to offer the social significations necessary for the shaping of life into *bios*, thus according it a possibility for immortality, iconic capitalism – despite the domination of icons and due to the merging and the homogenization of the public and the private sphere –is ultimately unable to reproduce itself in the hybrid sphere of the Internet. Hence, it attempts to offer a material immortality, an immortality in the dimension of *zoe* that makes the body immortal. In the next stage, in a desperate attempt to face the inability of producing social significations capable of giving meaning to mortality, iconic capitalism embarks on an evolutionary project of transforming the human species in order to quasi-abolish mortality: aiming at immortality in the future hybrid sphere, cyber organisms, robots and genetically engineered humans are three versions of the future of humanity ‘designed’ by iconic capitalism. The above-mentioned versions do not necessarily compete with one another: they may coexist. Meanwhile, the majority of the human race will be either struggling to survive, thus experiencing life mainly as *zoe*, or they will survive lacking the possibilities of transforming life into *bios*.

In this struggle within iconic capitalism, the privileged will be educated (where education means cultivating the ability to shape life as *bios*), while the disadvantaged will mainly acquire technical skills and information. This

struggle is distinct from and cannot be described as a class struggle because it requires the determination of a radically different concept of ‘class,’ one that is different from how the concept is put forth by Marxism. This leads to a fundamental difference between the disadvantaged and the privileged. The privileged will work or act thus creatively experiencing their lives, while the disadvantaged labour and work to make a living or just survive. In conclusion, the rejection of death in iconic capitalism results in life as *zoe* and life as *bios* not being recognized as two complementary dimensions of mortality. *Bios* is reduced to a life of pleasure through consumption defined by icons, the substitutes for meaning.

3. *Exiting the Crisis by Creating New Meanings: Politics of Bios as an Emancipatory Project*

Although “in the last three centuries philosophers –as one might show by drawing a line from Kant to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche– realize with increasing clarity that they seek nothing else but meaning,”¹⁶ the distinction between *zoe* (life common to all living beings) and *bios* (human life) has been largely ignored or misinterpreted. At the same time the misinterpretation has served to conceal the importance of the human body in politics. The consequences of this concealment can be observed in two phenomena. First, a negative view of the body due to its connection with life as *zoe*, i.e., the material conditions of life is expounded. Secondly, a notion of politics is propagated that is based on *zoe*, i.e., necessity instead of meaning and liberty. In political philosophy, the axiomatic assumptions of the discipline are made to include an implicit hierarchy of bodily functions and sensations, especially with a superiority of vision over other senses. In this superiority of vision we can trace the origins of the transformation of philosophizing as theorizing in the Western tradition. The word ‘theory’ originates from the Greek verb *theorein*, which means seeing; critical thinking initially meant the criticism of images. I argue that the most entrenched problems in political philosophy find their origin in the above assumptions, hence there is a necessity for a critique of the image in Modernity. The term ‘politics of *bios*’ describes forms of self-governance and of intersubjectivity in iconic capitalism within the framework of mortality. These include practices of Eros, friendship, work, family and more generally the creation of forms of participation as the democratic exercise of public power.

The politics of *bios* takes place in the private as well as in the public sphere; it can be understood as a set of practices that allows the explicit shaping of life as *zoe* into *bios*. Shaping life into *bios* means the creation of a project in the form of an icon or a coherent narrative, and presupposes a reflection on established images and their relation to imaginary social significations.¹⁷

¹⁶ V. Gerhardt, “Zur philosophischen Ortsbestimmung der Gegenwart,” *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 40 (1992), 597-609, p. 605.

¹⁷ Regarding imaginary social significations and their function in institutions, see C. Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge Mass: The MIT Press, 1998).

Especially for the subject, the explicit transformation of life into *bios* is achieved through its self-creation as a result of *επιμέλεια εαυτού* (care of one-self). The term *επιμέλεια εαυτού* describes the creation and cultivation of practices in managing pleasure, solitude, *eros*, love and power through exercises that include the body. The political dimension of the *επιμέλεια εαυτού* lies in the fact that its practice occurs inside spheres where power is a basic element of the interaction between subjects or between subjects and institutions. When the vector of the interaction is constant in its direction, power relations become forms of domination that govern both private and public spheres, consolidating concrete forms of *bios*.

In my syllogism, I understand power as a boundary condition of the politics of *bios*, in the sense that it is always created, cultivated and exercised within power relations. Power is defined as the capacity to enforce the will in an interaction, while domination is defined as an unquestionable power relationship. Power is about the distribution of human energy, i.e., the ability to produce work either as a result of self-care or the ability to labour or work. This includes the production of material goods or services and the control and distribution of information. The distribution of human energy also includes the production and management of icons. It should be noted that creating and cultivating a self-image is also part of self-care. Cultivating a self-image includes managing images (photos and videos) of us that are posted on social media, as well as the work on the self-image in the real world. The latter consists of choosing objects we use in our daily lives as well as interventions with how our bodies look. We choose our haircut, clothes, accessories and jewelry; we change our bodies through gymnastics, piercing, tattoos and even plastic surgery.

The term ‘life as politics of *bios*’ describes the ‘creation’ of the forms of self-governance, those of communication, practices of love, friendship, cooperation, the family, as well as the creation of the forms of participation in the public sphere, next to the democratic exercise of power. The politics of *bios* aims to enhance the unfolding of the imagination and the creativity of both the subject and society in order to create meaning on both levels. Its central feature is the elucidation of power structures and the questioning of the institutions of iconic capitalism. Its critical function is to uncover the mechanisms by which people are led to experience their lives as *zoe* while at the same time strengthening their capacity of self-governance and self-creation.

I admit that, despite the revision of my original intent, I am aware that the questions raised, and the issues outlined here, need further development, clarification and refinement in order to achieve the fullest consistency of terms and meanings. In any case, I hope that those who will take interest in the questions raised here and decide to work in that direction gained something useful that will help them advance the politics of *bios*. But I also try to keep in mind that:

For a critical analysis of the Castoriadian œuvre see T. Tasis, *Cornelius Castoriadis: Eine Disposition der Philosophie* (Saarbrücken: Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008).

“Each time you write something and you send it out into the world and it becomes public, obviously everybody is free to do with it what he pleases, and this is as it should be. I do not have any quarrel with this. You should not try to hold your hand now on whatever may happen to what you have been thinking for yourself. You should rather try to learn from what other people do with it.”¹⁸

¹⁸ H. Arendt, “Remarks to the American Society of Christian Ethics, 1973,” in *The Papers of Hannah Arendt* at the Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1973), MSS Box 70, p. 011828.

Dealing with the Crisis via Contemporary French Philosophy¹ (and Some Other Thinkers)

YANNIS PRELORENTZOS

Introduction

I will start with some preliminary remarks, which are going to give a certain *moralistic* tone to my paper (this term is used as an allusion to the famous 17th century French *moralistes*,² who have deeply influenced and inspired, among others, a great part of 20th century French philosophers³ and writers⁴):

(a) I have always tried to avoid playing the role of the *homo loquax*, in the sense of a person who, according to Bergson,⁵ speaks superficially about almost everything, often repeating trivial abstract ideas, without having something important and original to say. Philippe Soulez has already pointed out the importance of this issue in Bergson's philosophy in his admirable book *Bergson politique* (1989).⁶

(b) From a certain point of view, this paper is one of the most difficult I have ever written, because it does not concern a specific, clearly delimited subject, but the entire, multi-dimensional and complicated actual world situation in its fluid and uncertain field of antagonistic tendencies. Facing this

¹ I warmly thank Chara Banacou-Karagouni and Eleni Leontsini for having read this text very carefully and for their precious remarks.

I would like to express my warmest congratulations to the members of the Local Organizing Committee and of the RVP (Council for Research in Values and Philosophy) Organizing Committee of our July 2013 International Conference on their excellent work, especially to the colleagues and friends Golfo Maggini, Eleni Karabatzaki and Vassiliki Solomou-Papanicolaou. In particular I would like to thank Golfo for her powerful and untiring efforts and for her admirable and extraordinary performance. Particular thanks should also be addressed to Yiota Sioula, for the accomplishment of the secretarial duties, and to our students, as well, for their active participation.

² Cf. A. Levi, *French Moralists: The Theory of the Passions 1585 to 1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964). See also B. Parmentier, *Le siècle des moralistes. De Montaigne à La Bruyère* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, coll. «Points/Essais,» 2000), and L. van Delft, *Les moralistes. Une apologie* (Paris: Gallimard, coll. «Folio/Essais,» 2008).

³ Among others Bergson, Alain, Gabriel Marcel, Gaston Bachelard, Vladimir Jankélévitch, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and Raymond Aron.

⁴ Cf., in a characteristic manner, B. de Falloi, «Berl, l'étrange témoin,» in E. Berl, *La fin de la III^e République* (1968) (Paris: Gallimard, coll. «Folio/Histoire,» 2007), p. 17. See also *op. cit.* pp. 34-35.

⁵ Cf. Bergson, *La pensée et le mouvant* (1934) (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Quadrige/Grands textes,» 2009), p. 92.

⁶ Cf. P. Soulez, *Bergson politique* (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Philosophie d'aujourd'hui,» 1989), pp. 225-263. See also P. Soulez, F. Worms, *Bergson. Biographie* (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Quadrige,» 2002, pp. 197 and 365).

global situation, I feel that I have more doubts and questions than certainties, like Socrates' demon on a practical level, and, in some way, according to Bergson's philosophical intuition, concerning the cognitive one.⁷

(c) Nobody wished that this crisis happened, we did not ask for it. We are not masochists. Since it is undoubtedly here, though, we have to face it in the best possible way, both individually and collectively.

(d) What we have to do on both levels, and also in everyday life, is first to understand and then to try to change the situation. An *efficient and effective* change could only be based on a true comprehension, in the best possible way.

As Spinoza admirably said, “before, and instead of, laughing or crying, before, and instead of, scorning, we need to understand,”⁸ and “to understand via the knowledge of the causes of what actually happens.”⁹

(e) Hard work is required for such a comprehension; we should try to be as precise and concrete as possible, avoiding abstract ideas and intellectual constructions, paying attention to matters, not to words.¹⁰

(f) My *ingenium* (I am using this Latin term in its Spinozist meaning¹¹), my natural inclination is akin to Diderot's: I distinguish the good elements of any situation, trying nevertheless not to neglect its bad ones; it is spontaneously that this happens.¹² I am neither an optimist nor a pessimist; I am just – using William James's notion in a non-religious acception– a “meliorist” considering things in a positive way, looking forward to a progressive amelio-

⁷ Cf. «L'intuition philosophique» (1911), in Bergson, *La pensée et le mouvant*, op. cit., 117-142, pp. 120-121. Bergson himself makes such a comparison.

⁸ Cf. *Ethica Ordine Geometrico demonstrata*, Pars Tertia, Praefatio (*Ethics*, Part III, foreword), in Spinoza, *Opera*, hrsg. von C. Gebhardt (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1925), Vol. II, p. 138: “*Ad illos revertere volo, qui hominum Affectus, & actiones detestari, vel ridere malunt, quam intelligere.*”

⁹ According to all the studies that I took into account for the article at hand, the first challenge lies in understanding and analysing the current reality which led to this point. According to Généreux, in the case of France, and the Western world overall, understanding and analysing the “Thirty Glorious Years” is a necessity, ie. roughly from 1950 to 1980. Cf. J. Généreux, *À la recherche du progrès humain*, Vol. 3: *La Grande Régression* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, coll. «Points/Essais,» 2011), pp. 20-21.

¹⁰ Cf. H. Bergson, *Mélanges* (Paris: P.U.F., 1972), p. 367: “Therefore many among us travel through existence, the eyes stuck on formulas that have been written by a sort of inner guide which neglects to observe life because it complies, simply, with whatever is said about it and ponders on words rather than objects.”

¹¹ Cf. a very interesting, creative use of this Spinozist notion in the frame of the philosophical study of our identity (both personal and social), in the new philosophical work of C. Jaquet, *Les transclasses ou la non-reproduction* (Paris: P.U.F., 2014), in particular pp. 95-102 (“*Ingenium* ou complexion”) and part two: «La complexion des transclasses.»

¹² Cf. D. Diderot, *Lettres à Sophie Volland*, choice of texts and presentation Jean Varloot (Paris: Gallimard, coll. «Folio classique,» 2007), p. 65: “It is true that I naturally lean toward ignoring faults and find excitement in virtues (qualités). I am mostly influenced with the lure of virtues despite the defects of vices. I slowly and gradually detest bad people and I seek to find the good ones. If there is a nice point in an essay, or in one's personality, or on a painting, or on a statue, my eyes focus on it and it is all that I see and all that I remember.”

ration of any situation.¹³ However, if we were obliged to choose between optimism and pessimism, I am afraid that Alain's, the French philosopher's, claim is right: "the human condition is such that if we do not have as a rule an invincible optimism, immediately the worst pessimism is true."¹⁴

(g) An efficient way of dealing with the crisis requires the ability of grasping reality and ourselves as a whole, neither from a remote (*sub specie aeternitatis*) nor from a "too close" point of view, that might enable us to understand that the present situation is not the end of the world; it is not the first and certainly not the last crisis in human history, and undoubtedly not the most important one. Unfortunately, every crisis entails a number of victims.

(h) It would be useful if everyone could distinguish between the different faces of the present crisis (financial-economical, fiscal, social, political, cultural, personal, spiritual etc.) and try to identify the specificity of each one. The claim "we have to consider the crisis as an opportunity" might be trivial; nevertheless, there is no doubt that every crisis –and the actual one is not an exception–, could be considered, under certain circumstances, as an opportunity for an individual and collective rebirth. It is within such a frame that a number of philosophers and thinkers develop their analyses of crises in general, starting by examining the etymology of the Greek term "krisis", and especially its medical connotations.¹⁵

(i) If Deleuze's critique of Aristotle is accurate, as I believe, we do not have a natural tendency to meditation. It is only under pressure that we come to meditation, when we have to deal with a hard and violent situation. According to Deleuze, thinking, in the full sense of the word, is something rare and precious, thinking is a kind of feast.¹⁶ The periods of crisis may present an interesting aspect from this point of view, because people are more and more compelled to abandon or to change their usually more or less thoughtless life

¹³ Cf. the last pages of W. James's *Pragmatism*, in W. James, *Pragmatism and Other Writings*, ed., intro. and notes G. Gunn (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), pp. 131-132: "You see that pragmatism can be called religious, if you allow that religion can be pluralistic or merely melioristic in type; [...] what I take the liberty of calling the pragmatistic or melioristic type of theism is exactly what you require."

¹⁴ I borrow Alain's citation from Sébastien Charles, who uses it as a motto in his chapter on Gilles Lipovetsky, in his book *La philosophie française en questions. Entretiens* (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, Le Livre de Poche, coll. «Biblio/Essais,» 2003), p. 185.

¹⁵ Cf., for instance, a) C. Castoriadis, *La montée de l'insignifiance. Les carrefours du labyrinthe 4* (1996) (Paris: Seuil, coll. «Points/Essais,» 2007), p. 106. b) É. Moutsopoulos, *Valences de l'action* (Athènes: Académie d'Athènes, Centre de Recherche sur la Philosophie Grecque, 2012), pp. 307-308. c) M. Serres, *Le temps des crises* (Paris, Éditions Le Pommier, 2009; Greek edition, Athens: Kalentis, 2011), p. 10: "according to medical terminology, in order to overcome a crisis, it is required that the body does not return to its former state, but should discover a new way of life." Cf. also J. Derrida, *L'autre cap suivi de La démocratie ajournée* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991), pp. 34-35, without mention of the medical connotations of the Greek verb *krinein*.

¹⁶ We meet this assertion in many of his books, mainly in *Proust et les signes* (1964) (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Quadrige,» 2006), pp. 115-124 («L'image de la pensée»), in particular pp. 116-119.

and start thinking about it.¹⁷ Thinking is a power in itself and to be conscious of this power already provides a satisfaction. Genuine thinking is more precious, though, because, according to Spinoza's thesis in the *Ethics*, his masterpiece, it can liberate us –and help us to liberate the others– from the slavery of sad feelings and irrational desires.¹⁸ In the present case, in particular, it can liberate us from the sad desire to control other individuals, a sign of a lack of real power –this is the new dominant form of power, a substitute for the ancient one, the discipline.¹⁹ On the other side, it can liberate us from the slavery of narcissism, passive hedonism and artificial needs, which precisely lead us to consume, over and over, more or less useless things and to consider everything, including human beings, as commodities. These are some of the main characteristics of the new face of contemporary individualism in the developed societies, according to Gilles Lipovetsky²⁰ or of the ongoing privatization or *idiotization* of the individuals denounced by Cornelius Castoriadis,²¹ and also of the contemporary narcissism denounced by André Comte-Sponville.²²

¹⁷ André Comte-Sponville arrives at the same conclusion: cf. Charles, *La philosophie française en questions*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

¹⁸ About the powerful insight of Spinoza's treatment of our liberation of "sad feelings," cf. G. Deleuze, *Spinoza. Philosophie pratique* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1981), mainly the ch. II: «Sur la différence de l'éthique avec une morale,» section III: «Dévalorisation de toutes les 'passions tristes' (au profit de la joie): Spinoza l'athée.»

¹⁹ It is Foucault's and Deleuze's idea; cf. mainly G. Deleuze, *Pourparlers 1972-1990* (1990) (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, coll. «Reprise,» 2003), ch. 16: «Contrôle et devenir,» and ch. 17: «Post-scriptum sur les sociétés de contrôle.» Gilles Lipovetsky also considers that "the second individualist revolution," which occurred with "mass consumption revolution and mass communication, all within the dynamics of a democratic welfare state," replaced the previous "disciplinary and militant, heroic and moral" individualism; cf. *L'ère du vide. Essais sur l'individualisme contemporain* (1983) (Paris: Gallimard, coll. «Folio/ Essais,» 1993), p. 316.

²⁰ Cf. the entire work of G. Lipovetsky, kicked off with his book entitled *L'ère du vide*. See also the way in which Lipovetsky reformulates the thesis posed in his 1983 book with regard to fashion, ethics and sexuality in his following three books: *L'empire de l'éphémère. La mode et son destin dans les sociétés modernes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987). *Le Crépuscule du devoir. L'éthique indolore des nouveaux temps démocratiques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992). *La Troisième femme. Permanence et révolution du féminin* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997). Cf. also G. Lipovetsky (with E. Roux), *Le luxe éternel. De l'âge du sacré au temps des marques* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003). See the comprehensive account of Lipovetsky's work until 1999, which took the form of an interview with Sébastien Charles, in Charles, *La philosophie française en questions*, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-227.

²¹ Cf., for instance, Castoriadis, *La montée de l'insignifiance*, *op. cit.*, pp. 38, 103-104, 117 and *passim*.

²² In his book *Le Mythe d'Icare* (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Perspectives critiques,» 1984), Comte-Sponville "denounced the extreme narcissism of the 1980's"; cf. Charles, *La philosophie française en questions*, *op. cit.*, p. 197. About the main conclusions outlined by A. Comte-Sponville in his 1984 book, cf. *La philosophie française en questions*, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68, in particular pp. 72-74.

A) Individual Level

1) *Comprehension, Understanding*

a) The ontological, and also the anthropological basis of my analysis is Bergson's idea about the mobile, changing –and creative– character of reality, and particularly his fundamental notion of the incessant emergence of unpredictable novelty, a notion adopted –mainly in an indirect way– by a great number of 20th century French philosophers up to the present, specifically by certain philosophers of the *event*, a crucial notion indeed, especially as it was developed by Deleuze.²³ According to Bergson, reality, including human reality, is intrinsically temporal, which means for him, among other things, that something new always emerges, though it might take some time to be perceived and acknowledged as such.²⁴

At the level of the theory of knowledge, this unceasing novelty implies that we cannot really get to know the new by reducing it to the old and to what is already known, because we would miss its specificity, its newness. The knowledge of the new requires a new, vigorous effort.

b) At the anthropological level, the following question is to be answered: are we fundamentally selfish beings, looking mainly for our own interests or are we essentially altruists, considering the well-being and happiness of others first (I mean, are we persons who feel a natural inclination towards solidarity)? This dilemma, too often illustrated by the classical opposition between Hobbes (*homo homini lupus*) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, is schematically expressed. According to the Bergsonian methodological tool of mixtures pointed out by Gilles Deleuze²⁵ –a tool also adopted, without any reference, by other thinkers, like Jacques Généreux,²⁶ and centuries ago by Rabelais²⁷– we do not have to deal with two opposite, immutable kinds of human nature, but with two of its concurring tendencies. The point is that these coexistent

²³ For a phenomenological approach of the temporal character of reality, cf. most of Claude Romano's books, for instance *L'aventure temporelle. Trois essais pour introduire à l'herméneutique événementiale* (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Quadrige/Essais Débats,» 2010).

²⁴ Cf. Bergson, *Mélanges, op. cit.*, p. 364: "time, as it progresses, always unfolds new situations where continuous original effort is consistently requested from us." Why does "it take some time to be perceived?" Because the change needs to exceed a certain threshold.

²⁵ Cf. G. Deleuze, *Le bergsonisme* (1966) (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Quadrige,» 1998), mainly the first chapter, in particular pp. 6-13. Cf. also F. Worms, *Le vocabulaire de Bergson* (Paris: Ellipses, coll. «Vocabulaire de ...», 2000), pp. 13, 37, 43, 57, 62, and *passim*.

²⁶ This model of 'blending' with a prevailing in each case direction or trend, is used, without reference to Bergson, by Jacques Généreux: "limit situations [...] are the "attractions" that are specific to each corresponding dynamic. In theory, these attractions are fictitious. They are impossible and inaccessible in real human societies. The complete absence of ties and relationships, just like the perfect fusion, are equally impossible both between individuals and communities. However, fantasies of absolute independence or amalgamate unions (unité fusionnelle) may establish real, non-fictitious, attractions" (cf. Généreux, *À la recherche du progrès humain*, Vol. 3, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-163, in particular p. 163).

²⁷ Cf. E. Naya, *Rabelais. Une anthropologie humaniste des passions* (Paris, P.U.F., coll. «Philosophies,» 1998), pp. 73-74.

tendencies are found neither in the same degree in all human beings nor throughout the entire life of a person. We have an interest to defend and promote solidarity; it is difficult, though, to follow reason's directions in order to control our affections (or feelings)²⁸ and it is even more difficult to define the limits of solidarity as far as love or self-sacrifice is concerned.

c) According to Bergson, human nature is flexible, elastic, adaptable, and inventive. We can restrict our desires, if necessary, even our needs, and we can increase and extend (*dilater*) our activity.²⁹ This intrinsically inventive dimension of our nature is very important, if Michel Serres is right: "according to the medical terminology, the exit from the crisis does not require the return of the organism to its previous state but the invention of a new way of life."³⁰

d) According to the same philosopher, every person is unique, and duration is an immediate datum of every conscience. Thus, problems are different for every unique person, and can only be similar with regard to a superficial, conventional Self, or rather to the superficial and conventional dimension of every Self. Consequently, it would be impossible to find a unique, *impersonal* solution, valid for everyone. One has to solve his own problems from the inside (taking into consideration his own particular duration).³¹

2) *Change*

a) Bergson argues that, regarding change, both individually and collectively, what really matters is not the change of our ideas (which is necessary, of course, but not sufficient), but "a true creation of the will," a most difficult task.³²

²⁸ Cf. Spinoza, *Traité politique*, ch. 1, § 5 in Spinoza, *Œuvres*, trans. in French, intro. and notes C. Appuhn (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1965), Vol. 4, p. 13: "Indeed, this is a fact [...] men are necessarily subject to their affects. They are built in such a way to pity those who have misfortune and to feel envy for those who find happiness. They are more likely to feel vengeance than pity. Furthermore, everyone desires that others live in accordance to his idiosyncratic nature, that they approve what he himself approves of and reject what he himself rejects. [...] We have also shown that reason may as well contain and govern the affects, but we've equally seen that what reason instructs us is very difficult to follow."

²⁹ Cf. Bergson, *Mélanges, op. cit.*, p. 1153: "The human being is flexible and inventive [...]. We had to take into account this very flexibility of human nature."

³⁰ Cf. Serres, *Le temps des crises, op.cit.*, p. 10.

³¹ According to Bergson, self-creation is qualified by degrees in its realization: "this creation of the Self, from the being itself, becomes all the more complete the better we reason about the things we do. Here, reason does not function as it does in geometry, where premises are set once and for all, are impersonal, and where an impersonal conclusion is required. Here, on the contrary, the same reasons will be able to dictate to different persons, or to one person at different instances, acts that are profoundly different although equally reasonable. In reality, they are not entirely the same reasons, granted that they are not the same reasons of the one person or the one moment. Therefore, one cannot handle them *in abstracto*, as in geometry, nor solve the problems that life poses for the other person. Everyone is left to resolve these internally, for himself"; cf. Bergson, *L'évolution créatrice* (1907) (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Quadrige/ Grands texts,» 2007), p. 7.

³² Bergson, by referring to the wide and deep change which he noticed that was occurring in French society between 1890 and around 1910, this shift, which without a doubt may be

b) Bergson believes that we do not have the right to despair, there are always duties to be accomplished, there is always something useful to be done³³ (for example to grow up and educate our children, a really urgent task nowadays,³⁴ to take care of our parents or friends or of people in need and suffering, but also, in tandem, to take care of ourselves, of our body and of our soul (considered not as immutable things but as specific activities and processes). The Ethic of Care of Carol Gilligan³⁵ and Annette Baier,³⁶ or the Ethic and Politics of Care of Joan Tronto,³⁷ and in general the Care Revolution in American and British moral philosophy,³⁸ are highly appreciated by contemporary French moral philosophy (among others, by Frédéric Worms,³⁹ Sandra Laugier, Pascale Molinier, Patricia Paperman,⁴⁰ Fabienne Brugère⁴¹ or Marie Garreau and Alice Le Goff⁴²).

called “French moral and spiritual renaissance” (cf. *Mélanges, op. cit.*, pp. 969-970), states the following: “what strikes me the most, what makes me suggest this renaissance, is that while a transformation of ideas is taking place (you know, no one modifies their ideas that easily!) more so, a true metamorphosis or rather a true creation of the will is happening. Intention, however, is the expression of temperament itself and the most difficult for one to modify. From this point of view, the evolution of today’s youth seems like a kind of miracle. A two times happy miracle, since it affirms the reconstruction of our ethical-spiritual unity....”

³³ Bergson concludes his letter to N.M. Butler, in August 1940, shortly before his death, as follows: “these terrible events, in what concerns me personally, would have led me to despair, if I was not convinced that we should never despair, that there is always a duty to perform, a means to be useful” [*Correspondances* (Paris: P.U.F., 2002), p. 1667]. Cf. also *op. cit.*, p. 1668: “I would have fallen into the worst kind of despair if I did not tell myself and if I did not repeat to myself that no one ever has the right to despair, that tasks and duties will always exist to be fulfilled.”

³⁴ Cf. A. Naouri, *Éduquer ses enfants. L’urgence aujourd’hui* (Paris: Odile Jacob poche, 2009).

³⁵ Cf. C. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982). French revised edition: *Une voix différente. Pour une éthique du care* (Paris: Flammarion, coll. «Champs/Essais,» 2008). Cf. also V. Nurock (ed.), *Carol Gilligan et l’éthique du care* (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Débats philosophiques,» 2010).

³⁶ Cf. A. Baier, *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995).

³⁷ Cf. J. Tronto, *Moral Boundaries. A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (New York: Routledge, 1993). Cf. also L. Raïd, “Care et politique chez Joan Tronto,” in P. Molinier, S. Laugier, P. Paperman (eds.), *Qu’est-ce que le care? Souci des autres, sensibilité, responsabilité* (Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, coll. «Petite Bibliothèque Payot,» 2009), 57-87.

³⁸ Cf. for instance V. Held (ed.), *Justice and Care* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995).

³⁹ Cf. his book *Le moment du soin. À quoi tenons-nous?* (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Éthique et philosophie morale,» 2010). Cf. also F. Worms, L. Benaroyo, C. Lefève and J.-C. Mino (eds.) *La Philosophie du soin* (Paris: P.U.F., 2010).

⁴⁰ Cf. Molinier, Laugier, Paperman, *Qu’est-ce que le care? Souci des autres, sensibilité, responsabilité, op. cit.*

⁴¹ Cf. F. Brugère, *L’éthique du «care»* (Paris: P.U.F., coll. «Que sais-je ?,» 2011). Cf. also her previous book *Le Sexe de la sollicitude* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2008).

⁴² Cf. M. Garraud and A. Le Goff, *Care, justice et dépendance* (Paris: P.U.F., 2010).

Bergson is convinced that only work can save us.⁴³ “We have to repeat, day and night, the word of the Roman emperor: *Laboremus*.”⁴⁴ This salutary function of work and activity, in general, and especially in their creative dimension, is widely admitted by philosophers, like Alain and Bachelard,⁴⁵ or by writers like Franz Kafka, and Yorgos Theotokas, a Greek novelist and essayist.

I fully understand the huge difference of nature that distinguishes the work of a thinker (or an artist, or a writer) from the common labour in developed societies, especially the manual kind. I also understand the enormous and multi-dimensional problem of unemployment. I think, however, that, in conjunction with serious efforts looking forward to changing the present political and social situation, every activity can have a creative dimension (and a part of solidarity and communication with other members of a society). Even the unemployed ones can try to find productivity in a private way. I am aware of the difficulty of such a task, yet I believe that it is not impossible. I also presume that such an attitude may be connected to a conservative person, taking for granted that the present phase of neoliberal capitalism is inescapable. In my opinion, however, falling into inertia and waiting for a quasi-magical change of society is much worse than trying to take the situation into our hands, in a rational, responsible and solidary way.

c) According to Bergson, efforts, work, and the increase of our *élan* and vitality (admiration and love being necessary conditions for this) can either solve or eradicate problems that a mere intellectualist approach –due to its diminished vitality– regards as insoluble or hard to solve.

In order to solve a problem, we have to place ourselves from the beginning to the final state of its solution. We need to act as though it was already solved. In this case, there remains the task –a very difficult one, I must admit it– to take on the necessary proceedings for its accomplishment.⁴⁶ Hesitation and irresolution would imply loss of time and, even worse, of our self-confidence.

d) Instead of being attached to the past (or rather, to imaginary constructions of the past), we have to use, efficiently and rapidly, those parts of our past –both individually and collectively– that permit us to anticipate a solid future.

⁴³ In July 1940, while the war with Germany had begun, Bergson writes to Floris Delatre: “Let’s not waste courage. Work will save us.” (*Correspondances, op. cit.*, p. 1666).

⁴⁴ On July 31st 1940, Bergson writes to Léon Brunschvicg, that we now understand where evil had existed (i.e. Hitlerism) and that we have now touched abysmal depths. He also adds: “Let’s repeat, day after night, the Roman Emperor’s word: *Laboremus*” (*Correspondances, op. cit.*, p. 1665). He makes reference to Marcus Aurelius.

⁴⁵ Cf. A. Parinaud, *Gaston Bachelard* (Paris: Flammarion, coll. «Grandes biographies,» 1996), p. 238 : “On the 16th of March 1940: ‘Without being a pessimist, like some others, I believe hard times lie ahead. Good health and love for work are essential. Deprivation does not bother us to the least. We will always manage to live on what is the bare minimum for others.’”

⁴⁶ It is a fundamental idea of Bergson’s *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (1932).

e) We absolutely need to act, and not fall to inertia (this urgent character of action is definitive of French culture, literature (for example Rabelais)⁴⁷ and philosophy (for example Descartes).⁴⁸ Bergson rejects abstinence at the level of the action, and negation at the level of thought.

According to Rabelais, an obstacle for action consists, vis-à-vis the contingencies of the future, in waiting to establish certainty. We ought to act, even if we are not certain.⁴⁹

f) No concession to fatalism. According to Bergson, everything in history depends on our will, on our good will.

g) The Greek novelist George Theotokas, among others, believed that the solution of the crisis in his time would be the revival of the religious feeling, the conversion to religiosity.⁵⁰ I do not agree. I cannot see how such an attitude could be efficient either at an individual or at a collective level. I adopt the point of view of immanence, expressed by Spinoza, and pointed out by Deleuze in parts of Bergson's and Sartre's philosophical work:⁵¹ life, in a very rich sense of the term, as value *per se*.

B) Collective, Social Level

I will not repeat what we have already heard, read and listened to, time and again, about the many faces of the economic crisis, due in large part to the uncontrolled expansion of neoliberal speculative capitalism. I will finish with two remarks concerning the possible change of the prevalent situation in the countries that suffer from the actual crisis.

As far as the possibility of imposing major social changes is concerned, one has to pay attention to the conditions of their realization in an era of neoliberal globalization, and to search for a "New Renaissance" (as Jacques Généreux puts it)⁵² based on positive, creative and joyful projects, and not on sad emotions (according to the idea of Jean-Claude Michéa, inspired by Spinoza and Nietzsche).⁵³

As far as the conditions in which a positive social change might be realized that imply more social justice and equality, one needs to pay attention to the arguments expressed by Lipovetsky concerning the "second individualist revolution" in post-modern societies, a process touching deeply upon and un-

⁴⁷ Cf. Naya, *Rabelais. Une anthropologie humaniste des passions*, op. cit., p. 7 and *passim*.

⁴⁸ Cf. his "provisional ethics" in his *Discourse on Method*, and also *The Passions of the Soul*.

⁴⁹ Cf. Naya, *Rabelais. Une anthropologie humaniste des passions*, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

⁵⁰ Cf. P. Noutsos, *The "Generation of Ideas" and George Theotokas* (in Greek) (Athens: Eurasia Publications, 2013), p. 94.

⁵¹ Cf. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991).

⁵² Cf. J. Généreux's above mentioned book *À la recherche du progrès humain*.

⁵³ Cf. J.-Cl. Michéa, *L'empire du moindre mal. Essai sur la civilisation libérale* (Paris: Flammarion, coll. «Champs/Essais,» 2010).

dermining the sense and the forms of collective action as we came to know it in the first half of the XXth century.

We cannot exclude, of course, the possibility of a suicidal behavior of humanity (as Castoriadis and others have already pointed out), and we have to pay attention to the fact that history is full of lies and errors and that time, often, consolidates instead of eradicating them.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Cf. Falloi, «Berl, l'étrange témoin,» in Berl, *La fin de la III^e République*, *op. cit.*, p. 22: "He [Emmanuel Berl] loves history. He realizes that it is full of lies and errors. Time consolidates these instead of dissolving them."

Derrida and the Demand for an Economy of “Crises”

EFTICHIS PIROVOLAKIS

The recent proliferation of various types of discourses about the status of the present crisis appears to be unprecedented, especially in the European South but perhaps even globally. Equally striking is the lack of consensus, and the divergent interpretations of the nature of the crisis and its potential remedies or outcomes. Confronted with a frenzy of proclamations and self-assured recommendations about the best possible way out, one is at a loss regarding the geographical limits of the crisis, and the field of human endeavour in which it principally occurs: it is said to involve the economy and finance, institutions, politics and democracy, ethics, culture, ecology, the society as a whole, or all of those domains simultaneously. In this essay, I will not pronounce yet another empirical verdict about the specificity of the crisis or a proposed resolution. Instead, drawing on the philosophy of Jacques Derrida, I will reflect on the notion of “crisis” both in the sense of a determinate event occurring at the present time and requiring responsible action, and, alternatively, as an uncanny structure introducing alterity into the very heart of the present.

Derrida rarely uses the term “crisis” and has not produced a work on that topic. Moreover, whenever that word appears in his writings, he has reservations about its conceptuality. In *Specters of Marx*, while reflecting on the meaning of the Shakespearean phrase “the time is out of joint” and the idea that “the world is going badly,” he avoids speaking of crisis, which he deems “a very insufficient concept.”¹ Similarly, in *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, in an incisive analysis of Edmund Husserl’s conceptualization of that notion in his later work, Derrida suggests that “perhaps we must try to think [...] something other than a crisis.”² However, underlying his reticence is a serious argument which I will endeavour to explicate. I will distinguish between two semantic potentialities of “crisis.” The first two sections focus on the conventional understanding of crisis with a view toward unpacking some of its undeclared presuppositions and axiomatics. In the first section, in particular, I will demonstrate that even Husserl’s compelling and apparently rational discourse on crisis, inasmuch as it is influenced by certain external circumstances, can

¹ J. Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. P. Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 77-78.

² J. Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. P.-A. Brault and M. Nass (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 124. See also J. Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today’s Europe*, trans. P.-A. Brault and M.B. Naas (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 31, where, in the context of a discussion of European cultural identity, Derrida remarks: “This is happening at a moment for which the word *crisis*, the crisis of Europe or the crisis of spirit, is perhaps no longer appropriate.” I note Derrida’s use of the word “perhaps” in these allusions to “crisis.”

ultimately be subsumed under that ordinary understanding. The latter dominates both political and philosophical debates, and is indissociable from a “rhetoric of crisis” whose premises I will examine in the second section. Finally, I will explore another construal of “crisis” in terms of originary division and incalculability. I will explain why Derrida favours that alternative meaning and insists on the necessity of linking crisis to the incalculable and the undecidable. Two distinct demands ensue from the two senses of “crisis”: the demand to identify the crisis with a view to overcoming it, and the demand somehow to maintain and respect the crisis. Derrida gives the latter a strategic priority, without discounting, nonetheless, the urgency and potential benefits of the former demand.

Husserl’s Philosophical Rationality and the Rhetoric of “Crisis”

According to common sense and the current public debate, a “crisis” constitutes an unfavourable situation whereby one or more dangerous elements menace the security and stability of a given state of affairs. This impromptu definition is clearly upheld in one of the exemplary philosophical texts on crisis in the twentieth century, Husserl’s book from 1936, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*.³ Husserl’s *Crisis* developed principally from a series of lectures delivered in 1935 in Vienna and Prague, and is also associated with his written contribution to the International Congress of Philosophy at Prague in 1934, whose organizing committee had invited him to comment on the “mission of philosophy in our time.”⁴ Despite the specificity of the title,

³ E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. D. Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970); hereafter abbreviated as *Crisis*. Of course, Husserl was neither the only nor the first thinker who felt the intellectual urge to write about the crisis at the time. In the first decades of the twentieth century, other attempts, perhaps equally exemplary, to portray the crisis had been made by O. Spengler in *The Decline of the West*, ed. A. Helps and H. Werner, abr. ed., trans. C.F. Atkinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), and P. Valéry in “The European,” in *History and Politics*, trans. D. Folliot and J. Mathews, Vol. 10 of *The Collected Works of Paul Valéry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971). For a succinct overview of early twentieth-century discourses on crisis, see D. Moran, *Husserl’s “Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology”: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 33-35. Moran also refers here to Martin Heidegger’s thematization of the “crises of foundations” in the natural and human sciences in *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), §3, pp. 29-30. However, J. Derrida, in *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, trans. G. Bennington and R. Bowlby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 60-61, argues that, in spite of certain analogies, there is a radical heterogeneity between Heidegger’s views on crisis and the approaches by Husserl and Valéry. On the difference between Husserl’s “crisis-philosophy” and Heidegger’s “philosophy of the crisis,” see R.P. Buckley’s accurate and insightful *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992).

⁴ The famous so-called “Vienna Lecture” was entitled “Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity,” appearing as Appendix I in Husserl’s *Crisis*, pp. 269-99, whereas the

his critique is not directed against the European natural and human sciences alone. What is claimed to be undergoing a crisis is nothing less than European humanity and reason itself. In the "Vienna Lecture" from May 1935, Husserl famously declares: "The European nations are sick; Europe itself, it is said, is in crisis."⁵ He appeals here to a supposedly clear-cut metaphorical distinction between health and sickness in order to diagnose a transcendental pathology of communities, peoples, states and, finally, reason, a pathology to be blamed on the unpropitious development or intrusion of an evil agent.

The evil responsible for the contemporary state of European sciences and reason is rationalist objectivism, which is revealed to be rather irrational and, therefore, treacherous. Husserl aims his criticism at what, he thought, dominated European culture and society at the time: an objectivist irrationalism for which philosophy, as the guardian of true scientific rationality, was ultimately to blame, and which had infiltrated as much the positive sciences as the human sciences of psychology and history. As a result of this infelicitous contamination, European culture and society became sick. Husserl's thematic axis is the "more and more prominent crisis of European humanity itself in respect to the total meaningfulness of its cultural life, its total 'Existenz.'"⁶ For him, there was a clear link between philosophical, scientific, cultural and even political irrationalism.⁷

One way of approaching Husserl's *Crisis* is by following the author's stated intention. Accordingly, one cannot but approve of his attempt to offer a systematic philosophical diagnosis of the roots of the European problems during the first decades of the twentieth century. Confronted with a crisis that pervaded the spheres of science, philosophy, politics and culture, Husserl felt not only that it was his duty and responsibility to identify the problem at hand, but also that his philosophy was the most appropriate method for rescuing the honour of authentic rationality.⁸ In this sense, his discourse appears to be a sober and profound endeavour to determine the deep causes of the crisis, to take stock of the predicament of European civilization, and to demonstrate that the only safe medicine that could restore the health of the sick organism was his transcendental phenomenology.

One strand of R. Philip Buckley's careful interpretation of Husserl tends to emphasize that positive aspect of the *Crisis*, and to affirm the philosopher's insightful arguments and prognostic capacity. Stressing that it is not always easy to distinguish true from false prophets, Buckley contends that many as-

title of the Prague series of lectures was "The Crisis of European Sciences and Psychology." See also D. Carr, "Translator's Introduction," in Husserl, *Crisis*, pp. xv-xliii, pp. xvi-xvii.

⁵ Husserl, *Crisis*, p. 270.

⁶ Husserl, *Crisis*, p. 12. Insofar as the term "Existenz" was made popular by Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger, Husserl's use of the word here may be regarded as a reference to their philosophies, which he considered to be symptomatic of the wider spiritual crisis.

⁷ See Carr, "Translator's Introduction," p. xxvii.

⁸ For a detailed and nuanced analysis of Husserl's salvific discourse in the "Vienna Lecture" in particular, see Derrida, *Rogues*, pp. 123-40. See also Moran, *Husserl's "Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology,"* pp. 7-9.

pects of Husserl's text strike the present-day reader as prophetic: the major questions that preoccupy the philosophy of science today, the disastrous effects of unlimited technological advancement in recent decades and, of course, Auschwitz, all these attest to the veracity of Husserl's views on the abandonment of reason and the concomitant abandonment of humanity in the course of the twentieth century.⁹ Husserl achieved his status as a true prophet, Buckley continues, not by mere reaction to the critical factual circumstances around him but by looking for their *significance*.

The corollary of Husserl's assured identification of what had gone wrong in philosophy, science and culture is his voluntaristic optimism.¹⁰ I have already mentioned his belief that his transcendental philosophy was the best possible cure for the crisis shaking Europe at the time. If the crisis were the outcome of mistaken decisions that irresponsible agents took through a lack of will to be rational, by no means did Husserl conclude that there was no hope for human rationality at all. On the contrary. The contemporary movement away from an original unity and authentic rationality was interpreted as an urgent call for philosophical responsibility, a call upon philosophers to strive to overcome the crisis by recapturing the primordial truth of human reason.¹¹ The pivotal role this narrative accords to human agency is beyond doubt, hence Buckley's allusion to Husserl's "massive voluntarism."¹² Husserl did not merely hope that the failures of rationality would be reversible thanks to the intervention of truly rational and responsible subjects. He was fairly confident and even certain that that was the natural and necessary teleological course of European history. The instance that best exemplifies his fundamental voluntaristic optimism is his invocation of the well-known metaphor of the phoenix in the final sentence of the "Vienna Lecture": "Europe's greatest danger is weariness. If we struggle against this greatest of all dangers as 'good Europeans' [...] [then out of] the ashes of great weariness, will rise up the phoenix of a new life-inwardness and spiritualization as the pledge of a great and distant future for man: for the spirit alone is immortal."¹³ In the first instance, there is nothing wrong with such a commendable and ethically motivated philosophical project. Whenever there is a perceived crisis, there is also a demand, both theoretical and practical, accurately to delineate the critical situation with the aim of rectifying the errors associated with it.

Yet, on another reading not necessarily opposed to the previous one, one may also wish to examine more closely the axiomatics of Husserl's discourse,

⁹ See Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility*, p. 4.

¹⁰ In Husserl's "Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology," p. 10, Moran writes: "The *Crisis* is a relentlessly optimistic work, a work that looks to the future, a paean in praise of the philosophical life."

¹¹ The special role Husserl reserves for philosophers is evident in his characterization of them as "*functionaries of mankind*" (*Crisis*, p. 17) whose role is responsibly to promote genuine human values and to lead the way toward the creation of a new humanity.

¹² Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility*, p. xx. On Husserl's optimism, see also pp. 91 and 137-38.

¹³ Husserl, "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity," p. 299.

and some of the external circumstances that may have led him to undertake such a project at that particular point in time.¹⁴ Arguably, there are several reasons why the philosopher felt bitter during the 1930s. First, after the National Socialist Party came to power in 1933, Husserl, owing to his Jewish descent, was officially banned from teaching and publishing in Germany, and his German citizenship was eventually revoked in 1935.¹⁵ Second, he was deeply disappointed at the tendency of some of his former followers, such as Heidegger and Max Scheler, to embark on fundamental revisions of his phenomenological principles.¹⁶ Third, he felt intellectually isolated as his philosophy became increasingly eclipsed by the more popular existential philosophies of Jaspers and Heidegger.¹⁷ Each of these considerations is rather intricate, and a detailed discussion of the role they played in the writing of the *Crisis* is beyond the scope of this essay. However, the *Crisis* must have been motivated, in part, by the personal political and philosophical challenges Husserl was facing at the time.

If one takes these circumstances seriously into account, one may have to question the previous construal of the *Crisis exclusively* in terms of a purely rational and undeniably legitimate project. With respect to the disciplinary crisis of philosophy, for example, it appears inevitable that Husserl's view was compromised by his own philosophical isolation in the mid-30s. He regarded Heidegger's philosophy as a symptom of a generalized intellectual crisis although Heidegger himself perceived his own thought in *Being and Time* as the best possible response to the crisis of philosophy. The divergence of the two thinkers' responses to the crisis becomes even wider if we take into account Heidegger's political choices in 1933. With hindsight, one can perhaps conclude that Husserl was proved right about the cultural crisis, the abandonment of humanity and the unfortunate consequences of political barbarism, but was not quite right to discount the philosophy of Heidegger *tout court*. For the latter, it was rather Husserl's thought that was symptomatic of the crisis insofar as it sought, in a quasi-positivist way, to overcome the crisis by controlling and mastering everything.¹⁸ Evidently, there is no consensus be-

¹⁴ It is to Buckley's credit that he does not underestimate the significance of these external circumstances as far as the writing and publication of the *Crisis* are concerned.

¹⁵ See Moran, *Husserl's "Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology"*, pp. 31-32.

¹⁶ See Carr, "Translator's Introduction," pp. xxv-xxvi, and Moran, *Husserl's "Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology"*, pp. 30 and 37-38.

¹⁷ See Carr, *ibid.* Also, in *Husserl's "Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology"*, pp. 4-5, Moran points out Husserl's declared fear that "his labours in the development of phenomenology are in danger of being discarded as irrelevant and outmoded, especially with the growing interest in life-philosophy, existentialism," and, more generally, philosophical irrationalism.

¹⁸ In *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility*, p. 248, Buckley convincingly argues that, according to Heidegger, Husserl's "attempt to grasp all by a masterful and self-mastered subjectivity [...] [is] a sign of a fundamentally calculative thinking, the same sort of thinking that underlies the very sciences said to be in crisis." See also p. 267: Husserl's "endeavour to master the forgetfulness of Being demonstrated in the de-

tween the two philosophers about either the nature of the crisis or its possible remedy.

I have used the example of the *Crisis* in order to make the following point: if there is no agreement between Husserl and Heidegger about their contemporary crisis, if their otherwise circumspect and apparently rational theoretical discourses are infiltrated –more or less consciously– by non-philosophical, contingent factors related to their particular circumstances and personal ambition at the time, this process of infiltration is bound to be more readily at work in political and economic approaches which, anyway, depend on interestedness and strategic calculation. The Nazis, for instance, during the same period, were also convinced that European culture and politics were in a state of serious crisis. Their rationalization and ways of dealing with the crisis, which radically differed from Husserl's and Heidegger's, were clearly dictated by their political agenda and interests. Of course, the degree of partisanship is variable in each case, and one ought to be attentive to such differences in order to avoid assimilating Husserl's personal circumstances to Heidegger's interestedness or, even worse, to that of the Nazis. However, a certain partiality seems to be irreducible from any theoretical representation of a crisis, a partiality that arguably motivates and differentiates the rhetoric and staging of each such discourse, while also complicating its appeal to an objective and universalizable rationality.¹⁹

The Ordinary Theater of "Crisis"

Acknowledging the irreducibility of contingent circumstances and, by extension, of interestedness, Derrida, already in his "Economies of the Crisis" from

sire to possess Being in its full presence is itself the forgetfulness of Being." Derrida appears to concur when he notes, in *Of Spirit*, p. 61, that Husserl's discourse on the crisis and his appeal to a quasi-Cartesian transcendental subjectivity points toward a "non-questioning of Being presupposed by the metaphysics of subjectivity," a non-questioning that "might constitute one of the symptoms of the destitution."

¹⁹ A striking example of this process of complication is brought out by Derrida in *Of Spirit*, p. 60 n.1. Husserl, in "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity," appeals to an idea of European humanity that is spiritually and not geographically determined, which implies that the alignment of humanity or spirit with Europe is contingent and coincidental. However, insofar as Husserl goes on to include in the "spiritual shape of Europe" the English colonies and the United States but not the Eskimos, the Indians and the gypsies who wander about Europe (p. 273), the criterion according to which he distinguishes European from non-European humanity appears to be eminently Eurocentric and not purely spiritual. Is it merely by accident that he specifically excludes the non-Aryan Eskimos, Indians, gypsies and Papuans (p. 290) but not those European Aryans who may not participate, for various reasons, in the spiritual category of European humanity? Although Husserl's discourse is not suspected of the worse, writes Derrida, its underlying Eurocentrism means that it can ally itself with the politics one would want to oppose to it. This reading by no means suggests that Husserl's philosophy can or should be equated with, for example, Heidegger's political choices or the Nazi's response to the European crisis. It merely seeks to alert one to the complexity of the issues and questions involved, and to the difficulty of providing a definitive answer.

1983, expresses his reservations about the idea that the present world is in crisis.²⁰ "This 'idea,'" he maintains, "is experiencing its greatest inflation; it has its theater and its rhetoric" (EC, 71). In an attempt to investigate and expose this theatricality, he outlines a series of presuppositions underlying most discursive representations of a crisis. I will briefly codify them.

First, the ordinary rhetoric presupposes the unity or identity of the system undergoing the crisis. For instance, in Husserl's "crisis of European sciences" or in Jürgen Habermas' recent discussion of the "crisis of the European Union," a unity is tacitly attributed to a certain "Europe," whose internal divisions, from which divergent interpretations of the crisis may arise, are thereby underrated.²¹ This idea of a more or less unified "Europe" or "present world" that is currently in a state of crisis may indeed become highly complex, and refers rather to a vanished or envisaged identity than an actual one. Nevertheless, the deployment itself of the term "crisis" commits one to the belief in the existence of a unified body beforehand, and hopefully after the crisis is over. In between, the crisis would function as a provisional and largely accidental point of transition. If the very act of determining a crisis is premised on the attribution of a certain identity to the body undergoing a crisis, and if, as Derrida suggests, the deployment of "crisis" amounts to an effort to save the identity of an entity that never was nor will be *de facto* actual or secure, one would have seriously to reflect not only on the motivation behind this unification process but also on its cost.²²

Second, any theoretical portrayal of a crisis constitutes a discursive act produced by an individual or collective subject. This discursivity presupposes a public stage the subject occupies, thereby enjoying a certain mastery or sovereignty, at least in comparison with others excluded from any public debate. This is far from saying that the crisis is something purely discursive or verbal. It is to say that there is always a non-coincidence and potentially even a clash of interests between those who discursively delineate a crisis from the security of an academic institution or their party political headquarters, and those actually suffering from the effects of the crisis and supposedly represented by the former. The acknowledgment of this non-coincidence is related to the aforementioned complication of identity, and ought to give rise, according to Derrida, to several preliminary but always necessary questions: "Who is talking about crisis? Who is talking the most about it right now? Where? To

²⁰ In J. Derrida's "Economies of the Crisis," trans. P. Kamuf, in *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971-2001*, ed. and trans. E. Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), pp. 69-73, p. 69, Derrida is called upon by the interviewer to respond to the following question: "Based on, but not limiting yourself to your own area, could you tell us (in two pages) what is represented for you by the idea that the present world is in crisis?" This work is hereafter cited as EC.

²¹ See J. Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response*, trans. Ciaran Cronin (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012).

²² In "Economies of the Crisis," p. 70, commenting on the "crisis of the present world," Derrida remarks that "the concept of crisis would be the signature of a last symptom, the convulsive effort to save a 'world' that we no longer inhabit [...]. One more try, the word *crisis* says to us [...] one more try to save the discourse of a 'world' that we no longer speak."

whom? In what form? In view of what effects and what interests? By playing on what ‘representations?’” (EC, 71) It is definitely one thing to theorize about the causes and effects of the crisis of, say, global capitalism. It is quite another to be a real victim of the crisis due to the implementation of capitalist policies of outsourcing and off-shoring, actually deprived of direct access to any decision-making centers and even to the public debate.

The third premise of any such representation is one’s alleged ability to take action in order to remedy the current state of affairs. Although a discourse on crisis may acquiesce in a temporary stage of uncertainty, it prioritizes the demand and the confident belief that one is capable of programming in order to control the effects of the crisis and finally overcome it. There is a tacit claim that its producer has the competence required to determine the roots of the crisis and minimize its otherwise incalculable consequences. The inextricable link between the use of the term “crisis” and the claim to be able to implement a remedial course of action is indicated by two of the many senses the Greek word crystallizes: “*krisis*” is both a crucial moment or a disruptive event of great consequence, and one’s ability to judge, to calculate and to decide. Moreover, this teleological and voluntaristic messianism, which would deserve to be investigated in greater detail, is reinforced by two other words which belong to the same conceptual network, and which etymologically derive from or are associated with “crisis”: “critique” and “*kairos*.”

On the one hand, a discursive description of a crisis can hardly be dissociated from a critique of the past choices purported to have brought about the crisis at hand. The first step on the way to resolving the problematic situation is its accurate delimitation by holding accountable all of those who took the mistaken and one-sided decisions that led to a state of crisis. There is no crisis, therefore, without such a process of critique and imputation of fault. On the other hand, having already identified the wrong choices, one often claims that now is the propitious moment, the *kairos* to take the right decisions in order to rectify the errors of the past. The well-known rhetorical alignment of crisis with opportunity originates in the common belief that the time of crisis is also the appropriate time to re-assess all previous choices and confidently to decide on the correct course of action for the future.

What I call “the ordinary understanding of crisis,” together with all its interrelated presuppositions, uncritically or inadvertently subscribes to an axiomatic network of concepts (unity, identity, presence, certainty, calculation, etc.), a network to whose solidity the various senses and derivatives of “crisis” contribute: “crisis” as a treacherous present situation, as critique, and as the ability to judge and decide at the right moment (*kairos*).²³ Such an axiomatic is at work in philosophical approaches and even more so in economic, political and cultural debates, whereby one is too keen to represent and delimit the crisis. One of the problems here, for Derrida, is the following: “By determining it as crisis, one tames it, domesticates it, neutralizes it—in short, one

²³ Two Latin cognates of “crisis” that further consolidate this list are “*cerno*” (“to discern,” “to decree,” “to decide” but also “to separate”) and “*certus*” (“resolved,” “certain”).

economizes it. One appropriates the Thing, the unthinkable becomes the unknown to be known, one begins to give it form, one begins to inform, master, calculate, program. One cancels out a future" (EC, 71). I will return below to this cancelling out of a future, which amounts to a neutralization of difference and alterity.²⁴

In light of the lack of consensus about the nature and resolution of any crisis, how is one to choose among the numerous concurrent claims to an objective identification of its roots and remedy? More specifically, confronted with the theater of the present crisis, with an array of true and false prophets between whom it is indeed not always easy to distinguish, how is one to avoid the more biased and inadequate representations?²⁵ How is one to judge which of the available discourses is the most equitable, the most sensible and the least politically or financially interested? The least one can do, I argue, is exercise a certain vigilance by cautiously analysing the undeclared motives of all those who rush to express their views in a definitive and categorical manner. The most effective way of implementing such a strategy of vigilance is perhaps not by entering an argument about the crisis itself while leaving intact its conventional conceptuality and axiomatics. Rather, it may actually be more effective critically to reflect on the presuppositions of any theoretical discourse, and to complicate, in turn, the misleading identities and certainties attending the usual rhetoric of crisis.

The "Crisis" of "Crisis"

In his few references to the experience and notion of "crisis," Derrida gestures toward a radical questioning of the habitual conceptuality of "crisis," a questioning that undercuts any claim to mastery or certainty. With respect to the Husserlian "crisis," his phrase from *Rogues* cited earlier continues as follows: "Perhaps we must try to think [...] something other than a crisis. Perhaps we are enduring a tremor at once more and less serious, something other, in any case, than a crisis of reason, beyond a crisis of science or of conscience, beyond a crisis of Europe, beyond a philosophical crisis."²⁶

In 1964, almost forty years earlier, a similar reference to "something other than a crisis" appears at the end of "Cogito and the History of Madness,"

²⁴ As far as this logic of calculability and programming is concerned, it has to be stressed that Derrida does not seek simply to reject or even criticize it. In *The Other Heading*, p. 69, he contends: "It is a logic, logic itself, that I do not wish to criticize here. I would even be ready to subscribe to it, but with one hand only, for I keep another to write or look for something else." In the third section, I will clarify the provenance of that something else, that alterity which, he continues, "perhaps comes from a completely other shore."

²⁵ That it is not easy to distinguish between true and false prophets is demonstrated by Heidegger's attempt to deal with the crisis by assuming the rectorate at Freiburg in 1933, thereby aligning himself, to a degree, with the policies and politics of the National Socialist Party. It is also indicated by the recent rise of certain nationalist parties across Europe, such as Golden Dawn in Greece, which eagerly promise a way out of the current demographic, social, financial and moral crisis.

²⁶ Derrida, *Rogues*, p. 124 (my emphasis).

where Derrida commends Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* for enriching the potentialities of the concept of "crisis." Foucault distinguishes the conventional "crisis," in the sense of a danger menacing a healthy organism, from another "crisis" associated with division and caesura. Here is Derrida on the latter signification: "The crisis is also decision, the caesura of which Foucault speaks, in the sense of *krinein*, the choice and division between the two ways separated by Parmenides in his poem, the way of logos and the non-way, the labyrinth, the *palintrope* in which logos is lost."²⁷ In this brief comment, Derrida mentions "decision" and the Greek verb "*krinein*." However, what he has in mind is something other than the confident choice of a sovereign subject. He clarifies that the "very strong word" Foucault uses, "Decision," should be understood in terms of a "*dissension*," and underlines that "in question is a self-dividing action, a cleavage and torment interior to meaning *in general*, interior to logos in general, a division within the very act of *sentire*. As always, the dissension is internal."²⁸ Besides, the terms "caesura," "labyrinth" and "*palintrope*" point toward an originary division, a primordial and ineluctable disunity that all subsequent voluntaristic judgements would strive to eliminate.

Derrida does not analyse the intricate linguistic associations of the term "crisis." Nevertheless, this alternative construal may be detected in the etymological relation, in Greek, between "*krisis*" and the ancient verb "*keirō*," some of whose meanings were "to cut off," "to cut through," "to cut the hair," "to separate," "to divide." Accordingly, the primary sense of the ancient Greek "*krisis*" was precisely "separation" or "division." "*Keirō*" and "*krisis*" in this sense are related to other words of the Indo-European language family such as the Latin "*carere*" and "*caro*," the German "*scheren*" and the English "to shear" which retain the original signification.²⁹ The point here is not to engage in a purely lexicological genealogy of "crisis." The point is that this genealogy reveals that the conceptuality of "crisis" includes, from the very beginning, a sense of division, a certain opening up of a chasm, perhaps incompatible with the dominant currently voluntaristic and unifying motifs of decision, judgement and certainty. Two points could usefully be made with respect to that alternative meaning of "crisis."

First point. The motif of division is admittedly not new, and has always been acknowledged on the level of an etymological understanding of "crisis." Husserl himself, notes Buckley, deploys "crisis" in an etymological fashion whereby the term implies "a pulling apart, a separating, a cutting or dividing."³⁰ However, this process of division cannot be assimilated to the *self-di-*

²⁷ J. Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," in *Writing and Difference*, trans. A. Bass (London: Routledge, 1978), pp. 31-63, p. 62. See also M. Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. R. Howard (London: Routledge, 1967).

²⁸ Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," pp. 38-39.

²⁹ See H.G. Liddell and R. Scott (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. Sir H.S. Jones and R. McKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940³).

³⁰ Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility*, p. xviii.

viding structure of Derrida's caesural crisis for several reasons. For example, even if one acknowledges that a constitutive element of crisis is a certain division, the latter is regarded as a negative aspect to be eclipsed by a more positive phase during which one comes to terms with the reality of the crisis, undertakes a critique of the situation that led to the crisis, and confidently decides to move on by detaching oneself from the past and by producing new meaning. Such an understanding evidently complies with what I designate "the ordinary conceptuality of crisis" and the three presuppositions outlined above. Furthermore, and as a result of those presuppositions, although the pivotal role and even necessity of a dividing difference may be recognized, still, this is teleologically subordinated and, therefore, somehow reduced to the higher demand for resolution, unity and progress. The mediating factor capable of taking the appropriate action in order to transform a negative situation into a positive opportunity is, of course, human agency, whether individual or collective. In other words, it is believed or hoped that difference can always be sublated into the positive values of identity and certainty thanks to the messianic intervention of a responsible subject.

Derrida's understanding of the caesural crisis, on the contrary, admits to an alterity that cannot be reduced and that disrupts all forms of identity implicit in conventional discourse. He associates "crisis" with "caesura" in order to focus on a moment of an abysmal separation whereby identity is withheld, whether in question is the identity of the body sustaining the crisis, of the subject pronouncing the discourse on crisis, or of the projected future in which a resolution of the crisis is anticipated or indeed promised. The splitting structure involved here constitutes a self-dividing movement, a dissection which, interior to the present, to meaning and to identity, resists all messianisms, all historical beginnings and ends to the crisis. Derrida's aphorism that the "crisis has always begun and is interminable" only makes sense on the basis of such a radical questioning of identity and sovereign subjectivity.³¹

The emphasis on such a self-dividing structure announces a hesitation about the tendency to reduce disunity, to identify, to represent. The division of this "crisis" is akin to a not only necessary but also incalculable alterity that disallows certitude and self-assured choices. This is not to say that decision and judgement are impossible. It is to say that incalculability will always be *necessarily possible*; it will always be necessarily possible to question the validity and sincerity of any subjective discursive judgement about a crisis. The possibility of such questioning is something one can factually observe in public debates where there is no consensus about the status of the present crisis. Nevertheless, there is also an urgent necessity that one *ought to* question and complicate any discourse on crisis. Besides the legitimate demand to calculate and to program, there is the equally significant demand to respect the incalculable, to avoid unification and the often intentional reduction of the other's alterity, and to contemplate this essential incapacity to produce a comprehensive and equitable narrative on crisis.

³¹ Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," p. 62.

The latter demand is encapsulated in Derrida's phrase "the 'crisis' of the value of 'crisis'" (EC, 71), a "crisis" whereby one realizes that the term "crisis" is insufficient as long as it is axiomatically destined to suppress alterity. In undertaking the task to reflect on "the 'crisis' of the value of 'crisis,'" one is not condemned to remain in a state of indefinite ambivalence, paralyzed and undecided about the mistakes of the past or a possible way forward. Rather, one learns to proceed very carefully, still calculating and judging, still reaping the potential benefits of all sensible endeavours to overcome the crisis, but simultaneously critiquing the conceptuality of "crisis," aware that the crisis cannot and must not be masterfully controlled or definitively overcome.³² I suggest that by exercising a critical vigilance vis-à-vis the facts of any given crisis, by problematizing those facts, by responding to a crisis in a cautious manner, and finally by maintaining the crisis, one perhaps assumes an ethical or hyper-ethical responsibility which is difficult to measure and appreciate for it does not promise political or other benefits here and now or at a determinable time in the future.

Second point. What is ultimately the provenance or the pragmatic relevance of that alternative meaning of "crisis," and of the concomitant demand to respect radical alterity? In other words, what underlies Derrida's alignment of "crisis" with alterity and the incalculable? His insistence on an incalculable division does not arise from a perverse obsession with a nebulous and ineffable notion of "alterity." It results from his intention to leave open the possibility that there may always be others who remain unrepresented in public debates, that there may be concrete injustices and real differences between those suffering from the crisis and those theorizing about it.³³ The ordinary philosophical discourse, and *a fortiori* political and economic discourses, insofar as their principal aim is masterfully to control the crisis and reach a conclusive verdict, do not take seriously enough this ethical imperative to respect radical alterity. One has cautiously to analyse all interpretations of the crisis with a view to revealing their inherent divisions and injustices, for the sake of those who are excluded from the theater of the crisis and who are its real victims. The motifs of caesura and incalculability are instrumental in unmasking the limitations and partiality of, in particular, the economic and political discourses on the present crisis, which is not equivalent for all Europeans and is not experienced uniformly. Hence the demand for vigilance and meticulous

³² Hence Derrida's reticence to pronounce a verdict about the present crisis or to provide a principle for its interpretation: "Perhaps we no longer have at our disposal a *principle of response*, a discourse sure enough of its legitimacy [...] that it could authorize the *response in principle*, the telegram: 'In two words, to decipher the crisis, look in this or that direction; here is the master code, text follows'" (EC, 69).

³³ Whenever a theoretical discourse on crisis claims to speak in the name of others whom that discourse purportedly represents, what is presupposed is a continuous process of representation by virtue of which the radical alterity of those others is inevitably reduced. This is why Derrida makes much of the problematic motif of "representation" throughout his text, a motif invoked in the interviewer's question in "Economies of the Crisis," p. 69.

analysis, the demand for an economy or a negotiation between the two distinct senses of "crisis."

From the ancient Greek *etymon* of "crisis" there comes a call upon us not only to divide and to discern, but also to respect originary division and alterity, and to resist the tendency to unify. This call may appear to be purely conceptual or theoretical. However, it is intimately bound up with praxis and politics. It is motivated, after all, by a concern for those who are the least privileged, for those others whose lives are being manipulated always in the name of an anticipated resolution, in the name of a supposedly benevolent economic-political sleight of hand that would be capable of turning the crisis into opportunity.

The Thought of Kostas Axelos in an Era of Disillusion and Disappointment

ELENI ROUMKOU

From the poetic thought of Heraclitus to Heidegger, through Marx and in a “global thought of wandering and play,” who strived to grasp the fragments of the world through the endless exploration of the “great powers” by which man is related to poetry, art, politics, philosophy, science and technology, the route of Kostas Axelos, anxious to “hear the sound of the approaching,” goes more towards meditation.

His life and work can be collected in the metamorphoses of an uninterrupted journey, the meaning of which he was constantly exploring. Axelos shows us the degree to which thinking necessitates the adventure of an expatriation, if it wants to illuminate the present and open a path to the future.

The journey that led Axelos from Greece to France, in December of 1945, on a ship chartered by the Embassy of France for hundreds of young Greeks who wanted to escape the atrocities of the Greek Civil War, meant both the distance from his homeland and the exclusion of the Greek Communist Party. So he moved to France, a country he was familiar with from his student years. In the 50s he got a foothold in the CNRS, where he conducted a doctoral thesis on Heraclitus and Marx that took place in dialogue with the philosophy of Martin Heidegger.¹

His installation was also editorial, since Jérôme Lindon, director of Éditions de Minuit, gave him, along with Edgar Morin, the possibility to launch the journal *Arguments* (1956 to 1962), then, a collection with the same name, which ran from 1960 onward. Axelos also taught at the Sorbonne from 1962 to 1973. However, within this deep affinity between the man and the country, an underlying movement occurred over the years. It was crystallized in Axelos's trilogy of works *Marx, penseur de la technique* (1961), *Héraclite et la philosophie* (1962) and *Vers la pensée planétaire* (1964), collected under the title *Le déploiement de l'errance*.

The term “wandering” (“errance”) speaks of the metamorphosis that takes place when the journey becomes that of thinking. Axelos was an atypical thinker. His original reading of Karl Marx as thinker of technology [“penseur de la technique”] stands out in an era when Marxism was dominant; concerning the poetic and fragmentary thought of Heraclitus, he pulls out of a stuffy tradition to make it appear with his force intact for our time. Axelos also calls himself “atopic,” that is without a *topos*, placeless, as all his efforts aim to estrange (“se dé-payser”) himself from philosophy and to enter into a new dimension that would could be designated as “global” (“planétaire”).

¹ Axelos met Heidegger at Cerisy-la-Salle in August 1955. He is the translator, with Jean Beaufret, of Martin Heidegger's *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie ?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1957).

The term “global” means, according to the Greek verb *plazein*, “to wander” [“errer”]. Homer and Sophocles had already used this verb in the cases of Odysseus and Oedipus. The two great stories of wandering strays of the ancient Greek world meet in our ultra-modern times, in the globalized world we live in today, and in what the thinker reveals from that past. Wandering, because the history of the West, which is also the history of philosophy relating to this term, is now deployed under the double sign of nihilism and technology, which dominates and configures the planet (in Greek “wandering star” [*planétès* : “astre errant”]). Wandering again, this dual deployment prohibits thought to settle in the comfortable setting of the traditional categories of metaphysics. Also, all the foundations of thought it has successively tried to spread for two thousand years, all the systems that built on this foundation, have collapsed, and especially the very idea of the foundation. Private seating and railing, thought is obligated, if she wants to be at the height of her time, to answer this wandering and be in turn, “global” [“planétaire”].

Wandering, therefore, redoubles and replays the exile, but now under the radical figure that Kostas Axelos appoints so well in *Réponses énigmatiques*,² his most recent book, referring to it as “our main exile” [“notre exil foncier”]. This exile, though, must take the first line; as Henri Michaux said of poetry, it has to be a “trip of expatriation” [“voyage d’expatriation”], if it does not want to “move” [“s’orienter”] as Kant said, but find the way to her *destination*. For wandering, without paradox, has a destination, at least if we do not mean by that the final purpose of the trip. This is the destination the thought intended, and here lies the second second movement of Axelos’s life and work. It corresponds to two trilogies: *The Deployment of the Game* (*Le déploiement du jeu*)³ and *The Deployment of an Inquiry* (*Le déploiement d’une enquête*).⁴ The *world* (*le monde*) is that which he now calls the challenge and the horizon of thought. This is the first destination that will lead Axelos to gradually distance himself from the French philosophical landscape. He quits teaching and Sorbonne in 1973. He was probably led, at least in part, to the refusal to let the thought fall under the influence of ideality, this “disease” [“maladie”] for Mallarmé. So he rejects idealism, but also refuses to resolve its bastard form, intellectuality.

Kostas Axelos was not, decidedly, Sartre, Deleuze, or Derrida. He has chosen a sober distance, keeping stubbornly faithful to the issue of thinking, that is to say the question, that thought must remain for herself and the summons to her incessant questioning.

No doubt, this attention to the issue of thought still shows a debt to Heidegger and the distinction he draws between thought and philosophy. But

² K. Axelos, *Réponses énigmatiques: Failles-percée* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2005).

³ K. Axelos, *Contribution à la logique* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1977); *Le jeu du monde* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1969); *Pour une éthique problématique* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1972).

⁴ K. Axelos, *Arguments d’une recherche* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1969); *Horizons du monde* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1974); *Problèmes de l’enjeu* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1979).

Axelos continues to keep distance from Heidegger. Refusing idolatry and even the new academic aroused in Heidegger's work, not accepting the primary anti-Heideggerianism, he looks today, quite unique and, frankly, almost alone, to understand the limitations of this thought, that he does not ignore the greatness and radical novelty: he is trying to say, in particular, how it remains attached to metaphysics and ontology; how it is marked by this ideality, since Plato determines the odd relationship that philosophy keeps up with the Political [le "politique"]; how finally the size of the world remains the crucial point and the challenge of the difference between Heidegger's thought and "global thinking" [la "pensée planétaire"]. Axelos takes as a starting point the question Heidegger poses himself in the first pages of *Being and Time*: "Why, in the beginning of the tradition, ontology jumped right on top of the world phenomenon?" But if he again takes a different approach to this issue, and to understanding how the world could be the name of the un-thought of all philosophy, the history of which, rather than "forgetting being" ["l'oubli de l' être"] (Heidegger), would be instead "the oblivion of the world" ["l'oubli du monde"] and its enigma. The world would be the place of exile and the wandering of the global thought, summoning her to its destination.

But how des the "world" ["le monde"] resound? Neither, of course, as a substitute for being, nor as the entire world which is, nor as the world of "globalization" ["mondialisation"], which we now feed on *usque ad nauseam*, as Axelos says. The world is "It" ["Cela"], an enigmatic neutral which is both everything and nothing, the powerful focus of "opening" ["ouverture"], from time immemorial, which includes all dimensions of time. Like the *chaos* of ancient Greeks, this opening is all birth and depth, giving and withdrawal: the world is deploying its game and its negative; we belong inseparably, but piecemeal, to the same extent of our finitude.

Axelos's work, establishing itself as the free play of a highly open and lonely thought that rejects all evasions and pretensions, takes the risk to match this game of the world in multiple deployments, which opens, animates, and fertilizes the mind. For Axelos, the world deploys as "the game" ["le jeu"]. He suggests that this is a central question of Western metaphysics: "Being becoming totality, the supreme game".⁵ He thinks that the world can only be understood on its own terms, or rules, an internal logic of interplay, rather than on the basis of anything exterior to it:

"The play of the world attempts to think the game inside of which all games and all rules, all transgressions and all calculations, all significations and all interpretations (global and particular) appear, disappear, are reborn [...] which moves the pawns and figures, figurative or not, on the chessboard of the world, according to contingency or necessity. The pawns and figures are only parts of the game, just as truth is only the triumphant figure of errancy, corresponding to it. Thus polyvalent combination of theoretical and

⁵ Axelos, *Arguments d'une recherche*, p. 196.

practical games opens up, which from including the play of the world, remains contained and crushed by it.”⁶

Axelos developed his ideas on the world notably in *The Play of the World* (*Le jeu du monde*)⁷ and also in some of the texts he chose to have translated for the *Arguments* book series he edited. Axelos, in *The Play of the World*, makes a number of claims related to Eugen Fink,⁸ notably that the play and the world needs to be thought of in relation, and that the making-worldly of phenomena is through a logic implicit only to itself, without external cause or purpose. For Axelos, the world can only be understood through a continual process of becoming.⁹ This is what he means in the idea that the world “deploys itself” [“se déploie”], the world unfolds and unfurls itself “as a game.” This means that it refuses any sense, any rule which is exterior to itself.”¹⁰ Thus, for Axelos the true sense of Heraclitean play is that it is a play without player, opinion he shares with Fink. But what happens to the child? David Farrell Krell asks: “is the world the play of an innocent, or is it innocent of players? The first can be properly thought only through the second: when the child plays there is no player. Everything is played.”¹¹

“Deployment” [“déploiement”] is an important theme in Axelos’s thought, as it turns out to be the unifying theme of the three trilogies which form the core of his work. Each of these trilogies was given a title: the unfolding, unfurling, or the deployment of the game, and of an inquiry. Within this structure, which Axelos calls an “open systematic” [“systématique ouverte”],¹² the question of the world, the play or the game, and the relation of the human to that world of which they are both part and creator, is the central theme. For Deleuze, Axelos’s notion of “errancy” [“errance”] is a substitution for the

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 199; *Horizons du monde*, p. 80; “Planetary Interlude,” trans. S. Hess, in *Game, Play, Literature*, ed. J. Ehrmann (Boston, MA : Beacon Press, 1971), p. 8.

⁷ K. Axelos, *Le jeu du monde* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1969); see also his *Systématique ouverte* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1984). Chapter Two of the latter book appears as “The World: Being Becoming Totality,” trans. G. Moore, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24 (2006), 643-651.

⁸ On relation’s relationship to Eugen Fink, see F. Dastur, “Monde et jeu: Axelos et Fink” in J.-P. Milet (ed.) “Kostas Axelos et la question du monde,” special issue of *Rue Descartes*, 18 (1997), 25-38. These translations included Fink’s *Spiel als Weltsymbol* [*Le jeu comme symbole du monde*, trans. H. Hildenbrand and A. Lindenberg (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1966)], Fink’s study of Nietzsche and one on phenomenology, Marcuse’s *Eros and Civilisation* and Wilfrid Desan’s *Planetary Man*.

⁹ Henri Lefebvre claims that, for Axelos, “the play of the world is time-becoming.” In H. Lefebvre, “Le Monde selon Kostas Axelos”, *Lignes*, 15 (1992), 129-140, p. 134. In his most recent work, *Réponses énigmatiques: Failles-percée* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 2005), p. 88, Axelos relates this to Heidegger’s notion of *Ereignis*, the event or appropriation, which he translates as *avènement*, ‘advent.’ *Ereignis* gives being and time, and comprises the “world.”

¹⁰ K. Axelos, “Mondialisation without the World: Interviewed by Stuart Elden,” *Radical Philosophy*, 130 (2005), 25-28, p. 28.

¹¹ D.F. Krell, “Towards an Ontology of Play: Eugen Fink’s Notion of *Spiel*,” *Research in Phenomenology*, 2 (1972), 63-93, p. 93.

¹² Axelos, *Systématique ouverte* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1984).

“metaphysical opposition of true and false, error and truth” just as the play of the world between fragment and whole replaces the “metaphysical relation of the relative and the absolute.”¹³ The process of “mondialisation” as a process of world-isation, a becoming-worldwide. He contends that “mondialisation” is worth preserving as an alternative to “globalisation” because it retains the notion of the “world” [“le monde”], and therefore has a connection to the notion of the “world” which globalisation no longer preserves.¹⁴ The term “globalization” (“mondialisation”) already appears in his book *Vers la pensée planétaire* (1964), where he argues that today’s thought should become global, first because the world is unified by technology that covers the entire planet –via technology, we are at the same time planning the economy, politics and culture. But, also, because the word “planet” [“la planète”], means wandering star, it characterizes the actual state of humanity nowadays.

Axelos works intensively on the “encounter between global technology and modern humans.”¹⁵ For him, the thinking of this encounter is of considerable importance. “World” does not simply signify the totality of all that exists: it has to do with relations, interplay, and the “game” [“le jeu”].¹⁶ He claims, just as Heidegger does, that the human and world are not one, but neither are they two: “Neither of them is the other, but they cannot play [“jouer”] without the other.”¹⁷ Rather, they are something that requires their being thought together, what Heidegger calls “being-in-the-world”, which should not be understood in a primarily spatial sense, but rather as an integration of the human and the environment. As Axelos puts it, “there is not the human *and* world. The human is not *in* the world.”¹⁸ For him, we are not so much in the world but *of* the world, just as the world is not in space-time, but is spatio-temporal.¹⁹ The crucial issue is our relation to the world; it is both something within and outside our control: “The human is the great partner of the play of the world, yet the human is not only the player, but is equally the “outplayed” [“déjoué”], the “plaything” [“jouet”].”²⁰

¹³ G. Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, trans. M. Taormina (New York: Semiotexte, 2002), p.76.

¹⁴ Axelos, “Mondialisation without the World,” p. 27; see also his *Ce questionnement: Approche-Éloignement* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 2001), p. 40.

¹⁵ M. Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik, Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 40 (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983), p. 208. With this phrase Heidegger describes the “inner truth and greatness of national socialism,” the so-called “private” version of national socialism, that he yearned for in the face of the distortion he saw ruling in Germany. For a comment on the textual basis of these points, see also: Axelos, *Pour une éthique problématique* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1972), pp. 27-27; *Arguments d’ une recherche*, p. 169; S. Elden, *Mapping the Present: Heidegger, Foucault, and the Project of a Spatial History* (London: Continuum, 2001), pp. 30-31.

¹⁶ Axelos, *Lettres à une jeune penseur* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1996), pp. 10, n. 1, 13.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁸ Axelos, *Ce Questionnement*, p. 56.

¹⁹ Axelos, *Lettres à un jeune penseur*, p. 19; Axelos, *Systématique ouverte* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1984), pp. 40-54.

²⁰ Axelos, *Entretiens: “Reels”, imaginaire et avec “soi-même”* (Paris: Fata Morgana, 1973), p. 53.

As well as the thinking of the relation of the human and the world, Axelos's thought on technology is clearly indebted to Heidegger's problematizing of this issue.²¹ He interrogates Marx and Marxism through this question of technology. For Lefebvre, this is one of the important characteristics of Axelos: he is "one of a rare breed, if not the only one" who studies, criticizes, and situates Marx within the history of thought.²² In his book on Marx, Axelos shows how alienation –that great concern of Marx that dominated so much the French ideological debate in the twentieth century– has relations to Heidegger's notion of the "forgetting of being."²³ According to Axelos, alienation in Marx can be found not only in ideology and economics, but also the way modern man.

Axelos conceives modern technology as an "échafaudage," a scaffold or a framework.²⁴ Like Heidegger, Axelos thinks that the way we conceive the world is founded upon a particular ontological determination of it as calculable, measurable, and therefore controllable and exploitable: "Modernity leads to the planetary era. This era is global and worldwide, errant, levelling and flattening, planning, calculating and combinative."²⁵ For Axelos, "The world cannot be reduced either to an ensemble of intraworldly phenomena, nor to "creation", or to the Cosmic Universe, to which is adjoined a social and historical world, nor to the totality of that which human representation understands, nor to the total scope of technical activity."²⁶

"Globalisation names a process which universalises technology, economy, politics, and even civilisation and culture. But it remains somewhat empty. What is missing is the world as an *opening*. The world is not the physical and historical totality, it is not the more or less empirical ensemble of theoretical and practical ensembles. It deploys itself. The thing that is called *globalisation* is a kind of *mondialisation* without the world."²⁷

For Axelos, the world is an object of thought in its own terms, rather than understandable through other means. Thus, to think of "mondialisation" before we think of globalization may be a powerful means of introducing a material and philosophical basis to the thinking of the space of the world.²⁸

²¹ Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. W. Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

²² H. Lefebvre, *Qu'est-ce que penser?* (Paris: Publisad, 1985), pp. 167-168.

²³ K. Axelos and D. Janicaud, "Entretiens du janvier 1998 et du mars 2000," in D. Janicaud, *Heidegger en France*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Albin Michel, 2001), 11-13, p. 11.

²⁴ Axelos, *Problèmes de l'enjeu*, pp. 16, 66. See also his *Contribution à la logique* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1977), pp. 80, 121. Axelos suggests that the term *échafaudage* translates the Heideggerian notion of *Ge-stell*.

²⁵ Axelos, *Arguments d'une recherche*, p. 174. In *Horizons du monde* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1974), pp. 112-13, this notion is linked to the idea of the end of history. On technology generally, see the essays in *Métamorphoses*.

²⁶ Axelos, *Problèmes de l'enjeu*, p. 30.

²⁷ Axelos, "Mondialisation without the world," p. 27.

²⁸ See S. Elden, "Missing the Point: Globalisation, Deterritorialisation and the Space of the World," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30 (2005), 8-19.

Globalization equals to “mondialisation” without the world. It is understood as a political or economic process, most thought of which fails to comprehend the world or the globe over which this is extended in both material and philosophical senses.

The question of the “world” was one of the recurrent themes of the journal *Arguments*, and also in the *Arguments* book series.²⁹ Another important theme was the “planetary era.” The 1960 manifesto of the journal presents as one of its objectives to comprehend the “second half of the twentieth century: a planetary age of technology; iron age of a new industrial civilization; new age of the human”³⁰ and the *Arguments* book series was divided into two divisions, one of which was entitled “The Becoming-Thought of World and the Becoming-Worldly of Thought.”³¹ This phrase trades on a line from Marx’s doctoral thesis, where he suggests that “the world’s becoming philosophical is at the same time philosophy’s becoming worldly, that its realization is at the same time its loss.”³² Marx’s point is that in its becoming worldly, that is in its actualization, philosophy is transcended and overcome.³³ What is interesting here, in relation to the book series, is that “philosophy” is replaced by “thought,” a very Heideggerian move. So, here, as will become apparent in much of Axelos’s work, we have a Marxist theme transfigured through Heidegger.³⁴

²⁹ The fifteenth issue of the journal (1959) had a large number of articles devoted to the theme of the worldwide problem. See P. Fougeyrollas, “Thèses sur la mondialisation,” *Arguments*, 15 (1959), 38-39. In this paper, Fougeyrollas discusses how the tensions between capitalism and socialism are masking the opportunity of deploying the resources of the “world” in order to deal with problems of the world, for example starvation and malnutrition. A new universalism, which is a universalism of the world, must replace the universalist law, ethics, and social structure of, respectively, Christianity, Western democracy, and Marxism.

³⁰ “Manifeste no. 2 (1960),” in *Arguments 1956-1962*, p. xxx.

³¹ Axelos, *Arguments d’une recherche*, pp. 164-65. Also, see *Vers la pensée planétaire*, pp. 13, 30.

³² K. Marx, *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. and trans. L.D. Easton and K.H. Guddat (New York: Doubleday, 1967), p. 62. Both Axelos and Lefebvre regularly cited this as an aphorism, and for Axelos, it could be said to serve as a guiding theme for his entire work [H. Lefebvre, *Marx* (Paris: PUF, 1964), p. 55; and *Métaphilosophie: prolégomènes* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1965), p. 33. K. Axelos, *Marx penseur de la technique. De l’aliénation de l’homme à la conquête du monde*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1974; 1961¹), Vol. 1, p. 5, Vol. 2, pp. 50, 162; *Alienation, Praxis, and Techne in the Thought of Karl Marx*, trans. R. Bruzina (Austin, TX : University of Texas Press), pp. v, 202, 271; and *Problèmes de l’enjeu*, p. 177].

³³ On this period of Marx’s work, see Lefebvre, “Les rapports de la philosophie et de la politique dans les premières œuvres de Marx (1842-1843),” *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 63 (1958), 299-324.

³⁴ Two books translated in the *Arguments* series particularly contributed to this thinking of the relation between world and thought: E. Fink’s, *Le Jeu comme symbole du monde*, trans. H. Hildenbrand and A. Lindenberg (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1966) and W. Desan’s, *The Planetary Man: A Noetic Prelude to a United World* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1961) [L’Homme planétaire: prélude théorique à un monde uni, trans. H. Hildenbrand and A. Lindenberg (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1968)]. Axelos’ s

World and thought thus meet in the plural of their *Métamorphoses*,³⁵ thus opening the third phase of the work, where is transformed, at the same time, the meaning of this journey through which we follow the path of thought. If exile and wandering lead, indeed, to the global map of the world, the metamorphoses that take place within it, makes the thought that Kostas Axelos then appoints as a “roaming” [“itinérance”], or a “roving inquiry” [“itinérant questionnement”], which is such “passage” (way) [passage] in at least three senses. The thought is first a “pass,” because it can pass, and it passes because it can penetrate. It is no longer a dead end, it plays and passes. “Faults, breakthrough” [“Failles, percée”]; it is the subtitle of his 2005 *Réponses énigmatiques*. But, piercing, thought also shows, reveals passage, and the thinker, engaging in opening, becomes a “ferryman” [“passeur”]. So the thought is a pass, because it is only passing. As is said in *Replies (Réponses)*, we are indeed “passers” [“les passants”], those René Char wrote: “We are so few travelers, how much more guest passengers” [“Nous si peu voyageurs, combien plus hôtes passagers”].

“Guest passengers”: the formula of the poem matches to the thought, because the “ferryman”, what the thinker is, and “passersby”, that we are with him, without whom can claim to elect no domicile in the global dimension, have yet to inhabit the world map and hospitality: there stands our membership in the form of what Axelos tries finally, in his ultimate metamorphosis, to think of as the “constellation” [“la constellation”]. Far from any system, the solar system, for example, a constellation is called an arbitrary configuration, or more random and free, which draws the face of our non-topological membership.

“Nothing will happen until the place, except perhaps a constellation” [“Rien n’aura eu lieu que le lieu, excepté peut-être une constellation”], wrote Mallarmé in *Un coup de dés*, where he refers explicitly to Axelos’ *Ce questionnement*. It is in this sense that the constellation, whose technique is now the dominant figure, may be the name of the elusive riddle of what holds together, as fragments, man and world, in their wanderings. The task of thinking is to show what this constellation is and how it is indeed the site of our passage [passage], the site of our finitude in its global transformation, whose disaster—even in our more personal confusions—is also the provisional face still unthought. Trying to “say” [“dire”] is the task of thought, as well as of poetry, and about which Axelos argues constantly.

It is the task of the thinker, and also that of the poet “to find a language,” in the words of Rimbaud. Because language is the site of our fault. Because the language and thought working in contact, in Axelos’s work – not two but four languages at least: French, Modern Greek, Ancient Greek and German – two new words arise in his work: “poeticity”, “friendliness” [“poéticité”, “amicalité”]. There is not here either poetry as a literary genre, or the privacy

“Postface: Qui est donc l’homme planétaire”, pp. 151-157, is reprinted in *Arguments d’une recherche*, pp. 181-86.

³⁵ *Métamorphoses* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1991).

of a personal relationship. It concerns the way he would say and live the relationship with the world, with others as well as ourselves. "It may be vested in us sometimes to live wandering with poeticity" ["Il peut nous être dévolu d'habiter parfois l'errance avec poéticité"], Axelos writes in his *Ce questionnement*. Poetic and friendly: it would require a lot of a thinker and a way of living, without attempting to solve the riddle of their meaning, to find, in relation with the world, "the style" ["le style"] of their membership. This would be the reversal of an insolence that could, by lightning, harmonize us with the rhythm of things, the world and time.³⁶ In order to uncover this rhythm, one should be able to enter the free play of necessity. It would be a way to live in this *anankè* whose face has been "forgotten" by philosophy in the course of its history. In order to uncover this rhythm, one should live in the "expatriation" even of our passage and in the exile of our stay. This would amount to dig its enigma as the productive task of increasingly acute questioning, which is the thought, in its open, of an infinite movement.

This would also pave the way to a young thinker ["un jeune penseur"], as it appears in the title of Axelos' 1996 *Letters to a Young thinker (Lettres à un jeune penseur)*. No doubt, this young thinker is still potential, as that the future is also conditional. But if this young thinker becomes possible, it is certainly known to be in footsteps of Axelos, and he has been able to accomplish this exile to wandering and wandering the passage we just go. It will, then, be obvious that Kostas Axelos is, silently, already for us and for our time what we could call, borrowing Mallarmé's words about Rimbaud, "le passant considérable."

³⁶ In this agreement does not ignore the discord in this *amicalité* not ignoring the conflict, the rhythm is to find meaning in the word "*erruthmismai*," in verse 241 of *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus, that Kostas Axelos quotes: "I'm chained to this rhythm" ["Je suis enchaîné à ce rythme"].

The Crisis of Modernity: History, Tradition and Virtues

LIA MELA

Modernity is in crisis because, according to MacIntyre, it suffers from the loss of normative order, which philosophy reproduces in theory, thus the relevant problems cannot be solved at the level of socio-political practice. That is, the moral crisis is not produced by a crisis in theory, but rather the crisis in theory is a product of the social crisis of the era. Modern moral theory and practice is understood as a sequence of isolated conceptual “fragments,” which survived from different moments of the past, disconnected from their contextual meaning.¹ MacIntyre argues further that the “state of disorder” emerges from the overriding cultural power of a specific philosophical stream, “emotivism.”² The term hereto relates more generally to the inability of rational justification, and hence of rational solution, of ethical disputes, which emerges as a consequence of the acceptance of the basic thesis that value commitments are just expressions of preference, incapable of rational justification. Thus, by the term emotivism, he does not designate a particular meta-ethical school of thought,³ but rather the current inability of rational justification, which mirrors on a theoretical level the confusion of the modern world.

Morality is treated as a field in which each part seeks to impose on others its tastes and feelings, and so the other is not addressed as an end in itself, but

¹ A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1985 [1981a]), pp. 2, 110-111, 256, 257. The understanding of morality in terms of conceptual fragments is first presented in E. Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy,” *Journal of Philosophy*, 33 (1958), 1-19, through three basic theses: (a) In our day the pursuit of morality is pointless. It is better to be postponed, until we have an adequate philosophy of psychology. (b) The moral concepts of obligation and duty, of right and wrong should be abandoned as survivals of an older morality, dead today, which cause damage outside their context. (c) The differences between the British philosophers from Sidgwick until today are of little importance. For Anscombe’s influence in the philosophy that follows, see J. Begley, “The Virtue Theory of Alasdair MacIntyre,” *Pacifica*, 8 (1995), 220-228, pp. 221-223; J.L.A. Garcia, “Modern(ist) Moral Philosophy and MacIntyrean Critique,” in M. Murphy (ed.), *Alasdair MacIntyre: Contemporary Philosophy in Focus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 94-113, pp. 94ff; J. Haldane, “MacIntyre’s Thomist Revival: What Next?,” in J. Horton and S. Mendus (eds.), *After MacIntyre: Critical Perspectives on the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005; 1994¹), 91-107, pp. 92-93; P. Kelly, “MacIntyre’s Critique of Utilitarianism,” in Horton and Mendus (eds.), *After MacIntyre...*, 127-145, p. 128; S. Virvidakis, *La Robustesse du Bien* (Athens: Leader Books, 2009), pp. 38ff.

² *After Virtue*, pp. 2, 11, 256.

³ In the first chapter of *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), Stevenson argues that moral judgments, like metaphysical statements, do not constitute descriptions of facts, but rather expressions of stances incapable of rational justification. Therefore ethical attitude is not subject to rational argumentation.

rather as a subject of influence.⁴ The related sociology perceives social relations in this light and, consequently, the emotivist thesis is confirmed in the moral life of contemporary society by the development of “manipulative relations.” Manipulation, which characterizes the managerial model, indicates the refusal of the agent’s individual and collective control over their activity. The Enlightenment, according to MacIntyre, results in a formal rationalistic and instrumental program, incapable of rational justification in ethics. Contemporary civilization has its roots in the Enlightenment’s failure to give rational justification to morality.⁵ MacIntyre’s diagnosis concerns human life as a whole, individually and socially, of those living in modern condition, first, around ethical issues and, second, around questions concerning truth and rationality. Post-Enlightenment liberal civilization diverts in “emotivism” in theory and “bureaucracy” in socio-political practice.⁶

It is obvious that MacIntyre’s basic opponent is moral relativism. However, emotivism, related with the dominance of Logical Positivism, is presented by him as the basic characteristic of modern philosophy in general. The latter, incapable, for MacIntyre, of establishing universal claims, collapses in the end, after Nietzsche, into Postmodernism, which is apprehended as the full affirmation of emotivism, in the sense that it understands moral judgments as the product of the individual’s unrestrained will.

MacIntyre ascribes to the Enlightenment Project an abstract theory of human nature which yields an equally abstract normativity. Modernity cuts apart the correlation between ethics and reason by rejecting the existence of intrinsic ends. Teleology is marginalized as a metaphysical remainder of Aristotelianism and, in consequence, the distinction between “man as he is” (descriptive statement) and “man as he would be if he realizes its end” (normative statement).⁷ With the prevalence of individualism, moral perfection ceases to be associated with purposes inherent in human nature, and is connected to a set of ethical prescriptives (following a rule). The focal point is not human nature, but human action.

The emergence of individualism during the Modern Age has disastrous consequences, according to MacIntyre. In the course of this historical transition, the teleological understanding of human life vanishes, since the human subject is understood as merely a rational agent, without true or specific ends,

⁴ *After Virtue*, pp. 23-24.

⁵ MacIntyre indicates that Enlightenment has never been unable to agree on specific rationally justified principles, as it is ironically confirmed by the variety of modern moral theories, which dogmatically acknowledge different principles. As Enlightenment’s heritage remains an unattainable ideal of rational justification, since the attempt to infer ethical principles from abstract principles of reason is fatally barren.

⁶ MacIntyre claims that when social traditions collapse, bureaucratic mechanisms come to the fore [“Social Science Methodology as the Ideology of Bureaucratic Authority,” in K. Knight (ed.), *The MacIntyre Reader* (Cambridge Mass.: Polity Press, 1998), 53-68, p. 67]. Modernity is associated with the emergence of two main institutions: the modern state and free economy market, cf. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988), p. 211.

⁷ *After Virtue*, pp. 52-53.

independent of his will. MacIntyre argues that liberal justice and rationality correspond to “citizens of nowhere,” who lack moral commitments and reasons to act for anything else beyond the satisfaction of their interests and desires. However, this image has a strong touch of realism for the British philosopher, because modern society, at least on its surface, is presented as a gathering of individuals who join together for their common protection.

According to MacIntyre, the conception of the person, illustrated by modern philosophy, does not have narrative unity with regard to its development and self-understanding and hence the “emotivist self,” characteristic of individualism, cannot have a rational history in his transition from one moral commitment to another. The emotivist self does not have continuity out of the body and memory and for this reason a problem as to the definition of his continuity and identity arises, despite real human beings’ certainty.⁸ Significant properties, which are traditionally linked to subjectivity, are given up in such a way that the individual presents an abstract and vague character, because it is essentially shaped through the loss of those traditional boundaries which formed social identity and human life as an order for a certain end.⁹

The contemplation on problematic aspects of contemporary civilization has recently taken the characteristics of a controversy over the content, the limits and the prospects of Modernity.¹⁰ In their historical course, modern societies, which theoretically linked with the spread of the ideas of the Enlightenment, politically arose from the collapse of the ancient régime, technologically based on new science, and economically connected to the capitalist development, end in contemporary fragmented, culturally diverse, consumer societies. In these societies, the dominant individualism substitutes traditional religious, ethnic and class bonds, consistently raising issues of “identity” and “authenticity” in a new way, as a counterweight to the loss of the sense of community.

MacIntyre’s philosophy is propounded as a critique of Modernity from the point of view of a theory of virtues, which defines itself based on neo-Aristotelian elements, giving prominence to the articulation of a comprehensive ethics, which speak out on the substantive values of εὐ ζῆν.¹¹ MacIntyre’s theory of virtues is presented in three successive stages:

⁸ Regarding the problem of personal identity in modern philosophy, see *After Virtue*, pp. 216-217.

⁹ *After Virtue*, pp. 33-34.

¹⁰ The debate on the “Enlightenment’s Project” is also a central point of controversy between Habermas and the Neo-Aristotelians, see G. Maggini, *Habermas and the Neoaristotelians: The Ethics of Discourse in Jürgen Habermas and the Challenge of Neoaristotelianism* (Athens: Patakis Publishers, 2006); especially on MacIntyre, see pp. 79-102. For a criticism on MacIntyre from a Habermasian point of view, see also R. Paden, “Post-Structuralism and Neo-Romanticism, Or Is MacIntyre a Young Conservative?,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 13 (1987), 125-143.

¹¹ About Neoaristotelianism in general and MacIntyre’s position in that context, see, among others, H. Schnaedelbach, “What is Neo-Aristotelianism?,” trans. B. Gregg, *Praxis International*, 7 (1987/8), 225-237; J. Wallach, “Contemporary Aristotelianism,” *Political Theory*, 20 (1992), 613-641.

(1) The person participates in a wide variety of “practices,” which are defined in reference to certain “internal goods.”¹² Starting with the concept of practice, certain criteria of “excellence” in relation to human life are inserted, which have objective validity within the practice; therefore they are not just a matter of preference of the participants.

(2) The relationship with a specific set of practices is regulated by the needs of the “narrative unity of human life,” in such a way that the problem of choice between different practices can be dealt with, otherwise a case of radical choice is confronted. The theory is interconnected with a conception of the good as a “quest,” which assigns to the theory a teleological character.¹³ However, at this level, the definition of the good remains formal: the good consists in the quest for the human good.

(3) The quest moves within the horizon of the broader “tradition” in which the person belongs.¹⁴ Tradition provides content to the definition of the good, since, under its aegis, the goods are identified and integrated in relation to the virtues. As human behavior acquires meaning in the light of a certain narrative of human life as a whole, accordingly, human life acquires meaning within a broader inherited tradition. The concept of tradition expresses the need to strike roots, underlying the sense of (co)belonging in a community that exceeds the individual existence, providing conditions of meaning to the individual life. When, therefore, the moral language collapses under emotivism, man, at an individual level, cannot find common meanings that will allow individualization and, in collective level, the political community cannot express the citizens’ moral community in a common program.

“Practice” constitutes, according to MacIntyre, a coherent and complex form of socially established human activity, which aims at achieving certain (internal) goods. The multiple practices, in which the person participates, should be able to harmonize in a unity both on individual (the good of a particular person) and collective (general conception of the good life of a tradition) levels. By the introduction of the concept of “narrative unity of human life,” MacIntyre seeks to address the problem of choice between different practices. Since the “internal goods” of different practices are not evaluated, the choice between them is made on the basis of a sovereign view of the purpose of human existence as “narrative unity,” because otherwise the problem of radical choice would emerge, as it does in emotivism. In contrast, understanding human life as narrative unity makes possible its apprehension as a field of self-expression, which offers information on its contents.

Inevitably, the specific tradition formulates human existence, since each human being is individuated by its involvement in a tradition whereby his life obtains content. The ability to understand human action depends on the agent’s narrative course of life, which, in turn, depends on the available narratives that make this particular life distinct, integrating it simultaneously in the

¹² *After Virtue*, p. 187ff; *Whose Justice, Which Rationality?*, p. 32ff.

¹³ *After Virtue*, pp. 205ff, 213ff, 218-219.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 193-194.

narratives of the community to which the agent belongs.¹⁵ Thus, it is connected with a specific time, place and civilization, as the agent is directed to an end that is not his own construction. Thus, we can conclude, the narrative element does not produce the unity of the meaning of a life, but it is rather an aspect of the practical –implicit– sequence of meaning of that life (or tradition) that already exists on practical level anyway.

The term “tradition” refers to a wider, consistent and coherent web of epistemological requirements, methodological options, metaphysical assumptions and institutional preconditions, as well as to everyday social practices and relationships, which have to do with moral values and norms that formulate human communities in their historical course. This includes a set of beliefs and practices which reflect a broader view of the world, of man and of history, which is a worldview that proposes a way of approaching reality. Tradition, in this light, is a common matrix of meanings that sets values, form continuities, identifies patterns of behavior; in other words, it gives expression to a certain form of life. It concerns both theory and practice, and works as a social cohesive force that defines constancies of social existence, since those who share the same tradition are defined as a community.

On the social level, a wider cultural background of common language and historical memory is formed, from which the individual draws objective ethical criteria and those elements enabling the building of personal history.¹⁶ The personal stories themselves are inevitably associated with the community in which the individual belongs so that historical and social identity eventually coincides. MacIntyre delivers an innovative approach to the concept of tradition which challenges conservatism’s monopoly on the concept.¹⁷ He seeks a via media between emotivism’s relativism, which leaves the agent without a guide, and traditionalism’s dogmatism, in a way that guarantees the possibility of internal criticism of the tradition, and therefore the conditions of personal freedom. In this light, he criticizes individualism’s thin conception of the person, giving prominence to a more complex and comprehensive conception of human personality that seeks its identity within specific, “incommensurable” historical and social traditions.

The fragmentation of traditions in different theoretical schemes and incompatible forms of life is, according to MacIntyre, the cause of the crisis of modern society.¹⁸ MacIntyre reconceptualizes history in order to clarify how this happened, presenting a history of philosophy from the Homeric age to the present day in the form of a conflict of traditions.¹⁹ MacIntyre’s historical

¹⁵ *After Virtue*, pp. 34, 213-216.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

¹⁸ “Politics, Philosophy and the Common Good,” in Knight (ed.), *The MacIntyre Reader...*, 235-252, pp. 235-236; *After Virtue*, p. 109; *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, p. 337. The problem of fragmentation is a main concern of MacIntyre since the very beginning, see *Marxism: An Interpretation* (London: SCM Press, 1953), pp. 9-10.

¹⁹ MacIntyre put forth a narrative reconstruction of the history of philosophy from ancient Greece to late Modernity which is designed in a controversy with modern liberalism.

project, through the rediscovery of the tradition of virtues, aims to overcome the crisis of modernity.

The importance of MacIntyre's philosophy lies in his attempt to expand moral discussion on the issues of personal identity and to stress the need of reflection on the substantive content of human life, as well as elaborating issues relating to the nature of the good society. The British philosopher has a humanitarian background and still bears traces of his Marxist past, and that is why he incites the criticism of neoconservatives who accept the market economy. MacIntyre argues that contemporary society has, as its main feature, bureaucratic organization in politics and an inability of ethical evaluation to shape the identity of the capitalist societies of late Modernity. Although, in this case, the dangers of superstition and prejudices of many of the past traditions are avoided, MacIntyre finds risks of a different form in modern forms of social organization, risks of manipulation and coercion, because the modern, supposedly autonomous and self-sufficient person is completely dependent upon the impersonal structures of the state and free market economy. MacIntyre believes that Western political societies are oligarchies masquerading as democracies, since the vast majority of citizens do not participate in the circles of the elites who define the range of issues among which they are invited to choose.²⁰

MacIntyre reasonably defends the connection between ethics and politics, stressing the normative dimension of political questions and therefore the need for moral justification. From the reconstruction of the traits that MacIntyre ascribes to modern philosophy, we realize that these traits correspond to Logical Positivism, although he is never named this as the main rival.²¹ This is the view that moral judgments have no cognitive content, but rather are simply expressions of preference, which cannot be rationally justified, and hence they cannot provide a rational basis for the justification of ethical principles. As a further consequence, politics becomes a managerial enterprise, because, when power is legitimized in terms of associating means to ends, economically and efficiently, then politics is disconnected from any overall view towards the good life. Nevertheless, the features of emotivism that are related to Logical Positivism are presented by him as fundamental characteristics of modern philosophy in general, although this requires justification.

In *After Virtue* he presents the reasons why the Enlightenment Project ends up in necessary, for MacIntyre, failure. The discussion of radical disagreements on moral judgments is carried in the field of rationality and justice in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Finally, in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy and Tradition*, MacIntyre sets Thomism against Encyclopaedia and Genealogy.

²⁰ *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, pp. 345-346, see also "Politics, Philosophy and the Common Good", p. 237ff.

²¹ This is particularly evident in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy and Tradition*, where MacIntyre compares Encyclopaedia (Enlightenment) with Genealogy (Postmodernism). See L. Mela, "Moral Tradition and the Critique of Modernity in MacIntyre," *Axiologika*, 21 (2009), 41-54 [in Greek].

MacIntyre argues that the doubts concerning the possibility of valid evaluative judgments give access to relativism, which undermines the foundations of rationalism, marking an end to the Enlightenment's Project. MacIntyre's second opponent is Postmodernism, perceived as a complete affirmation of the emotivist thesis, in the sense that moral judgments are understood as an object of unrestrained will. He traces its roots back to Nietzsche's philosophy and for this reason the ultimate question is "Aristotle or Nietzsche?"; that is, either we will remain in relativism, which is approached as a consequence of the failure not just of Positivism but of the broader Enlightenment's Project, or we should find an alternative ethical theory. MacIntyre is in favour of a debatable reconstruction of Aristotelianism. I think the question can be reformulated: how can we get away from the problems of Logical Positivism and Postmodernism? On our way, we can find positive lines in the critical dimension of the Enlightenment's Project, which MacIntyre rejects altogether, by identifying it with Logical Positivism and furthermore, after the collapse of the latter, recognizing in Postmodernism its negative complement, an inverted image, somehow a consequence of its failures that lead to relativism.

MacIntyre's critique expands immensely, resulting in the Enlightenment Project's total rejection. The British philosopher defends his negative attitude by submitting a picture of fragile Modernity in his critique, but definitely not responding to its actual dimensions. However, as his criticism to Modernity turns into criticism against Modernity, it ends in inaccessible paths. Although MacIntyre undoubtedly brings to light many problematic sides of the Modern worldview, the articulation of a philosophical point of view, able to transcend Positivism's instrumentalism and Postmodernism's relativism, presupposes terms of criticism that are difficult for MacIntyre to set up. Enlightenment's one-dimensional understanding does not allow him to recognize its liberating dimension, its emancipating appeal. So, with an admittedly impressive gesture, the last five centuries of European civilization are discarded. Because MacIntyre's pessimism does not relate to specific theories, but permeates the whole of Modernity, and the prospects of the Enlightenment's Project. However, the combination of pessimism with the negative attitude towards Modernity leaves the reader with the feeling of a deadlock: MacIntyre seems to undermine the effort of realizing his own philosophical project.²²

²² About the pessimistic nature of MacIntyre's theory, see also J.B. Schneewind, "Virtue, Narrative, and Community: Alasdair MacIntyre and Morality," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 79 (1982), 653-663, p. 662; P. McMylor, *Alasdair MacIntyre: Critic of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 46ff; J. Horton and S. Mendus, "Alasdair MacIntyre: After Virtue and After," in Horton and Mendus (eds.), *After MacIntyre...*, 1-15, pp. 1, 6, 13-14; S. Mulhall, "Liberalism, Morality and Rationality: MacIntyre, Rawls and Cavell" in J. Horton, S. Mendus (eds.), *After MacIntyre...*, 205-224. A reasonable question is that if MacIntyre's "disquieting suggestion" is true and the world has indeed become as chaotic as he assumes in the illustration of the contemporary moral crisis, then on what philosophical basis philosophical criticism can be brought. About this internal contradiction, see, instead of others, R. Flathman, "Culture, Morality and Rights: Or Should Alasdair MacIntyre's Philosophical Driving Licence Be Suspended?," *Analyse und Kritik*, 6 (1984), 8-27, p. 10; G. Doppelt, "Modernity and Conflict," *Analyse und Kritik*, 7 (1985), 206-239, pp. 208, 210.

The impersonal, large-scale systems of economy and bureaucracy dominate through complex mechanisms that cannot be controlled, because their size precludes intelligent human adjustment. MacIntyre definitely prefers small-scale communities who express solidarity and authentic participatory action, allowing the administration of their affairs through face-to-face interaction, away from impersonal bureaucratic procedures.²³ But why this emphasis of MacIntyre's on the local communities? From a point of view, he may be attempting to articulate an argument in defense of cultural particularities rather than the homogenization of globalized capitalist trends. Or, maybe, deep down this is due to reasons internal to his neo-Aristotelian theory, as he realizes that he is unable to respond to the governance needs of a modern "great" or "open" society. However, the small, traditional communities are a rather weak counterweight to the sovereign authority of the globalized socioeconomic power. So, MacIntyre's call to form communal islands against modern barbarism, which have dominated us since long ago, seems ineffective.²⁴

Overtime, MacIntyre increasingly steps away from Marxism.²⁵ His aphoristic generalization that the pursuit of power by the forces of social reform does not liberate, because it requires the use of oppression, inevitably leading to the development of manipulative relations and to the formation of bureaucratic structures similar to those which are criticized, leaves little room for optimism. MacIntyre has not articulated a complete political theory until today, although this is the promise that closes *After Virtue*. From this point of view, we see that his project remains unfinished, since his critique of morality is not

²³ See *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (London: Duckworth, 1999), pp. 131ff. MacIntyre does not take as starting point ideal models, but forms of communities of which we have empirical or historical perception. See in *DRA*, 143 examples ranging from the ancient city-state in certain kinds of medieval communities and to later modern collaborative communities that express solidarity and common commitment to "internal" communal goods, so that citizens are not manipulated by capitalist development.

²⁴ The effectiveness of local communities is questioned and it is argued rightly that we cannot abandon the wider world, see M. Wartofsky, "Virtue Lost or Understanding MacIntyre," *Inquiry*, 27 (1984), 235-250, p. 248; M. Brown, "'You Take Alasdair MacIntyre Much too Seriously' (Ronald Preston) –But Do Preston or MacIntyre Take the Global Economy Seriously Enough?," *Studies in Christian Ethics*, 17 (2004), 173-181, p. 176ff. It is questioned in particular the ability of small communities to escape Modernity. See Schneewind, "Virtue, Narrative....," pp. 661-663; J. Wallace, "Review of *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory, Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*," *History and Theory*, 28 (1989), 613-641.

²⁵ In *After Virtue* MacIntyre argues that the problems of Modernity are relayed to Marxism. The failure of the latter occurs just by incorporating elements of the modern ethos that should be discarded if it is to provide a reliable alternative (*After Virtue*, p. x). He says that when Marxists organized in power they become Weberians, because, in order to promote rational management, they expand the bureaucratic modernization and instrumental rationalization, approaching in this way Weber's model, which expresses the modern impersonal rationality in an a-moral form on the basis of means-ends paradigm (109, 261). About the difficulties of developing a Marxist alternative to liberal theory see also "Notes from the Moral Wilderness," in Knight (ed.), *The MacIntyre Reader*..., pp. 31-49.

accompanied by the development of an alternative socio-political theory capable of supporting his demands and providing ways of transition to a just society.

MacIntyre charges Modernity for the absence of historicity, a necessary precondition to defining human nature, and reduces the problem to the abstract universality of the Enlightenment's Project. However, this criticism should not lead to indeterminacy and relativism, because, in this way, the reflective frame of evaluations that can render universal values of right action is undermined and, as a consequence, relativism, MacIntyre's main opponent, undermines the foundations of his own theory. And I think he is tacitly aware of the problem, as it is shown by the anguished way in which he poses the same question again and again: "Why not Nietzsche?" Besides, in his later works, after the *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy and Tradition*, his main interest is focused on Genealogy and relativism that results.

We realize, after all, that MacIntyre, trying to cope with the hammer of Positivism, is in danger of being crushed in the anvil of Postmodernism. The features found in standard forms of conservative traditionalism are absent in his theory. In fact, it cannot be understood, outside the modern condition to be considered, that it provides a reliable, fully articulated alternative program, completely different from the project of Modernity. Rather, it implicitly presupposes societies in which fundamental modern values are respected. Certain elements of his critique, such as the intonation of the need to discuss the content of human life, the prominence of co-belonging, the illustration of a thicker and more complex conception of human personality, the critique of the market relations, and the call to refrain from the trends towards privacy that individualism abets for the sake of a more active political participation in the public sphere, could, perhaps, be moderated in order to retain the traits of an imminent critique of Modernity, which aspires to show that moral relativism (emotivism), political manipulation (bureaucracy) and consumption (capitalism) are not a one-way route.

The request for the rational reconstruction of social relationships operates critically as an everlasting postulation for the ongoing reform of the social condition and, thus, for the overcoming of the historical limits of these societies. The latitude of this critique is found in the realization of the tension between, on the one hand, the evaluative bases of this culture and, on the other hand, the institutional forms of coercion, exploitation and dominion that cancel them. Besides, which tradition (as it survives today) is not already, in some point and somehow, a partaker in the Enlightenment? If, by contrast, the radical elements of MacIntyre's critique are emphasized, which means the rejection of the Enlightenment's Project tout court, then his critique ends up as one more theory among others, compatible with the Postmodern condition, where anything goes, why not the return to the fog of the past in the form of an idealized, harmonious pro-Modern community?

PART XI

Perspectives on the Current European Crisis

***“The European nations are sick;
Europe itself, it is said, is in crisis”:***
Reflections on Husserl’s “Idea” of Europe

GOLFO MAGGINI

To Vasiliki Solomou-Papanikolaou

(I)

*“Merely fact-minded sciences make human beings that are nothing but mere facts”*¹ –this is the emblematic formulation of the late Husserl’s ever-lasting attack on the historical development of modern science, dominated by the ideals of naturalism and objectivism, and accused of being a form “of rationalism, of enlightenment, of an intellectualism which loses itself in theories alienated from the world.”² But what is it that makes this attack so powerful and with such long-lasting effects for phenomenological thought? Husserl’s critique of scientism and technologism (*Technizismus*) is closely linked with the theme of crisis in the framework of his phenomenology of culture, more precisely of European culture, since the crisis has its roots in a “misguided rationalism.”³

Undoubtedly, the discourse on the crisis of Europe is not an originality of Husserl’s late phenomenological project: the end of WWI triggered a series of diagnoses of the crisis of Europe viewed as a civilizational crisis, e.g. in Spengler’s discourse on the decline of the West. Yet all those diagnoses share one common feature, that is, a negative evaluation of what the crisis is. For the late Husserl, nevertheless, there is an ambiguity as to the nature and depth of the crisis. “Our problem of the crisis” (*unser Problem der Krisis*) is, of course, a situation of dissatisfaction and distress, namely of what he designates as “our European distress” (*unsere europäische Not*).⁴ But there is something additional to this degenerate state which links the crisis to an intrinsic questionability (*Fraglichkeit*) as to the meaning –or the meaninglessness– of science,⁵ philosophy, and of European humanity as such: the nega-

¹ E. Husserl, “Bloße Tatsachenwissenschaften machen bloße Tatsachemenschen” [*Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937, Husserliana XXIX*, ed. R.N. Smid (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer, 1993), p. 106].

² E. Husserl, “Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity–The Vienna Lecture” (1935), in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. and intro. D. Carr (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1970), p. 289.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 294. Cf. *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Husserliana VI*, ed. W. Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), p. 342.

⁵ Husserl stresses on many occasions the intrinsic relation between meaning and historicity: See in this respect Paul Ricœur’s insightful analysis in “Husserl et le sens de l’his-

tive turn of the overall European crisis may signify an “existential catastrophe of the European man” (*existentielle Katastrophe des europäischen Menschen*), nevertheless, there is a chance that such a thing could lead to a “revolutionary *Umwendung*.”⁶ In any case, the historicity of European culture in all its manifestations –science being the primordial one– should be viewed neither in terms of a history of mere facts –Husserl’s attack on historicism is well-known –nor in terms of a historical *a priori*, since it brings about “a transformation of human existence and its whole cultural life.”⁷ Factual history as an offspring of historicism is yet another form of naturalism, which lies at the very root of the crisis. Therefore, Husserl’s emphasis is upon a teleological dimension, which is inherent only to the European “spiritual form” –what has often been interpreted as a strong indication of Husserl’s alleged Eurocentrism:

“... a remarkable teleology, inborn, as it were only in our Europe, will become visible in this way, one which is quite intimately involved with the outbreak or irruption of philosophy and its branches, the sciences, in the ancient Greek spirit. We can foresee that this will involve a clarification of the deepest reasons for the origin of the portentous naturalism, or, what will prove to be equivalent, of modern dualism in the interpretation of the world. Finally this will bring to light the actual sense of the crisis of European humanity.”⁸

For Husserl, only the recognition of teleology inherent in the “idea” or “spiritual shape” of Europe can bring therapy to the crisis, as it is this very teleological unity that makes it possible for individuals, but also for cultures, to com-

toire,” *À l’école de la phénoménologie* (Paris: Vrin, 1986), 21-58. Ricœur puts the emphasis on the intrinsic link between history and teleology in Husserl: if history, especially European history or Europe *as* history, has a meaning, this is a teleological meaning *par excellence*. It is via its teleological meaning, which is immanent to it, that Europe is intrinsically philosophical and this is the reason why the diagnosis of its crisis should not depart from external facts, in the way a historian would treat a crisis, but from a duty which investigates the “primordial establishment” (*Urstiftung*) of history as such in order to grasp its teleological unity (*À l’école de la phénoménologie*, pp. 31, 34).

⁶ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, pp. 108-109.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 289. On the problematic aspects of the necessary connection, according to Husserl, between Europe and history or historicity, see D.J. Levy, “Europe, Truth, and History: Husserl and Voegelin on Philosophy and the Identity of Europe,” *Man and World*, 26 (1993), 161-180.

⁸ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 273. An important issue to raise in this respect is what exactly Husserl means by “geistiges Gebilde.” For James Dodd, “spiritual” indicates that, for Husserl, the world is actively generated and given a strict coherence by the spirit. But “Gebilde” does not possess the abstract mean of a “structure,” but the concrete meaning of a “thing”: “But *Gebilde* also means “thing” in the sense that a formula or a theory, a custom or a poem by Montale is a “thing” – thus precisely in the sense of a structure that can “be” at all insofar as it has been moved, shaped, or fashioned by a concern that has led to or resulted in its accomplishment...” [*Crisis and Reflection: An Essay on Husserl’s Crisis of the European Sciences*, *Phaenomenologica* 174 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2004), p. 35].

prehend their historical task.⁹ Therefore, the situation of crisis has to be diagnosed under the light of a unique understanding of Europe as a "spiritual shape form" (*geistige gestalt*), not just as a geographical entity or a common historical fate:

"We pose the question: How is *the spiritual shape of Europe* to be characterized? Thus we refer to Europe not as it is understood geographically, as on a map, as if thereby the group of people who live together in this territory would define European humanity [...]. Here the title "Europe" clearly refers to *the unity of a spiritual life*, activity, creation, with all its ends, interests, cares, and endeavors, with its products of purposeful activity, institutions, organizations...."¹⁰

It is within the perspective of the spiritual essence of the European crisis that the latter should not be fought with the weapons of "old" rationalism which resulted in the degenerate forms of naturalism, objectivism, and "technologism." No recourse to this sort of solution would be a remedy to the crisis. No excess of rationalism of this kind and no appeal to it are capable of offering an alternative to the crisis. Contrary to these false remedies –the contemporary counterparts of which being technoscientific efficiency and technicized politics–, the only way out of the crisis is "the spirit's truly universal and truly radical coming to terms with itself in the form of universal, responsible science."¹¹

(II)

There are several problems pertaining to Husserl's account of Europe. One recurrent problem is the split within Husserlian scholarship regarding his diagnosis of the European culture with regard to its first and foremost feature, that is, its universality. There are those who claim that Husserl's account indulges in a strong monoculturalism which leads him to an exacerbated Eurocentrism.¹² This claim is further endorsed by statements such as the following:

⁹ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, § 15. In this respect, see V. Gérard, *La Krisis: Husserl* (Paris: Ellipses, 1999), pp. 13-14.

¹⁰ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 273 (author's emphasis).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

¹² R.P. Buckley, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility* (Dordrecht/Boston: Kluwer, 1992), p. 31 ff; E.W. Orth, *Edmund Husserl's Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999), p. 153 ff.; T. Ogawa, "Eurozentrismus, Eurozentrik und Ent-Europäisierung," in *Grund und Grenze des Bewusstseins: Interkulturelle Phänomenologie aus japanischer Sicht* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 121-131. For a well-argued thesis against Husserl's Eurocentrism, see T. Miettinen, "For the Sake of the Shared World: Husserl and the Limits of Europe," *Philosophy Today* 54 (2010), 193-199, pp. 193-196. Miettinen opposes the well-established views of Husserl's Euro-centrism, and even Jacques Derrida's idea that Europe's logic is the "logic of exemplarity" [*The Other Heading* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992),

“There is something unique here [in our own Europe] that is recognized in us by all other human groups, too, something that, quite apart from all considerations of utility, becomes a motive for them to Europeanize themselves even in their unbroken will to spiritual self-preservation; whereas we, if we understand ourselves properly, would never indianize ourselves.”¹³

There are others who opt for a greater openness to alterity and to intercultural communication on account of Husserl’s phenomenology of culture, while insisting on its wide scope, as he thematizes the life-world in view of “historical cultural worlds” (*historische Kulturwelten*).¹⁴ Still, before opting for one of the two positions, it is important to point out that, in the late Husserl, crisis in all its ambivalence is not circumstantial to Europe’s present state, but is a constitutive element of its “spiritual shape.” Moreover, this ambivalence is not external to the phenomenological project itself, as the diagnosis and the cure of the crisis suffered by European humanity end up being a limit-question for phenomenology itself, that is, for the possibility –or the impossibility– for phenomenology to raise such a question.¹⁵

p. 69]. For Miettinen: “in Husserl’s “absolute sense,” Europe does not bear within itself any substantive content that could function as the ground of this exemplarity. On the contrary, it is disposed to the constant *epoché* of its foundations. [...] Because, for Husserl, what he calls the *eidos* of Europe is in essence nothing else but a *constantly retreating limit*; something that the Greek philosophy was the first to articulate, but by no means to bring to completion” (author’s emphasis).

¹³ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 275. On Husserl’s sharp differentiation between this “universalizing” European culture and other “humanities” (*Menschheiten*), which are understood as “empirical anthropological types”: D. Moran, “‘Even the Papuan is a Man and not a Beast’: Husserl on Universalism and the Relativity of Cultures,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 49 (2011), 463-494, p. 466 ff.

¹⁴ Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937, Husserliana XXIX*, p. 112. As James Morrison indicates: “Since the life-world is essentially cultural-historical the *a priori* of history is identical with the *a priori* of the life-world. Hence the *ontology* of the life-world is at the same time an ontology of history. Such an ontology would disclose the “invariant typic” of any possible life-world and any possible cultural-historical world. As invariant and universal, Husserl claims that it provides the basis of a final refutation of *historicism*” [“Husserl’s ‘Crisis’: Reflections on the Relationship of Philosophy and History,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 37 (1977), 321-330, p. 322 (author’s emphasis)].

¹⁵ In his August 1934 “Human Life in Historicity,” Husserl speaks of a “primordial initial historicity” (*ursprünglich erste Geschichtlichkeit*) which is intrinsically related to a primordial “having of the world” (*Welthaben*) and “world-living” (*Weltleben*). Man as a rational being, either on the individual or on the collective-national level is intrinsically a historical being. In the case of man’s rational essence in the nation” (*in der Nation*), together with other nations, he speaks of “political historicity” (*politische Geschichtlichkeit*) (*Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937, Husserliana XXIX*, pp. 2-3, 9-10). See in this respect, G. Soffer, “Philosophy and the Disdain for History: Reflections on Husserl’s *Ergänzungsband* to the *Crisis*,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 34 (1996), 95-116, pp. 95-96. For Soffer, the *Crisis*-manuscripts present only one aspect of Husserl’s questioning

(III)

But why crisis? There is a first sense in which "crisis" was understood by the post- WWI European intellectuals –Husserl being one of them.¹⁶ Crisis would take on the meaning of a "spiritual deprivation" of the European man, which should, nevertheless, lead to a rational "renewal (*Erneuerung*) of culture."¹⁷ In this rather common sense, "crisis" is also present in discourses on Europe such as Spengler's, which is not irrelevant to the shift in Husserl's *Kulturkritik* from 1922 onwards.¹⁸ Nevertheless, for the late Husserl, the crisis of "spiritual Europe" signifies something much deeper, which has to do with a radical divergence between European culture as a "spiritual shape/form" defined by a set of ideal features and its concrete, historically defined realization, in other words, European humanity in its present state.¹⁹ But what were the constituent elements of Europe's state of crisis in the 30s?

on history, whereas its internal aspects are presented on other occasions, in relation with themes such as the life-world, genetic phenomenology, and time-consciousness. For a systematic treatment of the question of Europe and the development of the phenomenological method, see also S. Valdinoci, *La traversée de l'immanence. L'euroanalyse ou la méthode de la phénoménologie* (Paris: Éditions Kimé, 1996).

¹⁶ For Husserl, Germany, but also Europe in general, suffer from a profound cultural pessimism. The question for him is whether Europe should passively accept the "decline of the West" as a historical fate either through cultural pessimism or through the "Realpolitik" or whether it should, beyond pessimism and "realism," perceive of its course as a "life of reason" (*Vernunftslieben*): *Vorträge und Aufsätze (1922-1937)*, *Husserliana* XXVII, ed. T. Nenon and H.R. Sepp (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer, 1989), pp. 4-5.

¹⁷ Husserl, "Erneuerung. Ihr Problem and ihre Methode," in *Vorträge und Aufsätze (1922-1937)*, *Husserliana* XXVII, pp. 3-13. On the presuppositions for the renewal of a "cultural community" (*Kulturgemeinschaft*), pp. 43-54.

¹⁸ "... 'Der Untergang des Abendlandes,' diese neueste Theorie eines schwachherzigen philosophischen Skeptizismus" [*Vorträge und Aufsätze (1922-1937)*, *Husserliana* XXVII, p. 122]. For Christian Möckel, Husserl's *Kulturkritik* takes a decisive turn from the *Kaizo-Artikel* (1922/23), notably in contrast to the cultural critique of the philosophers of life (Simmel, Klages, Spengler). Especially as far as Spengler is concerned, Möckel detects in the *Crisis*-manuscripts a series of indirect references to his *The Decline of the West*. Yet, he notes that, for Spengler, the decline of the European culture represents a fateful tragedy, from which no escape is possible. For Husserl, however, the "crisis" is no tragedy or impenetrable "Verhängnis," but what paves the way for a real alternative, whose realization depends upon man himself and for which the regression to the mythical-religious *praxis* of an "inauthentic" (*unechtes*) humanity does not represent a real alternative to the crisis. See Möckel, "Krisisdiagnosen: Husserl and Spengler," *Phänomenologische Hefte-Neue Folge*, 3 (1998), 34-60, pp. 54-55.

¹⁹ Husserl defines the present state as that of a "process of a universal Europeanization" (*Prozess einer universalen Europäisierung*) (*Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937*, *Husserliana* XXIX, p. 16). His stance towards actuality is, nevertheless, complex and ambivalent and this reflects upon his conceptualization of "crisis" as the dominant situation in present time. This is indicated in the fate of studies such as "Über die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Philosophie" [*Vorträge und Aufsätze (1922-1937)*, *Husserliana* XXVII, 184-221], which was withdrawn from the conference and instead a letter was read aloud in which Husserl pronounced that at the present time philosophy is on its death-bed and what

Husserl regards Europe's present state as a state of foundational crisis; a crisis, that is, which threatens the very foundations of Europe as a "spiritual shape/form,"²⁰ its leading thread being the "novel traditionality of theory" (*die neuartige Traditionalität der Theorie*),²¹ that is, universal reason. The manifestations of the "drifting away" from Europe's foundations that lead to the crisis are many, diagnosed by the early Husserl under the headings of psychologism and positivism and, by the late Husserl, under the heading of naturalism.²² Positivism in science, which entails its progressive technicization, seems to be the most serious cause of the European crisis, since it ends up in the imposition of one-sided rationality (*einseitige Rationalität*).²³ The latter in its turn, touches all aspects of European culture: from Renaissance on, there has been a re-establishment (*Nachstiftung*) and, at the same time, a modification of the Greek ideal as a rational universal science, which eventually led to the degradation of the primordial establishment (*Urstiftung*).²⁴ As a consequence, instead of providing a meaning that is essentially connected to the life-world, European science led to a historical non-sense, that is, to a state of

should only be expected is a new beginning on the basis of reformed methodology. What is claimed here on the occasion of philosophy's current state of crisis could also be valid for science and European humanity as such. On the meaning and significance of actuality in Husserl: S. Le Quitte, "Le thème de l'actualité," in A. Granjean, L. Perreau (eds.), *Husserl. La science des phénomènes* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 2012), 115-136.

²⁰ On cultures as "spiritual forms" (*geistige Gestalten*): *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, *Husserliana* VI, p. 319.

²¹ Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, *Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937*, *Husserliana* XXIX, p. 15.

²² In a certain sense, science right from its Greek "breakthrough" (*Durchbruch*) has suffered from crises in the sense that Husserl identified early in his *Philosophy of Arithmetic*, where he discussed arithmetic *calculus* as the technological mediation of numbers perceived as mere symbols. Still, as R. Philip Buckley notices: "Only in an age dominated by technology, that is, in what one might call a technological culture, is the type of forgetfulness found in technological science a true threat, for it implies that the entire culture is one of forgetting and lack of insight, the lack of insight which accompanies and even fosters the advancement of the natural sciences, and their technological extensions. A lack of insight which is always a crisis of some sort only becomes a crisis of worrisome dimensions, when it reaches a certain magnitude or breadth" (*Husserl, Heidegger, and the Crisis of Philosophical Responsibility*, pp. 73-74).

²³ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 291; *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, *Husserliana* VI, p. 338. For a thorough account on Husserl's critique of the gradual technicization of European sciences, see B. Rang, "Die bodenlose Wissenschaft. Husserl's Kritik von Objektivismus und Technizismus in Mathematik und Naturwissenschaft," *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, 22 (1989), 88-136, pp. 103-107. See also T. Wolf, "Sinnverlust oder Sinnverzicht? Ansätze zu einer Hermeneutik der Technik bei Husserl und Heidegger," in J. Jonas-K.H. Lembeck (eds.), *Mensch-Leben-Technik. Aktuelle Beiträge zur einer Phänomenologie der Technik* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), 301-318, pp. 303-304.

²⁴ On the three senses of "establishment" (*Stiftung*) as "Ur-Stiftung," "Nach-Stiftung" and "End-Stiftung," see J. Dodd, *Crisis and Reflection: An Essay on Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences* (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2004), pp. 72-78.

crisis.²⁵ Nevertheless, against the commonly held thesis that Husserl emphasizes the role of rationality and science in the genesis as well as in the prospective reformation of European culture and, consequently, that he thematizes a primarily epistemological crisis, the emphasis here is put on the ethical dimension of the proposed cultural reform, that is, of the way out of the current crisis:

“The spiritual *telos* of European humanity, in which the particular *telos* of particular nations and of individual men is contained, lies in the infinite, is an infinite idea toward which, in concealment, the whole spiritual becoming aims, so to speak. As soon as it becomes consciously recognized in the development as *telos*, it necessarily also becomes practical as a goal of the will; and thereby a new, higher stage of development is introduced which is under the guidance of norms, normative, ideas.”²⁶

Husserl talks about the “self-responsibility of European humanity,” which lies in its Greek origin.²⁷ This responsibility –alternatively, this task (*Aufgabe*) – seeks to safeguard the Greek origin of European culture, but in a peculiar manner, that is, by emphasizing not its uniqueness and singularity, but its universality: European man’s self-understanding is, therefore, defined as a responsibility for his own human being, as being called upon a “life of apodicticity,” an “apodictic freedom.”²⁸ European humanity from the Greeks onwards has demarcated itself from traditional life-worlds to the extent that it stands “within the horizon of the infinities.”²⁹ But it is rational scientific activity that brings forth this infinity. Thus, Europe’s historicity is defined “through ideas of reason, through infinite tasks.”³⁰ The European cultural life-world is, therefore, distinguished from other cultural life-worlds, in the sense

²⁵ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 16. For an extended commentary on Husserl’s critical analysis at this point, see R. Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task. A Study of a Philosophical Concept* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 44-50.

²⁶ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 275. For Jean-Luc Nancy: “... The *end* that is the *telos* is not an end sighted and thus aimed at; it is an end insofar as it is the greatest possible development of something, beyond which there is nothing that this something could still become. This is why the *telos* is inseparable from existence...” [“Dies Irae,” in J. Derrida, V. Descombes, P. Lacoue-Labarthe, J.-F. Lyotard, J.-L. Nancy (eds.), *La faculté de juger*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1985, 9-54, pp. 41-42].

²⁷ Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, *Husserliana* VI, p. 516. On Husserl’s notion of self-responsibility (*Selbstverantwortung*) as a reply to the passive attitude towards the cultural crisis of cultural pessimists such as Oswald Spengler: F. Volpi, “Aux racines du malaise contemporain: Husserl et la responsabilité du philosophe,” in M. Richir - E. Escoubas (eds.), *Husserl* (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1989), 155-179; T. Miettinen, “Phenomenology and Crisis. Tradition and Responsibility in Husserl and Heidegger,” *Philosophy Today*, 53 (2009), 108-115, pp. 110-111.

²⁸ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 340.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 390.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

that the former promotes infinity and universality as an “entelechy inborn in our European civilization.”³¹ Therefore, it is only the historical-teleological perspective that paves the way for an authentic understanding of the crisis of European humanity, as Husserl notes in the conclusion of his 1935 Vienna lecture:

“In order to be able to comprehend the disarray of the present “crisis”, we had to work out *the concept of Europe as the historical teleology of the infinite goals of reason*; we had to show how the European “world” was born out of ideas of reason, i.e., out of the spirit of philosophy.”³²

Consequently, the crisis is a teleological event manifested in the decisive, unbridgeable cleavage between the –teleologically defined– “idea” of Europe and its concrete realizations. Moreover, the crisis is a foundational event which pertains to the patterns of universality and rationality. Last but not least, it is a crisis of the practical-ethical kind; it is in this respect that Husserl argues that it is the very idea of responsibility that should lead to a transformation (*Verwandlung*),³³ that is, to the “rebirth of Europe.”³⁴

(IV)

In light of the above analysis, one of the hardest questions to ask pertains to the way Husserl bridges the transcendental with the empirical, that is, the “idea” of Europe –linked to the teleological ideal of true (authentic) universality³⁵– to the concrete state in which the early 20th century Europe found itself. Since it is the phenomenological concept of the life-world that has been identified by many as the key to the issue,³⁶ there have been numerous analyses of its role and function within the late Husserl’s phenomenological proj-

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 275. On the topic of the differentiation between the modalities of tradition which are relevant to a specific form of life and, therefore, finite and the idea of science which proceeds from a purely theoretical interest thus exceeding the *Weltanschauungen* of specific *Menschheiten*, see F. Dastur, *Husserl. Des mathématiques à l’histoire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), pp. 109-110. Nevertheless, Husserl argues that the adoption of the theoretical-scientific attitude does not necessarily destroy what we commonly take to be the specific features of a cultural life. It entails the upheaval (*Umbruch*) of a tradition, not its destruction (*The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 288).

³² *Ibid.*, p. 299 (author’s emphasis). Europe’s self-responsibility is intrinsically connected to philosophy, which normally possesses a necessary task and lively evidence, whereas, in times of crisis, the evidence loses its liveliness, as it becomes weak and lifeless.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 391-392; *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, *Husserliana* VI, p. 511.

³⁴ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 299.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 341. Cf. Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task*, p. 81.

³⁶ Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 379 ff. Cf. T. Miettinen, “Edmund Husserl’s Europe: Borders, Limits, and Crises,” *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*, XI (2012), 77-97, pp. 84-85.

ect to diagnose the crisis and cure it.³⁷ In this respect, a fundamental difference should be marked between the particular historical *life-worlds* and the *a priori* life-world.³⁸

As to the actuality of Husserl's reflection on Europe's crisis, a question worthy to be asked is in which ways it could enlighten the present situation, which is once more a situation of crisis. Does Husserl provide us with hermeneutic keys to understand our current situation of crisis and find ways to overcome it, or are his diagnosis and therapeutic means for dealing with the crisis outdated and doomed to oblivion?

A first thing to retain from Husserl's phenomenological elucidations is that the solution to "our problem of Europe" cannot be of the same order as its cause, that is, if it is one-sided rationality that caused the problem due to its unprecedented separation from the life-world, we cannot find the way out of the crisis by adopting these same means.³⁹ A second point to be taken into consideration is that, by separating the factual, geographical-historical, from the spiritual-teleological definition of Europe, Husserl can give hermeneutic keys to understanding the process which underlies the current European crisis, that is, the impasses of the process of globalization,⁴⁰ which in turn is the Europeanization of the world.⁴¹ One way of interpreting Husserl's "idea" of Eu-

³⁷ J. Patočka, "Les périls de l'orientation de la science vers la technique selon Husserl et l'essence de la technique en tant que péril selon Heidegger," in *Liberté et sacrifice. Ecrits politiques* (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1990), 259-275, pp. 261-262.

³⁸ Concerning the phenomenological relation between the one, *a priori* life-world and the particulars life-worlds, cf. in particular the recently published *Die Lebenswelt. Auslegungen der vorgegebenen Welt und ihrer Konstitution. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1916-1937)*, *Husserliana* XXXIX, ed. R. Sowa (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), pp. 57, 171, 192, 203, 499, 682, 677. On this issue, see R.J. Welton's commentary in his review of the volume of the *Husserliana*: Welton, *Husserl Studies*, 26 (2010), 205-224, pp. 220-224.

³⁹ The intrinsic problematicity of the Husserlian "crisis" has been marked on many occasions. See, for instance, Jacques Derrida's repeated questioning on the actual status of the crisis as transcendental or empirical in the framework of his treatment of the genetic character of Husserlian phenomenology: "the origin of this crisis is not elaborated, precisely because on the one hand, there is no teleological reason for this crisis, and on the other hand, because, by definition, the crisis itself cannot reveal anything originary to us" [*Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990), p. 258].

⁴⁰ On the important differentiation between globalization and "worldwide-ization" (French: "mondialisation") and its implications for the European question in phenomenology, see Jacques Derrida's penetrating remark that he keeps the term "mondialisation du monde" instead of "globalization" in order to "maintain a reference to the world – monde, Welt, mundus– which is neither the globe nor the cosmos" ["The University Without Condition," in *Without Alibi*, ed., trans. and intro. P. Kamuf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 202-237, pp. 203, 223]. Also on the differentiation between globalization and "worldwide-ization" but in a different phenomenological vein: J.-L. Nancy, *La création du monde ou la mondialisation* (Paris: Galilée, 2000).

⁴¹ Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie, Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937*, *Husserliana* XXIX, 14-17. Cf. K. Held, "Husserls These von der Europäisierung der Menschheit," in C. Jamme

rope is to take it for a “supra-nation.”⁴² The other way is that of intercultural empathy, which we discover in his first sketches of a phenomenology of culture at the beginning of the 1920s in his *Kaizo-Artikel*.⁴³ These writings indicate a double movement in light of which we should also interpret the *Crisis*-manuscripts equally in two ways. First, there is the idea that the prospect of cultural renewal is a necessary component for a phenomenology-driven *Kulturkritik* and, second, that cultural renewal can and should function as the disclosure of an ideal possibility, which allows us openness to the future.⁴⁴ This double movement of renewal serves the articulation of the meaning of the phenomenologist’s ethical responsibility towards a situation of crisis, as the one we face at the present moment.⁴⁵

The above two points lead us to a third one, which is of crucial importance for seizing the similarities and divergences between the two epochal crises: is today’s European crisis unique in its essence? Globalization –a process that had already been theoretically envisaged and underway in the first decades of the century but fulfilled in late modern Western societies– is endangering Europe *qua* Europe, and so, what has always been to a certain extent the double face of Europe –Europe as a promise, but also Europe as a risk– can either be fulfilled or gone forever.⁴⁶

Following these demarcations about the way in which Husserl treats the concept of Europe in relation to the actual situation of European humanity, let us sort out Husserl’s positive contribution to the *Krisisdiagnose*, which is no other than the emphasis on the ethico-practical aspects of authentic universality.⁴⁷ The search for a true universality is not the offspring of intellectualism

and O. Pöggeler (eds.), *Phänomenologie im Widerstreit. Zum 50. Todestag Edmund Husserls* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989), 13-39.

⁴² The question of the relation between homeworld and alienworld(s) and the one (universal)-world is one of the most debated one among Husserl scholars. See indicatively: B. Waldenfels, “Experience of the Alien in Husserl’s Phenomenology,” *Research in Phenomenology*, 20 (1990), 19-33; K. Held, “Heimwelt, Fremdwelt, die eine Welt,” in E.W. Orth (ed.), *Perspektiven und Probleme der Husserlischen Phänomenologie* (Freiburg/München: Karl Alber, 1991), 305-337; A.J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology After Husserl* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), p. 173 ff.

⁴³ Husserl, *Vorträge und Aufsätze (1922-1937)*, *Husserliana* XXVII. On the relation between philosophy of culture and transcendental phenomenology: E.W. Orth, “Kulturphilosophie und Kulturanthropologie als Transzendentalphänomenologie,” *Husserl Studies*, 4 (1987), 103-141.

⁴⁴ On the role and importance of the future in Husserl’s phenomenological project: J. Mensch, “Husserl’s Concept of the Future,” *Husserl Studies*, 16 (1999), 41-64.

⁴⁵ Z. Davis, “Husserl on the Ethical Renewal of Sympathy and the One World of Solidarity,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, XLIII (2006), 561-581, p. 562.

⁴⁶ This is what Rodolphe Gasché indicates specifically as to Europe’s relation to its other: “The Little Thing That Is Europe,” *The New Centennial Review*, 7 (2007), 1-19, p. 17.

⁴⁷ If there is a talk of Husserlian ethics, it is as “the cultivation and maintenance of the right *ethos*,” and not as a formal system [M. Brainard, “For a New World: On the practical impulse of Husserlian Theory,” *Husserl Studies*, 23 (2007), 17-31, p. 19].

and abstract theorizing, but a responsible task for Europeans to assume.⁴⁸ Most of the exegeses of his late writings take for granted that he treats the European crisis as an epistemological crisis first, as he had already done earlier in his critique of psychologism, and it is in light of it that he delves into the crisis of the European cultural life-world. Nevertheless, early in his phenomenological investigations, at least from the 1922-23 *Kaizo-Artikel*,⁴⁹ it becomes clear that Husserl prioritizes a phenomenological investigation into the discontinuities or crises that emerge in the framework of cultural worlds as primarily practical-ethical.⁵⁰ Especially, the idea of ethical transformation and renewal (*Erneuerung*),⁵¹ already present in the 1922/23 *Kaizo-Artikel*, is a key motive for his phenomenology of cultural life-worlds and, most importantly, of the European cultural life-world. In this light we can, indeed, detect a direct line which leads from the *Kaizo-Artikel* to the *Crisis*-manuscript, where the earlier phenomenological project of cultural life-worlds is applied to the highest cultural life-world, that is, European culture, as the one disposing the highest degree of universality.

It is mainly the ethico-practical parameters of Husserl's phenomenological crisis-analysis—especially his idea of an “ethical generation of culture” and of a “continual renewal of a culture's generative force”—that can offer us insights into our own way of coping with the present cultural situation of crisis.⁵² We are used to perceiving the crisis as a deficiency in rationality, the latter perceived as techno-scientific rationality. But, in Husserl's terms, it is not the one-sided rationality that led to the crisis that can lead us out of it. The

⁴⁸ See in this respect: U. Melle, “Responsibility and the Crisis of Technological Civilization: A Husserlian Meditation on Hans Jonas,” *Husserl Studies*, 21 (1998), 329-345, pp. 329-334 and R. Gasché, “L'étrange concept de responsabilité,” in M.L. Mallet (ed.), *La démocratie à venir: Autour de Jacques Derrida* (Paris: Galilée, Paris 2004), 361-374. The role of phenomenology in this process of self-elucidation is, in this sense, unique: “In an important sense, then, phenomenology is the consummation of European culture's constant self-reflection, the summit of a self-imposed anxiety to be critical of its own endeavours while securing unwavering foundations by doing so. It is a science of science...” [B. Kaldis, “What is distinctive about European art and science? The Tragic Enmeshment of Art and Science or Husserl Revisited,” in E. Banūs and B. Elio (eds.), *European Culture/Cultura Europea* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2003), 555-582 (author's emphasis)].

⁴⁹ Following several commentators, however, the ethical dimension of Husserl's phenomenology of culture goes hand in hand with his *Zeitkritik* as early as the *Logos*-conference (1911): Möckel, “Krisisdiagnosen: Husserl und Spengler,” pp. 36-39.

⁵⁰ For an analysis that goes in this direction: Elisabeth Ströker, “Krise der europäischen Wissenschaften als Krise der Kultur: Husserls Europa Gedanke in seinem Spätwerk,” in W. Stegmaier (ed.), *Europa Philosophie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 123-139.

⁵¹ A. Steinbock, “The Project of Ethical Renewal and Critique: Edmund Husserl's Early Phenomenology of Culture,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, XXXII (1994), 449-464, pp. 459, 461.

⁵² The problem of the epistemological crisis as the forgetting of the lifeworldly foundations of modern science implies the reference to *praxis*: what falls into oblivion is the *praxis*-orientation of *theoria* and *episteme*, and it is this dimension that must be recovered: Ricœur, “L'originare et la question-en-retour dans la *Krisis* de Husserl,” *À l'école de la phénoménologie*, 285-295.

real issue here is to discover the authentic “generative force” which can lead Europe –not as a *de facto* financial or political entity, but most of all, as a unique cultural entity defined by an infinity of tasks and by a “universality in the making”⁵³ – out of its current crisis.

⁵³ Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task*, p. 64.

Europe and the Birth-Crisis of Ultracapital

JON CLOKE

Introduction

The re-telling of the capitalist story over the last 250 years has been characterized by symbolic events referred to as crises, described by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto of 1848 thus: “In these crises, a great part not only of existing production, but also of previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity –the epidemic of over-production.” Crisis, then, has been embedded in writings on capitalism as integral; Schumpeter¹ absorbed the crisis into capitalist theory as the fundamental process within capitalism –“This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism. It is what capitalism consists in and what every capitalist concern has got to live in.”

In the latter decades of the 20th century and into the first decades of the 21st Century, the intentional phenomena assigned to the economic home world and described as ‘crises’ have also appeared to intensify in frequency and impact, from the 1987 stock-market crash to the Tech-bubble crash of 2000-2002 to the global crisis that began in 2007.² A salient feature of each crisis has been that, irrespective of the general agreement that crises are inevitable, prior to their arrival, very few economic analysts agree about what constitutes an imminent crisis to the extent of being able to predict them, most spectacularly with the current one.³ Once the critical event has occurred, moreover, and despite any agreement over the destructive effects, the main struggle over them is to own the hinterland of meaning, the right to define causation from given, pre-existing ideological stand-points.

Although outside the remit of this particular paper, contemporary official discourses also revolve around the allocation of particular effects of ‘crises’ to market behaviour; ‘the market’ has become an iconic image of particular importance to elite commentaries on globalizing capitalism, having achieved the status of a *deus ex machina*, or perhaps more accurately a doxa (δόξα from δοκεῖν), the Platonic concept re-worked by Bourdieu as “the universe of possible discourse,”⁴ that which “goes without saying because it comes without

¹ J.A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942; London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 82-83.

² For a historical treatment, see C. Kindleberger and R. Aliber, *Manias, Panics and Crashes: A History of Financial Crises* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011⁶).

³ B. Bernanke, “Implications of the Financial Crisis for Economics” (Speech to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve by Chairman, 24-9-2010).

⁴ P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. R. Nice, Vol. 16 (1972; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 167-169, p. 164.

saying.”⁵ As a subordinate clause, modern crisis interpretation and therefore management, is extremely concerned with examining all critical events in terms of intentionalities of market actors—‘herd’ behaviours, the speed at which investors can withdraw from markets, trigger points, spill-over effects and contagion. Regarded in this sense, the market has become a monistic system, part of a nomothetic (not to say noumenal, in the Kantian sense) framework: “The market is always right. And it has to be fully respected at all times.”⁶

Following each nominal crisis, socio-cultural depictions of these events have tended to present them in the same linear, temporally sequential fashion—they are epiphenomena derived from a set of causal events and processes inherent to local, regional, global or sectoral aspects of capitalism, requiring urgent action on the part of public and private actors to avoid something potentially ‘far worse’ happening. They are also, according to political persuasion, either an essential part of capitalism requiring careful management to enable a transitional segue to a higher form of capitalism, or intense (and by many accounts intensifying) evocations of the inevitable self-destruction of capitalism which require increasing efforts on the part of global elites to avoid disaster on each separate occasion. But capitalism itself, the ‘elephant in the room,’⁷ its structures, framework and processes, appears to be outside the gaze of permitted discussion, the meta-doxa incorporating the market doxa.

As a consequence, various academic disciplines have examined the set of events since 2007 within a determinate capitalism and set up critiques which, on the whole, are functionalist (critiques of regulation and budgetary control, effective capital ratios, changes in, or new, laws, differential power structures in democracy, effects of capital flows) or institutionalist (the role of the banks, governments, ECB) or a mixture. So what role can philosophy play in the analysis of these pre-selected events and in the understanding of the term crisis to Europe? This paper suggests that its role is an essential part of a vital transdisciplinary step back, a widening of focus, since no single academic discipline is capable of encompassing what I suggest is no less than the evolutionary development of the system that is understood as capitalism; what philosophy in particular can contribute is towards the deconstruction of language with the intention of revealing ‘what is really going on’—as important in addressing the ways in which the signifier ‘crisis’ is being deployed as in deconstructing the current degradation of the Eurozone and addressing the root flows and processes globally where, as Wittgenstein proposed, philosophy should also be in the vanguard of the “battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language.”

In a previous paper,⁸ the author suggested an alternative translation of the critical development of globalizing capitalism through actor-networks, con-

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁶ J.-C. Trichet, “Introductory statement with Q&A” (Frankfurt a.M., 2010).

⁷ I. Bruff, “What about the Elephant in the Room? Varieties of Capitalism, Varieties in Capitalism,” *New Political Economy*, 16 (2011), 481-500.

⁸ J. Cloke, “The Evolution of Ultracapital and Actor-Network Capitalism,” in J.F. Silva

nectivities and agencements,⁹ an analytical device that “goes beyond simply describing the arrangements between various actors and socio-technical devices to consider the relationship between these assemblages and the wider social, cultural and political spaces in which, and upon which, they act.”¹⁰ In this reading of the global crisis and the European crisis, those events described by official discourses as crises are really no more than punctuation in a wider, deeper and richer text. Through the suggestion of an analytical vehicle which I refer to as the development of ultracapital, I proposed that, if there are real ‘crises,’ they are not accounted for in the official retelling of a series of abrupt, loud events, and neither is it true that “the ultimate reason for all real crises always remains the poverty and restricted consumption of the masses.”¹¹ The real crises lie in the evolutionary spaces and flows of capitalism as a complex system, and they are constituted by the interstitial contractions and expansions of capitalism as an evolving complex system, for which actor-network theory can provide some useful revelations.

This is an analysis therefore that deals simultaneously with the phenomenology and the hermeneutics of crisis as explicated by the technocratic discourse of crisis emanating from the European Union (EU) and the European Central Bank (ECB). Hermeneutics does not merely deal with theories of textual interpretation (‘austerity’ for instance is no more than one such text); Hermes is both messenger and translator whilst simultaneously being a liar and a trickster. As well as proposing an outline for a historical re-interpretation, this paper touches briefly on various aspects of the ways in which a memetic linguistics of ‘crisis’ is being perpetrated that conceals, rather than reveals, what is ‘really going on’ –these linguistics include a long list of terms such as shadow banking, sub-prime mortgage crisis, Eurozone crisis, financial crisis, debt crisis, Euro crisis, European sovereign-debt crisis, credit crisis and, most recently, Cypriot financial crisis.

It would be impossible to discuss all of these in any detail in one paper, so some exemplary themes are used to outline the proposed analysis, revolving around the idea of a ‘Euro-crisis’ and how language is being used to conceal the critical processes which began to dominate European socio-political development long before the set of events that began in 2007. The themes are used to tease out hidden sub-texts using critiques from a range of different academic disciplines, as well as to point out the logical fallacies of the lin-

and A.L. Escorihuela (eds.), *Dictatorship of Failure: The Discourse of Democratic Failure in the Current European Crisis*, *Collegium: Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 14 (Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, 2013), 99-121.

⁹ M. Callon, “What Does It Mean to Say that Economics is Performative?,” in D. MacKenzie, F. Muniesa and L. Siu (eds.), *Do Economists Make Markets? On the Performativity of Economics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 311-357.

¹⁰ S. Hall, “Geographies of Money and Finance I: Cultural Economy, Politics and Place,” *Progress in Human Geography*, 35 (2011), 234-245, p. 240.

¹¹ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3. *The Process of Capitalist Production as a Whole* (New York: International Publishers/New World Paperbacks, 1985), Part V: Division of Profit into Interest and Profit of Enterprise Interest-Bearing Capital.

guistic camouflage being deployed by governments, media and supranational institutions such as the ECB.

Crisis Memes versus Ultracapital Actor-Networks

A brief history of the concept of ‘crisis’ shows that, before and after entering the European vernacular in the 1400s,¹² the term has always been a limiting representation, both in its origins in understandings of the human system in Hippocratic medicine, and then in being transplanted as quasi-scientific terminology during the wave of ‘new understandings of the self, community, and the dynamics of the *res publica*’¹³ moving across Europe in the 1600s. Increasingly frequent declarations of various types of economic crisis continue to pre-suppose, irrespective of a general inability amongst economists, technocrats and the financial profession as a whole to predict the precursors, incidence or even type of crisis, that the particular system that is globalizing capitalism can be described in functional terms.¹⁴ At best, though, the deployment of crisis is a form of the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy, in which partial analyses are reverse-engineered from the set of events deemed critical.

As regards the collision of the socio-cultural development of the term crisis and the set of events in Europe since 2007, Latour’s¹⁵ work on “The Modern Constitution of Truth” adds a further set of analytical tools through which the naturalized, internalized social construct ‘crisis’ has been applied to globalizing capitalism, itself a ‘category of inscription that allows observed empirical effects to be wedded with culturally mediated rationalities.’¹⁶ The construction of economics as a modernist social science, after all, has been synonymous with and subordinated to the development of capitalism itself; the substantial efforts of the ‘allegedly detached, disinterested historian-subjects’ of economics to construct a nomothetic framework of primordial capitalist truths take as their starting-point that there is a really-existing capitalism ‘out there’ that is amenable to such explanations. Before and after 2007, however, even within economics itself, a growing body of criticism¹⁷ has been pointing out that, over a prolonged period of time, swathes of key economic constructs such as rational expectations, efficient markets, pareto optimality and utility curves have stubbornly resisted efforts to provide them with an empirical footing; they are key components through simply having been absorbed into

¹² J.B. Shank, “Crisis: A Useful Category of Post-Social Scientific Historical Analysis?,” *American Historical Review*, 113 (2008), 1090-1099.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1092.

¹⁴ T. Sturm and A. Mülberger, “Crisis Discussions in Psychology-New Historical and Philosophical Perspectives,” *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science, Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences. Special Section II*, 43 (2012), 425-433.

¹⁵ B. Latour, “Postmodern? No, Simply Amodern! Steps towards an Anthropology of Science,” *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, 21 (1990), 145-171.

¹⁶ Shank, *op. cit.*, p. 1095.

¹⁷ See most notably S. Keen, *Debunking Economics*, Revised and Expanded Edition: *The Naked Emperor Dethroned?* (London, New York: Zed Books, 2011).

the economic literature as micro-doxa necessary to supporting the broad meta-narrative.

Moving further afield, writers on critical capitalism in the political economy literature have also been pointing out the shortcomings of what is referred to as CC; it privileges institutions¹⁸ and therefore the CC response to the situation in Europe “has mainly delivered discussions of the diverse institutional responses to challenges which are perceived as uniform and exogenous to the varieties in question, and thus are externalised from the analysis itself.”¹⁹ As part of that institutionality, other writers have noted a fixation with the nation-state and the national economy, presupposing “that economic systems are ‘nationally organized’ in the sense that one can analytically separate the effects of domestic institutions in a single, sovereign state from institutions in other states or transnational institutions.”²⁰ Institutionalism, whether fixing on institutions within the nation-state or nation-states as sets of interacting institutions is criticized in that it finds change, in particular evolutionary change, hard to conceptualize and explain.

By way of contrast, the author²¹ previously proposed the concept of ultracapital as taking “a different approach to this growing body of conceptualization by focusing on changes in the meaning, measurement and use of capital itself, by looking at capitalism as a complex evolving actor-network system and through understanding capital as an expression of power.”²² Particularly since the explosion of potential in speed, fluidity and types of capital released by the ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) revolution, there has been an accompanying explosion of connectivity acting to submerge familiar and assumed institutional fixities; meanwhile, to a substantial extent, analytical schools in various academic disciplines purporting to describe and critique capitalism remain trapped within and employ the mythic language²³ of capitalism, created by itself for its own support –rationality, utility, efficiency, markets, optimality, equilibria.

This imprisonment by language, institutionalism and functionality acts to sideline or ‘invisibilize’ increasingly critical components of ultracapital, identified previously by the author; increasingly intense and extensive networks of actors and actants through increasingly complex agencements; new forms of capital outside orthodox measurement systems such as GDP and GNP; the rapid expansion of limitless cyber-spaces and the ability to utilize increasingly smaller fractions of time (temporal micro-distanciation) to create instantaneous trading in self-producing capital; the creation of socio-political and ju-

¹⁸ I. Bruff and M. Ebenau, 2014 “Critical Political Economy and the Critique of Comparative Capitalisms Scholarship on Capitalist Diversity,” *Capital & Class*, 38 (2014), 3-15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁰ R. Deeg and G. Jackson, “The State of the Art: Towards a More Dynamic Theory of Capitalist Variety,” *Socio-Economic Review*, 5 (2007), 149-179, p. 153.

²¹ Cloke, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

²² S. Bichler and J. Nitzan, “Capital as Power: Toward a New Cosmology of Capitalism,” *Real-World Economics Review*, 61 (2012), 65-84.

²³ E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 321.

risdictional mechanisms through the cyber-portals of OFCs and their linking to globally extensive, immeasurable networks through which to develop immeasurable and unidentifiable capital; and, lastly, capitalization processes linked to deterministic interpretations of the functions of the global biosphere that claim ownership over future ways of knowing and changing humanity, the effective privatization of evolution.

Europe and Crisis

The list of financial sector and government characteristics in Europe pre-2007 defined by the European Central Bank as causes of the ‘crisis’ is vague, institutionalist and phenomenological; private deficits financed by banks in both core and peripheral countries, unsound fiscal policies and excessive sovereign debt, unsound private sector lending and supervision/regulation of banks, loss of competitiveness through uncontrolled unit labour costs and exchange rate appreciation, balance of payments crisis in a “fully fixed” exchange rate regime, and fiscal indiscipline.²⁴ The list is atomistic and “reifies forms of ‘rational,’ neoclassical economic calculation and hence overlooks questions of power and politics in the reproduction of the international financial system.”²⁵

Critical capitalist analysis engages more with questions of power. The issues covered in the literature (with which the ECB chooses not to engage) include the assertions that the money stock is no longer in the control of central banks because the hyper-leveraging and interbank lending of an effectively unsupervised global credit and loan system has rendered central banks powerless, that national and global asymmetries are not reduced but compounded by ‘market efficiencies’ in which the more powerful players (particularly the corporate ones) have substantial and increasing competitive advantages, that, as financial services corporations have driven a sectoral intensification and concentration over decades, nation-states are effectively hostage to corporate arbitrage (as in the particular case of Greece and Goldman Sachs), and that global governance is governance in name only.²⁶ As a direct consequence of this shift in the balance of power out of the hands of even the strongest national governments, the last three decades have also seen a shift towards shared dependence on and responsibility for a corporate financialised capitalism, in which a substantial and increasing majority of individual and household transactions are in the control of ‘strategic gatekeepers (banking oligopolies, water monopolies, power oligopolies, retail monopsonies.’²⁷

²⁴ V. Constâncio, *Banking Union and the European crisis* (Vice-President of the ECB’s address to the 6th Santander International Banking Conference, Madrid. 5 November 2013) (https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2013/html/sp131105_1.en.html).

²⁵ Hall, *op. cit.*, 235.

²⁶ J. Leaman, “The Triumph of Authoritarian Crisis Management: Europe’s Tragedy Unfolds” (CSIG Research Seminar, Loughborough University, November 13, 2013).

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Leaman²⁸ also points out the role of discourse in misdiagnosing systemic imbalances, in effectively pre-programming false policy prescriptions ('austerity') for mythic sovereign debt crises. He also suggests that the term 'crisis' has been shaped into a tool to enforce a renewed, intensified cycle of disciplinary neoliberalism in an attempt to render 'crisis-driven' change irreversible, i.e. that the mythic language of crisis has a distinct and profitable direction. But this only goes so far; if it is the case that capitalism needs elaborating "not as a self-driven mechanism of surplus extraction and accumulation governed by objective laws, but as a set of interrelated social institutions, and as a historically specific system of structured as well as structuring²⁹ social interaction within and in relation to an institutionalized social order,"³⁰ then continuing to try to depict capitalism by appealing to its own self-described logic of functionality, from within the prison of its mythic language, can only provide at best partial analyses.

If, then, capitalism is no more than a fluid, malleable 'category of inscription' revolving around the indeterminate concept of capital, itself little more than the 'symbolic quantification of power,'³¹ what does the idea of ultracapital have to offer with respect to European capitalism, post-2007 and capitalism more generally? This article and the preceding one suggest that the answer lies in the way that the social evolution of the concept of capital through extended and intensified connectivity has imbued it with an institutionalized, relational form of the wave particle duality possessed by both light and matter, the ability to possess both wave-like and particle-like characteristics under the right circumstances – a gold bar is a more particulate form of capital, whereas complex derivatives are wave-like forms of capital that are effectively valued through social relations of circulation, but they are both capital. As Marx asserted:

"It is therefore impossible for capital to be produced by circulation, and it is equally impossible for it to originate apart from circulation. It must have its origin both in circulation and yet not in circulation" (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 163).

This is the case because how capital is measured is through social determinations of value, itself "a social relation in relational time-space."³² In focusing on connectivity, the relationships between actors and actants, and the agencements in which they are involved therefore, ultracapital concentrates on mapping the topology of value-creating relationships, the conduits through which power flows.

Interestingly, a recent body of work supporting this way of looking at capitalism has been produced by orthodox economic research, some of it origi-

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ A. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (Cambridge Mass.: Polity Press, 1984).

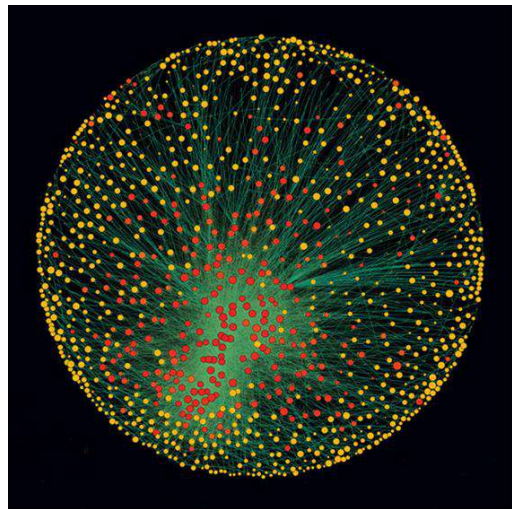
³⁰ W. Streeck, "Taking Capitalism Seriously: Towards an Institutional Approach to Contemporary Political Economy," *Socio-Economic Review*, 9 (2011), 137-167, p. 138.

³¹ Bichler and Nitzan, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

³² D. Harvey, *The Limits to Capital* (London: Verso, 2007), p. xx.

inating in the international financial institutions themselves. Vitali et al.³³ have produced a control map of the world's transnational corporations, starting with a list of 43060 TransNational Corporations (TNCs) identified by the OECD's definition of a TNC; the map itself (Fig. 1 below) is a map of ownership pathways between TNCs, indicating total or partial control (subsidiarization). By correlating ownership pathways with control of TNC value as measured by operating revenues, the authors were able to identify first a core of 737 top holders who controlled some 80% of the value of all TNCs, then a further super-core of 147 TNCs holding 4/10ths of the total value of TNCs globally, 75% of which are financial services intermediaries. This changing and intensifying network is the command and control system responsible for the ECB's unsound private deficits, unsound fiscal policies and, critically but not exclusively through its effective subordination of state financial controls, responsible for aspects such as national debts, unsound supervision/regulation, exchange rate appreciation, and so forth. The CC literature plainly covers another aspect of the same set of issues in its critique of the loss of control of states and central banks over the financial and fiscal flows within, outside and between nation-states.

Fig. 1: Network Topology of Strongly Connected Core Components (SCCs):



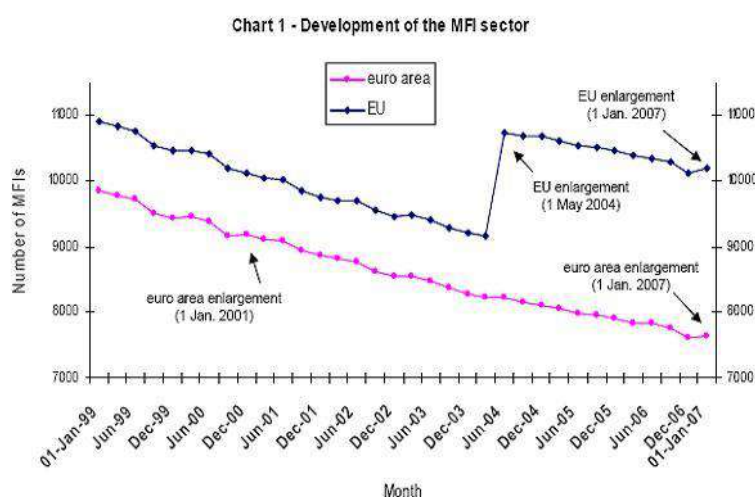
Key: Red = Superconnected companies, Yellow = very connected companies, Size of dot represents revenue (Source: Vitali et al., 2011).

Within and outside the European Union, an intensification of connections and super-connections between TNC actors in the decades up to 2007 and, as a response to the events since then, has had a critical effect on the nominal

³³ S.Vitali, J.B. Glattfelder and S. Battiston, "The Network of Global Corporate Control," *PLoS ONE*, 6 (2011) (<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0025995>)

and actual powers of governance exercise by the nation-state, as well as the supra-national institutions of the EU, the European Parliament, the Commission and crucially the ECB. With respect to the relational mapping done by Vitali et al, the intensification of connectivity has gone hand-in-hand with a substantial and continuing shrinkage in the number of financial institutions over time (see Fig. 2 below). Irrespective of the increase in the numbers of countries in the Union, an intensification of connectivity has been accompanied by a sectoral concentration³⁴ as a small number of very large, very powerful SIFIs (Systemically Important Financial Institutions)³⁵ emerge at the pinnacle of a shrinking pyramid of lesser institutions.

Fig. 2: Decline in the number of European Financial Institutions 1999-2007 (Source: ECB³⁶):



The results of this strategic change in the focus and control of EU governance are readily seen in the actions taken by the ECB since 2007, which have almost exclusively been actions to service the requirements of the European financial services network entity. These reactions have included Eurozone national bailouts and the Irish ‘bail-in,’ ECB interest rate and bond interventions, bank stress tests of dubious reliability, the re-vamping of the stability and growth pact, EU 2020 reforms, Euro Plus Pact of 2011, the Single Market Acts 1 and 2, and the Fiscal Compact. The culmination of this sequence of widening and deepening reactions to an intensifying succession of events within the EU has been the proposal of Open Market Transactions by the President of the ECB Mario Draghi, the “most successful monetary policy

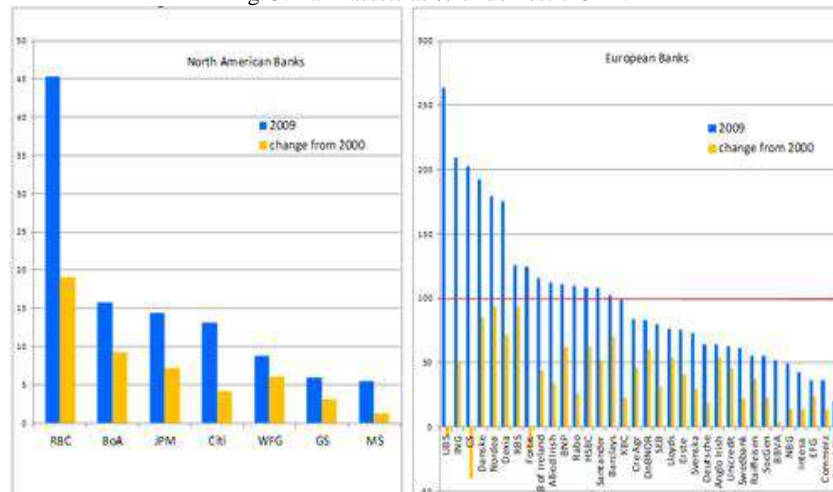
³⁴ A. Haldane, “The \$100 billion dollar question” (Bank of England Speech, 30 March 2010) (<http://www.bis.org/review/r100406d.pdf?frames=0>).

³⁵ Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Bank of England, Resolving Globally Active, Systemically Important, Financial Institutions (10-12-2012).

³⁶ ECB, “Development of the Euro Area Monetary Financial Institutions Sector” (ECB Press Release 3 January, 2007).

measure undertaken in recent times”³⁷ –where the ECB suspects that the bonds of an EU country engaged in fiscal measures with the ECB are the subject of speculation, it will quite literally buy unlimited amounts of them, guaranteeing losses for speculators. In the meantime, the banking share of national economic productivity as measured by GDP continues to increase (Fig. below).

Fig. 3. Bank assets as % of domestic GDP:



(Source: Bankscope and WEO Databases cited by Inci Otker-Robe, <http://blogs.worldbank.org/allaboutfinance/addressing-the-too-big-to-fail-problem-before-the-banks-become-too-big-to-save>)

The need for these actions has been universally directed at unquestioningly preserving the SIFIs and the system that they control, even though the understanding of ‘systemic importance’ comes unaccompanied by any analysis of what the system is or how it is constituted –the system merely is, “‘the economy’ as nature, or as a black box.”³⁸ This is the point at which it is necessary to understand that the increasing subservience of politics to serving the immediate needs of the European component of ultracapital represents the triumph of turning politics into a vehicle, not for disembedding the economy from society,³⁹ but for converting society into ‘the economy’ on a quasi-religious basis. Democratic practices in Europe, the holding of elections, and the participation of political parties in particular have been absorbed into and subordinated by a system of networks, associations and agencements controlling the creation of a rapidly expanding spectrum of capital types, themselves fueled by a revolution in the meaning of value. In respect of the distinctive forms of democracy represented through the national ordering of each individual member-state of the EU, and in particular with reference to the over-

³⁷ M. Draghi, *Financial Times*, 22/7/2013 (<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/2597e96c-f2d9-11e2-a203-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2ZxVhkwe7>).

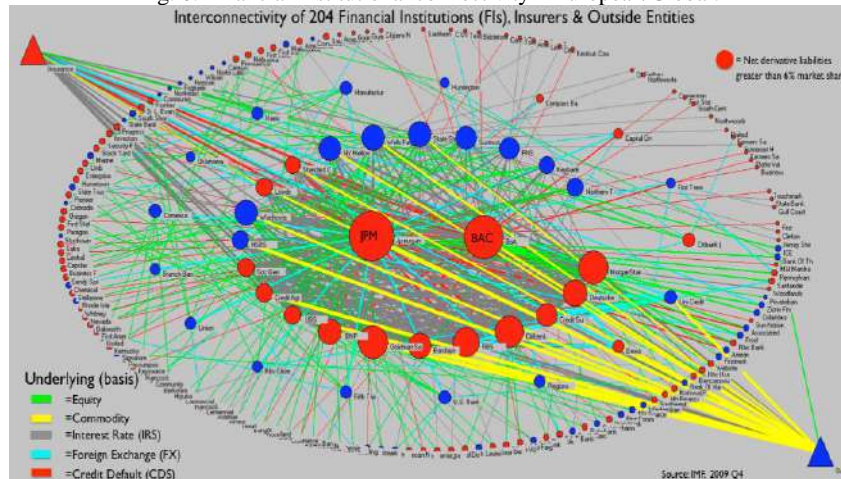
³⁸ Streeck, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

arching, evolving forms of democracy represented by the various institutions and practices of the EU itself, the reality is that, with the rise of ultracapital, “globally defined systems of circulation and production are altering the conditions of people’s freedom in deeply structural ways that are beyond the reach of recognition or regulation.”⁴⁰ Mario Draghi, the President of the ECB, put this slightly differently when he admitted candidly “The European social model has already gone.”⁴¹

An outline of the nature of the strategic relationships within the European super-entity being reinforced so urgently by the ECB has also been mapped, this time through mapping the kinds of complex financial relationships connecting the ‘skeleton’ command and control map in Fig. 1 above. This diagram (Fig. 4 below) shows the type of financial products connecting the 111 financial services institutions comprising Vitali et al’s superconnected core:

Fig. 6. Financial Institutional connectivity – European/Global:



(Source: Ötker-Robe et al., 2011)

Developing in a co-constitutive fashion with this interconnectivity, development of complex derivative instruments from the early 1970s onwards has been enabled *ab initio* by a parallel absorption of academic, institutional and state functions. As a consequence, the rapid re-positioning of radical changes in the way that regulation was perceived during the 1980s and 1990s was itself facilitated by a suborning of the academic and research environments in which economic theory was shaped –and the increasingly intense enjoining of sectoral actor-networks as peripheral regions of the core of corporate network control. It is important to note, too, that since 2007 the actions taken by supra-national institutions such as the ECB have, rather than acting to counter the

⁴⁰ E. LiPuma and B. Lee, “Financial Derivatives and the Rise of Circulation,” *Economy and Society*, 34 (2005), 404-427, pp. 102, 104.

⁴¹ M. Draghi “The Euro Crisis, Q&A” (Wall Street Journal, February 23rd 2012) (<http://blogs.wsj.com/eurocrisis/2012/02/23/qa-ecb-president-mario-draghi/>).

intensifying connectivity and sectoral concentration, actually intensified it,⁴² a process that has been duplicated across the Global North but particularly within the US, where, as Figure 6 points out, the global behemoths of JP Morgan and Bank of America currently comprise the two largest components of ultracapital's inner core, with the active assistance of the US Federal Reserve and the US government more generally. Such massive actants within this complex global network have been recognised as 'Too Important to Fail' since 2007 by other actors in the network and by governments alike,⁴³ giving them a further overwhelming competitive advantage in that recognition of this status allows them to borrow more cheaply than lesser actants, and with each order of magnitude of growth and complexity, state support is more inextricably locked in.

Afterword

All of the actions taken since 2007 by state, supervisory and regulatory bodies and the supranational institutions of the EU have acted to transform the tacit pre-2007 governance by financial services into an open, institutionalized model. Quantitative easing, the open market operations of the ECB and the conceptualization of SIFIs, the sudden florescence of the symbolic technocrat and technocracy as superseding local forms of democracy, are all symptoms of what has been described elsewhere as the unleashing of capitalism,⁴⁴ a process by which capitalism is becoming 'more like itself, revealing in the course of its development its 'true nature', or its 'essence.'⁴⁵ This unleashing is rapidly diminishing the relevance of both the nation-state and institutions as a focus for the analysis of capitalism; on a daily basis, 'market failures' and the wide-spread monopolization and corruption of the essentially contractual nature of economic processes challenge the very idea of capitalism as a functional system susceptible to analysis on its own terms and within the framework of its own imaginings of itself.

Fundamental changes in socio-political and politico-financial networks have thus been occasioned through the opening up of ultracapital space by 'socially imaginary objects'⁴⁶ which are beyond purely technical control. The rapid increase of actant interconnectivity (outlined in a basic fashion within the figures above) and the spread of unregulated and informal agencements between the most powerful financial services actors (of which complex deriv-

⁴² I. Ötker-Robe, A. Narain, A. Ilyina and J. Surti, "The Too-Important-to-Fail Conundrum: Impossible to Ignore and Difficult to Resolve" (IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/11/12, May 27, 2011).

⁴³ HC 261-I, "Too Important to Fail-Too Important to Ignore" (House of Commons Treasury Committee Ninth Report of Session 2009-10, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmtreasy/261/261i.pdf>).

⁴⁴ A. Glyn, *Capitalism Unleashed: Finance Globalization and Welfare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁴⁵ Streeck, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁴⁶ LiPuma and Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

atives are one important example, but the elision of difference between state and finance by the creation of a politico-financial elite is another) are being complemented by sectoral concentration and intensification. The supervision and regulation, and being mooted by bank reform, by stress tests, and in the Basle III agreement and its crude, increased capital requirements, meanwhile, presents a paper tiger for the 'causes of the crisis' and sets in place a regulatory mechanism for capital requirements which the politico-financial elite has no means of measuring accurately, and which they lack the will and the power to enforce.

The 'value-destroying'⁴⁷ merger and acquisition activity in the financial services sector, accelerated by the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act in 1999, is now effectively financed by the nation-states and the supra-national institutions of the EU across Europe, and continues to increase sectoral concentration. At the same time, the highly-liquid market for capital seeking substantial short-term gains has been hugely swollen by the liquidity pumped into the US and European financial markets by the US Federal Reserve and the ECB, which corporations are hoarding, substantially, in offshore locations and the cyber-spaces of ultracapital. In order to increase the flow of liquidity required to this unsustainable situation, the subordinated nation-state simulacra⁴⁸ of the EU are being forced through a mantra of competitiveness to divert increasing flows of public funding away from the abandoned structures of the social democratic model and into the super-imposed politico-financial conduits of ultracapital, positioning nations themselves as a 'subaltern set of institutions within an interdependent network, controlled by transnational capital as a hierarchised historical bloc.'⁴⁹

Geography, economics and political economy (amongst others) have been psychologically colonized by a conceptualization of capitalism which, even though it permits critique, only does so by subconsciously accepting the category of inscription that is capitalism as a functional system, thereby imprisoning these disciplines within the linguistic structures set up by the category itself. In doing so, they also 'sanitize periods of crisis'⁵⁰ by accepting the mythic linguistic tool 'crisis' as part of capitalism-out-there. Why this is important, and the role Philosophy has to play (particularly so far as Europe is concerned), is that the linguistic fetters surrounding the Euro-crisis are being deployed to speed up the very evolutionary processes responsible for the events since 2007: "This lesson is that a single financial market with a single currency needs a single system of supervision –and alongside this, a Single European Resolution Mechanism (SRM)."⁵¹ As Varoufakis⁵² suggests, the

⁴⁷ A. Haldane, "The Contribution of the Financial Sector: Miracle or Mirage?" (Paper presented at the Future of Finance Conference London, England, 14-7-2010) (<http://www.bis.org/review/r100716g.pdf?frames=0>).

⁴⁸ J. Baudrillard, "The Precession of Simulacra," in M.G. Durham and D.M. Kellner (eds.), *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2001), 511-550.

⁴⁹ Leaman, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

⁵⁰ Bruff and Ebenau, *op. cit.*

⁵¹ Constâncio, *op. cit.*

struggle, fomented by this set of proposals (not to mention the consequences of victory for their proponents), constitutes nothing less than a “titanic battle for Europe’s integrity and soul” in which “the forces of Reason and Humanism will have to face down the growing authoritarianism.”

⁵² Y. Varoufakis, “The Dirty War for Europe’s Integrity and Soul” (The University of Western Sydney Inaugural ‘Europe Public Lecture,’ State Library of New South Wales, 23rd October 2013).

The Moralism of the Rescuers and the Morality of Rescuing in the Current European Crisis

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non quidquid morale est mores bonos facit
(Seneca, *Epistulae*, 121)

I. Austerity: From Moral Hazard to Morality Play

In the current European sovereign debt crisis, the policies of austerity dominating the political discourse are justified by a consensus of economic expertise.¹ The scientific certainty behind the assessment of the crisis and the best way to proceed has succeeded in dismissing alternative forms of discourse. Although doubts have been raised about the effectiveness and fairness of these policies, and the question of the objectivity and truthfulness of the agents defining, imposing, and implementing these austerity policies has been called into question by many discordant voices even within the discipline of economics, no real change has taken place in the political process.

These disagreements over the soundness of the policies, their ideological neutrality, and even their ultimate purpose do, however, question the central claim for the need to appeal to technocracy, and its efficient *modus operandi* that results from the lack of disagreement, as distinguished from traditional politics.² Technocratic governance is problematic not only because of doubts about its democratic legitimacy, but also about the existence of a technical consensus on the main principles of its policies. In any other context, these doubts would be enough to at least initiate a debate over not only whether this approach should be quite as dominant as it appears to be, but also whether it

¹ That austerity is the solution on the table as is the result to a large extent of insufficient attention in the planning of the European Monetary Union (EMU, hereafter) and of the nature of the currency union. Individual countries voluntarily gave up –although in most cases without a democratic process– control over their currency, which now is defined by the European Central Bank. European countries cannot resort to traditional ways of reducing their debts, such as ‘financial repression.’ Please see C.M. Reinhart and M.B. Sbrancia, “The Liquidation of Government Debt,” *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper* 16893 (Cambridge, MA, March 2011). A clear expression of the austerity model is found in the European Central Bank Monthly Bulletin (August, 2010).

² The importance of the Reinhart and Rogoff study on the threshold of sustainability of government debt and the questioning of their data is a clear-cut case of the misuse of the objectivity of scientific data to justify political decisions as uncontested and neutral. See C. Reinhart and K. Rogoff, “Growth in a Time of Debt,” *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper* 15639 (Cambridge MA, January 2010). This has been questioned by, for example, J. Irons and J. Bivens, “Government Debt and Economic Growth: Overreaching Claims of Debt ‘Threshold’ Suffer from Theoretical and Empirical Flaws,” *Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper* 271 (Economic Policy Institute, July 16, 2010).

is indeed the right course to follow at all. To a large extent, however, that has yet to happen at the level where actual political decisions are taken. To address this kind of concern is not, however, the aim of this paper. Instead, my paper is based on an intuition that what makes this state of affairs possible is the fact that the real justification for austerity is not technocratic/technical expertise but rather morality. It is precisely on the moral grounding of the politics of austerity that I would like to draft some considerations.³ I am interested in morality as justification of austerity and in terms of the purpose it serves. I argue that morality has had a role to play in some of the decisions made in the present crisis in convincing European citizens of the fairness of austerity, both in debtor and creditor countries, and in justifying the persistence of a certain perception by market's agents of two types of European economies: the wealthy, efficient, and morally sound North, and the inefficient and profligate South.⁴ This perception has clearly had an effect in terms of the borrowing costs by national states (decreasing for the North, increasing for the South), which partially explains the deterioration of the economic situation in the latter and the recovery in the former.

The popular and classic metaphor of the doctor prescribing such a strong medicine for the patient that it leads to the patient's death is not out of place. The point of the analogy, as many see it, is not so much that the medicine is the wrong one, but rather that the doctor knowingly prescribed a medicine that (i) has no significant effect in treating the cause of the patient's illness (if one accepts the premise that the current crisis is not the result of profligate government spending, but the result of the costs in bailing out the financial sector, together with the lower revenues that result from the contraction of the economy) and that (ii) it causes the patient terrible suffering (in the case of austerity policies, the most vulnerable in society; the unemployed, low-skilled, pensioners, and youth are affected). The doctor acts this way because in his judgment, the patient is at fault for contracting the illness that afflicts him. The doctor acts dutifully by prescribing medicine for the patient, but keeps reminding the patient that the resources he is being given are needed elsewhere, particularly by other patients that have not willingly and knowingly contributed to their own medical condition. In these cases, the decision of the procedure is infected by a moral judgment that asserts the voluntary element for the existing medical condition.⁵ The legitimacy of the treatment is to

³ The question about the morality of austerity is quite different from the question about the morals of the markets. Whereas the former is an internalist question—that is the context within which markets function, the latter is an externalist view, that is the consequences of markets functioning.

⁴ On several occasions the German Chancellor has remarked that south European countries should not live beyond their means but behave more like Swabian housewives, known for their frugality. See J. Kollewe, "Angela Merkel's Austerity Postergirl, the Thrifty Swabian Housewife," *The Guardian* (17-9-2012).

⁵ See, for example, T. Hill, "How Clinicians Make (or Avoid) Moral Judgments of Patients: Implications of the Evidence for Relationships and Research," *Philosophy, Ethics & Humanities in Medicine*, 5 (2010), 1-14; T.M. Ronzani, J. Higgins-Biddle and E.F. Fur-

be found in the doctor's expertise, which means that the patient perceives the doctor's action to be neutral with respect to value judgments: the doctor's authority in imposing the cure is due to her or his perceived independence and objectivity. That is exactly the viewpoint of the technocrat, whose leadership is justified by his supposed lack of political drive. One should proceed here with caution, and recall Alasdair MacIntyre's arguments that 'expertise' and 'managerial effectiveness' are 'moral fictions.'⁶

II

The appeal to austerity has been justified in public discourse in the North by the notion of the moral inferiority of the indebted nations, which are described with epithets such as 'lazy' Greeks, 'sunbathing' Spaniards, and 'speculative' Cypriots. (The acronym first used to designate this group of countries – PIIGS, i.e. Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain– being a case in point.) It is the honest, hard-working man who is creditworthy and the expression of a particular ethos that has come to the fore with renewed intensity in the current crisis. Max Weber has discoursed at length about the characteristics expected by 'the spirit of modern capitalism' of a 'good' debtor in order to please a 'good' creditor.⁷ It is interesting to notice the combination of the two aspects just mentioned: the appeal to a traditional ethos (against the 'greed is good' motto?) and the dominance of scientific objectivity in policy making (against ideologically charged politics?). There is, however, as Weber makes clear, a utilitarian look to this, in that the aim of the debtor's display of honesty is 'useful, because it assures credit.'⁸

Austerity is often portrayed, especially amongst the wealthiest European nations, as not only the right economic policy, but also as the right moral thing to do: citizens of those countries requiring financial assistance need to be punished for having lived for too long well beyond their means.⁹ A clear

tado, "Stigmatization of Alcohol and Other Drug Users by Primary Care Providers in Southeast Brazil," *Social Science & Medicine*, 69 (2009), 1080-1084.

⁶ A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), esp. pp. 87-92.

⁷ "The most trifling actions that affect a man's credit are to be regarded. The sound of your hammer at five in the morning, or eight at night, heard by a creditor, makes him easy six months longer; but if he sees you at a billiard-table, or hears your voice at a tavern, when you should be at work, he sends for his money the next day; demands it, before he can receive it, in a lump. It shows, besides, that you are mindful of what you owe; it makes you appear a careful as well as an honest man, and that still increases your credit." M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930; London: Routledge, 2005), p. 15, quoting from Benjamin Franklin (emphasis added).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁹ See, for instance, the article in *The New York Times* by Nobel laureate P. Krugman entitled "Mugged by the Moralizers" (31 October, 2010). For a country to live above its means is for it to consume more than it produces. But, as Flassbeck and Lapavitsas (2013) point out, to live above its means is as problematic for the budgetary balance within the Monetary Union as to live below its means; Greece is a case of the former whereas Germany a case of the latter, that since the introduction of EMU has been promoting a policy of 'wage dumping,' which by increasing the competitiveness of its economy has built on the gap in

sign of this attitude is shown in how the expression ‘living beyond one’s means’ is used as an argument's starting point against any political project that is not directly aimed at improving state efficiency; one example of living beyond one’s means is the allocation of resources for social services. This drive is similar to that noted by Karlo Polanyi in his influential book *The Great Transformation* behind the Old Poor Law relief system of the mid nineteenth-century, the argument being that welfare support promotes passivity at the individual level and inefficiencies at the system level.¹⁰

According to this view, welfare spending or spending on any of the traditional functions of the state is a waste of resources. Applied retrospectively to those countries that have been bailed out, with their ‘generous’ social benefits and elderly population, it is judged as a deliberately irrational strategy that was to lead inevitably to the financial situation in which those countries find themselves in.¹¹ This application has the benefit of mixing the state in the South with the state in general, thus making the crisis look very much like a case of excessive governmental spending and wastefulness.¹² What ‘living beyond one’s means’ seems to exclude is the neoliberal drive at the heart of the European economic project that allowed for the incremental financialization of the economy,¹³ letting banks grow to such an extent that their rescue became imperative due to the systemic risks to the economy that their collapse could trigger.¹⁴ This led, during and after the financial crisis of 2008-2009, to the build-up of public debt in order to bailout those troubled banks.¹⁵

relation to other European economies. H. Flassbeck and C. Lapavistas, *The Systemic Crisis of the Euro-True Causes and Effective Therapies* (Berlin: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, 2013), pp. 11-17.

¹⁰ M.R. Somers and F. Block, “From Poverty to Perversity: Ideas, Markets, and Institutions over 200 Years of Welfare Debate,” *American Sociological Review*, 70 (2005), 260-287.

¹¹ An opposite view would be to argue that to contract debt at low interest rates is what a rational economic agent should do.

¹² Already contemporary authors criticize the state’s contracting of debt as a cause of concern, due to the stress it puts on future generations (and their impoverishment) and the risk to sovereignty that results from borrowing from foreign powers. See A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. W.B. Todd (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1981), Vol. II, Book 5, Ch. 3: “On public debts,” 907 ssg.; and D. Hume, *Of Public Credit*, in *Essays*, II.ix.2.

¹³ Expressed in the Stability and Growth Pact; it is also expressed in the notion of the Common Internal Market as the defining principle of all other dimensions of integration, for instance, the social. Citizenship is the result of the constitution of the single market. The Economic and Monetary Union continues this principle. See C.H. Church and D. Phinnemore, *European Union and European Community: A Handbook and Commentary on the Post-Maastricht Treaties* (New York: Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1994), p. 175.

¹⁴ On financialization, see, for example, C. Lapavistas, “Theorizing Financialization,” *Work, Employment and Society*, 25 (2011), 611-626.

¹⁵ Flassbeck and Lapavistas, *The Systemic Crisis of the Euro*, pp. 7-8. Europe has fallen into what Habermas describes as ‘the vicious circle of over-indebted European states and undercapitalized banks refinancing each other’ (“Democracy, Solidarity and the European Crisis.” Lecture Delivered in Leuven, 26-4-2013).

Even in those countries whose banking systems were less exposed to the global financial markets, the consequences were felt due to the need to intervene in the economy (fiscal stimulus) and to compensate (increasing social services) for the slowing down of economic activity, which was mostly due to the contraction of internal demand, at the same time as income fell due to lower tax revenues.

It also seems to exclude two other political blind spots at the European level; first, the question of the structural imbalance between countries in the north (which includes Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, and Germany) and in the South of Europe (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece) that is inbuilt into the European common market and economic and monetary union,¹⁶ and, second, the characteristic of present day capitalism whereby debt is consumption-related.¹⁷ There is something perverse in this system of 'market civilization,'¹⁸ which, on the one hand, promotes consumption as being something inherently positive and, indeed, at the core of the system itself,¹⁹ and, on the other hand, the abundance of negative judgments of those consuming beyond the means that were made available to them by those most benefiting from high levels of consumption.

Scholars have long agreed that one of the major contributing factors to the debt accumulation in South European countries during the boom years was the inflow of capital from wealthier European countries through their banking system, with historically low interest rates being paid in the sovereign debt market.²⁰ That cheap money created a sense of growth and sustainability of public finances that would prove to be artificial.²¹ In other words, South Eu-

See also M. Posch, S.W. Schmitz and B. Weber, "EU Bank Packages: Objectives and Potential Conflicts of Objectives," in *Financial Stability Report 17* (Oesterreichische Nationalbank, Vienna, 2009), 63-84.

¹⁶ See J. Bibow, "The Euro Debt Crisis and Germany's Euro Trilemma," *Levy Economics Institute Working Paper 72* (Levy Economics Institute of Bard College, May 2012), (http://www.levyinstitute.org/pubs/wp_721.pdf.) According to Bibow, the present crisis is not a sovereign debt crisis but a 'twin bank and balance of payment crisis' (p. 2).

¹⁷ See, for example, C. Crouch, *The Mysterious Nondeath of Neoliberalism* (Cambridge Mass.: Polity, 2011).

¹⁸ S. Gill, "Globalization, Market Civilization, and Disciplinary Neoliberalism," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 24 (1995), 399-423. See also S. Gill, "European Governance and New Constitutionalism: Economic and Monetary Union and Alternatives to Disciplinary Neoliberalism in Europe," *New Political Economy*, 3 (1998), 5-26.

¹⁹ See J. O'Neill, *The Market: Ethics, Knowledge and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1998). Of course, a strong individualist such as Hayek would stress that even then the individual remains free to exercise his 'knowledge and skill,' thus remaining completely responsible for its actions. See F.A. Hayek, *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948; 1958³), p. 14.

²⁰ R. Chen, G.M. Milesi-Ferretti and T. Tresselt, "External Imbalances in the Euro Area," *IMF Working Paper 236* (IMF, September, 2012).

²¹ "The creation of EMU and, especially, the introduction of the euro, contributed to the declines in current accounts by allowing countries to maintain their investment levels above what could be financed from domestic saving. Economic integration improved access to the international pool of saving, although it did not necessarily make it optimal or

ropean states, traditionally poorer than their Nordic neighbors, were overwhelmed by the amount of cheap credit (made possible by the pegging of their interest rates to that of Germany –an essential part of the Euro project) and capital flowing into their economies, which inevitably gave them a sense of prosperity that was not, for the most part, grounded on similar levels of development in their real economies.

One may, however raise an objection from the point of view of economic rationality. The convergence of interest rates on bonds from Euro zone countries before the crisis shows that private investors took solidarity among European countries as a given, and European countries, especially those benefiting from that convergence, took that confidence as a given, borrowing proportionally. In this economic context, South European countries acted in a way that best suited their perceived interests –that is, investment in social development and infrastructures at a time when the costs of financing them were unprecedentedly low. Doing so was acting in the interests of their citizenry, improving present conditions of life and hoping it developed the country's economy, thus making it a case of economic rationality rather than a case of a 'free ride.' That being the case, they still remain responsible for their decisions, but one needs, in addition, to inquire who made the conditions that allowed such low costs, and who failed in supervising the threat this posed to the Monetary Union and to these countries –assuming that, in the context of a monetary union without a fiscal union, supervision is the key to success.

Although these are real contributing factors to the current sovereign debt crisis, what *really* matters, from the point of view of the European political establishment, is to secure credibility in the markets –in other words, that markets perceive the economic situation of a given country as stable (or promising). This perception is not exclusively linked with the actual state of the economic situation and the levels of debt,²² but include elements of subjective reasoning whose exact process of formation/constitution is difficult to

sustainable," F. Jaumotte and P. Sodsriwiboon, "Current Account Imbalances in the Southern Euro Area," *IMF Working Paper* 139 (IMF, June, 2010), pp. 3, 11. In the conclusion (21) they make this point even more forcefully: "But the decline in current accounts would not have occurred, despite the decrease in saving rates, were it not for EMU and the euro."

²² See, for example, F. Giavazzi and L. Spaventa, who rightly ask: "markets and media were, however, more shocked by the *sudden realization* that all four cohesion countries had accumulated high levels of foreign indebtedness, as a result of a long succession of current account deficits, and of domestic household debt. *The relevant data were of course available before*, but as long as the going was good those imbalances were considered the natural side effect of a healthy process of convergence; *now instead* they came to be considered as symptoms of future sovereign insolvency and indicators of the inherent fragility of the whole single currency project. Had the markets been too complacent before or were they now displaying unwarranted pessimism?" F. Giavazzi and L. Spaventa, "Why the Current Account May Matter in a Monetary Union: Lessons from the Financial Crisis in the Euro Area," in M. Beblavý, D. Cobham and L. Ódor (eds.), *The Euro Area and the Financial Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 199-221, pp. 200-201 (emphasis added).

assess, and thus to replicate.²³ As Lane²⁴ points out, in 2007 “the low spreads on sovereign debt also indicated that markets did not expect substantial default risk” and the same seems to be true for 2008 and 2009, but by 2010 the perception of risk by the markets had changed dramatically, with the spreads on sovereign bonds rising exponentially²⁵—except for Germany and, for some time, France. According to L. Schuknecht, J. von Hagen, and G. Wolswijk,²⁶ this shift is a consequence of the collapse of Lehman Brothers, which increased the market’s perception of risk. The financial crisis did not create this problem, but intensified national fiscal imbalances at the same time that it placed them under the spotlight of suddenly risk-concerned (or even risk-averse) sovereign bond investors. However, from the outset, the EMU included mechanisms to prevent the exposure of the Union to this risk (for instance in the Stability and Growth Pact), but these mechanisms have failed, both at the national level and at the European level.

In order to secure this perception of stability (or, to restore confidence),²⁷ the so-called Troika—the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Commission—agreed to intervene in those European countries that were subjected to the rising cost of financing on the international markets, on the condition that those countries would impose extremely harsh packages of austerity measures. This was done in the context of “an influential political narrative of the crisis, which laid the primary blame on the fiscal irresponsibility of the peripheral nations, even though the underlying financial and macroeconomic imbalances were more important factors.”²⁸ As the cause of the economic situation of these states is, according to this narrative, profligate public spending, these austerity measures have concentrated on the reduction of all public expenditure, meaning a reduction not only in social spending, but also in the public capacity for supervision and regulation, together with the privatization of state monopolies and public held companies.

There are two main problems with the way in which this solution for the crisis, consisting solely on austerity measures, was decided. The first is one of legitimacy; the dismantling of the welfare state was, and is, being done with-

²³ The deficit of the United States for 2011, for instance, was much greater than that of the Euro countries; nevertheless the interest rates on its bonds were comparatively lower. In the same way, Japan’s public debt is also substantially higher than that of the Euroland and the interest rates Japan pays are substantially lower. See, for example, J. Bibow, “The Euro Debt Crisis and Germany’s Euro Trilemma,” pp. 3-4. In both cases these states retain full control of their own currencies.

²⁴ P.R. Lane, “The European Sovereign Debt Crisis,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26 (2012), 49-68, p. 52.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57, fig. 2.

²⁶ “Government Bond Risk Premiums in the EU Revisited. The Impact of the Financial Crisis,” *IMF Working Paper* 1152 (IMF, February, 2010).

²⁷ In other words, ‘to regain confidence,’ which is the title of the contribution of former Portuguese Finance Minister, Vítor Gaspar, to M. Beblavý, D. Cobham and L. Ódor (eds.), *The Euro Area and the Financial Crisis*.

²⁸ Lane, “The European Sovereign Debt Crisis,” p. 56.

out any sort of democratic control,²⁹ neither in those countries imposing the terms of the financial rescue nor in the countries being rescued.³⁰ Instead, the whole process is led by imposition and threat.³¹ Such a process constitutes a “denial of democracy,” as Etienne Balibar has aptly put it.³² The result has been the incremental divorce between the mechanisms of economic governance and the political processes that grant them democratic legitimacy: the major political institutions of old Europe have become more isolated from the society for which they work and to which they should be held accountable.³³ The losing side in this is above all democracy as a form of governance: recent opinion polls show extremely low levels of satisfaction and trust in democracy and democratic institutions.³⁴

The second is one of justification: the solution imposed itself under the guise of a (technical) consensus of economic experts, with little or no attention being given to alternative voices and technical solutions. The infatuation with technical economic expertise has even led to some experts becoming heads of government (Italy being a case in point). It is striking to see how much respect politicians have for science and for the principle of scientific objectivity. The science of economics, the story goes, offers unquestionable evidence that markets will respond positively to the imposition of austerity measures, which, in turn, will lead to the regaining of investors’ confidence in the economies of the troubled countries and in the European economic block as a whole. This fits with the theory that both technocrats and markets share the view that the state must be small and not intervene in the economy: the bigger the state is, the less money there remains for the rest of the economy. It also means that, in order for the state to spend a lot it, needs to tax a lot, which is not good for the economy and investors’ confidence.³⁵ Recent evidence

²⁹ C. Crouch, *Commercialization and Citizenship: Educational Policy and the Future of Public Services* (London: Fabian Society, 2003).

³⁰ L. Phillips, “ECB Austerity Drive Raises Fears for Democratic Accountability in Europe,” *The Guardian* (August 22, 2011).

³¹ In this sense, this is just one more crisis in the problematic relation between capitalism and democracy. For an overview, see W. Streeck, “The Crises of Democratic Capitalism,” *New Left Review*, 71 (2001), 5-29, who says pointedly that “the markets have begun to dictate in unprecedented ways what presumably sovereign and democratic states may still do for their citizens and what they must refuse them” (p. 26).

³² E. Balibar, “Réflexion sur la crise européenne en cours” [Reflections on the Current European Crisis], *Transeuropéennes* (2010) (http://www.transeuropeennes.eu/fr/articles/227/Reflexions_sur_la_crise_europeenne_en_cours).

³³ There is a wide corpus of secondary literature on the growing delegitimization of democratic procedures at the European level. For references, see, for example, A. Wimmel, “Theorizing the Democratic Legitimacy of European Governance: a Labyrinth with No Exit?,” *European Integration*, 31 (2009), 181-199.

³⁴ <http://www.publico.pt/politica/noticia/sondagem-diz-que-87-dos-portugueses-estao-de-siludidos-com-a-democracia-1563811>.

³⁵ According to the basic principles of orthodox neoclassical economics, which still influence much of European economic governance. There are, of course, a large number of critics of these policies but they remain for the most part outside decision-making circles. This is true also, critics say, in academia, with non-neoclassical economics being sidelined.

has, however, proved them wrong: austerity has led to a slashing of public investment with obvious negative consequences for the economy –revenue from taxation has decreased, private consumption has retracted, and the number of people claiming social benefits is on the rise due to the contraction of the economy, etc. The result is the growth of public debt in relation to Gross Domestic Product (GDP, hereafter), thus worsening the situation, not curing it.³⁶ This, in turn, has led to a further rise in interest rates, thus making it increasingly difficult for those originally troubled countries to find financing in international bond markets.³⁷

The austerity-based technical consensus has failed, but this has not essentially led to a revision of this process, its legitimation or its aims. This is mostly due to the fact that austerity policies do not follow simply from the need to achieve balanced budgets; rather they are part of an overall strategy of adopting “constitutionally guaranteed arrangements for macroeconomic policies” that are directed at fostering a neoliberal conception of the economy and society. This strategy is an expression of what Stephen Gill called ‘disciplinary neoliberalism.’³⁸ Its aim is the ‘preservation of the liberal market model’ –financial stability is necessary for ‘a return to normal market conditions.’³⁹ In fact, one should say, it is the way to return to the conditions *imposed* by the market’s agents. It constituted one of the explicit aims of the European Bank’s rescue packages to maintain the liberal market model, at the cost of the safety of public finances. It is important to stress that these packages were decided at the European level in accordance with (then) sound economic policy making.⁴⁰

Even students seem to have realized this and started to struggle against this sort of curriculum. See the interesting Post-crash Economics Society (<http://www.post-crasheconomics.com/>) organized by students at the University of Manchester.

³⁶ See Lapavistas et al., *Crisis in the Euro Zone* (London: Verso, 2012), p. 183.

³⁷ See the book-length argument against austerity by M. Blyth, *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). My text aims at complementing Blyth’s argument by showing that not only is there a moral background to austerity but that it also serves the purpose of gaining both popular and market support for austerity measures.

³⁸ S. Gill, “Globalisation, Market Civilisation & Disciplinary Neoliberalism,” *Millennium*, 24 (1995), 399-423.

³⁹ B. Weber and S.W. Schmitz, “Varieties of Helping Capitalism: Politico-Economic Determinants of Bank Rescue Packages in the EU during the Recent Crisis,” *Socio-Economic Review*, 9 (2011), 639-669. The authors focus on the bank rescue packages but the argument can be made for the whole system of rescue, as the authors themselves argue: ‘Therefore, the objective of fiscal prudence serves as an instrument for the objective of preserving the liberal market model’ (p. 640). See also Gill, “Globalization, Market Civilization, and Disciplinary Neoliberalism,” p. 408.

⁴⁰ Summit of the Euro Area Countries (2008). Declaration on a Concerted European Action Plan of the Euro Area Countries, Summit of the Euro Area Countries, October 12, Paris, France. See Weber and Schmitz, “Varieties of Helping Capitalism.”

III

The consequence of this set of policies has been the growth of inequality, unemployment, and despair.⁴¹ This has led to protests and profound social discontent throughout Europe, even if the level of protest in those European countries more affected by the crisis is striking for its mild nature, at least measured against the level of suffering the austerity policies have caused. Trust in economic expertise does not seem sufficient enough to explain the mildness of this reaction. What seems to be blocking deeper, more violent social convulsion is that most individual citizens recognize their own share of moral responsibility for incurring their own personal debt, and via elections of their countries. Austerity policies have been intentionally designed with a moral argument in mind; that is to say the implementation of the policies is preceded by the portrayal of the situation as one in which we all know who is to blame and why. A clear statement of this can be found in the words of the Finnish Prime Minister (as of 2013), Jyrki Katainen:

“One of the reasons why we are in crisis at the moment is that everybody did not follow strictly the rule base and now *we pay the price*.”⁴²

“Europe is like a family in which *all the members promised to respect the rules*. The crisis has revealed that this hasn’t happened. *We Finns find this unfair*. Don’t forget that many Finns are also affected by the crisis and are now unemployed. We are therefore urging stricter rules and greater monitoring rights for the European Commission in Brussels. *People have to have the feeling that things are done in a fair manner*.”⁴³

Many such statements can be found in contemporary European politics, aimed, not so much at individuals, but at the citizens of a given country or the citizens of a group of countries: the Portuguese, the Greeks, the Spaniards, etc. The strategy is clear: to identify a relationship between the economic situation of such countries and the characteristics of the citizens of those countries/group of countries, in order to dismiss the idea that there is any sort of shared responsibility at the European level and among other European countries, and to restrict the issue to one of individual (national) responsibility. The situation in which each troubled country finds itself is the result of their irresponsible and profligate behavior. The imposition of austerity follows not only the expert diagnosis that points to profligate public spending being the source of the crisis, but also involves a moral condemnation of such irresponsibility that must be followed by punishment to general approval.

In this view, it is, therefore, unfair for wealthier countries to bear the burden of other countries’ profligate and blameworthy behavior. The main em-

⁴¹ Posh, Schmitz and Weber, “EU Bank Packages.”

⁴² Interview with CNN, March 29, 2013 (emphasis added).

⁴³ Interview with *Der Spiegel*, August 13, 2012 (emphasis added).

phasis is on individual/national guilt for not following the rules, because following the 'basic rules' is the only way to protect everybody's property and the common currency. To protect property, one's own and that of others, is a moral obligation, and failure to do so should not shift the burden onto another person's or country's shoulders.

The accusation of failing one's moral duty, be that as an individual or as a citizenry of a country, cannot, however, be done in an absolute way. Obligation is relative to circumstance. The problem with the blame-discourse is precisely that it fails to account for a number of factors that contributed to the current state of affairs, over which many of the troubled countries have little control. This is not to say these countries –their citizenries and their political agents– have no responsibility or that there were not too many cases of over-borrowing, but rather that responsibility is situated, factors contribute to make it diluted and even shared. This is one of the discussions we should be having, but we are not. The question is, to put it bluntly, whether other countries that contributed to the crisis –by contributing to the constitution of an economic and monetary system that defines the nature of the crisis– and that benefited, and continue to benefit, from it must assume shared responsibility. It is precisely because the specific circumstances leading to the crisis entail common responsibility that the solution must imply responsibility together with solidarity. Otherwise, the main consequence of simply blaming these countries for their irresponsible behavior (once taken as a given by both the political elites and the public opinion) is that it has the effect of constituting a source of resistance to any comprehensive solution to the current crisis and to any future closer tied European Union. No alternative can be drafted that does not start from the assumption that the cause of the crisis is to be found in immoral, profligate behavior.

Among the contributing factors to the European crisis should be mentioned the flawed European economic model, in particular the Monetary Union, that structurally benefited some member states at the cost of others because of the very nature of their economies;⁴⁴ the effects of the contraction of the global economy, the effects of incremental globalization that affected some peripheral countries whose economies are more exposed to free market competition with countries with extremely cheap labor costs, the nature of the monetary model that removed all control over currencies from national actors (thus making it impossible to use devaluation as a way to counterbalance higher borrowing costs and the loss of competitiveness),⁴⁵ the sudden shift in market perception of some European economies that led to worse sovereign credit ratings and a consequent increase in borrowing costs (a shift that has a largely self-fulfilling nature), and finally the monetary policy of the ECB, which, according to some, was good for countries such as Germany and France but disastrous for countries like Spain –in allowing the exponential growth of

⁴⁴ Giavazzi and Spaventa, "Why the Current Account May Matter in a Monetary Union," pp. 217-19.

⁴⁵ Lane, "The European Sovereign Debt Crisis," p. 49.

private debt mostly for housing ownership. The countries in trouble have little if any influence over these issues, which played a key role in the formation of the crisis. This makes it impossible to address the causes of the crisis exclusively at the national level. But, at least to some, there are ways of addressing these issues at the European level, some of which have been implemented and others that have not.

Of all the issues just mentioned, maybe the most problematic –and certainly the easiest to address from a technical point of view– is the control of national states' funding in a way that is not dependent on shifting market perceptions. The basic problem here is that if the market valuation of x (the state of a given country's economic situation) has self-fulfilling consequences –the negative valuation of a country's finances by the market implies a rise in the cost of financing for that country–, then any country can find itself under unbearable and unjustified stress, leading to the incapacity of the state to meet its obligations –both to creditors (national and international) and its citizens. No one doubts the need to achieve balanced national budgets, but many have raised their concern about finding the right moment to do this, the contextual constraints in achieving it within the current economic and monetary union, and the speculative nature of the markets. The solution requires the various actors to be clear in proposing an alternative answer to this problem in a properly European way, meaning that the solution needs to be the result of an *ideological* debate at the European level about the political future of Europe and its citizens, rather than the product of technocratic decision making, whereby economic and social policies are applied to all member states.

The intervention by the European Central Bank, beyond its formal purpose of fighting inflation, by buying the sovereign debt of troubled countries in order to lower interest rates and to act as the lender of last resort to some European states through bailout packages, is an example of the European capacity, if willing, to shape the conditions required for a solution to the crisis. Extending this function could be an efficient way to exert pressure over the sovereign debt market.⁴⁶ But, the ECB's actions still fall short of achieving this aim. Certainly, one of the reasons this intervention has not been more forceful resides precisely in the moral argument, both in avoiding moral hazard (an economic issue) and imposing punishment (an ethical one).

Mr. Katainen was subscribing (intentionally or not) to a principle of moral economic theory whose roots can be traced back to the philosopher David Hume in his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. For Hume, the protection of one's property is the foundation of justice, and he is explicit in the idea that to act against it is a breach of the (social) contract.⁴⁷ To act in this way is to act against the (self-) interest of the community, by shattering

⁴⁶ For a full spelled-out argument, see P. De Grauwe, "Fragile Eurozone in Search of a Better Governance," *Economic and Social Review*, 43, (2012), 1-30. See also his "Only a more active ECB can solve the euro crisis," *Policy Brief* 250 (Centre for European Policy Studies, August 2011).

⁴⁷ D. Hume, *Enquiries Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902²), Section III, Part 2, p. 13.

the principles of trust and creditworthiness.⁴⁸ This is the way in which the assistance given to distressed countries has been understood, making the contemporary European situation one of crisis in the etymological sense of judging and deciding, “of reaching a verdict.”⁴⁹ It is clear that there is in this tradition, a strong claim that there is a moral obligation both to avoid contracting debt—as it is bad for society and the independence of the nation-state—and to be responsible for its repayment in case it is contracted—in such a way that only the contractor (in the case of the nation, the citizenry) is responsible for such a debt. In their economic analysis of the crisis, L. Schuknecht, J. von Hagen, and G. Wolswijk have concluded that

“There is, therefore, little justification for the claim that governments faced with high risk premiums during the crisis deserve the solidarity of other governments in the euro area.”⁵⁰

According to these authors, the markets’ valuation of a given country’s economic outlook is grounded on economic rationality, that is to say, higher interest rates follow from a deterioration of the economic situation of a given country and, especially, increased concerns about solvency. As the political expression of their analysis transpires, they take the troubled countries’ debt situation to be of their own making, thus relinquishing their European partners from responsibility—and solidarity.

The problem with this way of portraying the issue is that it obscures the role of other European countries—and the European model (monetary and otherwise)—in the development and triggering of the *financial* crisis and the real *social* crisis that came out from its ‘solution.’ The issue that needs to be emphasized is that, for moral qualifications such as blame and responsibility to be warranted, it is necessary to understand how the present state of affairs developed and who is responsible for what. Even if we do not reach any conclusions about who precisely is responsible for what, we would still get a better understanding of the conditions under which it would be possible to hold someone (or a nation) morally responsible and how the attribution of moral qualifications could be reached. A clear case of this kind of reasoning can be found in Smart (1943). Smart compares two situations in which Tommy does not do his homework. In the first, he does not do his homework because he is stupid—thus he is simply unable to do his homework no matter what. In the second situation Smart asks us to

“suppose that the reason why Tommy did not do his homework is that he was lazy: perhaps he had just settled down to do it when some other boy tempted him to come out and climb a tree. In such

⁴⁸ Central here is deciding which community a national government must obey: Europe’s citizenry or each national one? That definition/decision applies of course to both debtor and creditor nation states. What makes this particularly problematic in the European case is the absence of a European citizenry properly called.

⁴⁹ R. Koselleck, “Crisis,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400, pp. 358-359.

⁵⁰ L. Schuknecht, J. von Hagen, and G. Wolswijk, “Government Bond Risk Revisited: The Impact of Financial Crisis,” ECB Working Paper No. 1152 (February 23, 2010) (<https://ssrn.com/abstract=1540653>), p. 8.

a case the schoolmaster will hold Tommy responsible, and he will say that Tommy could have done his homework.”⁵¹

Whereas in the first case, ‘threats, promises, or punishments’ would have no effect on the schoolmaster’s desired outcome –Tommy doing his homework–, in the second case, in which the homework is not done due to Tommy’s laziness, blame and punishment are believed to play a role in changing Tommy’s behavior: punishment is understood here as an effective way of educating with the purpose of regulating moral behavior.

We see the same kind of reasoning being applied to the current crisis, in which responsibility is ascribed to the citizens and politicians of the distressed countries because they acted freely when making their political decisions, both at the national level and at the European level –namely by contributing to the design of the EMU model now in place. The ascription of this responsibility needs, so the argument goes on, to be accompanied by blame and punishment. Blame and consequent punishment are not considered in relation to the effectiveness of addressing the causes of the crisis –which clearly go beyond national public spending– rather, the aim is to prevent a certain sort of behavior and, for that to happen, some educational re-training is necessary. But, as Smart well notes, responsibility follows grading, that is to say, the evaluation of a certain behavior according to an existent moral norm or the consequences to which it leads. Judging, however, requires a committed understanding of the contributing circumstances, and that is what seems to be failing here. To return to Smart’s example, let us suppose that the schoolmaster had a role to play in the outcome; for instance, that he gave the pupil homework that was far too difficult or he had not been strict enough on previous occasions when the pupil had not done his homework. Would he not be co-responsible for the outcome? The point I am trying to make here is, again, not that there is no responsibility on the part of individual and collective agents at the national level –that is, of a given country and its citizens–, but that this should not obscure the shared responsibility of all the other European countries and citizens. It is also my claim that, if that is the case, then the right way to address this responsibility is to apply to the principle of solidarity.

IV

The imposition of austerity policies pays no attention whatsoever to the responsibilities those elected at the national level hold towards those that elected them, the responsibility European institutions have towards the citizens of bailed-out European countries, or the duty of solidarity that the leaders of the rescuing European countries have with respect to the leaders and citizens of rescued European countries. And solidarity is an essential issue here, if this crisis in Europe is the result of a structural imbalance. In other words, if the

⁵¹ J.J.C. Smart, “Free-will, Praise, and Blame,” *Mind*, 70 (1961), 291-306, p. 302. On a similar point, see G. Watson, “Responsibility and the Limits of Evil: Variations on a Strawsonian Theme,” in J.M Fisher and M. Ravizza (eds.), *Perspectives on Moral Responsibility* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 119-148.

system itself (both the capitalist market economy and the European monetary union) is supposed to be imbalanced by design,⁵² the moral responsibilities of all actors of this situation need to be seriously reevaluated. It seems clear that the real moral challenge in the context of the European crisis is not so much about how debtors will respond to the new paths opened up to them, but how creditors –European countries and their citizenry– face the need to assist debtor countries in the context of European integration.

When Hume advances his theory of justice, he is clear in stating that it works because of the common interest of both parts in making it work: both parts accept the need to leave the other with his/her possessions.⁵³ The problem, however, in the European case is that the theory only seems to apply to one of the parties, the creditors, and less so to the debtors. Hume's doctrine comes, however, together with a second claim, according to which, in a state of emergency, the principles of justice are suspended, and that this state of emergency happens both with extreme abundance and extreme necessity. There is something like that going on nowadays. Given the context of the European project, we obviously cannot act on our own anymore –cannot both in the sense of should not and in the sense of not having the ability. The argument can, has been, and should be made that these two aspects are related, meaning that the imposition of austerity should be accompanied by a parallel imposition of solidarity; even better, solidarity and austerity should be internally driven.

There is, however, another aspect of Hume that we should consider. In one of his *Essays*, which he devotes to public debt, Hume presents the situation of a highly indebted nation whose servicing of the debt makes the whole economy collapse. He then goes on to say that “[w]e have always found, where a government has mortgaged all its revenues, that it necessarily sinks into a state of languor, inactivity, and impotence” (*Essays*, II.ix.26). Hume thought that this was the case with Great Britain at the time of writing, but this is also very true in the case of Europe today. There is a sovereign debt crisis, to be sure, even if there is not a consensus about what caused it. The issue here is how to solve it and to allow these countries to be fully dependent on market perceptions is problematic: there is moral obligation, not only for debtor countries to pay their debts, but also for other European countries, especially those benefiting from the crisis, to help them in this effort. The difference between Hume's time and ours is precisely the kind of Europe that exists: in his time, each nation-state was threatened by the other.

An alternative economic view would be, as many have argued, to accept some form of distributional policy, in which the wealthiest European states would accept a system of a continuous transference of funds, which would address the question of the structural imbalance within the monetary union.⁵⁴

⁵² Koselleck, “Crisis,” pp. 392-393.

⁵³ See S. Darwall, “Motive and Obligation in Hume's *Ethics*,” *Noûs*, 27 (1993), 415-448, p. 421.

⁵⁴ See J. Habermas, “Democracy, Solidarity and the European Crisis” (Lecture delivered on 26 April 2013 at the University of Leuven), who points out that this entails the establishment of a real political union.

Such a transference of funds has been, in effect, part of the institutionalized project of the European Union in its long-term frameworks, although, of course, there is a difference in nature and size. The justification for not doing so has been the introduction of the question of ‘moral hazard,’ but that just reinforces the idea that the aim of the austerity policies is not to solve the problem of sovereign debt, but to maintain a certain political and economic model and to punish the rule-breakers.

V

There are clear advantages for using this moral argument. It has created a basic distinction between two sorts of European nations: the justly wealthy North and the incompetent, wasteful South. This has worked perfectly in two ways: first, it has helped to justify the dismantling of the welfare system almost everywhere in Europe with very little contestation, given the traditional overwhelming popular support for this welfare system.⁵⁵ (We need to do it because we spent too much, says the indebted country; we need to do it to pay for the irresponsible South, says the debtor North.)

Second, the tale of moral superiority has managed to convince the markets, with the yields on Nordic bonds continuing to be low, whereas, for the South, the borrowing costs remain unbearably high.⁵⁶ As a result, according to a recent article by *Der Spiegel* (August 19, 2013), Germany’s profit is in the order of 40 billion Euros for the period 2010-14 (the overall costs of the euro crisis, according to the same source, are 599 million euros). By May 2013, German 10-year sovereign bond yields had reached a record low, although the global economy was still in a depression.⁵⁷ In addition to this, the lack of investor confidence in other European countries has led to a flow of capital to Germany.⁵⁸ As L. Schuknecht, J. von Hagen, and G. Wolswijk⁵⁹ show, investors in government bond markets shifted their investments from peripheral countries to German bonds, which were considered as a ‘safe-

⁵⁵ See, for example, P. Diamond and G. Lodge, “European Welfare States after the Crisis. Changing public attitudes” (Policy Network Paper, January 2013). There are significant variations in this support (cross-national, within-country, and even about different programs) that need to be explained by a complex net of factors, namely, the structure of a given welfare system.

⁵⁶ J. Maudos, “Fragmentation of the European financial Market and the Cost of Bank Financing,” *Spanish Economic and Financial Outlook*, 2 (2013), 5-15. The recent data can be found in <http://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/money/long/html/index.en.html>.

⁵⁷ According to SEB Nordic Outlook, Economic Research -May 2013, 9. In the case of Finland, the only country of the Euro to retain triple-A ratings, the forecast is still that of recession (-0.2 per cent); the sovereign bond yields remain at historically low levels. The same argument is made by C. Offe in “Europa in der Falle,” *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, 1 (2013), 67-80 p. 76, as quoted by Habermas, *op. cit.*

⁵⁸ See S. Steinberg’s article, “Austerity policies heighten national divisions in Europe” (www.wsws.org/en/articles/2013/05/06/euro-m06.html).

⁵⁹ Schuknecht, Hagen, and Wolswijk, “Government Bond Risk Revisited: The Impact of Financial Crisis.”

haven investment.’ Furthermore, a weak Euro has helped Germany to increase the surplus on its current account, which, in 2012, was the biggest in the world. As Blyth⁶⁰ has recently argued (together with other economists), this has been made possible by Germany’s policies of beggaring thy neighbor and squeezing its own workers, which, according to Bibow⁶¹ and Lapavitsas⁶² among others, is a contributing cause to the current crisis. It is, of course, necessary to be able to assert the intention (and knowledge) of the agent in order to assert his or her moral responsibility, and, with collective agents, governments, and different levels of institutions acting on national and European decision-making processes, this is particularly difficult. It is not, however, wild to assume that each individual action is informed by self-interest, which may or may not coincide with the interest of other agents. Equally, the evaluation of one’s deeds can occur in the form of evaluating the consequences of those actions.

The German philosopher Jürgen Habermas has recently argued that it is precisely because Germany has benefited from the crisis that, as the economic powerhouse of Europe, it has a ‘normative obligation’ to act on the principle of solidarity, instead of stubbornly imposing austerity measures on debt stricken and impoverished countries from the European periphery.⁶³ Habermas’s call for solidarity is not based on, as we will see, Peter Singer’s ‘principle of preventing bad occurrences’ (also called the principle of benevolence), according to which, “if it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally to do it.”⁶⁴ Someone may object to applying the principle of benevolence to the European crisis by saying that the equally bad moral consequence, here, is the risk of moral hazard, that is to say that, to show solidarity, now, with these countries, will promote future cases of reckless behavior –because in this view, the current crisis is precisely the result of these countries’ reckless behavior. Faced with this argument, the cynic among us is tempted to say that this has not prevent us from bailing out major banks, but there is more to it than this quick populist reply.

In fact, Habermas provides a different foundation for the obligation to show solidarity. He claims that there is an obligation to assist these countries, because their situation is the result of the way the system has been designed, which has made them worse off while benefiting others. The bottom line of the argument is that the fulfillment by the debtor states of their obligations needs to be accompanied by the benevolence of others, in terms of their contribution to the stabilization of the system. If Europe is a project aimed at se-

⁶⁰ Blyth, *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea*.

⁶¹ J. Bibow, “The Euro Debt Crisis and Germany’s Euro Trilemma,” *Economics Working Paper Archive* wp_721, Levi Economics Institute, 2012.

⁶² Lapavitsas et al., *Crisis in the Euro Zone*.

⁶³ Habermas also makes clear that this principle of solidarity needs to be accompanied by acceptance by those indebted countries of a transfer of sovereignty to European institutions.

⁶⁴ P. Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1 (1972), 229-243, p. 231.

curing peace, along with social and economic progress for all its citizens, everything must be done in order to make it possible for the debtor countries to be given the conditions to pay off their debts without crushing their citizenry. Why does the fact that 27% of Spaniards are unemployed, or that the hundreds of thousands of Greeks and Portuguese that were left without any sort of social protection due to the cuts imposed in welfare provisions, lie beyond the moral concerns of other Europeans, in particular of those with growing economies?⁶⁵ Is there not a sense in which the other European countries, as the only ones that can help, ought to help, and we should take this as a moral obligation to show solidarity? The political issue, here, is that, if appeals to European solidarity are disparaged, then so too must appeals to integration be disparaged, because, in traditional political philosophy, the doctrine of integration is intertwined with policies of solidarity. Austerity is not a question of moral hazard, but of a morality play.

The argument becomes even more pressing if one takes into account the fact that the stabilization of the system is in everybody's interest. Furthermore, its costs are relatively minor in comparison to the social and financial costs that the given troubled states have to incur in order to service their debts at speculative market prices (speculative, here, used in a neutral fashion to describe the nature of the system). This obligation to show solidarity should not, however, be enforced to the extent that would cause harm to those being solidary. Instead, the benevolence principle should be used to argue for the moral obligation of assisting those troubled countries, in so far as the benefits for European's citizenry would outweigh the costs.

VI

To sum up, the argument for the need for austerity started by revealing the state of public finances, then went on to claim that this state of affairs is the result of government overspending, namely, due to the welfare system.⁶⁶ Finally, the need for austerity measures is demonstrated, and this is portrayed as the only solution to accomplish debt payment and to fix the South European countries' solvency problems. This argument strikes a chord in that it invokes an essential moral commitment: people suffer from being in debt, and people from Southern Europe accept that it is their moral duty, and their natural inclination, to pay their existing debts. The evidence for this can be found in the diminutive political traction gained by movements aiming at having some of the debt recognized as 'odious debt,' and at nonpayment. Debt repayment as

⁶⁵ The perception that there is not return to money spent in the bailouts helps explaining this resistance; it is rarely said, without ambiguity, by political actors that these are loans with, originally not-so-low interest rates: only in 2011 did penalty premiums (for the European backed loans) cease to be applied.

⁶⁶ The 'age of irresponsibility' in the words of the British Prime Minister, David Cameron. For this shift, see J. Clarke and J. Newman, "The alchemy of austerity," *Critical Social Policy*, 32 (2012), 299-319. The discourse on the question of responsibility and blaming public sector workers and those on welfare benefits deserves a study of its own.

the end, and austerity as the means to accomplish it, have been granted the status of moral commands, as self-standing and self-imposing moral principles that should be obeyed independently of any circumstances and consequences.

Alternative courses of action, such as acting together on the market in order to stabilize the bond yields of those European countries affected, are quickly dismissed, because they require a change in the ECB's objectives and substantial amounts of money (another way is the creation of the so-called 'Eurobonds').⁶⁷ This would allow troubled countries to stabilize their Debt-to-GDP ratio, providing them the necessary respite to stimulate their economies. Instead, political actors opted for a largely inefficient, expensive, and socially corruptive alternative, whilst, at the same time, blaming the assisted countries. There is no issue with the fact that, as political and moral agents, they are free to do so; the question, here, is not even whether they ought to do so. The question is, rather, what motivates them to adopt this course of action, and how this is justified in a way that is, at least to some degree, beneficial for Europe's citizenry and the global markets. I have argued that this course of action is motivated by the inclination of some countries to moralize, based on national prejudices and stereotypes, together with self-interest: portraying other countries as profligate, irresponsible and needing to be punished, makes their picture clearer and simpler, with obvious financial benefits.

The argument is aimed at appealing, both to the common good and to self-interest, but it only gains traction by including a strong moral claim. Only a moral argument is capable of legitimizing the political defense and of implementation of the economics of austerity in a way that defeats without a fight all opposing objections. And, by this, I mean that the argument aims at bypassing political/ideological opposition; that is, the 'principle of necessity plus morality of debt entails austerity' argument is presented as being legitimate on its own, thus authoritative to such an extent that it is imposed without our consent, instead of trying to earn it, as is the case in a normal political process.⁶⁸ (That is, technocracy is meant to bypass ideological objections, whereas the principle of necessity is meant to bypass political objections).⁶⁹

So, the central claim is this: austerity, defined as a set of economic policies and a political attitude aimed at forcing countries to keep to the principle of fiscal discipline –a low Debt-to-GDP ratio and a low budgetary deficit–,

⁶⁷ See the arguments by Jean-Claude Juncker and Giulio Tremonti, dated December 5, 2010, with the enlightening title "E-bondswould end the crisis" (<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/540d41c2-009f-11e0-aa29-00144feab49a.html#axzz2leEYNx2s>).

⁶⁸ There are two aspects here that are conceptually distinct: on the one hand, the aim of the argument is for it to be taken to be self-standing and self-evident; on the other, that it is in effect the dominant view of how to solve the sovereign debt crisis. What I claim in this paper is that the moral grounding of the argument is intended to justify the latter by procuring the former.

⁶⁹ Although disputable and fuzzy, the use of 'ideological' and 'political' here is to be taken as follows: 'ideological' for the overall conception of society, state, and governance, and 'political' for how such a conception is implemented, with an emphasis on the practices of everyday political management.

has achieved the status of a high moral principle, which, as such, is beyond reproach. To deny the need for austerity can, therefore, be portrayed as the result of both ignorance and immoral financial behavior. The cleverness of this is that, even if it were possible to open up the debate over austerity and question whether it is the best technical solution to the problem of fiscal discipline, this would still be a debate about a relativist view of truth –and scientific objectivity– rather than a debate about the moral principle itself.⁷⁰

To understand the argument is an essential part of any approach that seeks to dislodge it from the political scene and to undermine its claim to be a solution that commands public consensus. Any such approach needs to attack it where it hurts most, and where it hurts most is in its defense of the morality of the rescuers, which in turn rests on the immorality of the rescued. There are points to be made about how the design of the system contributed to the crisis at three different levels: that of capitalism itself, with crisis being an integral part of its mode of being; that of the current stage of market capitalism, which makes credit –consumer led as it is– its engine; and that of the European economic and monetary union, with imbalances between countries' economies built into the system. This is important, because it shows how the extent of the situation in which debtor countries find themselves is partially determined by external factors. It certainly questions some of their moral responsibility. This is not to say that these countries were not free to make the particular decisions they made, for instance foreign borrowing without corresponding levels of domestic savings,⁷¹ but just that one must understand the context in which these decisions were made, the particular circumstances of each country, and the systemic elements that made it possible:⁷² their responsibility needs to be assessed more carefully than has often been the case.

The counter-argument to be constructed is that obligation overlooks the principle of solidarity at the root of the European project and fails to accommodate the principle of fairness: if some countries have knowingly and willingly benefited from a situation that they themselves helped to create –the policies constituting the European response to the financial crisis and the policies constituting the European response to the sovereign debt crisis– then that benefit has to be taken as part of the deal, subject to the same rules that apply to European economic governance. In other words, it is necessary to rule over

⁷⁰ “A number of authors have suggested that the current period is unusually rich in explicit moral statements that support the neoliberal Project, in international economic relations and elsewhere. The discourse of the market is increasingly articulated in moral and civilizational terms.” M. Fourcade and K. Healy, “Moral Views of Market Society,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33 (2007), 285-311, p. 305.

⁷¹ On the importance of this aspect of the crisis, see Giavazzi and Spaventa, “Why the Current Account May Matter in a Monetary Union,” 199-221.

⁷² “First, EMU created the environment suitable for a credit boom in countries at the periphery of the single currency area [...] by eliminating currency and liquidity risks (and by fostering financial integration), EMU represented a major shock for those countries, as even low yield differentials would attract massive capital flows.” Giavazzi and Spaventa, “Why the Current Account May Matter in a Monetary Union,” p. 215.

it. From a moral point of view, it is necessary to question any moral action that is against the actor's self-interest, as is apparently the case with austerity policies.

Habermas's arguments that these benefits must be accompanied by a moral obligation to show solidarity should be taken seriously, as they are politically sound and ethically compelling. Perhaps the core of the argumentation could include the notion that, in acting in solidarity, Europe need not be motivated by self-interest or by doing the right thing, but rather by common interest: a competitive, more equal, and fair Europe is something worth defending. Whether these arguments will be considered is another story, and there seems to be little room for optimism: political actors often like to read or even quote philosophers, but they rarely understand let alone adopt their ideas.

Narratives of the Greek Debt-Crisis: Critical Pedagogy and the Rebirth of Ethnic Thinking in Europe

ATHANASE GOTOVOS

Introductory Remarks

At least since Bourdieu,¹ it has been widely discussed that language is used, not only to describe or interpret reality, including social order and social interaction, but also to legitimize or delegitimize it.² In this respect, public discourse is not only a device for descriptive, explanatory and normative communication, but, at the same time, constitutes a tool for maintaining existing or establishing new power relations.

The narratives about the Greek debt-crisis, emerging after 2009 in Europe and other parts of the world, are discourses on *Greeks*, as an ethnic collectivity, and on the crisis, as a socio-economic event. Besides having a descriptive and explanatory dimension, they also include a strong legitimacy function: through proper, although not necessarily valid, descriptions and explanations of the debt-crisis, an old social order (including public commodities such as education, health, social welfare and security) is being delegitimized and a new one (including privatization, competitiveness and austerity) is being proposed as inevitable and more just. For the task of establishing a new “European order” compatible with the dominant global economic thinking, a collectivity—the Greeks—had to be invented and stigmatized for their alleged negative “real nature,” upon which the old order was based. In this sense, the dominant narratives on the Greek debt-crisis represent a discourse policy for the establishment of a specific economic and political balance in Europe. If political decisions influencing economic processes and facts are the basic tools for the transformation of the old social order in Greece and other European societies of the South, the dominant narratives about the Greek debt-crisis constitute the necessary legitimacy instrument for creating consensus, especially on the part of the Greek people, on the decisions mentioned, and for facing social unrest triggered by radical austerity policies imposed on the population by the debtors.

¹ P. Bourdieu, J.B. Thompson, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991).

² For a further discussion on the relationship between discourse and social order, see M. Talbot, K. Atkinson, D. Atkinson (eds.), *Language and Power in the Modern World* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003); A. Mayr, *Language and Power: An Introduction to Institutional Discourse* (London/New York: Continuum, 2008); T.A. van Dijk, *Discourse and Power* (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2008); N. Fairclough, *Language and Power* (London: Routledge, 2013).

Collectivities, Identities and Stigma

The seminal work of Erving Goffman on stigma³ allowed social science to reconstruct, not only careers of individuals or small groups interacting within specific social establishments, but also the process of establishing collective identities for larger groups or communities. Collectivities (e.g. Jews, Greeks, Gypsies, blacks) may become the objects of identity definition and stigmatization on the grounds of socially accepted beliefs about their “real nature.” Inventing the “true” nature (or the ethnic/ national/racial character) of a collectivity is not a new endeavor in social history. Establishing stereotypic images of collective others has been the main tool of racism in all its forms: social, structural and institutional. The most recent and tragic case of institutionally based large scale collective stigmatization of collectivities in history, as a necessary step towards their destruction and annihilation, has been the regime of *National Socialism*.

For the implementation of collective stigmatization, National Socialism relied on negative popular images about certain groups, including Jews, Gypsies and homosexuals. Members of the academia supporting the regime transformed these images into “theory,” that is, into a scientifically sanctioned racist conception of past and present.⁴ Formal and informal education, legislation, and the press have been the main devices for the mediation of racist thinking from the top (intellectuals, scientists, functionaries) to the bottom of the society, connecting the brains of systemic racist theorists with the consciousness of ordinary Germans. The language used to transform the complex structure of racist theories into images accessible to the ordinary public was the language of *ethnic thinking* or “*völkisches Denken*.”⁵ It was this way of thinking about a collectivity and its members which made stigmatization possible: the postulation of homogeneity for all members of an ethnic or racial group. The “racial” similarity of the members of the community in past and present has been the main axiom of *völkisches Denken*.

The ascent of *ethnic thinking* almost eighty years ago in central Europe was triggered by a world economic crisis following the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles. The need for a culprit to be held responsible for the military defeat in connection with the humiliation of Germany through the

³ E. Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1963).

⁴ The most known among the numerous exponents of official national socialist racism are Alfred Rosenberg, Erwin Bauer, Eugen Fischer and Fritz Lenz. See A. Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts* (München: Hoheneichen Verlag, 1934); E. Bauer, E. Fischer, F. Lenz (eds.), *Menschliche Erblehre* (München: J. F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1936).

⁵ On the concept of *völkisches Denken* and its implementation by national socialist Protestantism, see C. Weber, *Altes Testament und völkische Frage. Der biblische Volksbegriff in der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft der nationalsozialistischen Zeit dargestellt am Beispiel von Johannes Hempel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebek, 2000). It should be noted that *völkisches Denken* was not an invention of National Socialism but it had already influenced European academia long before [U. Wolf, *Litteris et Patriae. Das Janusgesicht der Historie* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1996), p. 131].

Versailles treaty, and the social disarray as a result of the economic crisis, made stigmatization of specific collectivities easier. *Völkisches Denken* was developed into a mainstream, institutionally sanctioned discourse.

What makes a similar language use –the present dominant narratives on Greeks– seventy years after the collapse of National Socialism possible? How can the reappearance of this historical event be explained? For whom is contemporary ethnic thinking instrumental, and to what purpose? Which are the devices for the creation and dissemination of contemporary ethnic thinking, and how are they related to the past? Finally, what is the role of the intellectuals and the role of education in a Europe beleaguered by evil spirits of the past?

Scope and Methodology

The content of this article constitutes a preliminary analysis⁶ of two sets of data. The first set comprises about 800 texts published in seven German newspapers and magazines⁷ of relatively wide circulation in their on-line version in the time between December 2009 and June 2012, referring to the Greek debt-crisis. The second set comprises about 500 texts originating from six corresponding Greek newspapers⁸ in their on-line version during the same period.

Both sets of published texts (articles, opinions) were selected according to a double criterion: direct reference to either the causes of the Greek debt-crisis or its remedies, or both. The texts collected were submitted to a specific text analysis known as *critical discourse analysis*,⁹ as well as to a more traditional *structural content analysis*,¹⁰ through which specific *thematic fields* with a similar structure were investigated.

⁶ A full analysis of the texts investigated is expected to come out in a future publication.

⁷ On-line versions of *Bild* (<http://www.bild.de/>), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (<http://www.faz.net/>), *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (<http://www.sueddeutsche.de/>), *Die Welt* (<http://www.welt.de/>), *Focus* (<http://www.focus.de/>), *Der Spiegel* (<http://www.spiegel.de/>), *Die Zeit* (<http://www.zeit.de/>).

⁸ *Έθνος* (<http://www.ethnos.gr/>), *Καθημερινή* (<http://www.kathimerini.gr/>), *Πρώτο Θέμα* (<http://www.protothema.gr/>), *Το Βήμα* (<http://www.tovima.gr/>), *Ελευθεροτυπία* (<http://www.enet.gr/>), *Τα Νέα* (<http://www.tanea.gr/>).

⁹ More about this method in Fairclough, *Language and Power*. See also N. Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: Longman, 1995); H. Widdowson, "Review of Fairclough's *Discourse and Social Change*," *Applied Linguistics*, 16 (1995), 510-516; N. Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research* (London: Routledge, 2003).

¹⁰ See F. Heinzl, T. Werner, P. Cloos, S. Köngeter (eds.), "Auf unsicherem Terrain." *Ethnografische Forschung im Kontext des Bildungs- und Sozialwesens* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2010), p. 219. For a specific implementation of this analysis in a similar environment (newspaper language), see A. Neu, *Die Jugoslawien-Kriegsberichterstattung der Times und der Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung. Ein Vergleich* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2004).

The Socio-Political Frame of the Narratives

It is well known, that at the end of 2009, the globally acting finance capital, the so-called “markets,” changed its policy toward Greek state bonds and raised the interest rates to an extent that, in effect, prohibited any further loans for the Greek government. The Greek economy was repeatedly evaluated with negative scores by the main global market evaluation agencies, investments in the form of bonds became risky for global investors, and the Greek government was forced, either to declare the country insolvent or borrow its badly needed capital for the running of the state from a special category of investors, the so-called “Troika.”¹¹ George Papandreou’s government opted for the second solution and it had, therefore, to accept a dynamic frame of painful conditions as a prerequisite for the money to be received. This ever changing agreement between the Greek government and its new, seemingly provisional, creditors took the form of consecutive legislative acts and their implementation, which now exist as Greek law and its effects: *Greek social reality*. Tax raising, salary and funding cuts, diminishing the public sector, privatizations of public goods and services, high unemployment rates and social unrest, deep changes in the political party system, and political radicalization were some of the results and side-effects of the remedy provided for the debt-crisis.

It is not the aim of this paper to repeat the existing or present a new version of critique of the imposed remedy for the Greek post-crisis economy and society.¹² Much more my interest is to present and discuss the *deep structure* of dominant narratives on the *causes* of the Greek debt-crisis and its remedies, especially of those based on a form of thinking known in the past by its detrimental effects on human beings: *ethnic thinking* or *völkisches Denken*, which relates the debt-crisis in a causal way with an alleged, more or less permanent, Greek *national character*.

In this sense, the main task of this investigation was to describe and explain two consecutive processes: the first is the rebirth of *völkisches Denken* in Europe, especially in Germany, almost seventy years after this type of discourse was abandoned as a result of the military and political defeat of its main agent and proponent, the regime of *National Socialism*. The central question here is to locate and document the *commonalities* between the reasoning of a theory (or ideology) about national or ethnic collectivities, as we know it from the recent past in the form of institutionalized anti-Semitism or, almost two hundred years ago, as academic anti-Hellenism,¹³ and the new

¹¹ European Commission, European Central Bank, International Monetary Fund.

¹² There are practically innumerable texts in the Greek and world media through which various forms of such criticism have been expressed. The spectrum of this criticism ranges from ultra-conservative neo-liberal thinking to traditional Marxist capitalism analysis and critique.

¹³ For a report on the continuity of a negative sentiment against the Greeks among German intellectuals, see E. Rondholz, *Anmerkungen zum Griechenland-Bild in Deutschland-Essay* (Das Parlament, Number 35-37/27.8.12) (<http://www.das-parlament.de/2012/35-37/>)

forms of *ethnic thinking* emerging in Europe and transplanted into Greece during the course of the recent Greek debt-crisis. This type of thinking and its proponents conceive of social phenomena as the results of action of *ethnic collectivities*, whereas the action itself is thought to be the empirical indicator of the *soul* of the collectivity, or its *national character*. Although the word “race” does not appear any longer in the discourse, its equivalents, “ethnicity” or “folk,” stay for a collectivity with a high degree of mental and behavioral homogeneity, of similar “mentality” and “action.” In effect it is a new, post-modern form of racism without *race*.¹⁴

The second and supplementary process which captures my investigative interest is the migration of ethnic thinking concerning the Greek debt-crisis from its homeland, which is North Europe, to the society which is in the epicenter of the crisis: Greece. Are theories of the crisis presented by Greek media a mere reflection, repetition and reproduction of the ones appearing in North Europe, especially in Germany? If this is the case, what is the role of the Greek intellectuals, especially academics, in reproducing and legitimizing ethnic thinking in their own country?

Analysis and Results

Five key elements constitute the basic structure of the dominant narratives about the Greek debt-crisis. These elements are seen again and again in almost any text written by systemic intellectuals¹⁵ whose articles are published in the German newspapers mentioned above –from economists like Hans-Werner Sinn, Jens Weidmann, Thilo Sarrazin and Jürgen Stark up to publicly not known or anonymous readers and commentators of these articles in the same or in other newspapers– with the purpose of describing and explaining the Greek debt-crisis and of proposing remedies for it.

The first one, which I might call “*collective representations*,” has to do with the language used to describe and explain the crisis. The language of collective representation invents *collective agents* (e.g. “the Greeks”), recognizes collective responsibility for social phenomena, underlines collective traits, such as “national characters”, and opts for a collective fate. The main forms this thinking takes express themselves in “truths” like the following:

Beilage/008.html). For a recent study on *Bild's* anti-Greek communication policy after 2009, see H.-J. Arlt, W. Storz, *Drucksache “Bild”-Eine Marke und ihre Mägde. Die “Bild”-Darstellung der Griechenland-und Eurokrise 2010* (Frankfurt/Main 2011).

¹⁴ From the viewpoint of a classical racist theorist, like Rosenberg (*Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*), the alleged homogeneity of (ethnic) collectivities is based on “blood.” The words “race” or “blood” are still considered not to be politically correct in present Europe. Therefore a cultural indicator (“mentality”) replaces the biological ones (blood, genes), making it possible for the proponent of modern racism to be de facto a racist, without running the danger of being accused as a traditional racist.

¹⁵ The expression “systemic intellectual” refers to academics and other intellectuals who adopt the reasoning of the global economic system emerging after the collapse of the traditional bi-polar world towards the end of the 80s, either as a necessary evil or as a progressive step in the history of humanity.

- *Greeks lived beyond their capacities,¹⁶ and this led to debts.*
- *Greeks cheated Europe¹⁷ for money which they did not deserve*
- *Greeks do not work as much as other peoples in Europe, and therefore they are depending on others' help in order to keep the present living standard.¹⁸*

The second element, which one may call “*the justice of national state economies in competition,*” has to do with a view of the world as a set of national state economies in competition, and therefore eventually in conflict. Competitive economies prevail over weak ones, in a Darwinian sense. Peoples deserve the standard of life the state economy can sustain. Therefore, people in weak state economies deserve a low life standard, whereas people in strong and competitive economies deserve the opposite. The most striking representation of this element of the discourse on the Greek debt is the notion that the Greek crisis is essentially home-made, with the global (and European) system only reacting to a problematic situation which it has not created or shaped. As a result, cutting public expenses, making work force cheaper, selling public wealth and diminishing the public sector are considered as necessary steps for Greece to become a healthy and competitive economy.

The third element, which might be called “*remedy through loans for reforms,*” refers to the relation between loans to be given to Greece and the legislation to be introduced in Greece through majorities in the parliament, in order that the economy becomes market-friendly. The most characteristic expressions of this element are the words “*saving*” and “*package,*” used by commentators to refer to the loans given to Greece under the condition of new legislation and its implementation dictated by the special external creditors. According to this reasoning, if Greeks do not accept the only possible remedy to the present crisis, they must be ousted from the European Monetary Union and from the European Union, otherwise the problem is going to perpetuate

¹⁶ The German economist, politician and author of the ambiguous bestseller *Deutschland schafft sich ab. Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen* (München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2010) T. Sarrazin brings this point in a typical way in his article “*Griechen, Euro und die deutsche Schuld*” published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/gastbeitrag-von-thilo-sarrazin-griechen-euro-und-die-deutsche-schuld-11788263.html>). Sarrazin discourse about “mentalities” and “genes” refers not only to the Greeks, but also to the Jews. For a critical analysis of this discourse see E. Sicher, *Race, Color, Identity. Rethinking Discourses about “Jews” in the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), pp. 257 ff.

¹⁷ The “cheating Greeks” was the image the German journal *Focus* conveyed in early 2010 (*Focus* 20.2.2010) with its editorial “*Betrüger in der Eurofamilie*” (http://www.focus.de/magazin/videos/focus-titel-betrueger-in-der-euro-familie_vid_15672.html). More than three years later, the same journal brought in an article written by Markus Voss and titled “*Warum die Griechen immer anders rechnen als ihre Geldgeber*” the same image of the Greeks ready to embark on their cheating habit (http://www.focus.de/finanzen/news/staatsverschuldung/statistik-tricks-und-reformstau-warum-die-griechen-immer-anders-rechnen-als-ihre-geldgeber_id_3425068.html). In both cases the description refers to the collectivity “the Greeks.”

¹⁸ In Rosenberg’s description of the Jews the trait of “parasitic life” is of central value. See Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, pp. 461 ff.

itself and other Europeans will have to pay the bill in a permanent “save-the-Greeks” condition.

The fourth element, which one might call “*the postulate of mentality adaptation*,” is focused on the past, present and future way of thinking of a collectivity, in this case the Greeks, relating it to the crisis through a cause-effect link. There are several varieties of this element in the dominant narratives. Although the key word in the narrative is the term “*austerity*,” the two “truths” one often meets in the texts mentioned are the following:

- *Greeks have to learn to live within their capacities.*
- *There is no obligation for any European country or from Europe itself as an institution to pay in order for the Greeks to have a high living standard which they do not deserve.*

The last key-element of the discourse, which can be called “*past revisionism*,” has to do with reconstructing the image of the past in favor of a picture legitimizing the austerity measures of the present. The characteristic term for this element is the word “*party*” in which the Greeks as a collectivity are supposed to have participated in the past, before the crisis emerged. And the most striking language for this element is the expression “*the party is over*.” This phrase implies that, in the past, Greeks participated in a party, but now the party is over and they have to clean the mess by themselves as a necessary punishment for their “Balkan” mentality.¹⁹

Ethnic Thinking and the Role of the Intellectuals

Postmodern national state democracies in a world dominated by the power of the global finance markets are, in fact, oligarchies which must appear as the implementation of the free will of their citizens in order to have a minimum political legitimacy. The global forces of economy and technology cannot be ignored as the main shapers of the domestic policy of (externally) democratic states with relatively weak influence on the global economic power interaction. Global finance markets demand market-friendly ruling elites in national state democracies and they usually have them, at least in present Europe.

The main instrument of gaining political support for market-oriented political parties and their policies is a successful information and communication strategy, where social reality is distorted and turned upside down. The interests and the demands of the global agents have to be ideologically transformed into public –that is, national– interests on the domestic level. The market-oriented reforms have to be presented as the only rational way to a

¹⁹ The element of *punishment* is central in the management of the Greek debt-crisis. This is also true for the narratives on the remedy of the same crisis. The ousting of Greece from the European Monetary Union has been proposed by several intellectuals and politicians as a solution to the problem. See <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/debatten/kapitalismus/stabilitaet-vor-volksentscheid-der-schamfleck-ist-die-geldverachtung-11532097.html#Drucken> and http://www.focus.de/finanzen/news/staatsverschuldung/die-griechen-wahl-beseitigt-keine-probleme-haetten-wir-die-griechen-doch-rausgeschmissen_aid_768894.html as typical examples.

functioning and just democracy. It is exactly in this domain of information policies and reality construction where intellectuals seek a role to play: either in legitimizing the reforms or in deconstructing their ideological basis. There is also a third way for intellectuals to go: the option of silence and non-involvement. With the exception of silent and inactive intellectuals, the rest of them talk, write and act. They participate in the discussion and are agents of action. Some of them are narrative creators, and others are engaged in policy decision making.

Discussion means *text production* of any form and a typical social group for text production are the intellectuals. There are changes made through time in the role of the intellectual as a figure of *valid talk* about the past, the present and the future. In modern times, intellectuals are not restricted to the few influential thinkers –scientists, artists, philosophers– that they used to be in the past. On a national state level, there is a wide range of intellectuals producing texts every day. There are also numerous globally established intellectuals who may exert influence on the citizens of a national state. Yet intellectuals play a role in educating the citizen through their text producing activity. In this sense, intellectuals have not disappeared, but quite a few have, rather, adapted to the cultural code of the new, emerging global order.

There are at least four different strategies to be observed among Greek intellectuals –academics, journalists, artists, politicians– as a reaction to the situation created in the country after 2009. The first one is the *reform strategy*. Its proponents hold that the country needs reforms badly and the crisis is an opportunity for the implementation of delayed reforms, which could not be initiated without external pressure on the Greek political system. This stream of thinking accepts, more or less, the theory of a home-made debt-crisis, reconstructs the past as an “expensive party” in which all Greeks participated, disseminates responsibility to the whole collectivity and sees unpleasant side-effects of the remedy as an inevitable evil: as the necessary social and individual pain before the recovery. They usually welcome the external pressure exerted by the creditors upon the government and they support the implementation of the reforms dictated by the creditors. In some of its forms, this strategy incorporates a theory about the nature of the Greeks,²⁰ especially in explaining the reasons of the crisis and the reaction to the remedy.

The second strategy is the *resistance strategy*. Its proponents²¹ see the crisis as a result of an interaction between an aggressive finance capital and a failed economy of a country run by a corrupt, self-centered and ineffective elite. The demands of the creditors are interpreted as a large scale blackmail

²⁰ An inflation of the first person in plural in combination with a verb (such as “we are,” “we did,” “we do,” “we must do” etc.) is a characteristic indicator of assuming or implying collective responsibility for the structure and the function of the political, economic and social system now and in the past.

²¹ Resistance to the policies of “*loans for reforms*” may come from ultra-conservative or openly nationalist intellectuals as well as from intellectuals of the left who do not oppose a global frame in general, but reject the present form of globalization because of its socio-economic content in favor of a future (socialist) one.

to which the ruling elite will succumb in order to retain its role as intermediary between the external political and economic agents, and the country's wealth and economic assets.

The third strategy is that of *silent disinvolvement*. Either out of opportunism or because of shame and shock, intellectuals do not comment on the crisis, at least not publicly. One of the motives of the *silent intellectual* is the sense of uselessness of any intervention in a situation where external pressure will not stop before any rational or humanistic argument. Judging that neither the creditors' technocrats nor the Greek government and its technocrats will be affected by their knowledge and arguments, they decide to remain silent.

A fourth strategy is that of the *silent collaboration* with the government in the implementation of the reforms, without any public comment on the causes and the remedies of the crisis. It is a strategy which could be thought of as a variation of the first one. The intellectuals adopting it tend to offer technical assistance to the government, but they deliberately do not make a fuss of it, and they expect to get some favorable position in the new world emerging during and after the crisis.

Critical Pedagogy and the Dominant Narratives

Critical pedagogy is about *critical thinking* in the learning process, both conventional and social. It is about reading and understanding messages from various types of transmitters and disseminators. These may be school books, teachers, newspapers, television, internet etc. At the first sight, it is a tendency to build a mechanism of checking the validity of information coming into the person's consciousness. Since in any crisis management there is, on the part of the ruling elite, an interest in producing and establishing friendly narratives to be adopted by the public, there must be an opposite interest on the part of critical pedagogy to arm the individual with the weapon of critical thinking, in order to control the accuracy, validity and scope of the incoming message, and to be able to construct a valid one in its place. Critical pedagogy is a strategy to encounter systemic messages, that is narratives useful for agents representing the interests of economic and political stakeholders, but which are presented as *common public interest* for the collectivity, and are, thus, disconnected from the interests of the agents mentioned. In this sense, critical pedagogy is a systematic way to decompose complex messages into their constituents, deconstruct their fictive validity and create valid ones to counter them. It is a tool to be used by the less powerful to face the formidable weapon of information dissemination made by the wealthy and the powerful, when the latter are interested in gaining the souls of the former. And since, in conventional postmodern democracies, discourse politics have acquired special importance, critical pedagogy may be one of the last pillars of democracy in educating autonomous and critical citizens interested in a more humanistic social order. In this sense, critical pedagogy is an indispensable component of citizenship education.

Concluding Remarks

For the first time in the last seventy years, Greeks as a collectivity are systematically faced with an external portrait of themselves as a nation. This image is, with rare exceptions,²² extremely negative. The fact itself, that others talk about the Greeks and their supposed national character, initiated a new discussion within Greece as to Greek identity: Greeks, not only intellectuals, start again to ask themselves who they are and whether they really are what others project them to be. If one ignores for the moment the traumatic effects of a European, if not global, Greek-bashing, one may consider this tendency for collective introspection as a positive side-effect of the dominant narratives on the Greek debt-crisis. Since the search for the “true Greek” involves his relation to the crisis, the discussion about the Greeks includes a discussion about the causes of the debt-crisis, the responsibility of the political and economic elites of the country as well as of its citizens for it, the role of the finance markets, the future of Europe, the re-emergence of German economic nationalism, the Greek-German past, and the viability of the present structure of the political party system in Greece. The fact that Greek citizens are forced through the shock therapy they have been undergoing since 2009 to discuss the forces, external and internal, which exert an influence in shaping their present and future lives is, perhaps, the only positive side-effect of the economic crisis. The question of whether the same discussion could have been initiated without the debt-crisis and without the narratives about it, is not answerable.

²² To these exceptions belong the articles of former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt in German newspapers on the Greek debt-crisis and its management. See for example his criticism on attempted German hegemony in contemporary Europe. See also his critique on the management of the Greek debt-crisis (<http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/helmut-schmidt-auf-dem-spd-parteitag-der-alte-mann-kann-es-1.1226041-2>). Jürgen Habermas (<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/euro-krise-rettet-die-wuerde-der-demokratie-11517735.html>) and Günther Grass (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1PnvcX4G3c>) belong also to these exceptions as proponents of a non-dominant narrative about the Greek debt-crisis in German media.

The Crisis ‘Out of Its Humour’: Jokes and Caricatures in an Age of Agony

VASSILIS PASCHALIS

Mitis: So, sir, and what follows?

Cordatus: Faith, a whole volume of humour,
and worthy the unclasping.

(Ben Johnson *Every Man Out Of His
Humour*, act 2, scene 2)

Crises do not produce themselves; a crisis does not appear *ex nihilo* and it is not *causa sui* –it is not exempt from causal exegesis, even if it may demand, as it seems to be the case with the Greek Crisis, the whole repertory of Aristotelian four– agents causality system, in order to be explained, in order to determine which modes of corruption were the most pernicious, which forms of cleptocracy became the most devastating.

Crises bring along social evils which can reach the limits of Pharaonic Plagues, (harsh poverty, potential institutional collapse, elimination of rationality in every political thought, nostalgia for tyrannical forms of government); nevertheless, such phenomena may produce positive outcomes, at least in the cases where they lead to a novel, rational, and democratic restart. Last, as well as least, but not necessarily insignificant, such periods *may* trigger significant/respected forms of social consolation (as well as hysterical and socially dangerous ones) and, in such cases, may encourage a proliferation of interesting kinds of humour. Obviously, not all kinds of humour can be deemed so or acquire the positive characteristics associated with cultural phenomena and artistic objects. Thus, humour can be also banal, racist, authoritarian, silly, miserably stereotypical, etc. Or, simply *uninteresting*. This paper attempts a consideration of the concept of humour and its function, especially within such a period, suggesting that the development and proliferation of its best versions may serve as small- dose antidotes to the pernicious ideological strains produced during these times.

In antiquity, the theoretical consideration of humour was predominately (although by no means exclusively) associated with that of the drama form of comedy, and it was not earlier than the 17th century, and especially in the 18th one, that it became the object of systematic study as a most general concept, deserving a consideration independently from its literary formulations. The lack of a unified, generic term such as “humour” (that emanated in the 17th century) makes the correlation of all the theses and the theories that were developed in this vast area since the ancient times, difficult, as the exegetical views may, in fact, focus on different points, and thus, the dialogues may become asymptotic.

Given the above, the object covered semantically by the associated terms (humour, laughter, comic, etc.) was offered philosophical accounts which came in the forms of specific, almost mutually exclusive, “theories,” starting with Hobbes’s dark “superiority theory,”¹ which considered the emotion (“the passion”) associated with joking and laughing as a kind of “sudden glory” of the narrator over the object of the jokes. Humour was equated with ridicule, and found its place in the wider context of cruel social antagonism, signifying a means of looking down on the other, a *sui generis* strategy of aggression, sometimes more painful and intimidating than its bodily, straightforward forms. “Superiority” has had a long history, in the theoretical approaches of the field, and it has been given support on a psychological and biological-ethological basis. A more recent one, by C.R. Gruner, considered aggressive behavior as the ancestral origin of laughter.²

Yet, because the superiority doctrine apparently could not cover several cases, a formidable opponent soon emanated, implementing the term “incongruity” as the key word for the function of humour. This stance, proposed by James Beattie³ and Francis Hutcheson,⁴ imposed criticism to Hobbes’s axiomatic egoism and its consequences, and, in doing so, vindicated even the idea of “ridicule,” which, up to then, had a bad name in both the philosophical circles and, more widely, in the sovereign ideas of society, despite its wide social practice. “The implanting then a sense of ridiculous in our nature,” noted the latter, was giving us [i.e. to the humans] an avenue to pleasure, and an easy remedy for discontent and sorrow.”⁵

Incongruity theory was endowed with the support of Immanuel Kant,⁶ it was gradually accepted by many subsequent philosophers up to now including Soren Kierkegaard, Arthur Schopenhauer, Henri Bergson, et al., and at-

¹ T. Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651; New York: Penguin, 1982).

² C.R. Gruner, *Understanding Laughter: The Workings of Wit and Humor* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1978): “I contend that the Hobbes’s explanation is the most useful for explaining the phenomenon of laughter” (p. 30). “What do editorial satirist/humorists like Art Buchwald and Art Hope do to make us laugh? They just kid the socks of every absurdity in life” (p. 33). This does not mean that superiority theory has won completely the hearts of the members of the psychological and biological community that are engaged in the study of humour. One can consider the different stances of the scholars and researchers in H. Lefcourt, *Humor: The Psychology of Living Buoyantly* (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2001); J. Roewecklein, *The Psychology of Humor: A Reference Guide and Annotated Bibliography* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002).

³ J. Beattie, “Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition,” in *Essays* (London, 1779³).

⁴ F. Hutcheson, “Reflections Upon Laughter,” *The Dublin Journal*, 1725. [See also the discussion by E. Telfer in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 53 (1995), 359-369.] The article was presented in a form of a book as *Reflections Upon Laughter and Remarks Upon the Fable of the Bees* (Glasgow: Daniel Baxter, 1750). A facsimile of the original book has been published by the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1971).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J.C. Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911; original book published 1790), I, I, sec. 54.

tracted the interest of theoretically-minded writers such as Luigi Pirandello.⁷ The theory had already been anticipated by Aristotle, who had suggested that some sort of incongruity lies in the core of several characteristic instances of humor, after discussing the rhetoric power of the metaphors that produce surprise "the effect that is produced even by jokes depending upon changes of a letter or of a word [...] the word which comes is not what the hearer imagined."⁸ And by Cicero (*On the Orator*, ch. 63), who noted that, in the process of humorous witticism, "the speaker violates the expectation he has created,"⁹ as in the commonest form of jokes "we expect one thing whereas another is said; here our own disappointment makes us laugh." In a modern version of this line of thought, "incongruity" becomes associated with the creation of "mental patterns and normal expectations and their subsequent violation" or with certain "deviations from the way things are supposed to be."¹⁰ For Bergson, and this probably is the most interesting part of his thesis on humor, incongruity arises from a peculiar interpretative clash: a situation is "invariably comic" when "it belongs simultaneously in two altogether independent series of events and is capable of being interpreted in two different meanings at the same time."¹¹ Moreover, given the vast variety and the numerous instances of humour, it is doubtful whether the concept of "incongruity" can solely fulfill the role of the essential exegetical element of humour. In a sense, the actual function of incongruity is, to some extent, counterbalanced by a contrasting need for *congruity* with the object of the humorous perception and depiction; for Roger Scruton, the caricature of a political person (in his example that of Margaret Thatcher), can be interesting and humorous "not because it does not fit Mrs. Thatcher but because it does fit her, all too well."¹² Of course, this does not necessarily eliminate incongruity, or some similar concept that could serve in order to indicate that characteristic, initial gap of surprise, associated with the strange, cracking novelty of the verbal or visual approach; for it is the overcoming of this gap (which, in the case of caricature, is equated with

⁷ L. Pirandello, *On Humor*, trans. A. Illiano and D. Tesla (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960).

⁸ Aristotle, *Rhetorics*, 3.2.

⁹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On the Orator*, Book II, trans. W. Sutton and H. Rackham. Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), II, ch. 63.

¹⁰ J. Morreall, "Funny Ha Ha, Funny Strange and Other Reactions to Incongruity," in J. Morreall (ed.), *The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1987), 188-207.

¹¹ H. Bergson, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*, trans. C. Brereton and F. Rothwell (London: Macmillan, 1911), p. 96. The part of Bergson's theory which sees as the source of humor the "mechanical encrusted upon the living" has been, apparently rightly so, criticized. It is when this position is extended and widened, including "habitual" as well, instead of focusing exclusively on the material/mechanical/animal, that becomes more promising. In such a view, Bergson's aim to consider humor as social corrective, helping people recognize behaviours that are detrimental to human ideals, becomes more firmly grounded.

¹² R. Scruton, "Laughter," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Vol. 56 (1982), 197-212, p. 202.

the radically novel, over-simplified, grotesque persona) that produces, when the recognition is achieved, the necessary impetus for humor. But this is a point worth revisiting.

Now the juxtaposition, friction, or antithesis between ideas, expectations, events, experiences, interpretations, etc., tied up with incongruity, produces a characteristic “absurd” meaning, which is the essential core of humour. For the ‘greatest part,’ the juxtaposition is “founded on the contrast of ideas of grandeur, dignity, sanctity, and the like, and the experience of meanness and baseness.” Nevertheless, this move brings incongruity theory towards the field of the “superiority” one, since the essential element in the incongruous contrast is seen as emanating from the devaluation of the perceived subject in the eyes of the perceiver; in fact, in these grey areas, “superiority” theory can be equally considered as “inferiority” theory as well,¹³ and the mechanism of devaluation seems to be established on an Aristotelian basis (in the light of Aristotle’s theory of comedy which, “methodologically” rather than fully ontologically, diminishes the stature of the subject), rather than on a true Hobbesian one, with all its depressive, misanthropic pessimism.

The main difficulty of the superiority theory apparently stems from the fact that it can provide neither enough actual causal grounds for humour, nor much of a *differentia specifica*, which could dissociate it from other instances of devaluation on behalf of the perceiver or the narrator. On the other hand, its enduring significance lies on the presence of the diminutive strain in humour which is so strong and common that, even if it fails to be a universal characteristic, it cannot be easily bypassed in its accounts. Moreover, the variations, modes, degrees, etc., of the diminutive stance can be numerous, and even delicately conceived and executed, and their meticulous consideration can be fruitful for the theoretical understanding of humour. For example, the enjoyment associated with the devaluation not only of persons but also of abstract concepts such as the High/the Ideal/the Otherworldly, etc., (one must, here, necessarily refer to Bakhtin,¹⁴ despite one’s possible disagreement with his theses), or with the recognition of the role that folly (*moria*) plays in social life (a problematique associated, at first glance, with Erasmus, but both pre-existing and outliving him¹⁵), constitutes probably the most recognizable *topos* in the function of humour. In fact, the idea of implementing incongruity as the essential causal basis of humour can be *supplemented*, rather than refuted,

¹³ Now, under the actual caption “inferiority theory,” there exists a specific theory introduced by Robert Solomon who considers as a source of several instances of jokes and witicism, a kind of “self-deprecating humour, based on inferiority or modesty.” “Taking not oneself seriously,” “virtuous modesty or compassion” can be involved in the making of humour. See R.C. Solomon, “Are the Three Stooges Funny? Soitanly!,” in K. Higgins (ed.) *Aesthetics in Perspective* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1996), 604-610.

¹⁴ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. H. Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984). For Bakhtin, “the first step in a grand enterprise of studying the folk culture of laughter.” R. Lachman, “Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture”, *Cultural Critique*, 11 (1988), 115- 152.

¹⁵ Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly (Encomium Moriae)*, trans. C.H. Miller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

by a view in which the "violation of expectation" can easily acquire a diminutive import, as the expectations prove nebulous, absurd, and deceptive. Especially in the vast field of the social and political satire, such cases form a most common and easily recognizable theme, both in their verbal and visual applications.

Therefore, instead of sticking, in the theory of humour, to the image of two contrasting and contradicting theories, the one of which has to survive a gladiator's death at the hands of the other, one, by changing the gestalt perception of their relation, could see in the "superiority" motivation a frequent, and potentially rich (in the respect of the derivative cognitive and emotional/thymic ramifications), *materia prima* of humour which has the potential (yet only that) to be shaped in ingenious forms of jocular "incongruity."

Now, there is the thorny issue of the psychological "telos" of humour. For Morreall, 'instances of humour tend to involve a 'cognitive shift' or 'psychological re-orientation' ("to be amusing, the shift itself needs to take place in a context that is not somehow threatening or painful to the amused person"),¹⁶ and for Hutcheson incongruity "provides *distractions* from negative emotions."¹⁷ Yet, this can neither be a universal characteristic of incongruity, nor can it function *simpliciter*. On the contrary, jocular incongruity can easily cohabit with these sort of emotions, and the result can indeed be complicated: it may smoothen or diffuse the cut or the bolt of aggressiveness, yet it can also turn it into stagnant water, or give to aggressive emotions new outlets, fields, and modes for further cultivation. Kant, who wanted to absolve (the reputation of) humour, saw in the "amusement element of incongruity a strange quasi-physiological process, in which "the lung expels the air at rapidly succeeding intervals, and thus brings about a movement beneficial to health; which alone, and not what precedes in the mind, is the proper cause of gratification in a thought that at bottom represents nothing."¹⁸

Accordingly, the two theories do not necessarily constitute an irreconcilable pair, but rather signify two different elements of humour that do not indicate inconsistent exegetic layers but active factors in its formation. Such factors may intermingle, producing not only everyday instances (jokes), but also cultural and artistic objects (caricatures, cartoons, satirical poems/plays/novels). The vast field of political caricature (which has been characterized by Alfred le Petit as "the art of hate") is obviously saturated with "diminution,"

¹⁶ The psychological *telos* of humour: Morreall, "Funny Ha Ha, Funny Strange and Other Reactions to Incongruity," and F. Hutcheson, *Reflections Upon Laughter and Remarks Upon the Fable of the Bees* [1750] (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2009).

¹⁷ Hutcheson, *Reflections Upon Laughter and Remarks Upon the Fable of the Bees*.

¹⁸ Kant, *Critique of Judgment*: "In everything that is to excite a lively laugh there must be something absurd (in which the understanding, therefore, can find no satisfaction). Laughter is an affection arising from a sudden transformation into nothing" (I, I, 54). Also, W. Hazlitt, "On Wit and Humour," in W. Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Comic Writers*, intro. R.B. Johnson (1818; London/New York/Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1907), 1-35, p. 1: "laughter may be defined to be the same sort [i.e. as tears] of convulsive and involuntary movement."

in every possible form and degree of intensity. The way the various kinds of “incongruity” are implemented could somehow be considered on an analogy with “Darwinian forms of adaptation”; accordingly, they could be seen as aiming at a kind of ‘reality assimilation,’ as peculiar reactions to threats or as means of orientation in order to help or to pursue one’s goals more effectively. Nevertheless, the *telos* ascribed to incongruity can be still open to dispute, since the essence of ‘reality assimilation,’ in this field, is rather vague: incongruity is not simply eliminated or exploited by being turned into something “useful,” since it may be enjoyed as such, for the sake of it, as *incongruitas gratia incongruitatis*.

The kind of meaning that is typically violated in incongruity is that of a first level (therefore devoid of metaphorical extensions or hermeneutical disputes), and its truth is recognized as evident and even as universal on a commonsensical and empirical basis. It is on this basis that the “expectations” can be considered as violated or frustrated, and incongruity and even absurdity can be seen as entering the picture. Therefore the images, with which typical political caricature is rife, may be seen as incongruous and absurd on the aforementioned basis, but not on a wider context or meaning that involves the signification and depiction of moral qualities (rather than simply of physical characteristics), the handling of social metaphors, the allusion to political rumours and narratives, etc. Within such a context, there is nothing uncommon, absurd, or unexpected in the caricatures (like the one by James Gillray, that presented Napoleon and William Pitt holding knives and forks, cutting the globe in slices) which simply solidify simple, stock, everyday, stereotypical and schematic –thus fully expected, at least from a certain point of view– street expressions, characterizations and predications. Maybe the element of incongruity here is identical with the unexpected peculiarity arising from the passage to a radically different means of expression, such as the visual one. What is accepted, in the field of ordinary and colloquial language as run of the mill, it becomes peculiar, incongruous, or even weird when it shifts into the field of visualization. Despite the apparent “expressionistic” style of its *personae dramatis*, which may give the impression that this art is under the permanent spell of irrational passions, caricature meticulously and thoroughly studies the function of the passage from the one field to the other, and can apply it succinctly, carefully, and, somehow, in cold blood. The results can be of various degrees of success or failure (unfortunately, at least in everyday life, the viewer’s assessment of the quality of a caricature cannot be easily dissociated from the affection or antipathy towards the political opinion expressed in it), yet this is a major source of the artistic achievements of this art.

“Incongruity” is an extremely wide term, involving a plethora of techniques which aim at creating unexpected sequences, playful substitutions of words or objects, irrational treatments of a theme, etc. All of these techniques become acquired skills of the art of the fun making (the study of caricature leads smoothly to the perception of the general view of the art) and are implemented with varying forms of dexterity, on behalf of the cartoonist. For example, in a cartoon by D. Zervos (*Eleftherotypia*, 31/7/13) an equestrian G.

Papandreou, wearing a Napoleonic "hat" that has the actual form of the building of the Greek Parliament, and having, a la Buonaparte, one hand behind his jacket, is shown leaving a battlefield, where grey-suited 'soldiers' are still killing civilians. The caption reads: "The famous Memorandum Battle: the army leader Napoleon Vonandreou, heading only 158 MPs, vanquishes the hordes of pensioners, working people, and women and children who were threatening their kingdom."

For the cartoonists of the Left and of the wider anti-memorandum front (the latter, in certain cases, can encompass even papers typically belonging to other side of the political spectrum), the associations with the World War II constitute natural, stock sources of reference. The symbol of the swastika then becomes the general sign for all kinds of policies and practices which are seen as synonymous with extreme forms of exploitation, injustice, and authoritarianism. In a 27/3/2013 caricature published in the *Ephemerida ton Syntakton* (*Reporters' Newspaper*), Schäuble, standing next to Merkel and Langerde, is relaxing on large cushions which in fact are super-sized bed pillows (which bear the names "Deutsche Bank," "Bundessbank," and "IMF" respectively), holding a Nazi flag as a warming blanket on his feet. Langerde remarks decisively: "Security of bank accounts is over! Now everyone will keep the money in his pillow." Stathis, another Greek cartoonist, equally partisan in his views, quite regularly presented the representatives of the "Troika" and of the German Government as the natural heirs of the Third Reich. Therefore, the name of a German official appears split up (as Reich/enbach), while Nazi officers are shown playing with their marionettes, who are well known Greek politicians.

Caricature's targets are not limited to concrete persons; its approach of the socio-political field is much wider, and it can aim at entities which allow for various degrees of abstraction. It is expected that, in the caricature with a strong ideological charge, the attack on general concepts representing the ideology of the opponent is much more common; yet, this rule of thumb depends heavily on the historical period and the concrete political situation. Inevitably, there is no "school" of caricature that is immune from this trend, and there is no evil, whatsoever, in caricature following this path. The dangers can be associated with the perennial over-simplification that is part and parcel with this art, but even this is not enough for condemnation, since it can be considered as an element of its establishing *convention*. Moreover, the assessment of the possible hazards caused by caricature depends on its actual objects; the real problems arise when the suppression of the most basic social and human rights are given a humorous vindication, and when truth is severely and irreversibly violated.

Basing its force and its ability to convince partly on the constant repetition of certain strong schematic images that signify universal or abstract entities, political caricature employs most of them as targets of antipathy and derision, and a selected few as objects of adulation, which, in certain cases, acquires the form of a characteristic, jocular manic-laudating bi-polar, which becomes an essential part of the cartoonist's style. In the work of Giannis Kalaitzis,

probably the most recognizable of the Greek exponents of this “school” of caricature, the “Troika” appears as an enormous, aggressive, three-headed Cerberus dog, which either attacks directly or offers guard services, while abominable acts of cruelty are performed by others (usually Greek or European politicians). In a 2011 (20/10) cartoon published in the *Eleftherotypia*, the “dog” cries enthusiastically, “Kill the fatted calf, here comes the prodigal son,” looking joyfully at the direction of the approaching Greek Prime Minister, who gloriously enters the Summit of EEC, while Merkel is ready to slaughter Greece, who is presented as a pitiful reincarnation of Miss Piggy from the Muppet Show. In another cartoon by the same artist, a poor fellow is offering a sort of public confession of his sins: “Yes, I caused the crisis! I destroyed the economy! I led the country into debt!,” and soon, an enormous giant, named «Προϋπολογισμοσμέρκελ» (Budgetmerkel) calls the three leaders of the Government (depicted in the para-military gear of the “tsoliades,” traitors who had been in the service of the Nazi Occupation forces) to come and get him.

Because of her crucial role in the handling of the Crisis and in imposing the austerity measures, the German Prime Minister Angela Merkel became a stock point of reference, of Greek, and also of non-Greek caricaturists. Judging by the frequency with which she appeared in their works, one could reckon that, in a sense, she became a peculiar kind a *persona grata*, despite the critical approach expressed to her political theses. Merkel was assigned a clear-cut and specific role, that of a powerful and bullying dominatrix, and her looks and physique were exploited to offer an image of a humourless matron with a lingering East German taste, regarding dressing and hair styling. Peter Brooks (*Times*, 15/9/11) presented a scene of parody weight-lifting with Merkel attempting, along with other two “athletes” to lift the Euro: as the others are Sarkozy and George Papandreou, Merkel appears easily lifting them as well, along with the actual weight. In a 2011, parody of the musical film *Grease* (due to the obvious pun, this term had been associated with Greece since the early 19th century caricatures of the “Eastern Issue” and the Revolution), Sarkozy is given the role of John Travolta, and appears holding Merkel –an updated version of Olivia Newton John– in his hands. Molotov bombs are shown exploding all over the place like fireworks threatening the romance of the pair who sing, in a mock version of the original film song, “Summer hating/ it happened so fast, summer hating/ I hope it won’t last.” In some other editorial cartoon by (Peter Brooks, 31-7-12), showing a scene from a Beach Volleyball game, the winning athlete, i.e. Angela Merkel from the rear, makes a sign with two of her fingers. A note explains the “Rules of the game”: two fingers means blocking your opponents and telling them to go take a running jump.

A considerable number of caricatures involve images of Temples in ruins or broken statues which, going beyond the typical role as referents to Ancient Greece and its culture, have also become, in the hands of some cartoonists, stereotypical indicators of modern Greece’s catastrophe. In one of them, published in the *Times* (5/3/2011), a notice-board indicating “For Sale” has ap-

peared in the Parthenon, stating also "Excellent location/needs work/call George Papandeu in the telephone number..." In a cartoon signed by B Lower (*Daily Telegraph*, 19/6/11) Merkel and Sarkozy support, as Caryatids, the collapsing Parthenon which bears the inscription "GRANDIOS/PROFLIGATOS/SKINTOS/AUSTERITOS/ ZEUS HELP US." Again, a furious battle scene between special police forces and demonstrators appears carved in the pediment of the Temple. The basic pattern is found in an editorial cartoon by Tim (*The Independent*, 12/2/10), in which a broken, limbless female Museum statue tells the astonished viewer who has a paper in his hand writing about "Greek Crisis," "It will cost an arm and a leg."

At the beginning of the crisis, European editorial cartoons, especially the ones of the popular and tabloid papers were blaming "the Greeks" exclusively for the Crisis (without much need for further qualifications). As time, as well as austerity measures proceeded, and the consequences became all the more apparent, there was a considerable change, at least in some part of the press, and, luckily enough, in that of the best quality. In a 2011 cartoon which indicates some signs of sympathy, the "Debt Doctor" is applying "Methods of Austerity" by injection to a Greece who is screaming with pain. Meanwhile, the nurse, asking the waiting patients –Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Ireland– "Who'd like to be next?," cannot get an answer, since they, terrified, are pointing to each other (*The Economist*, 2/7/2011). In another editorial cartoon from the *Times* (Morten Morland, 10/3/12), a personification of the Greek People in the form of "tsolias" (more infrequent nowadays outside Greece, but extremely common up to some decades ago) is being hit, under a schematic Temple entitled "Greek Crisis," by successive, pendulum balls (as in well-known toy) which bear the indications "Market panic," "Euro," "EEC," "Rescue Deal." In another one, about a year later (Martin Rowson, *The Guardian*, 11/2/2012), Barroso is removing the last piece of flesh remaining on the bones of a lying skeleton, while Merkel is awaiting with the plates as a waitress to serve the awaiting clients. The gradual change of attitude has become obvious.

Caricature was not born to render justice; it can attack tyrants, injustice, and the corrupt, yet, at least occasionally, it may get it all wrong. Moreover, tyrants and the corrupt have had their own friendly cartoons. Yet, caricature can indicate the lack of justice in a most characteristic, ingenious, and spirited way, and its idiom can distill, intensify, cultivate, or mirror the vernacular of the public sentiment at its best. And, at least at its luckiest moments, the voice of this art can acquire something of the irony and the stochastic tone of a poet's voice: "Θεοί μεγάλοι, της Ασίας προστάται, βοηθήστε μας!" ("Great gods, protectors of Asia, come to our aid!"¹⁹).

¹⁹ C.P. Cavafy, *Selected Poems*, trans. and intro. A. Sharon (London & New York: Penguin Classics, 2008).

PART XII

Greece in Crisis

National Crises and Self-Awareness in Modern and Contemporary Greece

ATHANASIA GLYCOFRYDI-LEONTSINI

I. Introduction

Nations are both political and cultural entities; they are constituted by people that have an identity as members of a community related to their shared traditions, history and common destiny in a certain region. According to Benedict Anderson, the nation is ‘an imagined political community’; this view is related to Eric Hobsbawm’s ‘invention of the tradition,’¹ and both are related to the ideology of nationalism, spread out in the middle of the 19th century in the Balkans, and most particularly in Greece. During this period, the Greek intellectuals experienced the sentiment of unity in an area that ‘belonged to them,’² a sentiment shared also by the common people as a result of the national awareness caused by the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence (1821). Putting aside the rhetoric of nation-building that was developed during the pre-Revolutionary period,³ the Greek intellectuals –after the establishment of the Greek State in 1828, and from the 19th century onwards till the middle of the 20th century– dealt with the nation’s solidarity and its future welfare, as well as with ways to enforce national identity and ideology, especially before or after national crises.⁴ These Greek intellectuals related national identity to the notion of the continuity of Hellenism and its mission in the world,⁵ whereas they also argued in favour of the view that Greece could act as a bridge that unites East and West. They developed, therefore, a rhetoric that continuously repeated the importance of the humanistic values of Greek culture and stressed the relation of modern Greece to the heritage of the past,

¹ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: New Left Books, 1983), and E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

² A. Karathanassis, *I trisimi enotita tou ellinismou, Archaïotita-Byzantio-Neos Ellinismos [The Tripartite Unity of Hellenism. Antiquity-Byzantium-Modern Hellenism]* (Thessaloniki, 1985).

³ R. Clogg, “Sense of the Past in Pre-Independence Greece,” in R. Sussex - J.D. Eade (eds.), *Culture and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Eastern Europe* (Columbus Ohio: Slavica Publishers, Inc., 1985), 7-30.

⁴ A. Glycofrydi-Leontsini, “Enlightened Intellectuals in Modern Greek Society,” *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms*, 2 (1997), 400-404, and R.D. Argyropoulos, *Les intellectuels grecs à la recherche de Byzance (1860-1912)* (Collection Histoire des Idées 1, Athènes: Institut de Recherches Néohelléniques-Fondation Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 2001).

⁵ L.M. Danforth, “The Ideological Context of the Search for Continuities in Greek Culture,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 3 (1984), 53-87, and A. Vacalopoulos, “Byzantium and Hellenism: Remarks on the Racial Origin and the Intellectual Continuity of the Greek Nation,” *Balkan Studies*, 9 (1968), 101-126.

which survived in the West, trying to secure its roots and place in modern Europe.

A similar nationalistic rhetoric has been developed in the 20th century, when the Greek state and nation experienced the national crisis that followed the tragic historical events of the so-called ‘catastrophe’ of 1922, related to the effects of the failed Greek military campaign in Asia Minor and the conflagration of Smyrna;⁶ following these tragic events, the Greek intellectuals, disappointed and motivated by a sentiment of frustration and despair, united their attempts to redefine national identity and produced two tendencies, a nationalistic one, that tried to define the notion of Greekness, and a universal, both expressed in their philosophical and literary writings.

In more recent times, that is in the second half of the 20th century, philosophers, who had a strong sociological background, such as Panagiotis Kondylis (1943-1998) and Kostas Axelos (1924-2010), had written essays on the crisis of modern Greek society in which they refer to the crisis of the bourgeois civilisation, for lack of rationalism, and excessive Hellenocentrism as well as for its Western orientation.⁷ They dealt mostly with the problem of civic life and culture, also discussed by the political philosopher and psychoanalyst Cornelius Castoriadis, although the crisis of the modern society was not particularly connected by him with modern and contemporary Greece; all of them argued that the post-modern crisis is a crisis of values, culture and institutions, and examined generally the effects that this crisis had upon the state, the individual and the society, connecting it with the evils of the capitalistic economy. Castoriadis (1922-1997), in particular, has analyzed the European crisis in terms of economy, politics and social degeneration. In his 1992 essay “The Crisis of Modern Society,”⁸ and later, in his “The Crisis of Western Societies,” he referred to the political ignorance and apathy of late Western modern societies towards the importance of education and culture.⁹

⁶ See M. Llewellyn Smith, *Ionian Vision. Greece in Asia Minor 1919-1922* (London: Hurst Publishers, 1998), and R. Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 105ff.

⁷ Kondylis and Axelos published essays after the 60’s on the crisis of Modern Greek society that have been re-published on the occasion of the outbreak of the recent economic crisis in Greece; in these essays they present several arguments for modern Greece’s failure to become a truly modern country. See P. Kondylis, *The Causes of the Decline of Modern Greece* (Athens: Themelio Publishers, 2010), and K. Axelos, *The Fate of Modern Greece* (Athens: Nefeli Publishers, 2010). For a discussion of their views, see K. Rantis, “Neither Fate nor Decline: The Crisis of Modern Greek Society in Kostas Axelos and Panagiotis Kondylis,” in this Volume.

⁸ C. Castoriadis, “The Crisis of Modern Society,” in D.A. Curtis (ed.), *Cornelius Castoriadis Political and Social Writings*, Vol. 3: 1961-1979 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 106-117.

⁹ Cf. C. Castoriadis, “The Crisis of Western Societies,” in *The Castoriadis Reader*, trans. and ed. D.A. Curtis (London: Blackwell, 1997), 253-266. First published as C. Castoriadis, “La crise des sociétés occidentales,” *Politique Internationale*, 15 (1982), 131-147, and the English translation by D.J. Parent, “The Crisis of Western Societies,” *Telos*, 53 (1982), 17-28.

But how is it possible in the terms presented above to assess the recent economic crisis that has recently gravely affected Greece and other countries in Southern Europe? Is the current crisis a crisis of consumerism and state institutions, or an essentially political crisis? Is it merely a debt crisis and not a political crisis? Is it fair to insist –as external and internal voices did, such as the officials of the European Community and the Greek politicians of the previous ‘pro-memorandum’ coalition government (from 2012 till January 25, 2015)– that we should “re-establish” the state by eliminating the welfare state, violating, thus, basic human rights, and weakening the democratic institutions? Which is the role that the intellectuals should play in the forging of this attitude towards the new ‘ideology,’ advocating the “re-making of the New Greece” that has recently been developed by the pro-crisis rhetoric of politicians and other neo-liberal centers, who had adopted this slogan and implemented policies that often violated European laws and human rights? In what follows, I will discuss some issues related to the above mentioned crises, faced and discussed by Greek intellectuals in the 19th and 20th centuries.

II. Hellenism and the Romantic Self

The Modern Greek state, from its foundation (1828) until today, has gone through many crises –political, national, economic, ideological, cultural, and moral– that have marked its history, tested its institutions, and defined its political and cultural life. For two centuries, the existence of the Modern Greek state has been polarized, and has been in a status of constant tension, in an effort to reform the political system and its institutional framework, which especially affects its intellectual and everyday life. During the various crises that have tested the endurance of the Modern Greek state and the resistance of the Greek people, the role of the intellectuals has been particularly important. They sought ways to escape crises, and developed their own rhetoric and narrative that seek to overturn the crises experienced through a period of time. They tried to redefine their value system, to establish and renew institutions, to abandon desires and national expectations, by always raising the awareness of the national self and the importance of Greek identity, history and culture, and insisting on the Greek particularity.

The creation of steady institutions and the building of a solid national identity marked the Greek 19th century. During this period –and within a complex and long-lasting web of ideological, historical and cultural processes– the meaning of the nation and its unified contribution to the history of humankind was born, a notion first developed by J.G. Herder (1744-1803), who had exercised a strong influence on Greek intellectuals.¹⁰ The idea of the nation and the Greek community¹¹ led to the cultivation and development of the

¹⁰ Cf. generally, I. Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978), and in particular, C.T. Dimaras, *Neoellinikos Diafotismos [Neohellenic Enlightenment]* (Athens: Hermes, 1977), pp. 283-299.

¹¹ P.M. Kitromilides, “I idea tou ethnous kai tis ethnikes koinotitas stin elliniki istoriografia” [“The Idea of the Nation and National Community in Greek Historiography”], in

nationalist ideology that prevailed throughout the 19th century, and was adopted by philosophers, historians and intellectuals, who supported the creation of new nation-states. Undoubtedly, the formation of Modern Greek identity in the 19th century was linked to issues pertaining to nationalist ideology, and to the historicity of the Modern Greek state. Herder's conception of national cultures, linked to both geographical area and climate, highlighted the existence of the national culture and spirit, expressed through that culture. This comprised a theoretical construction that was adopted by the national schools of philosophy and historiography. In the case of Modern Greece, nationalist ideology contributed to the creation of a sense of unity and to an attempt to expand the political, ideological and intellectual paths of the nation, which, prior to the Revolution of 1821, had developed a rhetoric of reconnecting Modern Greece with Antiquity, and strengthening national consciousness and historical memory, in conjunction with the increasing turn of modern Greeks towards the West.

The formation of the Modern Greek State was the product of the historical junctures and the conflicts between the Great Powers in the Balkans. In the broader Greek world, a debate emerged in early 19th century, between the pro-Europeans and those who denied the West. In this debate, Adamantios Korais (1748-1833), the main representative of Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment, took an Aristotelian middle way, arguing that Greece's position lay amongst the advanced European countries and that, with their help, his homeland could become an autonomous and democratic State, providing proper education, freedom and equality to its citizens.¹² In parallel, Korais thought that the Greek nation had to achieve familiarity with its ancient heritage, so he tried to render text editions and classical scholarship widely available to the Greek readership.¹³ The same rhetoric was adopted by other Modern Greek intellectuals, who stressed the importance of Greek classical education for the development of Modern Greek consciousness, as well as the importance of enlightened Europe in their efforts for the regeneration of the modern Greeks. The creation of the new Greek independent state, which signified the appearance of a new consciousness and adjustments to the elements that comprised national identity, and especially customs, language and historical memory, was associated with the new political organization of the Greek people, as well as with the identity crisis brought on by the rupture of the nation with its roots in the long Ottoman Rule period. Most certainly, the contribution of European ideo-

Istoriografia tis neoteris Elladas 1833-2002, Vol. I (Athens: Kentro Neoellinikon Ereunon/Ethniko Idryma Ereunon, 2004), 37-52.

¹² Cf. *Mémoire sur l'état actuel de la civilisation dans la Grèce, lu à la Société des observateurs de l'homme*, par A. Coray, docteur en Médecine, et membre de ladite Société, le 16 Nivose, An XI (6 Janvier 1803) (Paris: 1803; Institut Néo-hellénique de la Sorbonne, Université Paris IV, reproduction 1978).

¹³ Korais has established the *Greek Library* in the early 1800s as an educational project that was directed from Paris in which he has published philosophical and literary texts of antiquity with comments and introductions, considering these editions as valuable for the strengthening of the national awareness.

logical, philosophical, and artistic ideas in the 19th century was of crucial importance for the formation of a liberal spirit within Greece, which reinforced the historical consciousness of the Greeks, and supported the efforts to strengthen the foundations of the state; at the same time, all liberal ideas introduced to Modern Greece had an impact on the intellectual thought and the society, with the Greek language as its means of expression.

More specifically, the Greek intellectuals in the 19th century set the historical and philosophical basis of national ideology, and outlined the theory of the historical continuity and unity of the Greek nation and, alongside this, the historic mission of Hellenism.¹⁴ Historians or historians of philosophy, such as Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, Petros Vrailas-Armenis, Markos Renieris and Konstantinos Kozakis-Typaldos¹⁵ offered a narrative of the nation, and specified the national elements arguing on the continuity and unity of the Greek nation, recognizing the role of Byzantium, which was also emphasized by other intellectuals, such as Alexandros Rizos-Ragavis (1809-1892) and Spyridon Zambelios (1815-1881).¹⁶ Zambelios restored the unity of Hellenism as a historical continuity, recognizing the role of Byzantium, which is the “medieval Hellenism” or “the Roman Empire of the Orient,” to the formation of the modern Greek Self. All of them contributed to the formation of the concept of modern Greek national identity, in an effort to develop the national consciousness of their fellow Greeks, so that they would be aware of their origins, identity and *telos*, responding, in this way, to Fallmerayer’s well-known theory that questioned the descent of the Modern Greeks from the Ancients.¹⁷

Actually, the continuity of the Modern Greek nation and culture, through ancient, medieval and modern times, and its historic mission was underlined in the mid-19th century, among others, by the historian Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos¹⁸ and the philosopher Petros Vrailas-Armenis, in an effort to prove the historical unity of Hellenism.¹⁹ From the perspective of historiography, the works of Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos and Spyridon Zambelios are par-

¹⁴ A. Liakos, “To zitima tis ‘synecheias’ stin neolliniki istoriografia” [“The Question of ‘Continuity’ in Modern Greek Historiography”], in *Istoriografia tis neoteris Elladas 1833-2002*, Vol. I, *op. cit.*, 53-65.

¹⁵ A. Glykofrydi-Leontsini, “Ethnikoi charactires kai istoriki apostoli tou ellinismou sto ergo tou K. Tsatsou” [“National Characters and Historical Mission of Hellenism in the Works of K. Tsatsos”], *Praktika Diethnous Epistimonikou Synedriou “Konstantinos Tsatsos. The writer, the philosopher, the politician”* (Granada 2010), 455-476.

¹⁶ Cf. Sp. Zambelios, *Byzantinai meletai. Peri ton pigon tis neollinikis ethnotitos* [*Byzantine Studies. On the Sources of Neohellenic Ethnicity*] (Athens: Ch. N. Philadelphus, 1857).

¹⁷ G. Veloudis, “Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer und die Entstehung des neugriechischen Historismus,” *Südost-Forschungen*, 39 (1970), 43-90, p. 43ff.

¹⁸ For Paparrigopoulos’ arguments on the historical continuity of Hellenism, see K. Paparrigopoulos, *To teleutaio etos tis ellinikis eleftherias* [*The Last Year of Hellenic Liberty*] (Athens, 1844).

¹⁹ E. Moutsopoulos, “La conception de l’histoire dans la pensée grecque du XIX^e siècle: Paparrigopoulos et Vrailas-Arménis,” *Neohellenika. Annual Publication of the Center for Neo-Hellenic Studies*, 1 (1970), 122-127.

ticularly important; the latter attempted to prove the continuity of Hellenism and saw Byzantium as an integral part of Greek history and thought.²⁰ On the other hand, the causal conception of history, based on the dual scheme of progress and fall, was also discussed by many Modern Greek intellectuals, such as the Heptanesian Georgios Kozakis-Typaldos. In his *Essay on the Progress and Fall of Ancient Greece* he argued for the unity of Hellenism, which, according to him, was religious and political, since it was based upon the community of religion, laws, customs, and ethics.²¹ Generally speaking, the national unity of Hellenism was supported within the context of historicism, which prevailed after 1850 with the promotion of the unity of language, religion, customs, and historical and collective memory, emphasizing the characters of Greek spirit.

On the same topic dealt P. Vrailas-Armenis (1813-1884), a philosopher and politician, born in Corfu, one of the Ionian Islands that were then under British protection. In his philosophy of history, developed between 1835 and 1884, Vrailas tried to prove the historical continuity of the nation, and argued that Greece's historical mission was to transfer Western civilization to the East. Citing geographical space and environment as factors in the achievements of the past, Vrailas mentions time, that is history and the glorious past, as factors that create obligations among the modern Greeks and determine the great mission of the Hellenic nation in the world.²² His article "East and West", published in 1854, was written in the first year of the Crimean War (1853-56) and is illustrative of the political as well as the ideological crisis of the era, which arose with the conflicts between the Great Powers. For Vrailas as well as for other intellectuals of the mid-19th century, the issue of the relationship between East and West was political, and only secondarily cultural. In the above mentioned work, he presented his views on the role of Hellenism, as this resulted from the position of the Greek state on the map and the current historical juncture. He also discussed the historic mission of Greece, Greek civilization serving as the basis of European civilization, and asserted that Greece could act as a "border country" and a balancing factor between East and West. The terms "East" and "West" are used by him as stereotypes in order to establish, through the geographical qualifier, the corresponding civilizations as two diachronic and diametrical different worlds,²³ and to advance

²⁰ Argyropoulos, *The intellectuals Grecs à la recherche de Byzance (1860-1912)*, *op. cit.*, pp. 37ff.

²¹ G. Kozakis-Typaldos, *Peri tis proodou kai tis ptoseos tis palaias Ellados* ["On the Progress and Fall of Old Greece] (Athens, 1839). See also R. Argyropoulos, *I philosophiki skepsi stin Ellada apo to 1828 os to 1922, Anthologia keimenon me eisagogi kai scholia: Europaikis epidraseis kai prospatheies gia mia ethniki filofosia* ["The Philosophical Thought in Greece from 1828 to 1922, An Anthology of Texts with an Introduction and Commentary"], Vol. I (Athens: Gnosis Publications, 1995), p. 20.

²² P. Vrailas-Armenis, "Peri tis istorikis apostolis tou ellinismou" ["On the Historical Mission of Hellenism"], *Corpus Philosophorum Graecorum Recentiorum*, ed. E. Moutsopoulos-A.Glycofrydi-Leontsini, Vol. 4B (Athens, 1974), 351-392.

²³ For this distinction, see G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, Preface by C. Hegel, and Introduction by the translator J. Sibree (New York: Dover Publications, 1956).

the historical role of Hellenism.²⁴ Vrailas expresses his optimism in relation to the progress of the newly established Greek state and believes that Hellenism, due to its special and privileged position between East and West, has a historic mission to reconcile the opposing elements that both represent, achieving, thus, the fulfilment of history.²⁵ Greece's glorious historical past and its contribution to civilization, the historic mission of Orthodoxy, which could facilitate collaboration between Greece and Russia, as well as Hellenism's bonds with Western Christianity and civilization are the terms for the advancement of the new civilization in the East.²⁶ Vrailas believed that the Russophobia of the Westerners was exaggerated, although he characterized Slavism as including "all the non-Greek and Orthodox elements of the East and the North," emphasizing that "Hellenism, except for faith, has Slavism against it both spiritually and socially and with completely different historical elements and in every way opposite," since Slavism is always subordinate to monarchism and absolutism. On the contrary, Hellenism is that which "developed for the first time for its societies' individuality and political freedom, and through all this was created the highest form of ancient civilizations."²⁷ Referring in particular to modern Greece, which was built on Western foundations, he argued that it could promote Western civilization and its values in the East, thus, serving as a unifying and balancing factor between East and West.²⁸ Vrailas, accepting the general principles of progress and providence, which leads historical events to a final end,²⁹ adopts Herder's view, according to which every people participates in its own historical progress and to the historical progress of humanity, according to the law that history itself ordains.³⁰ By relating the historical mission of Hellenism to a secular messianism, within an understanding of the mission of the peoples in the salvation of the world, Vrailas tried to promote its historical continuity and aimed to strengthen the Greek national identity, connecting the historical present with Antiquity and ascrib-

²⁴ See A. Glykofrydi-Leontsini, "Anatoli kai Dysis: Tautotita kai eterotita ston neoelliniko stochasmo tou 18ou kai tou 19ou aiona" [East and West: Identity and Otherness in the Neohellenic Thought of 18th and 19th Century], in K.A. Dimadis (ed.), *Proceedings, 4th European Congress of Modern Greek Studies* (Granada, 9-12 September 2010), Vol. 5 (Athens: European Society of Modern Greek Studies, 2011), 87-104.

²⁵ P. Vrailas-Armenis, "Anatoli kai Dysis" [East and West], *Corpus*, Vol. 4B, 325-336, and "Peri tis istorikis apostolis tou ellinismou" ["On the Historical Mission of Hellenism"], *ibid.*, 351-353.

²⁶ Vrailas-Armenis, "Anatoli kai Dysis," *op. cit.*, pp. 334-335.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

²⁸ Vrailas-Armenis, "Peri tis istorikis apostolis tou ellinismou," *op. cit.*; *Idem*, "O neos politismos paravallomenos pros ton archaion," *Corpus*, Vol. 4B, 303-310, and "Anatoli kai Dysis," *op. cit.*

²⁹ Vrailas-Armenis, "O neos politismos paravallomenos pros ton archaion," *op. cit.*, pp. 390-391; see also P. Noutsos, "I provlmatiki tis istorias ston P. Vraila-Armeni," in *Neoelliniki Filosofta. Oi ideologikes diastaseis ton europaikon tis prossegissson* [The Question of History in P.Vrailas-Armenis. The ideological Elements of Its European Dimensions] (Athens: Kedros, 1981), p. 140.

³⁰ P. Vrailas-Armenis, "Peri ton archon tis filosofias tis istorias" [On the Principles of the Philosophy of History], *Corpus*, 4B, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

ing a functional role to Byzantium. Vrailas-Armenis developed his national, social, and political ideas in a period of ideological polarization, and of intellectual struggles between realism and idealism, positivism and eclecticism, liberalism and socialism. He lived in Corfu, one of the Ionian Islands that were then under British protection, and, from the beginning of the 1840's, he was involved in political activities concerning liberty of thought and liberal Constitution. In particular, he had an active participation in a movement to promote the adoption of the Greek language by the Ionian State, as he was convinced that the Greek character of the Ionians had to be manifested through Greek means of expression.³¹

More specifically, he attempted to define the 'characters of the Greek spirit,' which is distinguished by freedom and is the product of the influence of geographical and environmental factors.³² Emphasizing the glorious historical past of Greece and its impact in the West, he connected the values of the Greek spirit, such as vivid perception and imagination, correct judgment, acuteness and moderation, with Christian religion and argued that, as a result of these elements, Greece belonged to the West. Some years later, after the Unification of the Ionian Islands with the Greek State in 1864,³³ in his treatise *On the Historic Mission of Hellenism (Peri tis istorikis apostolis tou ellinismou, 1871)*, the Corfiot philosopher presented the historic mission of Hellenism once more in objective terms that included, in addition to the natural environment, the material and intellectual achievements of the past. Vrailas, thus, seems to adopt Herder's view that every people participates in the historical progress of humanity according to the law that history itself commands.³⁴

It is also worth noticing that another intellectual, Markos Renieris (1815-1897), in his *Essay on the Philosophy of History (Dokimion philosophias tis istorias)*, published in Athens in 1841 (which was the translation of his essay *Armonia della Storia del'Umanità, 1839*), argued that Modern Greece belongs to the West, and can play a reconciliatory role between East and West. This view is again expressed in his article "What is Greece? East or West?" ("Ti einai i Hellas? Anatoli i Dysis?"), published in 1842,³⁵ some years before the Crimean War, in which Renieris tried to explain the difference between Eastern and Western civilization which lies on the different cultural identities of East and West; i.e. on the notions of *non-ego* and *ego*, or absolutism and individuality, the distinctive characters of these contrasted worlds. He insists

³¹ A. Glycofrydi-Leontsini, "The Reception of Scottish Philosophy in the Ionian Islands during the British Protectorate," in A. Hirst and P. Sammon (eds.), *The Ionian Islands. Aspects of Their History and Culture* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 293-317, esp. pp. 310ff.

³² Vrailas-Armenis, "Peri ton charactiron tis ellinikis dianois" [On the Characters of the Hellenic Mind], *op.cit.*, pp. 395-400.

³³ The Ionian Islands were ceded to Greece when the Bavarian king Otto was deposed in 1863 and replaced by the Anglophile George I.

³⁴ P. Vrailas-Armenis, "Peri ton archon tis filosofias tis istorias" ["On the Principles of the Philosophy of History"], *Corpus*, 4B, *op.cit.*

³⁵ M. Renieris, "Ti einai i Ellas. Anatoli e Dysis?," *Europaikos Eranistes*, 1 (1842), 189-215.

that a synthesis of these elements can be achieved in Modern Greece due to its important geopolitical position, and he is certain that the Greek nation by all means belongs to the West, a view that is expressed by many Greek intellectuals and politicians of this era till the present.³⁶

III. *Ethnocentrism Towards Critical Self-Reflection*

In the late 19th and early 20th century, when the Greek nation was identified with the established Greek State and Hellenism was going through an identity crisis, caused by the transformation of its cultural and political identity, as well as by the language dispute between archaists and demoticists, and the conflict between Hellenic and Roman ideology, a debate arose around the various conceptions of Hellenism. Hellenism's great influence and intellectual aspects were highlighted, and this attitude brought Hellenism conceptually very close to 'Hellenicity' or 'Greekness,' and the political vision of the 'Great Idea' ('Megali Idea') which was coined by Prime Minister Ioannis Kollittis in 1844 and was related closely with the Greek claims on territories in the East. Within the context of the nationalist ideology and the crisis that characterized the historical period, following the Great War and the Asia Minor War, which led to the distraction of Smyrna in 1922 and the ethnic cleansing of the Greek population of Asia Minor by the newly established Turkish State, modern Greek intellectuals went through the post-war crisis and experienced the disappointment caused by the denial of their national expectations. Under the disastrous results of the Asia Minor War, these thinkers embarked upon a profound reflection on Hellenism and its future, meditating on the serious social problems of the present, while at the same time envisioning the future of the Greek nation. As a consequence, this had a preoccupation with issues related again to the unity of Hellenism, its historic mission, and the definition of the term 'Hellenicity' or 'Greekness,' which now became the dominant ideological construction of the Greek identity, by re-examining itself and by re-invigorating classical teaching.

At the same time, the anti-Western Greek nationalist movement began to develop, born from a traumatized and particularly sensitive Hellenocentrism which originated in the denial of Greek hopes by the Western powers to expend in the Orient and their lack of support for national rights. The need for national expansion is expressed by the linguistic reformer Yannis Psycharis, at the end of the 19th century, as he wrote in Paris in 1888: "A nation, in order to become a nation, wishes for two things: to enlarge its frontiers and to create its own literature."³⁷ Following the annexation of the rich agricultural prov-

³⁶ See Renieris-Gennimatas, *Ti einai i Ellas?* (Athina: Roes, 1988). See also Glycofrydi-Leontsini, "Anatoli kai Dysis: Tautotita kai eterotita ston neoelliniko stochasmo tou 18ou kai tou 19ou aiona" ["East and West: Identity and Otherness in Neohellenic Thought of 18th and 19th century"], *op.cit.*

³⁷ Y. Psycharis, *To taxidi mou* ["My Journey"] (Athens, 1888), ed. A. Angelou (Athens: Ermis Publishers, 1971), p. 37, cited in R. Beaton, *An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 65.

ince of Thessaly in 1881, and despite military set-backs and national economic crisis, such as the Blockade by the Great Powers in 1886, the national bankruptcy in 1893, the defeat by Turkey in 1897, the friction with Bulgaria over Macedonia from the 1890's until 1913, events that humiliated Greeks, the Greek state continued to develop the national expansion up to the 1920 through 1922 disaster that followed the Asia Minor War. After this year that put a hold on the expansionist optimism of Greece, one important characteristic of cultural nationalism was developed, combined with a reaction in favor of modernism and the contemporary European spirit, as well as with the pressure exerted for an exclusively national orientation of all forms of intellectual expression relating to Hellenism, and that was the effort to broaden Greek peculiarity. This is what the intellectuals of the Generation of the Thirties were concerned with, that is to define what 'Greekness' or 'Hellenicity' is. The term was forged by Periklis Yiannopoulos, who emphasized the particular character of Greek natural environment and Greek spirit and opened new horizons in poetry and prose as well as in the other arts.³⁸

As it is widely known, after the Asia Minor War, the meaning of 'Hellenicity' or 'Greekness' acquired a particular weight in the literary and in the even wider aesthetic milieu of the Generation of the Thirties, ending up as an ideological precept among the liberal intellectuals and authors of the era, who expressed the fear that Greece would be assimilated and identified with the West. The awareness of the particularity of the Greek spirit becomes, nonetheless, apparent in the interwar period with Giorgos Theotokas' work *Free Spirit* (*Elefthero Pneuma*, 1929), in which he attempts to explore the meaning of the term 'Hellenism' so as to encompass a broader framework of open-minded thinking that identifies Greeks as Europeans. As he noted, "We are to feel, to think, like Greeks of the 20th century, like the contemporary Europeans which we are." Elsewhere, he observes that "the modern Greeks love [...] the West like a great homeland. They don't go to it, as the Turks, the Indians, the Chinese do, like imitators. They go as members of the same family, to take the place that belongs to them within this family." Theotokas argued for the shift from the 'Great Idea' to new ideas, for a need of Europeanization, pointing out:

"After the confluence of so many traumas and catastrophes, the exhaustion of values is natural and should not seem strange or disillusioning to anyone. But we are completely lacking also in the virtues of the soul that will enable the birth of new values and will nourish the high and noble sentiments, the desire to surpass ourselves, the need for the *Idea*."³⁹

Besides that, in an endeavor to tie nationalism and national education to classical antiquity, the Greek liberal government, under Prime Minister Eleftheri-

³⁸ P. Giannopoulos, *Apanta* [Opus Magna], (Athens: Eleftheri Skepsis, 1988), *passim*.

³⁹ G. Theotokas, *Elefthero pneuma* (1929; Athens, 1973); also G. Theotokas, 'Free Spirit', translated from modern Greek with an introduction by S.G. Stavrou, *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*, 2 (1986), 153-200.

os Venizelos, decreed, in 1931, an annual sum of 350,000 drachmas to the Academy of Athens for the translation of classical texts into Modern Greek. Following Korais's educational project, realized in the series of the *Greek Library*, the *New Greek Library* was established, and, in 1934, an edition of Plato's *Symposium* appeared with a translation and comments by Yannis Sykoutris (1901-37), a Greek classical scholar trained in Germany, who, in 1935, published a detailed essay on the history of classical text editions in Greece.⁴⁰

IV. *Self-Awareness and Ideological and Political Crises*

In the mid-20th century, after the tragic events of World War II and the Greek Civil War (1943-1949), there was yet again a preoccupation with thinking around issues relating to the concepts of nation and Hellenism. This was of particular concern to philosophers Konstantinos Tsatsos and Ioannis Theodorakopoulos, who faced new challenges and developments, thanks to geopolitical and economic interests. Both were interested in the historic mission of Hellenism, and explored the relations between Greece and Europe. Ioannis Theodorakopoulos argued that the historical continuity of Hellenism can be seen in the link between antiquity and Byzantium,⁴¹ and also in the Greek spirit which neutralized anything that threatened to make Hellenism extinct. According to him, the coupling of Hellenism and Christianity, the development of a human-centered culture, the love of education and freedom, the idea of patriotism, and the love of history and tradition, were the main characteristics of Hellenism during the foundation of neo-Hellenism, after the fall of Byzantium. Knowledge of the glorious past and the high ideals of justice, virtue, freedom, polity, and beauty, as well as the ideas of individuality and humanity, are characterized as great ideas or 'ideas of life,' and considered as decisive factors for the continuity of Hellenism, but also criteria for the identity of the Hellenic nation, which have influenced Western European political thought.⁴² The Greek spirit, with its specific characters and ideas, especially its love for freedom, democracy and education, has a great impact on humanity and serves as the tool for the building of national identity and self-awareness, as well as for the very existence of Hellenism.⁴³ Similar ideas

⁴⁰ I. Sykoutris, "I 'Elliniki Vivliothiki' tis Akadimias Athinon" ["The Greek Library of the Academy of Athens"], in *Meletes kai Arthra*, 1956, 369-396. Cf. C. Güthenke, "Editing the Nation: Classical Scholarship in Greece, c. 1930," in S.A. Stephens and P. Vasunia (eds.), *Classics and National Cultures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 121-140.

⁴¹ I.N. Theodorakopoulos, "Byzantio kai Neos Ellinismos" ["Byzantium and New Hellenism"], in *To Eikosiena kai o synchronos Ellinismos* [1921 and Contemporary Civilization] (Athina: Oi ekdoseis ton Filon, 1972), *passim*.

⁴² I.N. Theodorakopoulos, *I Ellas os idea. O polemos kai oi ideologies* [Hellas as an Idea. War and Ideologies], (Athens, 1945), p. 6ff., and *Idem*, "To noema tis ellinikis eleftherias" ["The Meaning of Hellenic Liberty"] (Athina: K.S. Papadogiannis Publishers, 1957), pp. 7ff.

⁴³ Theodorakopoulos, "Byzantio kai Neos Ellinismos" ["Byzantium and New Hellenism"], *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

were presented by K. Tsatsos, who believed the nation to be a spiritual entity, not a material one, as he considered the biological and geographical factors to be of secondary importance.⁴⁴ Tsatsos emphasized the Greek origins of Europe, and argued in favor of the common moral, intellectual, and cultural background of Greeks and Europeans, as well as on their common value system. According to Tsatsos, Hellenicity was “what remained unchanged in the depths of our souls from the Homeric era until today [...] the thing that drove the unity, the fundamental identity of Greeks of all eras [...] a bundle of spiritual and, more generally, intellectual traits, from virtues and vices, from gifts to defects, which were expressed through the ethos, the fine arts, philosophy and in religious searching...”⁴⁵ Tsatsos discussed the permanent traits of the Greek spirit, especially by referring to the idea of freedom, which is the very foundation of European civilization, and pointed out the need to promote in the unified Europe of his day the specific differences between the Greek nation and the particular traits of other European peoples. At the same time, he discussed the characteristic traits of the contemporary Greeks, who were distinguished by their ability to overcome obstacles, to be selfless, brave, free and autonomous, and to aspire to the classical ideal of the ‘good and the beautiful’ (καλὸς κἀγαθός; *kalos kagathos*).⁴⁶ He also argued for the historical continuity of Hellenism that consists in the unity of antiquity with modernity through Byzantium and Christianity, and stressed the importance of history which is linked to the existence of the Greek nation as well as with its singularity and its unique place in the world.⁴⁷ These two philosophers of the 20th century shared the same common ethnocentric ideas, mostly idealistic, with thinkers of the 19th century, and considered that Greece occupies an important role in Europe, as it is in the crossroads between East and West, the two cultural worlds that contrasted individualism to collectivism, being affiliated culturally and politically to Western Europe.⁴⁸

V. Society and the Crisis of Modernity

Contemporary Greek intellectuals of the Greek Diaspora, such as Cornelius Castoriadis (1922-1997), also discussed in the late 20th century, the crisis of contemporary civilization, arguing that values had been lost in contemporary capitalist society. Castoriadis located the crisis of modern society in forms of

⁴⁴ K. Tsatsos, *Elliniki Poreia*, [*Hellenic Course*], (Athens: Ikaros Publishers, 1952¹; Athens: Vivliopoleion tis “Estias” I. D. Kollarou Publishers, 1968²), pp. 51-52.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 18ff.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, *passim*. Cf. A. Glycofrydi-Leontsini, “Ethnikoi charactires kai istoriki apostoli tou Ellinismou sto ergo tou K. Tsatsou” [“National Characters and the Historic Mission of Hellenism”], in *Konstantinos Tsatsos. Philosophos, syggrafeas, politicos, Conference Proceedings* [*Konstantinos Tsatsos, Philosopher, Writer, Politician*], (Athens, 6-8 Nov. 2009), (Granada-Athens, 2010), 455-476.

⁴⁷ Tsatsos, *Elliniki Poreia* [*Hellenic Course*], *op. cit.*, pp. 64-67, 80, 76.

⁴⁸ I. Theodorakopoulos, “Ellas kai Europi” [“Hellas and Europe”], in *Filosofia kai Zoi* [*Philosophy and Life*] (Athens, 1976), p. 59, and K. Tsatsos *Ellas kai Europi* [*Hellas and Europe*] (Athens: Genike Grammateia Typou kai Plirophorion Publications, 1977).

social organization, institutions, values and morality, and suggested that people should have a sense of responsibility and should undertake these responsibilities, both individually and collectively.⁴⁹ According to him, “the deep crisis of all institutions is what shows society’s inability to continue to function as it is, hence the need to create new forms of social life.”⁵⁰ Castoriadis spoke generally of the capitalist crisis in Western society, which had led to a crisis of civilization and values. He spoke of the crisis of society and of the people of the, mainly, industrial centers, who live within an impersonal, mass society, alienated and anonymous, passive and indifferent, and exhorts contemporary men and women to wake up from their *narcosis* and to develop autonomy and free will.⁵¹ Society’s deep crisis is due, according to Castoriadis, to the phenomenon of privatization, and, for this reason, a re-evaluation of values and models is required, of autonomous thought and action, creativity and reflection, these last two predicating the moral authority of the self.⁵² Castoriadis also discussed “that which makes Greece” (*Ce qui fait la Grèce*), that is, its specificity, which makes it different from other societies, arguing that this element is “the primary imaginative conception of the world by the Greeks, as expressed in religion and myths,” as well as in the Greek *polis* and democracy, which was very important for the people of ancient Greece.⁵³ As he points out, the Greek specificity is not harmony or moderation, nor the discovery of truth as ‘revelation,’ but the revelation of the non-meaning, and of the being’s existence with the non-being.⁵⁴ He also remarks, some years before the current crisis, that:

“Present-day ‘political’ society is more and more fragmented, more and more dominated by lobbies of all sorts, and this creates a general blockage of the system. Each of these lobbies is indeed capable of effectively hindering every policy that is contrary to its real or imaginary interests; none of them has any general policy; and, even if they had one, they would not have the ability to impose it.”⁵⁵

It is also very important for the human being to be present in all the acts of society and to contribute to its changes,⁵⁶ to be social, and to exit from the private sphere and enter the public sphere.⁵⁷

⁴⁹ D. Ertuğ, “Crisis as an Ideological Problem,” *International Journal of Modern Social Sciences*, 2 (2013), 216-228.

⁵⁰ C. Castoriadis, *To epanastatiko provlima simera* [*The Revolutionary Problem Today*] (Athens: Ypsilon Publishers, 1984), p. 30.

⁵¹ C. Castoriadis, *Synchronos kapitalismos kai epanastasi* [*Contemporary Capitalism and Revolution*], (Athens: Ypsilon Publishers, 1987), p. 265.

⁵² C. Castoriadis, “Anthropologia, Politiki, Filosofia,” *Nea Koinoniologia*, 31 (2000), p. 65.

⁵³ C. Castoriadis, “The Greek Polis and the Creation of Democracy (1983),” in *The Castoriadis Reader*, *op. cit.*, pp. 267 ff.

⁵⁴ C. Castoriadis, *I elliniki idiaiterotita. Apo ton Omiro ston Herakleito. Seminaria 1982-1983* [*The Hellenic Peculiarity. From Homer to Heraclitus. Seminars 1982-1983*], trans. Z. Giataganas (Athens: Kritiki Publishers, 2007), pp. 18, 417.

⁵⁵ Castoriadis, “The Crisis of Western Societies,” in *The Castoriadis Reader*, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

⁵⁶ Castoriadis, *Synchronos kapitalismos kai epanastasi*, p. 265.

VI. *Current European Crisis and Greece's Debt Crisis*

There is no doubt that, within the many different types of crises, ideological, historical, national and political, which caused the discontinuities as well as the mobility of ideas in the West, the modern Greek nation-state, over a period of two centuries, developed and established democratic institutions, and achieved impressive economic growth, resulting in its membership at the European Economic Community and, subsequently, at the European Union. Greece, which moved into its European phase in 1974, after a period of growth and national pride, especially after its numismatic integration, and the successful organization of the World Olympic Games at the beginning of the 3rd millennium, is experiencing, from 2009 onwards, an economic crisis, due to the defects of the current economic system and the internal political inability to deal with fiscal and governmental problems. Due to the crisis of Western Societies and the inability of previous politicians to manage it, Greece and its people face a nightmare situation that is now called debt crisis. After many crises experienced over a period of two centuries,⁵⁷ the Greek state is in danger again and Greek people feel disappointed once again. Despite the fact that many leaders today talk of a New Greece, the cracks in society and the structure of the state are deep, and trust in the democratic functioning of the state is shaken. Greeks are subject to a racist insistence from abroad about the “particularity of the Greeks,” often blamed for being lazy and cunning, and on the root of a crisis which is nevertheless political and global. When reflecting on the historical past of the Greek nation-state, on the struggles of the people and its intellectuals to secure a place for the Modern Greek State on the international map, we can see that history moves in cycles, with continuities and discontinuities. This demonstrates that the future of the nation-state is directly tied to the political, cultural and economic reality, to the historical context of the globalized, neoliberal, international society. If, today, the future of the nation-state seems bleak, at least for small states such as Greece, where state institutions are being weakened alongside a corresponding strengthening of extra-state bodies, what must again be noted regarding the specificity of the ‘Greek state’ within the current European crisis is the need for the strengthening of the national identity, the fertile dialogue between intellectuals and society, so as to address the new challenges in a spirit of freedom and democracy, with faith in the future of the nation-state, and with attempts to strengthen its institutions. Greece has an important political and cultural role to play on the historical stage, not simply because of its geo-political position, but also because it is the country that created institutions and values such as freedom and democracy; it has to fight for its dignity, its place in the world and its European future as an equal member of the United Europe.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 376.

⁵⁸ K. Kostis, *Ta kakomathimena paidia tis Istorias. I diamorphosi tou neoellinikou kratous, 18os-21os aionas* [*Les enfants gâtés of History. The Formation of the Neo-Hellenic State, 18th-21st c.*] (Athens: Polis Publishers, 2013).

The formation of the Greek state had followed a progressive course from the 18th to the 21st centuries, and the crises that Greek people experienced were due to various reasons; we can characterize these crises as ‘historical crises,’ considering them as a real deadlock in the course of a society that could have repercussions for its future.⁵⁹ Crises can cause discontinuities, but also re-evaluations of the standards of a society, and their consequences in the past or the present could provide us with clues to rethink our past and also our present state. On the other hand, they can help the Europeans, people and authorities, to understand that politics should set definite criteria for the well-being of all European people; criteria that are political, ethical, and spiritual, and not merely economic as Adam Smith has indicated, referring to the commercial society of his days.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ E. Moutsopoulos, *Oi istorikes kriseis, Prytanikos logos ekfonitheis tin 2an Dekembriou 1977* [*Historical Crises. Inaugural Rectoral Speech on December, 2, 1977*], (offprint, Athens 1977), 22 pp.

⁶⁰ Adam Smith embedded his political economy in a system of moral philosophy, jurisprudence and politics and in his *Wealth of Nations* comments that, “Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all,” but Smith also realizes that it is the job of philosophers who understand the principles of political economy, to safeguard the public interest by educating their masters. See A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, eds. R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner, 1978, p. 715.

Democracy, Political Autonomy and Crisis: A Democratic-Republican Approach

STEPHANOS DIMITRIOU

This paper sets out to explore the relation between democracy, Enlightenment thought and democratic political self-determination. By the term ‘Enlightenment,’ it is understood the totality of theories that formulate any conception of social and constitutional order, as well as the moral and political values and the normative principles within the frame of the theories of political liberalism and democratic republicanism (Kant, Mill, Rousseau) that could both produce a basis for a normative theory of democracy. This paper will also explore the tension between democratic political autonomy and self-determination, as well as the practice and policy of financial liberalism (libertarianism) in the contemporary fiscal and political crisis in Europe.

In particular, my aim in this paper is, first, to argue that there is an inherent relation between the Enlightenment and democracy, a relation that, as such, surpasses their historical connection. Second, that this aforementioned relation is grounded on both Enlightenment’s and democracy’s specification via Kantian political philosophy and, especially, via those explicitly distinctive Rousseauian influences to the latter. Third, I will argue that this relation between Enlightenment thought and democracy is also a requirement for the implementation of the demand for liberty and equality. In addition, I will also argue that it is not possible to explain the European crisis only as a financial one. It is needed to be dealt with as a crisis of democracy across Europe. This argument makes out a case for incorporating elements of egalitarian political liberal theory into the content of democratic socialism; it also supports the demand for radical changes, and, at the same time, the need for profound and essential social changes that will aim at lifting out the consequences of injustice, exploitation, and the undermining of representative institutions. The main position of this paper is that the relation between the Enlightenment and the public use of speech elevates Aristotelian, Rousseauian, and Kantian political philosophy, as well as the republican elements of J.S. Mill’s democratic theory,¹ to the fundamental normative core of an innovative contemporary democratic theory. A republican theory of democracy –with reference to democratic socialism– could not but aim at the elimination of inequalities and exploitation. It should also seek to harmonize the free will of each with the free will of others, under the light of a universally valid rule of liberty that will have the effect of a general moral law under conditions of equal liberty and autonomy. These conditions will enable the equal political self-determination

¹ N. Urbinati, *Mill on Democracy: From the Athenian Polis to Representative Government* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 47-54.

of the citizens and, therefore, facilitate the satisfaction of the Rousseauian principle of democratic self-determination of the people.

(i) *The Internal Relation between Enlightenment Thought and Democracy*

The relation between Enlightenment thought and democracy is not merely recognized within the historical period of the 18th century over which the social and political terms were set, which led to the overturning of the traditional political institutions, and resulted to the establishment of liberal democratic ones. It is in these terms that the main characteristics of the Enlightenment should be recognized, according to the demands of enlightened deontological liberal and democratic thought. One should also point out the deliverance of thought from the despotic manipulation of traditional authority, the respect of all people as part of the whole of humanity, the virtues of liberty and solidarity as the constitutive principles of political communities, as well as the recognition of equal liberty and autonomy as prerequisites for the reproduction of those communities and the security of their coherence. These basic features are common in Enlightenment thought, and also in the deontological content of democracy. There are those component features that constitute value principles and demands that surpass the particular juncture, under which their historical articulation was made possible. The above define the context within which we are able to understand that the emblematic principle of the Enlightenment—for both pure and practical reason—is the concept of autonomy. It is the concept that expresses the critical content of Enlightenment thought, and leads to the principle of equal political self-determination, as well as to the democratic self-determination of the people as the sovereign subject. Nevertheless, the definition of autonomy—as far as its multifarious outlines are concerned, in particular with reference to the level of social and political organization—is not obvious. For example, should it be seen as an individual or as a collective autonomy, or could the combination the two be plausible? The aforementioned relation between Enlightenment thought and democracy leads towards the third part of this trilemma. The democratic political organization of *status civilis* should not overlook collective autonomy or the social obstacles that obstruct its realization. Besides, individual autonomy, as such, is also in need of a social and political condition that would secure its realization, in order to be historically possible.

(ii) *The Timeliness of Kantian Political Philosophy for Democracy and the Influence of Rousseauian Thought*

Since the reference to the influence of Rousseauian thought could create the impression that there is a relation of an immediate continuity between Rousseauian and Kantian political philosophy, especially with reference to the formation and the characteristics of political society, it would be best to start by stating the differences among these two theories. Their main difference is that Rousseau refers to the democratic political organization, which is found-

ed on the basis of popular sovereignty.² In that political organization, legislation is the product of the *general will*.³ In a different way, Immanuel Kant emphasizes –not on popular sovereignty– but on the decisive role of deliberation and the public use of speech. Nevertheless, this difference is not decisive for the evaluation of Rousseauian influence to Kantian thought, since, according to Kant, the sovereign has the moral obligation, as well as the corresponding commitment, to institute laws that would be acceptable by the universal will.⁴ Correlatively, during the exercise of political sovereignty, there is a previous political commitment towards the respect and the defence of freedom of conscience and thought, so as the universal will should not exist merely as an abstract mental creation, but it should also constitute a recognizable political reality. This interrelation allows us to understand that the political philosophy of modernity –mainly in line with the Rousseauian and Kantian version under examination– recognized, at the historical turn of the French Revolution, the possibility of the establishment of a new organization subjected to the rule of law, whose institutional constitution would be based on the ideas of liberty, autonomy and *isonomia*. The deep internal relation between Enlightenment and democracy can also be seen in the fact that the political and social problem of the new constitutional organization is also a problem of the political philosophy of modernity. In that sense, this is literally a double-natured problem: a political and an academic one at the same time. It is precisely this double-natured problem that Rousseauian political philosophy reveals. The dominant place that liberty and equality occupy in Rousseau's thought is apparent in most of French Revolution's institutions.⁵ This was also apparent in the constitutional texts of the Greek Revolution, and especially in the 1827 Constitution of Troizina and in the *Hellenike Nomarxia* anonymous text. Rousseauian thought is the thought and the language of the French Revolution. It is the thought that was written and the language that was delivered before the historical occurrence of the Revolution. Because of that, Rousseau could be seen as the intellectual scout of the latter, although this interpretation has received many criticisms in the relevant discussion, often with the presentation of interesting arguments whose analysis and discussion would require another paper.

Nevertheless, it would be difficult to doubt that the main idea behind the *Social Contract* has, as its starting point, the conception of liberty; namely, the value by which the historical, pre-Revolutionary society is assessed. The actual Rousseauian, contractarian idea is based on this value and not on vio-

² E. Cassirer, *The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed., trans., intro. and a new post-script P. Gay (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989²), pp. 111-115.

³ R. Fralin, *Rousseau and Representation: A Study of the Development of His Concept of Political Institutions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 73-75.

⁴ H.E. Allison, "Autonomy and Spontaneity in Kant's Conception of the Self," in *Idealism and Freedom: Essays on Kant's Theoretical and Practical Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 129-142, p. 129.

⁵ N. Urbinati, *Representative Democracy: Principles and Genealogy* (Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 138-139.

lence, so as to render possible the foundation of political organization in freedom. Therefore, the reference to the general laws of liberty is a term for the possibility of reasonable co-existence in general; so, the specific content of the social contract surpasses the particular terms of its foundation into the majority or unanimous expressed opinion of the general will.⁶ To put it differently, it is not possible to decide, inside the social contract, on whether we want to be free or not, because freedom is a constitutive term for co-existence in a political community, so that, through voting, the free decision-making would be a valid and binding way to deal with individual dubious and disputed issues.

On the basis of the above, it is possible to argue that the conception of freedom is the dominant principle –in the whole of Rousseau’s political philosophy– and that it is this very conception that reveals the *Republique* as a political necessity. It also allows us to understand the moderation set by the general will with regard to government and legislation: that these should have effect and be exercised within the institutional framework that would secure liberty and equality. In order to realize this clause, the support of political power is necessary, since political power will constitute the expression of the political sovereign –the people in this case– so far as the law of liberty and self-determination are dominant.⁷ These values define a specific object, their object of reference –namely, society. If this object gets constituted on the basis of those value systems, then a society will emerge, having a general legislation with power influenced and controlled by the citizens on the basis of the deliberative established by the public use of speech. This is the universality of Kantian republicanism that claims to have effect in every cultural condition on the basis of a moral-political criterion. This criterion –which does not level individual differences– defines progress: for example, in a society A or B, has there being an overturn of the egotistical profit-minded activity and plutocracy that are accomplished against the patient victims of injustice? This is the moral-political criterion that claims universal effect. The same deliberative expression of the public use of speech is determined by the binding of those criteria, so that, from now on, the so often violated idea of progress –which was put forward by Enlightenment thought, and especially Kantian Enlightenment– is the theoretical demand for the political realization of those value-principles as well as the critical evaluation of societies on the basis of the aforementioned criteria. There is progress when we possess individual autonomy via the use of our own intellectual and critical powers; and there exists collective judicial and political autonomy when societies are evaluated by the

⁶ M. Forsyth, *Reason and Revolution: The Political Thought of the Abbe Sieyes* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1987), p. 70.

⁷ A relevant problem: “Domination can occur without interference, because it requires only the someone have the capacity to interfere arbitrarily in your affairs; no one need actually interfere. Interference can occur without domination, because interference need not involve the exercise of a capacity for arbitrary interference, only the exercise of a much more constrained ability.” P. Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 23.

moral-political rule of law. In this sense, the Enlightenment does indeed constitute a perennial contribution to the struggle for progress, based on both the public use of speech and the moral-political and judicial-political claim for autonomy, and autonomy's historical condition: the establishment of a social and political organization where the conception of universal justice would be dominant.

(iii) *The European Crisis and the Dangers for Democracy*

What is the relation of the above with today's demand for social justice, and which theory of democracy could adequately reveal this claim as a prerequisite for the moral coherence and the radical transformation of contemporary democracies?

The present situation of deep economic and social crisis, of the degradation of societies and the people, of exploitation and injustice, of oppression and inequalities, but also of the rise of the Far-Right, constitute a reversal and a destruction of the idea of progress and the claim for solidarity and justice. The need for substantial justification of individual, social and political rights, which are crashed under the conditions of neo-liberal and super-conservative capitalism, demands the promotion of adequate reasons that would be in favour of basic principles of justice. This means that it is necessary to look into the terms through which the question of justice and democracy would be put on a new basis. This investigation cannot –and should not– be purely political. In order to be vigorous and adequate, this investigation should contain the required theoretical foundation so as to avoid any neo-liberal associations. This theoretical foundation is possible to be grounded in the critical tradition that derives from philosophy and the social sciences, which goes back to deontological Enlightenment, as well as to its radical descendant: namely, it goes back to Rousseau, Kant, J. S. Mill, and to Karl Marx.

The failure of the demands of the Enlightenment and of Enlightenment's emancipation project –as far as their historical realization is concerned– requires an innovative reflective criticism: we should re-think the historical starting-point of the social values in their own content so as to seek their justification. The historical starting-point of these values is not equivalent to the admission that they are subject to the limitations of the historical *milieu* in which they emerged. On the contrary, the normative core of political modernity is sustained beyond the limitations set by the historical events in the context of which this very core was formulated. Besides, over the last two centuries, the normative content of bourgeois societies is reinforced, as well as tested, via the reference in that very core, based on how problematic (and definitely not perfect at all) this reference is.

Marx's critical undertaking regarding his criticism of political economy is not merely limited on the positive explanatory move between the historical particular and the abstract. On the contrary, it is a reflective move towards the justification of these values, so as to be supported in social reality. Under this theoretical prism, the relation between standard liberty and equality, the con-

ditions of equal rights dialogue, as well as the individual and collective aims, are constituted in the historical perspective of modernity.

These are formulated through the bourgeois-ization of traditional societies. In this way, a moral rule is constituted that could help us evaluate societies. This rule is not formulated on a hypothetical social contract (upon which the force of the normative principles is dependent), but on the guarantee of individual, social and political rights through the lifting of the terms of oppression, injustice and exploitation. These terms crash the aforementioned rights and, in particular, the right to liberty which is, thus, rendered to a mere mental fiction that only serves to consolidate the victims of injustice –i.e. those people who are deprived of their liberty and would certainly would not be in a position to enjoy it. Thus, we can observe the neo-liberal demolition of the post-war welfare state and the dislocation of the values that were established by the bourgeois revolution. This results in the undermining of social and political rights, and the thinning of the actual notion of political democracy. Namely, we experience the weakening of the normative core that was, from the French Revolution until the post-war welfare state, partially recognizable in the institutional existence of that very state and, at the same time, which constituted the pin-point of the demands set by the social movements.

Thus, over the last years, the values of earlier reformative socialism have been completely abandoned by contemporary neo-liberal social democracy. These values are now adopted by the democratic-socialist Left that has inherited the great 20th century socialist tradition: the pursuit of the general interest for the paid labor forces, namely socialism with democracy and liberty. This means respect for individual rights and, therefore, the adoption of the main principles of classical deontological political liberalism, so that democratic socialism would be, indeed, ‘democratic.’ But, this also means the reinforcement of social rights equality, so that it would still be socialism. Something of this sort would mean that the deontological orientation of political liberalism would be maintained, but in such a way so that the political necessity is not vague; it should be determined by the principles of radical social theory which claims reformative changes.

In this sense, the democratic-socialist Left, especially in the European South, bears the burden to defend the legal and judicial culture of equal liberty, autonomy and solidarity, not only within the nation-state but also within the prospect of a politically unified Europe that would embrace these principles, and not those of neo-liberal Europe. On the contrary, the above political claim (and the risk) regarding the European prospect should be the re-establishment of both the welfare state and the rule of law, because, nowadays, they both seem to collapse simultaneously, and, because of that, they collapse in a way that poses a threat for the coherence of the value system of societies. This double claim is based on two pillars: the most radical expressions of political liberalism regarding the protection of individual rights, and to the democratic-republican claim for universal justice and political democracy; and those for the democratic participation of the people, namely for the participation of the producers of wealth to the processes of the production of wealth.

From the above, it is apparent that the dilemma about whether capitalism should be reformed or whether it should be by assault revolutionarily overturned is in itself transformed into the position that favors the radical and revolutionary character of such reforms, which are also in need of the relevant social majority. Namely, there is a need for radical and revolutionary reforms of strategic character that would aim at deep social changes which exhaust and exceed the limits of neo-liberal capitalism, and map out the perspective of the structural, institutional reformation of contemporary Europe towards a genuine democratic constitution common to all European people, and capable of expressing European unity.

It is, therefore, deeply reformatory and radical at the same time that this argument should be in favor of democratic socialism, and in favor of the reorganization of the European Union on the basis of the principles of solidarity and equal respect, and also in favor of radical changes and reforms that would aim at the establishment of social justice. In this context, we should attribute a new meaning to the content of the principle of national sovereignty and to the notion of democratic patriotism that should not, nonetheless, be abandoned. We are all well aware that democracy cannot exist without the principle of popular sovereignty or without the relevant and deriving principle of the democratic self-determination of the people. We could, thus, simply ask ourselves whether the principle of popular sovereignty can exist without the principle of national sovereignty. My answer to this question is that the principle of popular sovereignty cannot exist without the principle of national sovereignty. Thus, it is not possible to abandon the principle of national sovereignty, no matter how (rightly) we believe in the importance of a unified Europe. The abandonment of the principle of national sovereignty would also entail the abandonment of the principle of popular sovereignty, which is the evaluative and normative core of democracy. Democracy is inherent to the value of patriotism and its constitutional expression. We ought to re-define these two principles in a new context. We should consider the idea of a European *demos*—along with the simultaneous insurance from the national connotations that are brought by the conception of the ‘nation’ in its political meaning— as a notion that is synonymous with the political notion of ‘people’; the people being the subject of sovereignty, the constituent power and the safeguard of democratic equality.

Alas, none of the above is recognizable in contemporary Europe. Europe has lost its ‘Hellenic character’ in relation to the notion and the importance of the *Demos* and the political *agora*. It has also lost its European Enlightenment liberal characteristics of the public use of speech and the unobstructed participation in free and coordinated political deliberation. It has also lost the value characteristics that were inherited by the French Revolution and Rousseauian democratic republicanism. Today, we are faced with an ultimate attack by the financial capital against society, in the whole of Europe. The post-war welfare state proved to be too expensive for the capital. Now, the capital takes back, in multiple, what it was forced to give away. In essence, it revokes the transformation of the liberal state into a social state. The latter was not a dif-

ferent form of state: it emerged –and acquired its constitutional form– as the evolution of the liberal state, aiming at the incorporation of the principles of solidarity and its harmonization with those liberal principles. It constitutes a historical evolution that was a product of many struggles.

It is because of this that anti-liberalism, when it turns against the theory of political liberalism, is neither anti-capitalist nor radical. It only suffices to observe that neo-liberalism, especially in Greece, revokes the greatest state intervention in order to suppress individual and collective rights or to direct the course of the share-bonds in the stock-market exchange. The welfare state co-existed with the values of political liberalism, as far as the respect of rights was concerned. Looking forward to democratic socialism and to the radical social transformation that is needed in Europe does not entail that we should overlook the fact that the principles of political liberalism and democratic republicanism determine the content of the definition of the very notion of ‘democratic’ in the actual theory of democratic socialism. The main issue at stake is the defense of democracy, which is now threatened by neo-liberalism itself. The shrinking of fundamental constitutional citizen rights, as well as the violation of the principle of the separation of powers, entails that the liberal and democratic principle of constitutional democratic polity is also at stake. The policy implemented by the dominant European countries against the European South turns against the principles of liberal-democratic constitutionalism. The just welfare state turned liberalism into egalitarian political liberalism. We are now experiencing a counter-reformation period in the whole of Europe, an era of liberalism without democracy. Democracy seems to be posing an obstacle. The dominant policy in Europe is in need of liberalism without democracy; not political but economic liberalism that leads to anti-democratic totalitarianism. From now on, whoever is in favor of democracy cannot but be against neo-liberal capitalism. To put it simply: whoever talks about fascism, without also mentioning neo-liberal capitalism, does not reveal the whole story.

However, these are for the future. For now, the gloomy present in which we live calls upon us to understand that the dominant policy, in Greece and the rest of the European South, turns citizens into slaves. Democracies do not last long with slaves. If we want Europe to be the common home of its people, these people should not be treated as poor and illegal tenants by Germany and its allies, who behave as landlords. It is the people that are the “landlords” of their countries and of Europe, their common home. They build it, they clean it, and they maintain it. In democracy, it is the people who are the vehicle of sovereignty. On September, 17, 1787, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the American Constitution was signed, making an active reference to popular sovereignty. The idea of popular sovereignty is conceived by Aristotle in *Politics* (III.9-11), and is later systematized by Rousseau. These influences are obvious in the American Constitution; and the people, as the subject that expresses its sovereign will and exercises its constituent power, is also expressed in the opening sentence of that very Constitution. The American Constitution expresses the spirit of democratic constitutionalism in the ‘Preamble’

with the phrase: “We the People...”⁸ This is the primary democratic-patriotic duty for the people of the European South, and especially of Greece: to exclaim again the phrase that declares that political, democratic and patriotic dignity is a requirement for the preservation of the unified Europe; but, for the preservation of a unified Europe that would be democratic. We should all say again the phrase of the most important, collective, democratic, political self-determination, the phrase of constitutional patriotism. We should exclaim again: “We the people...!”

⁸ *The Constitution of the United States* (1787), Preamble: “We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

The Physical Effects of the Institutional Violence in a State of Crisis

KOSTAS THEOLOGOU

Introduction

A social, economic and political crisis offers us an opportunity to recollect aspects and forms of *violence* that should be reconsidered. This paper aims to contribute to the conceptualization of violence within an institutional framework, and the effects of violence on the human body. Social processes and institutional expressions of violence are of a various nature, and also deal with the political system itself and the democratization processes of the regime.¹

Therefore, on one hand we recollect the phenomenon of violence and the consequent physical and psychological suffering, and certainly the forms of *resistance* against state and institutional violence in modern cultures; on the other hand we refer to the field of human rights, from a legal and ethical perspective. The double focus intersects the subjects of the *rights* and violence: the humans and their bodies, i.e. the *physical* effects. Forms of violence in modern societies include: *Genocide* (e.g. in African countries' civil wars, in Asian countries' religious clashes etc.), *Women's Rape* (in War and Peace time, or in specific cultural milieux like Muslim societies), *Paedophilia* and *Children's work* (in all cultural settings), *Equality among handicapped* citizens (adults and minor citizens in education and employment), *Animal abuse* (e.g. caged and drugged in circuses, fights in arenas, tortured during scientific experiments, terribly abused domestic pets, etc.), *Long-time Unemployment* (e.g. recently in European countries even Euro-zone members) etc.; the list is *open* to suggestions.²

On the other hand, it is claimed³ that violence is well-rooted in the Greek culture; the modern history's leftist activism includes bombs planted by well-

¹ E.G. Krug, J.A. Mercy, L.L. Dahlberg, and A.B. Zwi, "The World Report on Violence and Health," *Lancet*, 360 (2002), 1083-1088; A. Linklater, "Citizenship, Humanity, and Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions," *International Political Science Review*, 22 (2001), 261-277; J.M. Mann, "Health and Human Rights: If Not Now, When?," *American Journal of Public Health*, 2 (1997), 113-120.

² J. Baggini and P.S. Fosl, *The Philosopher's Toolkit: A Compendium of Philosophical Concepts and Methods* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), pp. 179-184.

³ P. Papasantopoulos, "Violence as Midwife of the History. Convergences and Deviations between the Golden Dawn and Syriza," *Politiki Epitheorisi*, 30.12.12 (http://politicalreviewgr.blogspot.gr/2012/12/blog-post_1427.html); P. Papasantopoulos, "The Caricature of the Temporary Squattings," *Politiki Epitheorisi*, 18.7.2013; D. Psychogios, "Perpetuating the Culture of Violence," *Oropedio, Selides gia ton Saki Karagiorga*, 6 (2008-2009), 348-355; P.K. Ioakeimidis, "The Dearth of Institutional Consent. Why We Cannot Change the Confrontational Greek Culture," *ta Nea*, 22.7.2011 (http://politicalreviewgr.blogspot.gr/2011/07/blog-post_22.html), et al.

respected democrats (like Sakis Karagiorgas, a highly respected university teacher, Kostas Simitis, a social-democrat Prime minister of Greece, et. al) during the military regime in Greece 1967-1974. More recently, the wave of violence burst in December 6, 2008 when youngsters felt at ease to eject plastic bottles on a police car, and police officers felt equally at ease to shoot against them. When a 15 year-old boy was shot dead, riots burnt down Athens. And, to the opinion of this paper, this scenery never ceased since, because of the crisis emerging and establishing in the everyday life of the Greek society. This is an inaugurating moment for the hybrid given birth by a culture of violence –diffused in the entire society and the overall political system⁴– an institutional and ideological manipulation that equals to violence on behalf of the state.

So, in our approach we discuss the social effects of crisis, introducing the socio-economic-political crisis and the violence produced by this crisis; then, we discuss the violence affecting individual and public health, which is also a violent situation produced by the crisis. We, also, detect the physical symptoms of the crisis, or this collective trauma and, finally, we conclude.

1. *Crisis in Democracy Producing a Violent Race to the Bottom*

Actually, the specific approach to the crisis refers, rather, to the regime established in a parliamentary republic, where not only the liberalist market values prevail against the sociopolitical and cultural ones, but the market forces also impose even the social policies in almost any regime of the kind, producing, thus, a race to the bottom.

The global financial crisis of 2008 exposed inherent instabilities and contradictions within the system of capitalist production and speculative finance, neoliberal ideology and policies have become more politically durable, economically *necessary*, and culturally *hegemonic* than ever. The varying methods of state violence had been discussed even earlier.⁵ A further inquiry on the issue could engage with the deepening inequalities and structural violence caused by reinvigorated manifestations and re-articulated processes of neoliberalism (exclusion, domination, ‘accumulation by dispossession’ etc.); it could, also, widen the discussion of the present crisis to include analyses of (dis)organised resistance against neoliberalist alternatives, as well as perspectives of the crisis in a *braudelian longstanding* process, including examinations of structural adjustment programs, trade liberalisation and the privatisation of public assets since the 1980s in the *global South*. We do not explore, but we do underline the ways in which outsourcing, deregulation, dispossession, austerity, the *workfare-prisonfare nexus*,⁶ and the so-called *race to the*

⁴ Psychogios, “Perpetuating the Culture of Violence.”

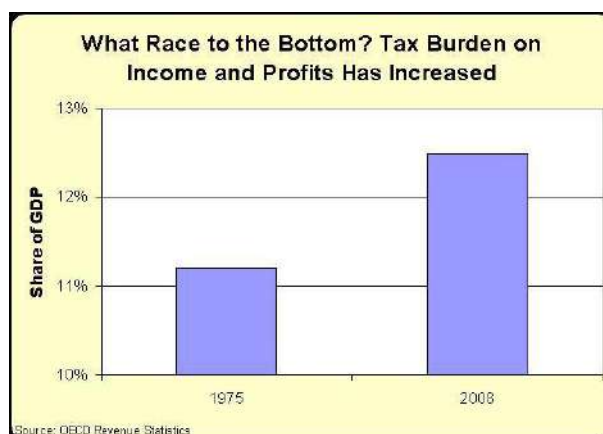
⁵ See, for example, J. Ron, “Varying methods of state violence,” *International Organization*, 51 (1997), 275-300, pp. 276-297; C. Nagengast, “Violence, Terror, and the Crisis of the State,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 23 (1994), 109-136, pp. 110-134.

⁶ L. Wacquant, “Crafting the Neoliberal State: Workfare, Prisonfare, and Social Insecurity,” *Sociological Forum*, 25 (2010), 197-220, pp. 198-218.

bottom shape and inform labour organising, subaltern struggles, and resistance by the marginalised or excluded.⁷

Let us focus on the *race to the bottom*. The situation is one in which companies and countries try to compete with each other by cutting wages and living standards for workers and the production of goods is moved to the place where the wages are lowest and the workers have the fewest rights.⁸

The race to the bottom is a socio-economic concept that is argued to occur between countries, states, provinces or territories as an outcome of globalization, free-trade, neoliberalism or economic deregulation.



source: <http://danieljmitchell.wordpress.com/2011/03/30/jeffrey-sachs-and-the-fictional-race-to-the-bottom-caused-by-tax-competition/>

When competition becomes fierce between geographic areas over a particular sector of trade and production, governments are given increased incentive to cut business regulations, labor standards, environmental laws and business taxes. In other words, a *race to the bottom* is a socio-economic concept that occurs between nations. When competition becomes fierce between nations over a particular area of trade and production, the nations are given increased incentive to dismantle currently existing regulatory standards. Such a race may also occur within a nation (such as between states or countries), but this occurs much less frequently because the federal government has recourse to enact legislation slowing or halting the race before its effects become too pervasive.⁹

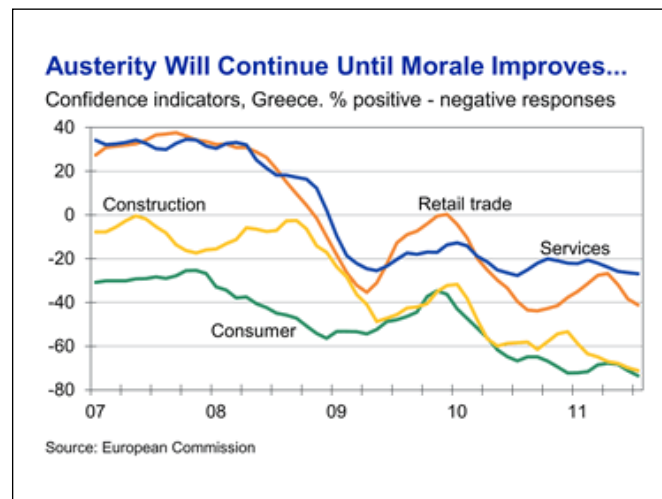
⁷ R. Lister, "From Equality to Social Inclusion: New Labour and the Welfare State," *Critical Social Policy*, 18 (1998), 215-225; R. Lister, "Investing in the Citizen-Workers of the Future: Transformations in Citizenship and the State under New Labour," *Social Policy & Administration*, 37 (2003), 427-443; C. Pierson and F.G. Castles (eds.), *The Welfare State Reader* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006); M. Kitson, R. Martin and F. Wilkinson 2000, "Labour Markets, Social Justice and Economic Efficiency," *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 24 (2000), 631-641.

⁸ <http://lexicon.ft.com/Term?term=race-to-the-bottom> (*The Financial Times Lexicon*).

⁹ B. McLean and J. Nocera, *All the Devils Are Here: The Hidden History of the Financial Crisis* (NY: Portfolio Penguin, 2010); C.M. Yablon, "Historical Race Competition for Cor-

We keep that in this moment of post-industrial capitalist globalisation –in which we witness an intensified and militarized, or quasi-militarized but certainly totalitarian global assault on resources, particularly in the global South, extremely acute underemployment and unemployment, deregulation of employment conditions, and untenable ecological destruction, and that the role and the importance of the modern liberalist state is feeble and infirm. There is a certain interaction between the state, labour, and social justice in different spaces of neoliberalism and resistances to it.¹⁰

The Greek crisis is seen as a product of aggressive rent-seeking predator groups within a context of the lack of accountability and the failure of the rule of Law. An economy that appeared to be experiencing high and constant growth rates in the late 1990s and early 2000s hit rock bottom fast and unexpectedly. The causes of the crisis are structural and long term, deriving from poor performances and pathologies in the political and labour markets allowing rent-seeking groups to maximise their gains in non-transparent ways. Then, the high growth rates of the previous decade were only superficial, and Greece is simply a textbook case of modern economics and political economy; in other words it was a bubble waiting to burst and it did.¹¹



source: http://www.economy.com/dismal/article_free.asp?cid=225111&tid=5AB5D93B-6C42-4355-8264-60410C40EF8E

porate Charters and the Rise and Decline of New Jersey: 1880-1910," *The Journal of Corporation Law*, 32 (2006), 323-380.

¹⁰ L. Bostock, "Pathways of Disadvantage? Walking as a Mode of Transport among Low-Income Mothers," *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 9 (2001), 11-18; H. Leitner, J. Peck, E.S. Sheppard (eds.), *Contesting Neoliberalism, Urban Frontiers* (New York: Guilford, 2007); J.H. Pierskalla, "Repression, Protest, Deterrence, and Escalation: The Strategic Calculus of Government," *December Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 54 (2010), 117-145.

¹¹ See M. Mitsopoulos and T. Pelagidis, *Understanding The Crisis in Greece: From Boom to Bust* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

This neoliberal hegemony, both in its glory and in its decadent crisis, has had global implications. Dynamic, expanding capitalist systems have their own strategic and geopolitical imperatives. Neoliberalism has sought a favourable climate towards business across the globe. It demands low tax regimes, limited state interference, and unimpeded access to markets and vital resources. It calls for internal security, the capacity to contain external enemies, and strong rulers in control of their populations, with whom bargains can be struck and influence exercised. It engenders hostility to more democratic and alternative experiments.¹² The above contribute to a downfall of the morale and that downfall enhances the possibilities for a positive attitude and reaction.

2. Other Social Effects Include Suffering Affecting Both, Individual and Public Health

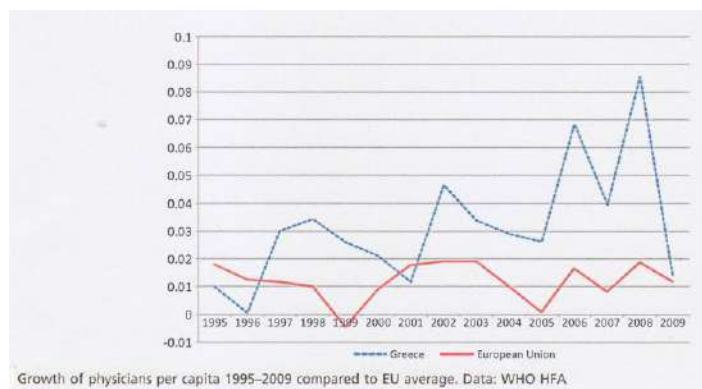
Equally important is a change in thinking about human targets, i.e. population, in war and in parliamentary democratic regimes in periods of crisis.¹³ The part of the human brain that assists in making moral choices is far more difficult of access. Those who are victimized by weapons ought to be our main concern. Hundreds of thousands of innocents have been killed by 'conventional' means during the twentieth century. And since 2008, after more massive suffering, violence and the eventual deaths of people living in modern states in crisis, the same repercussion of a nuclear explosion is experienced by the south Europeans; the effects will last a few generations ahead; the analogy is not excessive, since in such a disaster the impact on the populations causes traumas that last for some generations. In Greece, we have a specific example of generations during the German Occupation who developed various fears of hunger and food security, and tried to provide for all the goodies for their children. It took us some fifty years to abolish the mentality and the attitude; and it is not sure that we have abolished it yet.

The Greek national health-care system has been accumulating structural problems for more than a decade, and they have been exacerbated by the economic crisis. In terms of expenditure, a failure to contain costs created budget deficits for sickness funds. The system is highly centralized, but resource allocation suffers from a lack of planning and coordination, weak managerial and administrative capacity, and underdeveloped mechanisms for assessing needs and setting priorities. Furthermore, an oversupply of specialist physicians coexists with an undersupply of general practitioners and nurses. The combination of an absence of a functioning referral system and irrational pricing and reimbursement mechanisms leads to poor coordination of care, large

¹² S. Hall, D. Massey and M. Rustin, 2013, *After Neoliberalism: The Kilburn Manifesto*; "After Neoliberalism: Analyzing the Present," *Soundings*, 53 (2013), 8-22, pp. 3-19 (<http://www.lwbooks.co.uk/journals/soundings/pdfs/s53hallmasseyrustin.pdf>).

¹³ K. Hastrup, "Violence, Suffering and Human Rights: Anthropological Reflections," *Anthropological Theory*, 3 (2003), 309-323.

out-of-pocket payments and a sizable black economy, impeding the system's ability to deliver equitable financing and access to services.¹⁴



source: A. Kentikelenis, I. Papanicolas, "Economic Crisis, Austerity and the Greek Public Health System."

Now, think of this institutional violence, the extreme taxation, the burdens of not being able to buy food for the children, the pupils fainting at classes, and this abrupt collective squalor that, on one hand, prevents any kind of planning for the future and, on the other hand, imposes the conditions of longstanding impoverishment. South-European societies will not be able to thrive and rebuild their structures (financial, societal, cultural etc.) until after some decades, towards the mid-21st century. Costas Douzinas¹⁵ claimed that, the more you obey, the more you get punished –that is the Troika's way. The resistance is arguable, and one can foresee *a second spring of discontent* that is in the air, and it will bloom in an uprising of the European South against those in the North who act as sadistic colonial masters,¹⁶ because the austerity measures and this race to the bottom are like an atomic bomb, with effects that last for many generations to come.

3. *The Physical Symptoms of the Individual and Collective Blight*

And why is that uprising inescapable? In Greece, the parties that brought the country to its knees –and are now implementing policies accomplishing the well-chronicled catastrophe of the society on a household and a mass level, and a simultaneous rise of fascism– are on the brink of exit. Let us widen the scope: the International Committee of the Red Cross says it plans to adopt a strategy for southern Europe over the Eurozone crisis, which has made millions of Europeans struggle to get food. Yves Daccord, the director general of

¹⁴ A. Kentikelenis, I. Papanicolas, "Economic Crisis, Austerity and the Greek Public Health System," *European Journal of Public Health*, 22 (2012), 4-5, p. 5.

¹⁵ C. Douzinas, "Europe's South Rises up Against Those Who Act as Sadistic Colonial Masters," *The Guardian*, 28 March 2013 (<http://guardian.co.uk>).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

the ICRC, said in an interview on January 1st that the world’s largest humanitarian organization will equip itself especially for southern Europe.¹⁷ In an earlier lecture, he claimed that the humanitarian landscape is changing.¹⁸ New figures released by the Eurostat statistical agency showed that nearly 120 million EU citizens are living below the European poverty line.

And is the poverty line a statistical quantum that may depict, symbolize or even substitute reality? The highest poverty rates were recorded in Romania and Bulgaria (41%), Latvia (38%), Lithuania (33%), Hungary (30%), Poland (27.8%) and Greece (27.7%). In particular, Greek children up to 17 years old live near the poverty line with a percentage of 28.7%. In other age groups: 18-64 years old 26.7% and over 65 at 26.7%.¹⁹ Greece is facing a humanitarian crisis. The EU’s own poverty standards show that Greece is in crisis. But member states will not admit that their ‘bailout’ was to blame.²⁰ Austerity measures have worsened the country’s recession (in the sixth consequent year) and created a record 27% unemployment, some 67.1 % for those under 25, and put nearly 1.35 million people out of work. That coincides with rising rates of homelessness and suicide. The government has almost no programs to help the poor, leaving it to NGO’s and the Greek Orthodox Church to set up soup kitchens and medical clinics to help them.²¹

People at Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion								
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Eu (27)		25,6	25,2	24,4	23,5	23,1	23,4	
Greece	30,9	29,4	29,3	28,3	28,1	27,6	27,7	
Ireland	24,8	25	23,3	23,1	23,7	25,7	29,9	
Italy	26,4	25	25,9	26	25,3	24,7	24,5	
Portugal	27,5	26,1	25	25	26	24,9	25,3	24,4
Spain	24,4	23,4	23,3	23,1	22,9	23,4	25,5	27

source: Eurostat, 2012

¹⁷ This interview at: <http://presstv.com/detail/2013/01/02/281391/red-cross-to-focus-on-southern-europe>. “We are now seeing for the first time that the Red Cross in several European countries needs to focus on the poor in their own country, much more than on external missions outside Europe,” Daccord stated. In Spain, for example, about two million people are receiving help from the Red Cross, including approximately 300.000 who are “extremely vulnerable” by having no chance to support themselves, he added. Daccord also warned that the developments in Europe, where the “gap between the social needs of the people and their ability to help has increased,” will lead to violent riots. The European Commission sees the Eurozone crisis to be so severe that it has projected a new poverty fund with about €18.6 billion to help the most vulnerable. Jonathan Todd, the spokesperson for the EU social affairs commissioner, said, “We need new mechanisms if we are to help all the poor people who in many cases are now living in a real social emergency.”

¹⁸ The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) is the UK’s leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues.

¹⁹ See more at <http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2012/02/08/eurostat-27-7-greeks-i-e-3million-people-live-at-the-edge-of-poverty-line>.

²⁰ A. Politaki, “Greece is Facing a Humanitarian Crisis,” *The Guardian*, 11.2.13 (<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/11/greece-humanitarian-crisis-eu>).

²¹ A. Dabilis, “Crisis Pushes Greek Poverty to 31%” (<http://greece.greekreporter.com/2013/02/26/crisis-pushes-greek-poverty-to-31/>).

To some extent, the expenditure cuts come to substitute for the weaknesses in tax collection, but they end up also disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable Greek regions and income groups. Some northern and northwestern regions are out to lose the most, with a projected reduction in real disposable incomes (accounting also for the impact of indirect taxation) of well above 10%.

“The overall effect of this differentiation will be an amplification of existing inequalities. Owing to weak cross-regional adjustment mechanisms and preexisting imbalances, it is possible that under specific conditions the asymmetry of these effects will trigger a cumulative process of divergence and further regional differentiation that may be hard to rectify also in the future.”²²

Multilevel notions of resilience –i.e. how individuals, communities, and entire societies positively adapt to shocks– can be expanded to cover wider social and economic determinants of public health. Such an inclusive notion of resilience provides an explanatory framework that implicates the physical, psychosocial, and economic factors that help populations to resist and adapt to public health threats, such as the economic crisis. Finally, public health voices have been largely absent from the debate about how to respond. Many health ministries have been silent. The Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection of the European Commission, despite its legal obligation to assess the health effects of EU policies, has not assessed the effects of the Troika’s drive for austerity, and has instead limited EU commentary to advice about how health ministries can cut their budgets.²³

The argument against austerity has been won in Southern Europe. The establishment of austerity enhances the ruling elites, is achieved through ideological disorientation and misinformation and, of course, ultra-violent police repression; this is a physical effect of violence. We also consider as a physical effect of violence the extensive and abrupt privatization of the commons: cultural commons and commons of nature –water, sea, energy resources, etc.– are all systematically sold off. Greek people are obliged to rent back its common inheritance and its collective achievements that compose the national substance.²⁴

In such a perspective, there is a certain urge to safeguard programmes for vulnerable groups, such as children or the elderly, those with mental illness and drug rehabilitation programmes. Action is also needed on the supplies; while the crisis has seen a substantial decline in the annual growth of physicians, more should be done to increase the number of general practitioners in

²² V. Monastiriotes, “Making geographical Sense of the Greek Austerity Measures: Compositional Effects and Long-Run Implications,” *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 4 (2011), 323-337, p. 333.

²³ M. Karanikolos, P. Mladovsky, J. Cylus, S. Thomson, S. Basu, D. Stuckler, J.P. Mackenbach, M. McKee, “Financial Crisis, Austerity, and Health in Europe,” *The Lancet*, 381 (2013), 1323-1331, p. 1329 (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0140673613601026>).

²⁴ Douzinas, “Europe’s South Rises up Against Those Who Act as Sadistic Colonial Masters.”

rural regions. Measures are also needed to address the widespread out-of-pocket payments in primary care, and more needs to be done on pharmaceutical policy –like measures to increase generic prescribing– in order to allow savings on drug expenditure to be reallocated to the recruitment of nursing staff, for example. All measures require political decisiveness and coordination across ministries, with a shared focus on equity and quality.²⁵

Some countries pleaded for the crisis to cut costs, especially in the hospital and pharmaceutical sectors. The governments of Poland, Latvia, Slovenia, and Austria armoured their position in price negotiations with pharmaceutical companies, and those of Greece, Portugal, Latvia, Slovenia, and Denmark sped up the restructuring of their hospital sectors. Other countries, like Cyprus, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, etc., reduced the salaries of health professionals, or reduced the rate of salary increase. These policies could exacerbate wage imbalances between or within countries, which could increase health-worker brain drain.²⁶

The picture of health in Greece is concerning; it reminds all of us that ordinary people are paying the ultimate price, in an effort to finance debts: losing access to care and preventive services, facing higher risks of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases, and in the worst cases losing their lives. Greater attention to health and health care access is needed to ensure that the Greek crisis does not undermine the ultimate source of the country's wealth-its people.²⁷

It is a physical effect when people are starving, it is a violent physical effect when pupils cannot do their homework because they have no electricity, no food, and no way to heat their environments; it is a violent feeling of a physical nature to tell lies to your family and offer fictitious explanations for the poverty of their household. It is a physical violence to be psychologically worn out and have the energy of a wreck, without dignity and pride; that's the image of one third of the Greek population. It is a physical violence when the health system and medical treatment is not accessible to all working and unemployed citizens in a country; when parents cannot afford to hospitalize their children, to feed their family, and to support their own parents. The family bond collapses, and societal ties fade away, and wildness replaces civilization.

Conclusions

The above forms of violence allow for *resistance* (expressed even as a *reaction* of equal force), because they produce the same painful effects on the

²⁵ Kentikelenis, Papanicolas, "Economic Crisis, Austerity and the Greek Public Health System."

²⁶ Karanikolos, Mladovsky, Cylus, Thomson, Basu, Stuckler, Mackenbach, McKee, "Financial Crisis, Austerity, and Health in Europe," p. 1325.

²⁷ A. Kentikelenis, M. Karanikolos, I. Papanicolas, B. Sanjay, M. McKee, D. Stuckler, "Health Effects of Financial Crisis: Omens of a Greek Tragedy," *The Lancet*, 378 (2011), 1457-1458; F. Megaloudi, "Rising Death in the Streets of Athens: The Human Toll of the Greek Tragedy," *The Huffington Post*, 7.1.2013 (http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/fragkiska-megaloudi/rising-death-in-the-streets-of-athens_b_2411003.html).

physical body of those who suffer the *institutional violence of heavy taxation and unemployment* (since they are potentially hungry, homeless, psychological wrecks, inclined to commit suicide and other unpredictable acts, etc.) with a *physically raped human being*.

“According to Aristotle the *demos*, is the multitude in assembly. The physical coming together of bodies is a demonstration, a manifestation. It is a ‘monstration,’ it is the public appearance of a common body and political desire. If, for Hegel, the first step in the emergence of a political subjectivity is the negation of the world, the second is precisely the stepping out in the world, the public appearance, which then returns to self in full identity. A new type of political subjectivity is emerging. It is the result of the return of the right to resistance on post-industrial and post-democratic society.”²⁸

The Greek government and the EU-IMF ECB Troika do not draw any attention to the spatial dimensions of the austerity measures and emphasis remains centred on inducing structural reforms, not stimulating growth through public investment.²⁹ Therefore, a non-anticipated local uprising may burst.

During the 80s, Greeks were treated as consumers rather than citizens, as desiring creatures rather than thinking civilians. Loans, banking and the stock market vicious tricks produced an artificially inflated property market, reprioritizing the value code and suggesting economic growth as the criterion for individual happiness and social mobility.³⁰ In this stage, untimely and ineffective austerity measures once more violently reversed these priorities and values that had been previously ‘established’; furthermore, a radical behavioural change was imposed for the sake of *national salvation*. This national salvation, though, is not equally declared by the partners of the political system, producing, thus, an unprecedented rise of fascism and xenophobia.³¹

The debt offered a convenient pretext for brutally imposing “reforms” that, unfortunately, are only faced with suspicion towards the ‘useless’ political administrators, who also suggested that we were all “in it together” and must be punished; but the administrators do not seem to burden themselves with any measures and their political benefactors and pre-electoral sponsors keep dodging and avoiding taxes.

Because of the *moral aspect* of violence and the gravity of its effects, war and violence, rather, consist of phenomena that eventually respond distinctively to the moral reproach, and disapproval. Those who condemn violence, despite its origin, do not take into account the criteria of just warfare and justi-

²⁸ C. Douzinas, “Athens Rising,” *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 20 (2012) 134-138, p. 137.

²⁹ Monastiriotis, “Making geographical Sense of the Greek Austerity Measures: Compositional Effects and Long-Run Implications,” p. 334.

³⁰ Douzinas, “Athens Rising,” p. 136.

³¹ The Europe director of Human Rights Watch, J. Egeland, and J. Sunderland, a senior Western Europe researcher and author of the new Human Rights Watch reported to the CNN (18-7-2012) that there is hate on the streets and xenophobic violence in Greece (<http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2012/07/18/greeces-other-crisis-xenophobic-violence>).

fied violence; they seem to claim that they prefer to die (=morally) in obedience, rather than live (=immorally) in resistance.³²

In Greece, the Troika enhances the punishment, despite the fact that their own policies and financial predictions are false. The European uprising of discontent is torching the people's consciousness, and cries out for their awakening; it's time for them to demand the end of policies that destroy their national and cultural identities, and plunder their commons.

The current public debt crisis was caused by the gigantic financial crisis that emerged in 2007, which later became a recession by 2009. The state suffered from this, because the state across Europe –to a lesser extent in Greece–rescued the banks, and rescuing the banks is an extremely expensive task. A more fundamental issue is that the recession that followed crushed tax revenue. Consequently, state finances began to go into deficit and state debt began to rise. In other words, the public debt crisis, which is happening in Greece and in southern Europe, has got nothing to do with state profligacy, a sudden, wild bout of expenditure on the part of the Greek State.³³ The people, as subjects of their states, are not impersonal and spineless automata, and their homelands are not a loot of the piracy conducted by the colossal banking policy makers.

Reform in Greece can only be substantive if the embedded and deeply rooted *clientelistic* structures are dissolved.³⁴ But it is not arguable that these structures can only be dissolved through reform, and not through the change of cultural processes of longstanding values, eventually leading to attitude and mentality change.

³² K. Theologou, "The Apolitical Disapproval of Violence," *Avgi*, 9.3.2013.

³³ C. Lapavistas, "The Greek Crisis–Politics, Economics, Ethics: A Debate held at the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities, Birkbeck College, University of London, 5 May 2010," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 28 (2010), 293-310, pp. 299-307.

³⁴ Cf. Mitsopoulos, Pelagidis, *Understanding The Crisis in Greece: From Boom to Bust*.

Guilt, Shame and the Greater Good: The Use of Moral Arguments in the Greek Crisis*

ELENI LEONTSINI

Introduction

This paper focuses on the recent Greek economic,¹ political, social and humanitarian crisis, from its official beginning in March 2010 until the present. Many arguments have been formulated in various ways and by many public figures of various origin and ideological standpoints (politicians, journalists, intellectuals, and academics), in order to justify the implementation of neoliberal economic policies to Greek society. These arguments have varied in their rhetoric, justification, and source of origin. Many of these arguments have been based on philosophical premises, attempting to offer a moral and political justification of the crisis and of the state we are in. My aim, in this paper, is to focus on the examination of the rhetoric and the logical structure of these arguments that have, so far, tried to defend the neoliberal policies implemented by the previous Greek governments –but also by governments of other European countries–, focusing in particular on those that have appealed on moral grounds, making indirect use of moral normative theories, attempting, thus, to justify, on moral grounds, the need for the implementation of neoliberal practices in modern Greek society.

The profound impact of the crisis on all levels of contemporary Greek life generated a systematic critique of the overall structure of the modern Greek state, historical consciousness, and political order, expressed in all forms of cultural production; through literature, arts, language studies, education and journalism. Indeed, a great deal of literature has been produced on the Greek crisis, and many seminars, book launches, and symposia took place regarding the crisis, including this one, of course. At first, it seemed that we not only had to suffer the consequences of the crisis, but that we also had to discuss it. All of the sudden, crisis was –and still is of course– in fashion, and there has been a growing production of talks, political speeches, newspaper articles, papers and books on it; books referring to the Greek crisis reaching bestseller numbers, both at home and abroad.

* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 11th Biennial Conference of the Modern Greek Studies Association, Australia and New Zealand (MGSAANZ) on “Crisis, Criticism and Critique in Contemporary Greek Studies” (University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia, 7-9 December 2012). For helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper and for bibliographical assistance, I am grateful to Stephanos Dimitriou, Carmen Gallano, Vrasidas Karalis, Golfo Maggini, Dimitris Papanikolaou and Eugenia Stathakopoulou. I would also like to thank audiences at Sydney and Ioannina.

¹ It should be pointed out that the Greek economic crisis was considered to be merely a fiscal one at the beginning of 2010, but now (2015) it is mainly a debt crisis.

Nevertheless, it should also be pointed out that many conferences have taken place inside and outside Greece, discussing the wider European political crisis; the main concern of these conferences has been the examination of the political aspects of the fiscal European crisis, and the obligatory implementation of neoliberal policies by democratically elected governments. In Greece, the response by the Greek left has been relatively slow regarding the production of literature concerning the crisis, but has, according to my opinion at least, rightly focused on political and economic issues regarding the crisis, and not on the production of arguments that appeal to emotion.²

Roughly, I suppose, there have been at least two sets of arguments of this kind, i.e. two sets of so-called ‘pro-crisis’ or ‘pro-memorandum’ arguments.³ In many ways, both sets of arguments are interconnected in various ways, and one could say that they overlap at points without being clear as to which side is adopted in the rhetoric.

First, those attempting to defend the crisis either by justifying it (trying to explain its origins that are, according to their opinion, deeply rooted in Greek society and the corruption of the Greek people,⁴ or attributed to the crude and peculiar form of Greek capitalism that needs to be up-graded, etc.), or by trying to discover its causes; trying to find the ones responsible behind it, or by

² One of the first fine examples that springs in mind is the Symposium organized by the “Anagnoseis” and “Enthemata” Sections of the *Avgi Newspaper* on “Social Liberalism or Social Justice? Liberty, Equality, Autonomy, Solidarity Today?” (12-13 October 2012). Many similar symposiums and various political talks have been organized by the Coalition of the Radical Left Party (SYRIZA) ever since, impossible to list here. Again, the relevant books written are far too many to be listed here. See, for example, C. Douzinas, *Filosofia kai antistasi stin crisi: politiki, ithiki kai Stasi Syntagma* [*Philosophy and Resistance to the Crisis: Politics, Morality and the Syntagma Stop*] (Athens: Alexandria, 2011) and its English version *Resistance and Philosophy in the Crisis: Greece and the Future of Europe* (London: Wiley, 2013); C. Laskos and E. Tsakalotos, *22 pragmata pou mas lene gia tin crisi pou den einai etsi* [22 Things that They Tell Us about the Crisis and Are not So] (Athens: ΚΨΜ, 2012); G. Dragasakis, *Poia exodus? Apo poia crisi? Me poies dynameis?* [What exit? From What Crisis? With What Forces?] (Athens, Taxideutis, 2012); L. Vatikiotis et alia, *Kivernisi tis aristeras. Dromos gia to mellon i aristeri parenthesi?* [Government of the Left. Road for the Future or a Left Parenthesis?] (Athens: Topos, 2013); J. Milios, *Apo tin crisi stin kivernisi tis aristeras* [From the Crisis to the Government of the Left] (Athens: Pedio, 2014); K. Lapavitsas, *Lexi pros lexi. Keimena gia tin helleniki crisi, 2010-2013* [Word to Word. Texts on the Greek Crisis, 2010-2013] (Athens: Topos, 2014); G. Kouzelis, *Fasismos kai demokratia* [Fascism and Democracy] (Athens: Nesos, 2014).

³ ‘Pro-memorandum’ being those arguments that defended the adjustment programme of Greece with its official creditors that is called ‘memorandum’ (‘mnemonion’), signed by the previous Socialist ‘PASOK’ government (2009-2012) and the following coalition government of the conservative ‘New Democracy’ Party together with the Socialist ‘PASOK’ Party and the centre-left ‘Democratic Left’ Party (2012-2015). The Democratic Left Party left that coalition government in July 2013.

⁴ See, for example, A. Pantazopoulos, “Crisi ethinikis tautotitas” [National Identity Crisis], *To Bima Newspaper* (Sunday 24 June 2012), p. A25, and T. Diamantopoulos, “San simera mia alli chora. Eklise oristika kai epodyna o kyklos tis pentachronis epiplastis evimerias” [“As from Today Another Country. The Circle of the Five Year Mad-Up Prosperity has Closed Once and For All”], *Ta Nea Newspaper* (Monday 12 November 2012), p. 13.

trying to induce a sense of guilt to the members of Greek society. These arguments either claim that “we should see the crisis as an opportunity for change”⁵ or that there is no other solution to the crisis than the neoliberal austerity measures imposed, since “we are all responsible for the crisis.” It should be noted that arguments of both kinds have been expressed, not only by right-wing conservatives, neoliberals, and ‘third way socialists,’ but also by the majority of the Greek Center-Left.

Second, related to the above has been the line of thought introduced by some intellectuals that could be labeled as ‘pro-crisis’ arguments, endorsing, what I would call the ‘moralistic thesis,’ according to which there is a deep spiritual crisis that lies within us, whose cause has been our alienation from our intellectual past, our traditional moral values, and our involvement with consumerism. These contemporary moralistic arguments often attempt to appropriate Greek Antiquity by making references to classical texts and ancient philosophers, like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. In addition, it should be pointed out that, throughout contemporary Greek history, that is, since the creation of the Greek State in 1830, but mainly in the post-1974 period, various similar philosophical arguments have been formulated by contemporary Greek intellectuals and academic philosophers that refer to issues pertaining to the formulation of the Neohellenic and European identity, and attempt to explain the structure, the function, the virtues, and mainly the pathogenies, of Neohellenic society.⁶

Related to the above has been the line of thought, introduced by several politicians, journalists, intellectuals and academics, that could also be labeled as ‘pro-crisis’ arguments, endorsing, what I call the ‘moralistic thesis,’ according to which there is a deep, spiritual crisis that lies within us, whose cause has been our alienation from our intellectual past, our traditional moral values, and our involvement with consumerism. In addition, these contemporary moralistic arguments often attempt to appropriate Greek antiquity, making

⁵ Many Greek socialist politicians (PASOK) have argued in public on various occasions that “We should see the disaster we are experiencing as an opportunity,” “We should view the crisis as an opportunity,” “The memorandum is an eulogy,” “Even if the memorandum did not exist, we should have invented it.” See C. Laskos, *Crisi kai aristeri politiki* (Athens: Nisos, 2014), p. 79.

⁶ See on this K. Rantis, “Neither Fate nor Decline: The Crisis of Modern Greek Society in Kostas Axelos and Panagiotis Kondylis,” in this Volume. For a thorough and extensive philosophical criticism of Panagiotis Kondylis’ theory, see K. Phychopedis, “I apofasi gia theoria sti theoria tis apofasis tou Panagiotti Kondyli” [“The Decision for Theory in the Theory of Decision of Panagiotis Kondylis”], *Nea Estia*, 1717 (1999), 498-513. See also K. Phychopedis, “To anorthologiko stoixeio stin elliniki theoritiki skepsi” [“The Irrational Element in Greek Theoretical Thinking”], in *Ideologika Reumata kai taseis tis dianoesis sti simerini Ellada [Ideological Trends and Tensions of Intelligentsia in Contemporary Greece]* (Athens: Sakis Karagiorgas Foundation, 2002), 17-27 and S. Dimitriou, “To problima ton axion stin ‘perigrafiki theoria tis apofasis’: kritiki prosegisi sto ergo tou Panagiotti Kondyli” [“The Problem of Values in the ‘Descriptive Theory of Decision’: A Critical Assessment of the Work of Panagiotis Kondylis”], in *Ideological Trends and Tensions of Intelligentsia in Contemporary Greece, op. cit.*, 28-36.

references to classical texts and ancient philosophers, like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The use of the emotions of ‘shame’ and ‘guilt’ is typical in these moralistic arguments, as is the appeal to the ancients, and the use of antiquity is not only misleading in this case, but also deceptive.

This kind of argument has been developed by many authors, and there are far too many books that have been recently published over the period of the current Greek crisis,⁷ that it would be impossible to discuss all authors and all arguments presented;⁸ the most notable example being Stelios Ramfos,⁹ who has written extensively on this since the beginning of the Greek crisis.¹⁰

Stelios Ramfos, in particular, has provided us with an array of such arguments in two books that he has recently published. The first, entitled *The Logic of Insanity*, published in 2011, is a collection of various essays written mostly in the press, discussing the outburst of the Greek crisis since 2010.¹¹ In this book, Ramfos particularly emphasizes that the Greek crisis is not a fiscal one, and that the aim of his book is not to discuss financial matters, in which

⁷ Arguments of this kind have been developed of course not only by Greek thinkers but also by other Europeans like the ones that have been recently produced by various French philosophers. See, for example, S. Hessel and E. Morin, *Le chemin de l'espérance* (Paris: Librairie Artème Fayard, 2011). For a thorough overview of the ways contemporary French philosophy has attempted to deal with a crisis, see Y. Prelorntzos, “Dealing with the Crisis via Contemporary French Philosophy,” in this Volume.

⁸ Cf. G. Kontogiorgis, *Economica systimata kai eleutheria* [*Economic Systems and Freedom*] (Athens: Sideris, 2010); George Siakantaris, *Oi megales apousies. I helleninki demokratia se amyna* [*The Great Absences. The Greek Democracy in Defence*] (Athens: Polis, 2011); N. Alivizatos, *Poia democratia gia tin Ellada meta tin krisi?* [*What Democracy for Greece after the Crisis?*] (Athens: Polis, 2013); G. Politis, *Na sikothoume orthioi: I epanastasi tis koinis logikis* [*To Stand Up: The Revolution of Common Sense*] (Athens: Psychogios, 2014); T.P. Tassios, *As anastochastoume eautous kai allilous* [*Let's Reflect upon Ourselves and the Others*] (Herakleion: University Publications of Crete, 2014).

⁹ See, for example, S. Ramfos, *Time Out. I ellenike aisthisi tou chronou* [*Time Out. The Greek Sense of Time*] (Athens: Armos, 2012), p. 57.

¹⁰ Fairly recently, a book published by A. Pantazopoulos, entitled *The Left National Populism (2008-2013)*, follows similar lines of argument published in books in other European countries, and attempts to justify the despicable theory of the so-called two extremes; it is interesting that, apart from the historicist argument evoked, there is also a fair amount of ‘moralistic’ one, since Ramfos and Giannaras are cited, among others, as his mentors. See A. Pantazopoulos, *O aristeros ethnikolaikismos. 2008-2013. [The Left National Populism. 2008-2013]* (Athens: Epikentro, 2013). On a similar line of argument, see S. Valnten, *Europi, helleniki krisi kai demokratiki aristera* [*Europe, Greek Crisis and Democratic Left*] (Athens: Polis, 2014). Against this argumentation, see the book review of the A. Pantazopoulos’ book by G. Mertikas (*Anagnoseis Kyriakatikis Avgis*, 21/6/13) where it is pointed out, amongst other things, that the book’s hidden agenda is to eventually promote the so-called theory of the “two extremes” (far left/far right). It is worth noticing that in the polemic against the radical left by conservatives and socialists, as well as centre-leftists, it has often been evoked in the so-called theory of the “two extremes” in Modern Greek society a parallel with the Weimarer Republik (1919-1933). For a critique of this contemporary revival of the Weimarer Republik (1919-1933), see M. Agelidis et alia, *I democratia tis Baimaris kai oi synchrones anabioseis tis* [*The Weimar Republic and Its Contemporary Revivals*] (Athens: The Nikos Poulantzas Institute, 2012).

¹¹ S. Ramfos, *I logiki tis paranoias (The Logic of Paranoia)* (Athens: Armos, 2011).

he is not an expert anyway, but to examine the attitudes and the mentalities of the Greek people, since, according to his view, “it is them that enhance socio-political tension in our country.”¹² Ramfos thinks that “the internal dimension of our collective wreckage,” as he calls it, is due to the “conflict between the public and the private, the conflict between reason and sentiment, our bad relation with time and our Self, conflict in general.”¹³

Ramfos discusses corruption and the Greek debt, and claims that the bankruptcy is not a financial one, but a moral and a spiritual one. He thinks that we experience a void, a void within ourselves, and claims that the Greek people have a bad relation with the Greek State, and are immature regarding their relation to the institutions, which is due to their special ties with the family. He presents us with several points of this kind that are based on a historically unfounded narrative. I cannot call them arguments because they are neither philosophical nor historical, and they lack either kind of methodology.¹⁴

Making Sacrifices for the Greater Good

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, throughout the Greek and the European crisis, there have been several sets of arguments attempting to defend the neoliberal policies, following a utilitarian line of thought that captivated my philosophical interest and, to this day, have never ceased to amaze me for their audacity and twisted reasoning. The problem with arguments of this kind is not, of course, the use of bad philosophical argument; this kind of argument is usually so fallacious that it poses no interest to the philosopher to refute it. It is simply bad philosophy, and, if the politicians that have been presenting these arguments were philosophy students, they would simply have failed their philosophy exams. The problem is that these arguments have been feeding Greek and other European public opinion regarding the European crisis, as well as legitimizing the politics of austerity.

In Greece, the most celebrated example of this line of utilitarian argument has been Theodoros Pangalos, a long-standing and prominent politician of the Greek-Socialist PASOK party, with his memorable phrase “*oloi mazi ta fagame*” (“we all had our snouts in the trough”), which sought to implicate wide selections of the Greek population that had benefited from clientelistic politics, even if, in most cases, this was rather in minor ways.¹⁵ This kind of ar-

¹² *Ibid.*, ‘Preface.’

¹³ *Ibid.*, ‘Preface.’

¹⁴ See also on this D. Ertuğ, “Crisis as an Ideological Problem,” *International Journal of Modern Social Sciences*, 2 (2013), 216-228.

¹⁵ I am using here the idiomatic translation of the Greek sentence “*oloi mazi ta fagame*” that Theodoros Pangalos used many times in public, literary meaning “we all ate what there was together” by C. Laskos and E. Tsakalotos, *Crucible of Resistance. Greece, the Eurozone and the World Economic Crisis* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 3. As Laskos and Tsakalotos point out, “the phrase implies a general tendency of consumption to exceed production capabilities, but also alludes to semi-corrupt and fully-corrupt practices that contributed to Greece’s deficits and debt” (*ibid.*, p. 160, n. 1). Pangalos eventually even published an e-book on the same title, defending his thesis (August 2012).

gument has, of course, often been used in various versions by other Greek politicians,¹⁶ but is also, implicitly at least, widely used by many others (journalists, men of letters, academics of various disciplines), and widely features in various formulations of moralistic arguments mentioned above. As succinctly put by Christos Laskos and Euclid Tsakalotos:

“This exercise in creating collective guilt, implicating the whole ‘culture’ of the population, was a continuous and powerful refrain on the part of those intellectuals within the dominant narrative who backed the policies with which the elites proposed to address Greece’s longstanding economic, political and cultural shortcomings in the age of crisis.”¹⁷

That particular way of formulating an economic program in times of crisis has at least three interesting aspects. First, there is the rhetorical use of ‘we,’ which suggests that sacrifices are abstractly requested from all individuals as citizens, even though, as tradition has it, and as specifically proposed financial measures are designed, only part of society is targeted, with a recurrent emphasis on civil servants, pensioners, and so on. Banks, large corporations, and, generally, individuals and entities at higher levels of the socio-economic ladder, not only seem to largely escape the new austerity measures, but, in fact, it seems that they get out of it making a profit.

Along the same lines, a second element in that general picture consists in demanding, in a rhetorical manner similar to that expected in times of war, extreme hardship from a few for the sake of the prosperity of all, and particularly future generations. And thirdly, the statement is notable for the economic model it offers: national poverty, as opposed to a more normal focus on job creation or increased purchasing power, is the way to solve the problems in the long run for debilitated European economies.

That, in turn, suggests a novel approach to economic ills, on the model of “creative destruction,” which takes economic misery, not only as a problem, but as part of the solution, and which sounds, thus, at odds with the traditional political outlook of recounting social and economic progress that has been achieved, and further prosperity that needs to be promised. In general terms, the statement assumes poverty not to be a fact, but an acceptable and desirable way of existence of some for the greater good of the collective.

Despite the fact that the utilitarian argument has usually been shaped around the general maximization principle of the overall good (the utilitarian maxim: “maximize happiness for the greatest number”), and has always been either a positive or negative kind of utilitarianism (that is, utilitarians have either focused on the maximization of happiness or on the minimization of pain), cur-

¹⁶ Another line of similar utilitarian argument has been offered by the Portuguese Prime Minister who had declared that “we [i.e. the Portuguese people] will only get out of this situation [i.e. the current crisis] by becoming poorer.” That statement sought to justify the implementation of austerity measures agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund and the European Commission in order to make the Portuguese economy more competitive, while allowing for the hope that one day economic progress would return.

¹⁷ Laskos and Tsakalotos, *Crucible of Resistance*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

rent popular political arguments seem to be based on the principle of “maximizing pain for the greater number.” So, one can see that what has been at play here, at most times, is a kind of reversed (and perverse) utilitarian argument.

Let me, though very quickly, explain what is usually involved in utilitarian, or consequentialist as it is often called, theory. Two broad classes of ethical theory –consequentialist and deontological– have shaped most understandings of normative ethics, normative ethics being the branch of moral philosophy that deals with the investigation of the criterion of right action. Consequentialists hold that we should choose the available action with the best overall consequences, while deontologists hold that we should act in ways circumscribed by moral rules or rights, and that these rules or rights are defined (at least partly) independently of consequences.

That which has ethical value for consequentialism is the *good state of affairs*, and right action is understood as action tending to bring about good states of affairs. The simplest form of consequentialism is the view that the moral worth of an action is to be evaluated solely with reference to the outcomes of the action: the better the outcome, the more morally worthy the action. Consequentialist theories differ about what they take to constitute the best outcome. Utilitarianism, the most familiar consequentialist theory, takes an action’s worth to depend upon the extent to which it maximises utility – where utility is understood variously as happiness, pleasure or preference satisfaction. Consequentialism and Rights theories each aim to systematize our principles, or rules of action, in ways that will help us to see what to do or recommend in particular cases.

Roughly, consequentialists claim that we are obligated to act in ways that produce the best consequences. It is not difficult to see why this is an appealing theory. First, it relies on the same style of reasoning that we use in making purely prudential decisions. If, for example, you are trying to decide what you are going to choose for honors in the University of Glasgow, you will consider the available options, predict the likely outcomes of each, and determine their relative value. You will then select a subject (or two, if you want to do joint honors) with the best predicted outcome. Consequentialism uses the same framework, but injects the interests of others into the ‘equation.’ When facing a moral decision, I should consider available alternative actions, trace the likely moral consequences of each, and then select the alternative with the best consequences for all concerned. When stated so vaguely, consequentialism is clearly an appealing moral theory. After all, it seems difficult to deny that achieving the best available outcome would be good. The problem, of course, is deciding which consequences we should consider, and how much weight we should give to each. For, until we know that, we cannot know how to reason about morality.¹⁸

Utilitarianism, the most widely advocated form of consequentialism, has an answer. Utilitarians claim that we should choose the option that maximizes

¹⁸ Cf. S. Scheffler, *The Rejection of Consequentialism* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1982), and *Idem* (ed.), *Consequentialism and Its Critics* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988).

‘the greatest happiness of the greatest number.’ They also advocate complete equality: ‘each to count as one and no more than one.’ Of course we might disagree about exactly what it means to maximize the greatest happiness of the greater number; still more we might be unsure about how this is to be achieved.¹⁹ Act utilitarians, on the one hand, claim that we determine the rightness of an action if we can decide which action, in those circumstances, would be most likely to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Rule utilitarians, on the other hand, reject the idea that moral decisions should be decided case by case. According to rule utilitarians, we should decide, not whether a *particular* action is likely to promote the greatest happiness of the greater number, but whether a particular *type* of action would, if done by most people, promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Thus, it seems that an act utilitarian might decide that a lie, in a particular case, is justified because it maximizes the happiness of all those concerned, while the rule utilitarian might claim that, since everyone’s lying would diminish happiness, then it would be best to adopt a strong rule against lying. We should abide by this rule even if, in some particular case, lying might appear to better promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

Rule utilitarianism is definitely the most defensible form of utilitarian theory, and has recently been developed in various sophisticated ways. Nevertheless, it is not, of course, without problems. What do you do, for example, when you have to choose between saving your mother or a famous scientist who is about to discover the cure for cancer? Surely, you owe more to your family than you owe to your bank or someone you have never seen before in your life, but what about having to choose between saving the life of 100 people and saving the life of your family? These are not easy dilemmas to answer, and, indeed, most of the main objections to utilitarianism have sprung out of these, such as Bernard Williams ‘integrity objection.’²⁰

Deontological theories are most easily understood in contrast to consequentialist theories. Whereas consequentialists claim that we should always strive to promote the best consequences, deontologists claim that our moral obligations –whatever these might be– are, in some sense and to some degree, independent of consequences. Thus, if I have obligations not to kill, steal or lie, those obligations are justified, and not simply on the ground that following these rules will always produce the best consequences. It is because of this that many find deontological theories so attractive. For example, most of us would be offended if someone lied to us, even if the lie produced the great-

¹⁹ J.S. Mill (1861), *Utilitarianism*, ed. R. Crisp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). It has been argued by R. Crisp, *Mill on Utilitarianism* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 102-105 and 173-200, that J.S. Mill in his ‘Utilitarianism’ essay endorses an act-utilitarianism theory, while later in his ‘Liberty’ essay (1873) he advocates rule-utilitarianism. Cf. also J. Riley, *Mill on Liberty* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 153-157 and 191-192.

²⁰ Cf. Williams, “Consequentialism and Integrity,” in Scheffler, *Consequentialism and Its Critics*, *op. cit.*, 20-50 and J.J. Smart and B. Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 108-118. Cf. also Crisp, *Mill on Utilitarianism*, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-153.

est happiness for the greatest number, and I would certainly be ‘offended,’ if someone killed me, even if my death might produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number.²¹ Thus, according to the deontologist, the rightness or wrongness of lying or killing cannot be explained simply because of its consequences. Of course, there is considerable disagreement among deontologists about which rules are true. They also disagree about how to determine these rules. Some deontologists, like Immanuel Kant, claim that it is abstract reason that shows us how we should act.²² Some, like John Rawls, talk about principles that can be discovered in reflective equilibrium,²³ while others claim that we should seek principles that might be adopted by an ideal observer.²⁴

This neoliberal austerity policy has been attempted, in one way at least, to be defended, as I have tried to show, by adopting an appealing side of a utilitarian argument, but on false pretenses. Finally, it should also be pointed out that this novel approach to economic ills is further supported by the ‘future generations argument’ that is often also invoked in many ways.²⁵ The future generations argument is essentially a utilitarian argument. According to this argument, often used in various other contexts, we have the moral obligation to protect the rights of the future generations; hence, it is permissible, in doing so, to sacrifice the rights of the people living in the present. For example, the salary and pension cuts were presented as necessary so that our children and grandchildren would be able to secure their pensions in the future.²⁶

But, why do we have the obligation to care about people about whom we know nothing? Even if one establishes the obligation to care about future generations, it should be made clear about *which* future generations we should care. So-called “future generations” do not constitute, in any sense, a real group of people. “Future generations” are not real people, they are people who, in most cases, have not yet been born, and it is uncertain whether they will be. But, even if we do feel that we ought to care for the future generations, we cannot possibly know how the future will turn out (e.g. *chaos argument*).²⁷ Maybe these sacrifices that one is making now would lead to even

²¹ Like, for example, in the case of the various versions of ‘the hospital example.’ Cf. Crisp, *Mill on Utilitarianism*, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-35 and 99-101.

²² Cf. I. Kant, *The Moral Law. Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. H.J. Paton, (London: Routledge, 1948) and M. Gregor (ed.), *Kant’s The Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

²³ Cf. J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

²⁴ Cf. O. O’Neill, “Kantian Ethics,” in P. Singer, *A Companion to Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 175-185.

²⁵ To offer an indicative example of an argument of this kind, I merely refer to a newspaper article published in *Ta Nea* newspaper (03-07-10) where the proposed at the time new Bill on Pension schemes is referred as ‘Nomosxedio-fili tis zois gia to Asfalistiko: So as our children and the next generations be able to have a decent pension.’

²⁶ For an extensive analysis on the use of future time, see D. Papanikolaou, “Poiios milaei gia to mellon, oi grammatikes tis krisis” (“Who Talks on the Future, The Grammars of the Crisis”), *Unfollow*, 10 (2012), 34-39.

²⁷ See J. Lenman, “Consequentialism and Cluelessness,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 29 (2000), 342-370.

worse consequences in the future. Of course, one could argue against this line of argument that our intuitions tell us that we plan and provide for our future, even if we do not know what the future will hold. This is true, but it still cannot refute the strongest objection against utilitarian moral theory, which is that one could never account with certainty for the potentiality that a certain set of actions will not lead to an unpredicted set of consequences; neither, of course, would it be able to refute the ‘sacrifice of the innocent’ objection against utilitarianism, and argue in favor of the principle that the end justifies the means, thus, treating people as means, and not as ends in themselves.

Conclusion

My aim in this paper was to briefly outline the first set of arguments that appeal on utilitarian grounds, and to show the fallacies involved in the use of this kind of utilitarian argument when it is evoked in favor of the implementation of neoliberal policies on the Greek and European people. Arguments of this kind fail to see the crisis for what it really is: a political one, a crisis of the political European institutions caused by the implementation of neoliberal policies that aim to abolish the welfare state, diminish individual and collective rights, and undermine European democratic institutions,²⁸ ultimately undermining, thus, the very idea of democracy.²⁹

²⁸ See G. Fløistad, “Freedom and Democracy,” in A. Fagot-Largeault and B. Saint-Sernin (eds.), *Philosophy and the State of the World*, Institut International de Philosophie (Paris: Vrin, 2013), 175-183 and P. Skúlason, “How to Face the Crisis: The Idea of an Education-State,” in Fagot-Largeault and Saint-Sernin (eds.), *Philosophy and the State of the World*, *op. cit.*, 201-219.

²⁹ See S. Dimitriou, “Democracy, Political Autonomy, and Crisis: A Democratic-Republican Approach,” in this Volume. See also S. Dimitriou, “Kindyneuei i demokratia?” [Is Democracy in Danger?], *Enthemata*, *The Avgi Newspaper* (Saturday 4 May 2013), 36-37; *Idem*, “O demokratikos autokathorismos tou laou” [“The Democratic Self-Determination of the People”], *Efimerida ton Syntakton* (19-20 October 2013), 25 and *Idem*, “Se poion prepei na aneiki i kyriarxia?” [“To Whom Should Sovereignty Belong To?”], *The Avgi Newspaper* (Tuesday 25 March 2014), 1-2.

Corruption in Greece: Empirical Evidence and Theoretical Implications

GEORGIOS CHRYSSAFIS

Introduction

The present paper is based upon a work, which is still on process (concerning the empirical part of it),¹ about the phenomenon of corruption in Greece. For the first part of my argumentation, I use the empirical evidence which gained publicity about scandals occurring in Greece during the last 10 years. For the second, I use the main actions of pressure groups, the typology of their activity, the relation of their action to the public interest and their rhetoric. The limitations for the proceedings' Volume do not allow me to give a more analytical presentation of an original version of the paper. It is a research as yet uncompleted, but safe enough to offer us some useful conclusions. At this point, I clarify that my work concerns the field where (directly or indirectly) public administration is involved, and not a singularly corporate corruption. However, from the presentation, it becomes evident that corruption is a complex problem which includes both sectors, and usually it is not easy to simply be ascribed in one of them.

I work upon the assumption that Greece represents an example of some kind of fundamentality of the corruption, and usually creates the impression and belief that it has become a part of the ethical (and perhaps moral) order, not only for the parties involved but for the social body as well. On the other hand, corruption appears either as a formal or as an informal structural phenomenon and, in some cases, it generates the conviction that it is a part of moral and ethical order, not only within the administration, but in the public body in general as well. Concerning the informal type, I think it is of particular importance that a dormant or shadow type of corruption transferred from the rhetoric and practice of interest groups, leading us to the estimation of some more qualitative indicators, useful for the theoretical enquiry. The consideration of this dimension strengthens the aspect about the endemic character, complexity and particularity of corruption in Greece.

Corruption: Definition and the Greek Specificity

1.1. Commonly Used Definitions of Corruption

The literature and rhetoric on corruption is of increasing intense, and a big bulk of attempts for its definition has been deployed. The main circumstances

¹ The empirical raw material about the mobilizations of pressure groups has not been fully processed and studied yet. On the other hand, I think a new "window" has opened about informal corruption and it concerns the changes in governance brought by the crisis.

of corruption include four interconnected, basic constituent elements, which apply adequately to the public sector, and they could be accepted as a typological definition of corruption (based on a presentation by Philp):²

- Somebody who acts for personal gain or advantage (A)
- Breaks the rules of the public service
- Harms the interest of the public (B), in the broad sense (public good is included)
- Benefits a third party (C), who rewards (A) for access to goods and services which (C) would never otherwise have acquired.

These are commonly sufficient preconditions for the diagnosis of corruption cases and, in general, they suggest a) the existence of a public official who acts for private gain, and b) in ways that contradict to his/her formal responsibilities. In other words, it is an approach that takes into consideration material elements, namely money, or some kind of benefit to the parties involved, which are helpful for the definition of indicators and the evaluation of countries and governments, as it is defined by several organizations (World Bank, Transparency International, GRECO from the Council of Europe, etc.), but not adequate for a detection of the causes, or for a thorough charting of corruption as a phenomenon concerning the whole social body.

A more general definition, but within the frames defined by Philp, is given by several researchers as "... *the misuse or abuse of public power for private or political gain...*,"³ but it is not completely satisfactory for two major reasons: first, in a corrupt act, it is not necessary for a misuse to exist, because it may be a use within the limits of legitimacy (in that case, matters of ethical and moral action emerge); and, second, the gain is not clearly private or political (in cases of endogenous public administration procedures, which are very common in Greek reality), but it may be a distortion of public interest, or a

² See M. Philp, "Access, Accountability and Authority: Corruption and Democratic Process," Paper for the *Political Studies Association-UK 50th Annual Conference* (10-13 April 2000, London).

³ This definition is used from (references from the present paper): S. Rose-Ackerman, "Corruption and Government," *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, 15 (2008), 328-343; M.A. Alzola "Corruption at the Boundaries of Morality: Navigating Moral Imperialism, Cultural Relativism and Tolerance," Paper for *The Third ISBEE Congress: Freedom and Responsibilities in Business-Ethics, Leadership and Corporate Governance in a Global Economy* (Melbourne: International Society of Business, Economics and Ethics, 2004); D. Saint-Martin and F. Thompson (eds.), *Public Ethics and Governance: Standards and Practices in Comparative Perspective* (Perspective Research in Public Policy Analysis and Management, Vol. 14) (London: Elsevier, 2006); J. Svensson, "Eight Questions about Corruption," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 19 (2005), 19-42; D. Treisman, "The Causes of Corruption: A Cross-National Study," *Journal of Public Economics*, 76 (2000), 399-457; E.M. Uslaner, *Corruption, Inequality and the Rule of Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Alzola mentions that Rose Ackerman used this definition since 1975 in a pioneering work of hers about corruption and that such a definition stated on 1967 by John Nye. See Alzola, "Corruption at the Boundaries of Morality: Navigating Moral Imperialism, Cultural Relativism and Tolerance," pp. 2-3. Also see J.S. Nye, "Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis," *American Political Science Review*, 61 (1967), 417-427.

collective gain in the public sphere (in cases of corporative interests). The originality of the definition is ascribed to Rose-Ackerman,⁴ which, in a recent work of hers, approaches the subject in a more integrated way, presenting the aspects of corruption in the triple section between libertarian ethnographers, free marketers and cultural ethnographers.⁵

All approaches connect corruption to material elements (greed, bribery, gifts, or venality and favors) and free market procedures in capitalistic societies, as well as cultural characteristics in respective societies. Rose-Ackerman places the problem at the level of the perspective about democratic legitimacy and she defines the following fields for combating corruption: transparency, government, oversight, measures for large-scale procurements and bribery, laws against offenders from all sides, independent ombudsmen, and electoral laws' amendments.⁶ Uslaner uses the same definition, and he suggests that it is not the factors that render a society's structure of governments corrupt, but some social and economic conditions.⁷ He focuses on economic inequality and low trust between different people, and indicates several possible sources of definition: the cultural, the normative, and that of the fairness of the legal system. His central argument is that better policies or governments are not sufficient to reduce corruption, especially in countries with rising inequalities, because inequality is the central cause of corruption. In my opinion, there is some fallacy in a part of his argument, because he attempts to ascribe a causal norm to a complex phenomenon which has the form of a vicious circle: he does not justify why one could not accept corruption as the cause of inequality instead.⁸

Others connect it to different externalities, like inequality, low growth rates, macroeconomic instability, lack of democracy, impassionate behavior, etc.,⁹ which, I believe, fall in with the problem of causality. All of them are

⁴ Reference from Uslaner, *Corruption, Inequality and the Rule of Law*, p. 6.

⁵ See S. Rose-Ackerman, "Corruption: Greed, Culture and the State," *Yale Law Journal Online*, 120 (2010), 125-140.

⁶ Of course, all these presuppose the existence of a transparent system: in Greek reality the problem is that all of these presumptions exist (typically, the system is extremely transparent), but they are not enforced.

⁷ See Uslaner, *Corruption, Inequality and the Rule of Law*, pp. 6-11. He mainly identifies corruption to malfeasance and lack of transparency (p. 8) and he believes that changing the form of government does not reduce corruption and examines several countries: Estonia, Romania, Slovakia, Mali, Nigeria, Singapore, Hong-Kong and United States. In the edition there are several approaches that contribute to the different views of understanding corruption.

⁸ It is Rose-Ackerman's comment as well. However, she connects corruption to growth rates, which in my opinion is not accurate, because in the developing countries corruption has not been eliminated. See Rose-Ackerman, "Corruption and Government." In this work of hers, she practically analyzes aspects of corruption, she appears to be based on her general definition mentioned by Uslaner and she identifies corruption to the interconnection between private wealth and public power.

⁹ Form the references of the present paper see: S. Rinaldi, G. Feichtinger and F. Wirl, "Corruption Dynamics in Democratic Societies," *Complexity*, 3 (1998), 53-64; Treisman, "The Causes of Corruption: A Cross-National Study"; M.A. Selligson, "The Impact of Corruption in Regime Legitimacy: A Comparative Study of Four Latin American Coun-

useful as particulars that help us to construct a frame about the constituents of corruption. However, they do not offer a full aspect about the causes of it, and about its impacts upon the social morality, or the systems of principles and values in general. I believe the difficulty of defining or of giving a strong definition of corruption lies in the difficulty of charting the causes of it fully. In most of the cases what is indicated as the cause in one, it is the consequence in another, or what is the cause today, tomorrow becomes the consequence.¹⁰ This is possible only if we approach it through the qualitative element of it, which leads us to the ethical and moral dimension of it.¹¹

1.2. *The Significance of the Alternative Definitions*

I suggest that corruption should be disengaged from money or material transaction, and it should be additionally connected to immaterial elements, which may include favor within the public sector. It is more useful to define it through theorizing about responsibility, accountability,¹² and developing some system of principles and we could concentrate on a syllogistic such as the following: corruption is an act which violates some existing rules within a society, or within a community, or globally (of law, morality or ethics, all these not necessarily cumulative), and the parts involved within this act, should satisfy certain preconditions to be characterized as corrupted. In that case, the ques-

tries," *The Journal of Politics*, 64 (2002), 408-433; contributions in D. Haller and C. Shore (eds.), *Corruption: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 2005); J. Svensson, "Eight Questions about Corruption"; contributions in S. Rose-Ackerman (ed.), *International Handbook on the Economics of Corruption* (Cheltenham-Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2006); R.A. Miller, *The Erotics of Corruption: Law, Scandal and Political Perversion* (New York: University of New York Press, 2008); Uslander, *Corruption, Inequality and the Rule of Law*. Among them, Svensson, although he presents empirically the public dimension of corruption (legal payments, campaign donations, post-retirement jobs, etc.), he concludes on the complexity of corruption, the lack of full knowledge about it and he recognises that the definition is not clear at all. On the other hand, Moran notes that in countries where there is a democratization process, the weakness of the state facilitates corruption. See J. Moran, "Democratic Transitions and Forms of Corruption," *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 36 (2001), 379-393. I think that the weakness of the state, as a factor for the encouragement of corruption, may be observed even in democratic countries.

¹⁰ Lambsdorff correctly indicates that causal factors may become consequential and vice versa from case to case and within the same area of corrupt activity: size of public sector, quality of regulation, culture, economic competition (market structures), decentralization, values and gender policies, geography, history. See J.G. Lambsdorff, "Causes and consequences of corruption: What do we know from a cross-section of countries?," in Rose-Ackerman (ed.), *International Handbook on the Economics of Corruption*, 3-51, esp. pp. 4-22.

¹¹ Alzola, after indicating the connection between morally incorrect acts and acts of corruption, concludes to add in the definition of corruption the precondition that "A corrupt act is a particular kind of morally incorrect act..." See Alzola, "Corruption at the Boundaries of Morality: Navigating Moral Imperialism, Cultural Relativism and Tolerance," pp. 9-12.

¹² Gupta correctly considers accountability as an aspect of the discourse about corruption. See A. Gupta, "Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics and the Imagined State," *American Ethnology*, 22 (1995), 375-402, p. 388.

tion about corruption becomes more complex, and tracing corrupted acts demands some basic preconditions, like:

- It being a voluntary act, and outside the sphere of ignorance or/and violence.
- Full knowledge of the action and the alternatives available.
- Full knowledge of the possible outcomes.
- Full knowledge of the possible parties harmed and the parties favored.
- Full knowledge about the act's illegality and/or its moral deficiencies.

Nuijten and Anders offer an ethnographic approach which focuses its discourse around corruption on the fields of law and morality. It is interesting to observe that they disengage it from law violation, or from the antithesis between corruption and law.¹³ The first explains the weakness of law in societies with high corruption, and its indeterminacy in other, less corrupted societies. Also, they indicate the unclear boundaries about law, order, and corruption, or the blurred interconnection between them. This is an explanation of why, in some cases, corruption prevails over law, or amends it, and in some others, law is unable to combat corruption. On the other hand, corruption is connected to the exercise of power, and researchers relate it under three perspectives: transactions between individuals, institutional power, relations of hierarchy.¹⁴

I agree with Heller's and Shore's suggestion that the definition given from the WB and other entities of the kind, which are commonly used, namely that corruption is the "*abuse of power for private gain*" is neither useful nor satisfactory, because it degrades it a) into a problem of some dishonest or immoral individuals, working (or having some connection to) for the public sector and b) to interpretations about corruption, focusing upon the individual greed and personal venality, and not focusing to the conditions they create and add to their milieu, which produces and reproduces them.¹⁵ Under these circumstances, conventional definitions ignore local practices and categories. On the other hand, conventional definitions cannot answer to certain questions.¹⁶

So, we are driven to the necessity for alternative definitions of corruption, to cover more spheres of public life, which in Greek (and other) realities are of special interest. Deflem's aspect is noteworthy:¹⁷ corruption may be con-

¹³ See their introduction in M. Nuijten and G. Anders (eds.), *Corruption and the Secret of Law: A Legal Anthropological Perspective* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 1-24.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-17.

¹⁵ Actually, they comment that we cannot simply talk about the "*rotten apples*" and not about the "*barrel that contains them*." See: Haller and Shore (eds.), *Corruption: Anthropological Perspectives*, Introduction (pp. 1-26). The same argument with the same example of rotten apples is used by Nuijten and Anders, in Nuijten and Anders (eds.), *Corruption and the Secret of Law*, pp. 3-4 (Intro.).

¹⁶ For example, the above definition presupposes that there is some power which is abused or misused. However, it does not cover the circumstance of a part that uses the power that is possessed by another one. In other words, it considers only the part that has the power and leaves outside the part that does not possess it, but it acts in a corrupt way.

¹⁷ M. Deflem, "Corruption, Law and Justice: A Conceptual Clarification," *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 23 (1995), 243-258. He makes an interpretation of corruption based upon Habermas's theory of communicative action.

ceived as a kind of interaction that undermines legal procedures through the use of *bureaucratization* of relations in the public sphere, and he identifies two types of corruption: *monetary* (money) and *bureaucratic* (power). He believes that disclosure of corruption in diverse circumstances of public life supplies us with the empirical data about the subject. An illegal activity may be traced in several fields, and it touches society, as a whole, affecting its members directly or indirectly, even those that have been appointed to serve public interest. Another distinction is made by B.A. Rosenson, and refers to *individual* (aiming at personal financial enrichment) and *collective* (aiming at political gain) corruption.¹⁸ The second is of particular importance, because it works to obstruct or to damage any legislative process in some societies (i.e. Greece and Italy are referred as two examples of the kind). Following Deflem's suggestions, in my opinion, it is interesting to trace the degree of diffusion of corruption's practices within the society, and to notice that it's extensive flourishing in society concludes to render corruption a normal social event or phenomenon, which may drive us to a second level of corruption (the acceptability of it, as a normal or expected phenomenon).

In my opinion, if one wishes to define corruption in a more broad way, he/she should consider responsibility and accountability: I believe that corruption usually emerges from the absence of responsibility and almost always in the absence of accountability (because we usually observe responsibility without accountability). I agree that, usually, it is difficult to trace and identify responsibility, concerning types and uses which are difficult to trace in fields and sectors where corruption grows. Typically, somebody is responsible when:

- He/she is expected to play a particular role, according to an appointed duty.
- He/she is conscious and reliable, and acts under an aspect with regard to the consequences of the result produced.
- His/her actions are causes of the result produced. In this sense, responsibility means a causal connection to the relation of the relative result.
- He/she is blameworthy for the act.

In a more complete version, based on the Aristotelian approach, responsibility for any person who acts in an anti-deontological way may be defined under the following preconditions:¹⁹ first he/she acts with knowledge; secondly, he/she deliberately chooses the act and chooses it for its own sake; and

¹⁸ See B.A. Rosenson, "The Costs and Benefits of Ethics Laws," in Saint-Martin and Thompson (eds.), *Public Ethics and Governance*, 135-154, esp. pp. 147-159. She examines the impact of ethics laws in several states of U.S.A. and especially laws applying to legislators. In most cases ethics laws were introduced or strengthened as a response to several scandals from public officials and to change the corruption culture.

¹⁹ I highlight from the original text: (i) Πρῶτον μὲν ἐὰν εἰδῶς. (ii) Ἐπειτ' ἐὰν προαιρούμενος δι' αὐτά. (iii) Ἐὰν καὶ βεβαίως καὶ ἀμετακινήτως πράττη. *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 1105a 32-37. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham (Aristotle, Vol. XIX, Loeb Classical Library 73; Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1926). In many corruption cases, all three conditions are fulfilled. The agent acts under full knowledge, after a deliberate choice of her act and under the knowledge both, of the final cause and the means used. This is a common ground regarding scandals in contemporary Greece.

thirdly, the act must spring from a fixed and permanent disposition of the character. Considering these preconditions, we may have some additional criteria for the definition of corruption, which ignore the one-dimensional notion about “private gain” through an “abuse or misuse of public power,” and which obey the principles of responsibility and accountability. These criteria are more useful because they help us to detect corruption in its ethical and moral dimension, and to broaden the notion of it, considering it as a social phenomenon. Specifically, an act is corrupt when:

- There is a break with the rule of law or/and the ethical norms of the society.
- Which happens in order to favor one factor and harms another one.
- The act is voluntary and not undertaken in a state of ignorance or violence.
- The factor who acts is in full knowledge of his/her act and of the consequences for all parts: the favored, the harmed, and the public.
- The factor who accepts blame for or causes the act, is in full knowledge of the consequences from the favor received and for the harm caused.
- Both of the factors have knowledge of the alternatives for the act, but they act in the way which is convenient to them.
- They are in full knowledge about the ethical and moral deficiencies of the act.

The above presentation could be more detailed, but it is neither necessary nor useful, because my idea is to indicate the qualitative elements which broaden our view about corruption, and may include inaction as well, since corruption is not necessarily something active. On the other hand, it helps us to consider not only responsibility, which may be easily be ascribed to an actor, but accountability as well: the latter, or better the absence of it, is one of the major causes of corruption, since it concludes by becoming socially accepted. In that sense, corruption influences public legitimacy and public morality, as major elements which construct public confidence.²⁰

2. *The Specific Nature of Corruption in Contemporary Greece*²¹

2.1. *The Formal Dimension*

The remarkable thing about scandals in Greece (in my opinion, in a way that returns to common and basic patterns) is not simply their corrupt dimension,

²⁰ Selligson uses empirical data to support the view that lack of confidence in political factors (government, politicians, etc.) favours clientalism and cronyism, even in countries like France, Germany and Italy (period of reference: 1976-1995). On the other hand, he indicates that a corrupt act (scandal) alters public confidence. See M.A. Selligson, “The Impact of Corruption in Regime Legitimacy: A Comparative Study of Four Latin American Countries,” pp. 411-414.

²¹ For a historical approach of corruption in Greece, see D. Moschopoulos, “Corruption in the Central Administration of the Greek State: A Historical Approach,” in S. Tiihonen (ed.), *The History of Corruption in Central Government*, International Institute of Administrative Sciences Monographs, Vol. 21 (Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2003), 145-163. He examines corruption from the year 1883, when the Greek State was established, until 1995.

but the mechanics of their rhetoric, justification and legitimacy. I agree with Ruth Miller that scandal and corruption are linked, and that we cannot consider a scandal as something else except a (potentially) corrupt act, and with her argument that what is important about scandals is not simply the corrupt dimension of them, but the procedural perceptions as well.²² In the Greek reality, this suggestion may be considered as a “*deployment of the scandal*,” in the public sphere and the justification of it, which reaches even the social establishment of new ethical codes.

Following the discussion of the unity, I trace the phenomenon of corruption in Greece, using the material from the major scandals revealed during the last 10 years. I support the notion that, first, a scandal cannot be disengaged from being accepted as a corrupt action, and, second, that empirical examination drives us to enough interesting common patterns and regularities. Some researchers suggested several distinctions dividing scandals from corruption, because scandals are related to a perception of the public about something illegal, although it may not be such, while corrupt acts are connected to the definitions presented in the first chapter.²³ In my work, I use publicity material, because I think it is not useful for the purposes of my work (examination of the qualitative elements of corruption) to examine the official papers of the cases, and because it is of major importance to see the development of the cases in the public sphere. On the other hand, publicity material offers us the basic information about the development of collective ethics and morals, and the way that legitimacy happens. I believe that Greek specificity is of particular interest, due to its endemic character, in the sense that it covers all fields of public life, and that it has an “integrated” nature. Additionally, as a practice and an ideology, it has a historic depth, which means that it is embedded and “legitimate,” and that legality, in some cases, exists as an exception. In the past years, this has been pointed out from international entities, and their reports have never been used as opportunities and motives for a public consid-

²² This is a core assumption in her work and she examines the scandals as corruption cases in areas of former British colonies, focusing on the erotic and pornographic dimension of corruption. See Miller, *The Erotics of Corruption: Law, Scandal and Political Perversion*, Intro., esp. pp. xii-xvii. Miller makes an interesting connection between corruption and totalitarianism and the dichotomy (corruption/totalitarianism)-(legality/liberalism). She distinguishes the totalitarian and corrupt system from the liberal and rational, identifying indirectly the contradiction between the corrupt and the liberal (*ibid.*, p. 107). I believe that, on the contrary, a corrupt system or act is not necessarily irrational, but completely rational, within its corrupt nature and circumstance. At least, the empirical evidence from Greek reality supports this suggestion. I think it is essential to have in mind that, it is one thing for corruption to be supposed as being outside the limits of ethics or morality and another thing to be considered as something irrational.

²³ See the arguments about this distinction developed in Saint Martin and Thomson (eds.), *Public Ethics and Governance*, and especially the following contributions: B.A. Rosenson, “The Cost and Benefits of Ethics Laws,” 137-154, esp. pp. 150-152 and A. Rosenthal, “The Effects of Legislative Ethics Law: An Institutional Perspective,” 155-177, esp. pp. 162-165.

eration, beyond a superficial, naïve and populist rhetoric. I recall two reports, of particular importance:

- The Report from the GRECO Group (Group of States against Corruption) from the Council of Europe-Year 2001.²⁴
- The Report from the European Central Bank, which noticed that corruption is number 1 problem from Greece-July 2003.²⁵

I detect scandals of major and minor importance, which took publicity, and are considered of corrupt nature. I keep a different place for the scandals of the field of athletics, which constitute a different body of corruption cases, usually closer to the public, due to the wide publicity that athleticism enjoys, and to their distinctive importance, at least concerning justification of the acts.²⁶ However, the qualitative findings and the arising questions do not differ from the other categories. In the full version of my work, for each case, a “codification” or “typology” is presented, which includes the following records:

- Short description of the case
- Involved individuals and collectivities
- Evolution of the case
- Steps (phases) of the investigation
- Content of rationalization-justification
- Conclusion of the case
- Outcome for the individuals involved

From the study of these scandal cases, I emphasize the interesting points, which indicate several elements of a regularity contributing to the particularity of the phenomenon. A presentation could have it as follows:

- They all enjoyed wide publicity, which (regardless the exaggerations that usually occur in the mass media) was revealing for each case. Actually, the impression always given is that the disclosure of corruption cases happens exclusively in the publicity domain of the mass media, which appear to have a multiplied operation: they reveal, they investigate, they assign responsibilities, they serve for the satisfaction of the collective sense and, finally, they close the case.
- In the course of the disclosures, it is declined that the administration or the justice department had the potential to act preventively, but they did not, for reasons independent to them. Also, it is indicated that they remained inactive even when the case could had been revealed or solved. This role has been undertaken by the mass media, which, actually, verify the sug-

²⁴ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/round2/GrecoEval2%282005%296_Greece_EN.pdf.

²⁵ Title of report: A. Afonso, L. Schuknecht and V. Tanzi, “*Public Sector Efficiency: An International Comparison*” (Working Paper No. 242). Also Published in *Public Choice*, 123 (2005), 321-347 (<http://www.ecb.int/pub/pdf/scpwps/ecbwp242.pdf>).

²⁶ In the full version of my work there is an Appendix presenting the typology of the scandals. I examine about eighty (80) cases from the public life (especially politics) and six cases from the field of athleticism. Due to the limitations of this paper, this presentation is not possible.

gestion that they are factors linking ethics with trust,²⁷ and which “reproduce” the rhetoric of corruption. It is a widely defused social narrative which develops the terms of the public discourse about corruption, and in many cases it is just a rhetoric away from the moral essence of the problem.²⁸ Finally, there is no publicity when dispensation of justice happens.

- One makes the impression that most of the scandal cases, which had been dropped out, could have been solved, and responsibilities should have been ascribed. These are sufficient causes rendering corruption a fundamental symptom with wide generalization within society: an unsolved or dropped scandal “legitimizes,” not only the causal factors, but its own essence as well, because it is only rhetorically blameworthy, and so it works as a transformative tool for ethics and morals in the relative society.
- It is (negatively) interesting and commonly recognized that, in every period of time, numerous corruption cases are active and under investigation.²⁹
- It appears that everything moves around the sphere of legality, and one never permeates to the core of responsibility and accountability, and of personal morality, not even at the level of law of order. Namely, the preconditions of normativity and ethics or morality are never completed. On the other hand, in the scandals where political factors are involved, a problem of legitimacy emerges.
- In spite of the usual scandal examples, we find enough cases where the corrupt act is followed by a normative act which gives it the necessary legitimacy or “regulates” the problem. Because of the lack of a relative framework,³⁰ the problem in Greece has an additional aspect: a new scandal does not demand or does not create the necessity for a new rule and the reason for this is simple; the rule already exists, but it is not followed, and this happens without any consequences for the offender(s). In these cases, corrupt acts get their legitimacy through the deviance from legitimacy.

²⁷ It is one of the significant findings in Rosenson’s work, “The Cost and Benefits of Ethics Laws,” in Saint-Martin and Thompson (eds.), *Public Ethics and Governance*, 135-154, pp. 147-149.

²⁸ For this broad social narrative of corruption and the discourse about it see A. Gupta, “Narrating the State of Corruption,” in Haller and Shore (eds.), *Corruption: Anthropological Perspectives*, 177-193.

²⁹ For example, in the year 2009 there were under investigation the cases of: Siemens, Pavlides, Vatopedion Monastery and of the side (shadow) juridical network (the case emerged before the year 2000). In the year 2010 the cases: Vatopedion Monastery, Siemens, Vodafone (re-opened and closed), and there was some publicity about forty five (45) cases (contracts for public procurements, public hospitals, contract of the Public Shipyards, illegal hirings in public organizations, several cases of bribes, etc.). In the year 2011 the cases: Vatopedion Monastery, Siemens, Submarines procurements, Proton Bank, contracts awards from the Tourism Organization, fixed up football games and closing (after seven years) of the Kenteris-Thanou case (athletics).

³⁰ Haller and Shore in *Corruption: Anthropological Perspectives* (p. 4, Intro.), give as the information that the change of legal framework for an ex-post legitimacy was a common practice in Silvio Berlusconi’s governments.

Deviance of legal framework becomes one of the most important factors of corruption, participating in what Treisman suggested as “legal culture.”³¹ The Greek particularity consists in the implementation of both potentials, i.e. the avoidance of a legal framework, and, as an example, this particularity verifies Rose-Ackerman’s suggestion that cultural, historical and social factors are major causes for the fundamentality of corruption in some societies, and may be used both as explanatory tools for it and for the creation of new legal frameworks.³²

- In cases where political factors are involved, it is common for their involvement with the scandals not to prove detrimental for their present and future political status. Usually, they are re-elected or appointed by the government to be responsible for the duties of the state. Consequently, legitimacy and political trust are renewed, either through the political body or the political parties: under these circumstances, the aspect that a liberal democracy does not guarantee about constraining corruption, is verified.³³ On the contrary, even in liberal-democratic societies, corruption emerges necessarily and, paradoxically, it becomes the opposition tool by the supporters of the other side (totalitarians or non-liberals). So, corruption is independent from the type of constitution, unless we suppose that the level of corruption depicts the level of liberality and the quality of democracy in a society.³⁴
- Lastly, as far as the involved individuals are concerned, the type or rationalization that emerges in all the cases is of particular significance, which consists in the following reactions:³⁵
 - Denial of responsibility and invocation of complete ignorance.
 - Denial about damage or harm caused, or that the public or a wider interest was hurt.

³¹ Treisman, “The Causes of Corruption: A Cross-National Study,” pp. 401-407. Treisman considers that it varies between societies, even of similar traditions (he uses the examples of Britain and its former colonies). He also indicates other factors of corruption: legal systems, balance of power, economic conditions, influence of religion and political stability.

³² In Rose-Ackerman, *International Handbook on the Economics of Corruption*, Intro.

³³ See J. Kunicova: “Democratic Institutions and Corruption: Incentives and Constraints in Politics,” in Rose-Ackerman, *ibid.*, 140-160.

³⁴ These are some findings of the modelling approach by Rinaldi, Feichtinger and Wirl, “Corruption Dynamics in Democratic Societies.” They trace the dynamics of corruption in the field of the politicians and present some patterns which indicate the cyclical dimension of it. They believe that corruption is inevitable and in one way a necessary evil.

³⁵ For a detailed presentation of rationalization see: G.M. Sykes and D. Matza, “Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency,” *American Sociological Review*, 22 (1957), 664-670; B.E. Ashforth and V. Anand, “The Normalization of Corruption in Organizations,” *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 25 (2003), 1-52; S.C. Zyglidopoulos and P. Fleming, “Ethical Distance in Corrupt Firms: How Do Innocent Bystanders Become Guilty Perpetrators?,” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 78 (2008), 265-274; S.C. Zyglidopoulos, P. Fleming and S. Rothenberg, “Rationalization, Overcompensation and the Escalation of Corruption in Organizations,” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 84 (2009), 65-73.

- Appeal to a higher loyalty or purpose (i.e. the development of the country, or the success of the 2004 Olympic Games): it is a deviation from moral and legal order, based upon a purely utilitarian argument, namely it is only the final cause that is of interest, and not the means used.
- Condemnation of the condemner: in the cases of the political individuals involved, the justification is that a “*plan for their political extermination*” exists, which may be conceived as an inversion of the significance of the act
- Other rationalizations. Most interestingly, in one case, the justification was that the whole thing was an “*administrative dysfunction*,” and in another that it was a “*managerial anomaly*.” In other cases, the investigations had been characterized as indications about the transparency of the system or as positive developments. This kind of rationalization leads us to the definition of a rhetoric that reverses the facts or degrades corruption itself, it generates a “*euphemistic language*”³⁶ and it takes the form of moral justification.
- Especially in athletics, most of the justifications involved the envy in the international community of the success of Greek athleticism (doping cases) or it was about a full denial of responsibility (athletics and football scandals). Usually, there was also a public call from the federation to the official state to support the athletes.

In my opinion, the justification in Greek reality does not appear in the usual character of an attempt to rationalize the act or non-act, but it takes the form of considering it as something reasonable to happen or not to happen, in the sense that the event appears as something reasonable to happen under the specific circumstances. Namely, it is not simply a *rationalization*, but a “*reasonablization*” (the term proposed by the author of the present paper), which, in my opinion, suits much better to describe the Greek reality and applies perfectly to the definition made by Anand et al. about it as a “*mental strategy*.”³⁷ Actually, the main important characteristic is that most individuals involved in a scandal do not accept or consider their act as corrupt. If they do accept some responsibility, they escape accountability by rationalizing it in a way which is between ignorance and knowledge, by ascribing it to the circumstances. A version of that denial is the rhetoric of generalization, giving a wider dimension to an individual act. Another variety of this denial has been traced in the athletic scandals, when the social reaction was the denial of accepting the evidence, through conspiracy theories or simply the belief that

³⁶ The term from V. Anand, B.E. Ashforth and M. Joshi, “Business as Usual: The Acceptance and Perpetuation of Corruption in Organizations,” *Academy of Management Executive*, 18 (2004), 39-53, p. 47, who consider this rhetoric as one of the crucial factors for the avoidance from responsibility. It is interesting to notice that this rhetoric is the first thing used as an argument from the individuals involved and especially from political factors.

³⁷ See Anand et al., *ibid.*, p. 39. Actually, their work is about private organizations and the corporate corruption, but it is very useful and applicable for public sector, since the same tactics and conducts are met.

there is no wrong done. To conclude, the justification through invocation of rationality and reasonableness of the apparently corrupt act functions as a demonstration of new principles, new morality rules and new ethical examples. In that case, any corrupt act is collectively accepted and considered as an act within a set of adopted rules.

2.2. *Informal Corruption*

Under the term “informal corruption,” I assume corruption which is not well known to us from the international research and bibliography, and from common practice as it has been chartered in the previous unity. In another way, it could be considered as a “dormant” or “shadow” form of corruption, which emerges in every circumstance when some interest groups appear in public life for reasons concerning only themselves, but they present them as if they were of general importance. Like the formal one, it works as an example for the social body and, at the end, it usually becomes part of the moral order.

When one justifies professional behavior that ignores common sense views about what is just, she is based upon a confirmation of the priority of the particular purpose that aims at becoming universal. Because of the conflict between particular corporative demands and the demand for a universal moral and ethical dialogue, some professionals tend to make arguments about the moral and ethical exceptions of their demands. Finally, they conclude by arguing that what is good for the professional sector is good for society; namely, they identify a particular interest with the public one, not only theoretically but practically as well, because they theorize and attempt to justify that the first is a necessary condition for the second. This constitutes a permanent situation in Greek reality for the exceptional treatment of several professions, individual categories in the public sector, and a purposeful (through public policies) unaltered condition.

The phenomenon of moral and professional particularism occurs frequently, which may mainly be considered as another level of corruption when it generalizes, given that the notion about public interest is reversed, by these factors, which through their rhetoric, claim to identify particular interest within the common interest.

I place part of the activity of most pressure groups in a premature and dormant corruption phase, in the sense that their practices and rhetoric do not aim at protecting professional rights and requests, but they consist in corporate claims in ways that:

- Sometimes become detrimental for the public life.
- Occasionally take a violent dimension.
- Usually take place against the rule of law.
- Tend to identify their particular interest with that of the public life.
- Function as “educative” tools and examples for the other pressure groups or the public in general.
- A part of their legitimacy comes through the mass media.

On the other hand, due to the fact that they occasionally enjoy political support (and, in some cases encouragement, since there is an interdependence between interests and political factors), I believe the activity of these groups strengthens the legitimacy crisis of politics, as in many cases it appears to work on the threshold of corruption, because of their exemplar dimension for the public in general. Additionally, these groups become something different than expressions of society and public interest, since they turn into servants of corporative claims and, from an aspect of morality, they bypass general principles in favor of the particular. So, in some cases the crisis of formal and moral legitimacy emerges, as has been noted from the examples of two recent cases.³⁸

In my opinion, the charting of pressure groups' actions, in many cases, leads us to the informal corruption, and places it in the threshold of the formal corruption, due to its constitutive elements. The codification of this activity is such that may offer us a quantitative approach as well, and has as it follows:

- Frequency of action (possible repeated regularities, circumstances that cause action).
- Reasons for the action (possible repeated arguments).
- Content of the claiming and division:
 - Claims of corporative type.
 - Claims tending to public interest.
 - Other claims (weight of each in the total rhetoric). I believe this is of particular importance, because it consists in a rationalization of the group and it points to the diminished notion of public interest as the part of the group.
- Types of mobilizing (practices from the groups, practices from the state):
 - Formulation.
 - Actions detrimental for the daily activity of the public (i.e. blocking streets and routes, obstruction of productive activities, interventions in archeological places, etc.).
 - Degree of rule of law observance (or transgression).
 - Duration of the mobilization.
 - Publicity.
 - End of mobilization.
 - Result.

The groups that have been mobilized during the last decade cover a wide spectrum of activities (=professions) and, occasionally, have enough common characteristics (from the above mentioned) that suffice us to have the potential for a typology of action and argumentation from several (and certain) groups:

³⁸ I refer to the acts from the union of the Public Power Corporation during 2011 and the union of the workers in the Athens subway (METRO) in January 2013. For both corporations there have been reports from the General Inspector of Public Administration, which have never been exploited and examined. The report for the first entity is about some excessive expenditure and the report about the second mentions the hirings of the last years. For the report about Public Power Corporation, see <http://www.gedd.gr/articles.php?article=83> and for the report about METRO, see <http://www.gedd.gr/articles.php?article=72>.

- It is a common practice to act on the edge of legality. Many groups do not limit their action to within its nature (i.e. a simple strike), but they tend to externalize their claims with additional actions outside the core of the subject. In many cases, this presents an unnecessary burden for the public, through excessive actions (like street blocking, several obstructions) outside the limits of rule of order. It is not a simple failure, but unwillingness to comply with the rules.
- There is a repeated rhetoric of claiming moral exception or exception from ethical rules and principles.³⁹
- As a consequence of the former rhetoric, usually, there is a tendency to ascribe a more universal character to the morality of the argumentation. In many cases, there are groups which relate their interest to a wider, social one, and the general interest is degraded to the level of the particular, so that the latter will get an artificial general importance.
- From an aspect of morality, a question of legitimacy arises for several individuals who play a role of leadership for these groups.

All of the above constitute a system of examples, which are (usually) used for a future action of new groups or for other members of the social body. The examination of the actions within the last decade show enough repeated patterns and regularities, not only within the same groups (because there are repeated mobilizations), but from one group to another. It is essential to have in mind that each group functions as an example for the others, through a set of actions that are tolerated within the state and the society. In other words, some groups create an environment that encourages individuals and groups to similar incorrect acts. In such circumstances, one individual or group draws the motive to adopt similar actions and attitudes towards the public body.

In my opinion, this situation constitutes a system of “*informal*” or “*dormant*” corruption, and is in agreement with the correct notion expressed by Rose-Ackerman about the complexity of corruption as a social symptom, which includes economics, morality and legitimacy, and where economic development does not guarantee the elimination or the cure of it. She distinguishes “*grand*” from “*low level*” corruption, and characterizes the former as the corruption which is highly destructive for the state and the society, and undermining for the state legitimacy and for the economy.⁴⁰ Uslander also uses a similar distinction, between “*grand*” and “*petty*” corruption.⁴¹ In both approaches, the latter could be suitable for the purposes of the discussion in the present unit.

³⁹ This is the typical example of moral particularism. See M. Norris and M.-O. Little, “Defending Moral Particularism,” in J. Dreier (ed.), *Contemporary Debates in Moral Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 305-322.

⁴⁰ See Rose-Ackerman (ed.), *International Handbook on the Economics of Corruption*, Intro.

⁴¹ See Uslander, *Corruption, Inequality and the Rule of Law*, pp. 10-11.

Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I attempted to present the theoretical questions arising from the Greek version of corruption and its singularity. In my opinion, it consists in something which usually becomes part of the social conscience and, in most cases, it represents normality, and, for this, something extremely difficult to be reversed. By using the Greek example, my objective was to indicate the complexity of the phenomenon, its fundamental character in several societies and its duality of existence, both in a formal and in an informal type. On the other hand, one cannot identify whether corruption is the cause or a symptom for a crisis, since the lack of values is something which reinforces material crisis. Additionally, I believe that the study of the crisis' impact upon governance is of particular significance, because I believe that crisis occasionally is used as an excuse for non-liberal deviations: that is another challenge for a paper like this.

Finally, corruption contains so many activities and so many aspects of social life that it is difficult enough to define it in a unique way, especially if we focus on the material dimension of it. From the Greek reality, if we will use the "Siemens Case" we could put forth the following questions:

What is corruption?

Briberies or shadow briberies (in some cases of donations to political factors)? Venalities?

The implication to this system?

Covering?

The justification of it?

Which is the responsible and accountable (corrupt) party?

Siemens Corporation?

The CEO (Chief Executive Officers) from Germany?

The CEO from Greece?

Some secretaries?

Politicians?

The two dominant parties (because they have obtained funds from Siemens and because they had not disqualified their members involved)?

The Parliament?

The electoral body who legitimized those that had been involved?

Rousseau and the Greek Aspects of Crisis: Nationalism vs Political Compassion

PANAGIOTIS PANTAZAKOS

I

Political debates started in Greece from the fall of the Dictatorship of the Colonels in 1974 and, since, have evolved, leading up to the signing of the first Memorandum on the Greek State's financial stability in 2010. During the same time period, such debates have been far more vivid in Greece than the debates in other European countries, due to the Greek people's yearning for what they had earlier been deprived of, democracy and freedom of speech. Today, however, the regularities of the social structure have been overthrown,¹ because of the multileveled crisis which has hit the country. For the Greek citizens, the crisis created the sensation of a violent and sudden interruption in their entrenched habits. Therefore, they have realized that all these years of debates and political reasoning have ended up in the formation of a new type of reality, which aimed at substituting the reality as such. Greeks, for years, voted and behaved as if they had solved their financial problems and, instead of trying to find ways to "enlarge the pie," they ended up arguing over the "leftovers" and "devouring" their own flesh; they fought with shadows. Unresolved issues and deadlocks accounted for the ideological superiority of one political party or another. The fair distribution of income and taxes was overlooked, international laws and rules governing the international monetary system were totally ignored. Consideration over how to carry on with everyday life took over.

This abnormal "landing" of the Greeks on the dire global economic reality, as well as the bitter taste of being cheated and betrayed by the leaders, in addition to the feeling that today "poisons" the lips of most Greeks, and furthermore, the revelations, lies, cheap rhetoric, scandals and mistakes, have allowed two completely contrasting forces to come to the forefront of the Greek political scene. On the one hand, there are closed and conservative forces, which do not hesitate to exploit popular resentment in order to openly attack democratic debates and advocate violence. On the other hand, there is a broad range of progressive political forces of different inclinations, which have sought to minimize the impact of the economic crisis, proving that standing together is better than standing alone.

The contribution of Jean Jacques Rousseau's philosophy is especially significant in the Greek people's struggle to effectively address the crisis and enter dynamically in a new and mature age, significant for comprehending the

¹ P. Pikrammenos, "Public Law in Exceptional Circumstances in the Visual of Annulment Administrative Procedure," in A. Argyros (ed.), *Studies on the Memorandum* (Athens: Athens Bar Association, 2013), p. 13; also in *Law Pace*, 60 (2012), 2643-2647.

Greeks. While his work clearly defines some of the most talked about terms of our time, such as nationalism, patriotism, political compassion, our homeland vs the “outside,” Rousseau combines the essence of democracy with the general will of the people, which is characterized equally by the willingness of all citizens and the willingness of specific groups, too.²

But what does Rousseau mean by nationalism, patriotism and political compassion? And what do the modern political parties mean? Can the consistent exercise of philosophy contribute to the deepening and widening of democracy, or is there nothing but an unbridgeable gap between philosophy and democracy, since the truth of the many has nothing to do with the solitary truth of the philosophers? How is nationalism ultimately involved in the contrast between the nature of society on the one hand, and individualism on the other? How can general will (the type of political formation that Rousseau forms as “volonté générale”) alter the functioning of democratic institutions, so as to undermine them and lead society to totalitarianism and authoritarianism?

In what follows, I will try to answer these questions in two stages. First, I will describe modern nationalism as familiar to all of us, as well as its causes. Then, I will refer to Rousseau’s texts in order to determine if modern nationalism is equal to the philosopher’s nationalism.

II

A modern definition that compares nationalism and patriotism would be that the first one is loving your own country and hating all the others, in contradiction with the second one, which is loving your own country and showing respect and equal recognition to all the others. Nowadays, nationalism is generally present. Not only does it lie within the Parliaments of Southern European countries, for example Greece, Italy or Spain. This is either due to their own failures and excessive fiscal deficits, or to the global financial situation, where the crisis has rocked their very foundations. Nationalism also exists in the Parliaments of Northern European countries, for example the Netherlands or Sweden, which, not only were the least affected by the crisis, but also were benefited by it.

Since the 1980’s, nationalism had already been displayed dynamically in the European firmament. First, there was the former Soviet Republic, which eagerly sought to secede from the communist block and the Soviet Union, after the “Perestroika,”³ and thus march alone. Secondly, there were the liberal Western democracies and the reaction from the popular masses toward the economic and administrative union of European countries, as planned by their leaders. In other words, they were confuted who thought that nationalism was

² F.M. Banard, “Will and Political Rationality of Rousseau,” *Political Studies*, 32 (1984), 369-384; N.J.H. Dent, *Rousseau: An Introduction to His Psychological, Social, and Political Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).

³ M.F. Plattner, “Rousseau and the Origins of Nationalism,” in C. Orwin and N. Tarcov (eds.), *The Legacy of Rousseau* (London & Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 183-199, p. 183.

defeated once and for all in the Second World War, with the collapse of its most extreme form of "National Socialism" and the establishment of Communism in the one camp, and the Liberal Democrats in the other one. As the political situation today shows, nationalism has, in fact, survived attacks from the left and the atheistic rhetoric, as well as from the right and the Liberalism of West. Most of all, nationalism has survived because it found an unexpected ally in internationalism, which supported it either under the form of internationalist solidarity within the Russian communist nationalism, or under the form of established nationalist alliances in order to confront common enemies, so that nationalism would return to the forefront of public attention.

According to Marc Plattner and Hans Kohn, nationalism should be considered as a broad ideological current, mainly characterized by the strong tendency of its followers to put the idea of the nation at the apex of moral values, and the strong desire of both individuals and groups to be educated in the spirit of unreserved commitment to national ideas, and, at the same time, to ignore other moral values, such as solidarity or humanity or human rights.⁴ Nationalism, as observed in the bibliography, appears to be a dynamic phenomenon in the European Culture, the sources of which date back to the second half of the eighteenth century. They are interwoven with the industrialization and democratization of Europeans, although "bona fide" no one can deny the fact that people have always had a strong sense of belonging to a certain society, sharing the same language, country, religion, common ancestors and the same historical memory.

For Hans Kohn, as well as for the British Royal Institute of International Affairs,⁵ Rousseau is regarded as the philosopher who divided the concepts of "nation" and "people," and, therefore helped the nations of Europe to be transformed into nation-states, equipping them with emotional and moral arguments, in comparison to how they were before the eighteenth century, in other words scattered into large empires. Nonetheless, he is also the one to offer the theoretical foundation for developing nineteenth century nationalism, which led Europe and the whole world to be steeped in blood.⁶ In order to substantiate their arguments, they rely mainly on the third chapter of Rousseau's *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, where the philosopher stresses the eminent importance of the nation in shaping the behavior of individuals.

It is national institutions, writes Rousseau,⁷ which shape the genius, the character, the tastes and the manners of people; which give them an individuality of their own; which inspire them with that ardent love of country, based on ineradicable habits, which makes its members, despite living among other people, die of boredom, though surrounded by delights denied them in their

⁴ H. Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origin and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1944), p. 23.

⁵ E.H. Carr et al., *Nationalism: A Report by a Study Group of Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 27, 30.

⁶ Plattner, "Rousseau and the Origins of Nationalism," p. 184.

⁷ J.-J. Rousseau, *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, in *Jean Jacques Rousseau: Political Writings*, ed. F. Watkins (Edinburgh, 1953), ch. 3.

own land. Remember the Spartan, indicates Rousseau, who gorged in the pleasures of Great King's court and was reproached for missing the black broth. "Ah," he said to the satrap with a sigh, "I know your pleasures but you don't know ours!" Today, no matter what people might say, there are no longer any Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, or even Englishmen; there are only Europeans.

In the opening pages of *Emile*, Rousseau observes that every nation has its own distinct character, formed by both material features such as climate or geography, as well as by political and economic causes.⁸ Indeed, in passages like these, the philosopher does not hesitate to criticize interfaith and trade, believing, as he says, that they make national differences fade, giving way to a field that does not simply nourish the farmer or his neighbors, but other residents of other distant countries, who, by acting normally, consume colonial products that do not satisfy their cultural habits, but, also, because anyone who deliberately ignores his roots and his history is not just forgetful, but he is a nobody. Nations, Rousseau indicates, are nothing but the summary of their members. For this reason, whatever virtues a citizen may have differ from those of his nation, and therefore all nations and people ultimately have the government that they deserve.

According to Rousseau, if we wish to study the character and the habits of a nation, we ought not to go to big cities, where citizens act impersonally, but into the districts, to transit stations or to Diaspora communities. There, not only we do focus on elements that are invisible in big cities, but, also, we find that Greek and English people are more Greek or English in New York or India than in their birthplace.

For Rousseau, education should be public, because it is only then that the state can ensure the unity, continuity and cohesion of the nation. According to the philosopher, education must cultivate tastes, manners and customs of the citizens in three complementary ways: firstly, with historical memory, religion, poetry, literature and public honor ceremonies to the glorious deeds of their ancestors; secondly, with team-work, theater, music, public games in the countryside and ethnic sports teams; and, thirdly, with the fear of a common enemy, which sometimes is, according to Rousseau, of such vital necessity for the unity of the nation that it has to be invented if it does not already exist. Characteristically, in the fourth chapter of his *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, Rousseau writes:

"It is education that must give souls a national formation, and direct their opinions in such a way that they will be patriotic by inclination, by passion, by necessity. When he first opens his eyes, an infant ought to see the fatherland, and up to the day of his death he ought never to see anything else. Every true republican has drunk in honor of love for his country, that is to say love for law and liberty, along with his mother's milk. This love is his whole existence;

⁸ J.-J. Rousseau, *Emile, or On Education*, trans. A. Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), pp. 39-40.

he sees nothing but the fatherland, he lives for it alone; when he is solitary, he is nothing; when he has ceased to have a fatherland, he no longer exists; and if he is not dead, he is worse than dead.”⁹

According to Plattner, “Rousseau cannot be considered as a nationalist in the sense of [how] nationalism is defined today. While his writings state that nationalism is a valuable precursor for cosmopolitanism, as opposed to nationalism in itself, his ideal is not the obedient nationalist but the free citizen.”¹⁰ In the first book of *Emile* Rousseau writes:

“the envisioned citizen cannot be equated with the individual citizen of a nation: Every citizen is always in contradiction with himself, always floating between his inclinations and his duties, he will never be either man or citizen [...] he will be one of these men of our days: a Frenchman, an Englishman, a bourgeois. He will be nothing.”¹¹

From this point of view, someone could argue that, for Rousseau, the ideal of education and legislation shall not solely include the citizen or the promotion of national standards, but shall include the cosmopolitan, the man without frontiers or the philosopher in the true sense.

“My scorn,” writes Rousseau in the *First Discourse*,¹² “is to reveal those who are subjugated by the opinions of their century, their country, their society and praises philosophers like Bacon, Descartes and Newton as the preceptors of the human race.” Meanwhile, along the same line, Rousseau presents himself as a genuine philosopher, and speaks, as he says, a language that suits all nations. While pleading to Plato and Xenocrates for judges and to the human race for an audience, Rousseau indicates a few great cosmopolitan souls who surmount the imaginary barriers that separate people and who, following the example of the sovereign Being who created them, include the whole human race in their benevolence.¹³

For Rousseau, the ideal citizen should not be a nationalist, but a patriot, and we should not get confused when we use these two terms. As we saw, they refer to two, not only different, but wholly opposite things. The primordial duty of a patriot is, according to Rousseau, the respect of the public interest and the law, not only because, in this way, the democratic principle of “the minority to follow the decisions of the majority” can be substantiated, but also because law is the redeeming feature of the general will, which establishes by law the natural freedom among people. In other words, Rousseau cannot be classified as a nationalist in the sense that we consider someone nationalist today, because, in his work, he does not systematically analyze the meaning of “nation.” Neither does he identify the concepts of “homeland” or “state.”

⁹ Rousseau, *Considerations on the Government of Poland*, p. 176.

¹⁰ Plattner, “Rousseau and the Origins of Nationalism,” p. 189.

¹¹ Rousseau, *Emile*, p. 40.

¹² J.-J. Rousseau, *First Discourse*, trans. R.D. Masters (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1964), p. 36.

¹³ J.-J. Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, trans. R.D. Masters (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1964), pp. 103, 160-161.

In fact, he uses the terms “people” and “nations” alternatively to refer to “what are clearly political units whereas in other cases they designate pre-political groupings of men.”

III

Rousseau’s ideas for the nation, race, homeland and political compassion¹⁴ can, if they are properly examined, offer a lot to the Greeks who suffer due to the crisis, on both a speculative and a practical level.

On a speculative level, the study of Rousseau’s philosophy can help Greeks, not only to correctly understand the difference between patriotism and nationalism, and, in this way, to defuse political controversies, but, also, to realize the value of patriotism in their social life. Whether we like it or not, no state can survive for long if its citizens see no good in its laws and practices beyond these unwelcomed necessities, generated by the need to accommodate others.

On a practical level, Rousseau’s philosophy can help Greeks to realize that they have to deal with the crisis within their specific needs and characteristics, in order to follow their history, to discover how they can ensure freedom and self-sufficiency, instead of seeking to secure external financial support by signing memoranda as safety nets for financial fallback.

As reported by Rousseau, supporting the merchandise economy, ensuring the purchasing power of the middle classes, and dealing with unemployment by supporting employment instead of subsidizing the unemployed, should be consisted, together with fiscal consolidation, the fair taxation of wealth and juridical stability. There is no other way to set up a stable state that will serve the interests both of its citizens and of the oligarchs.

When citizens refuse their homeland, and substitute it for financial success and personal benefits, then they lose their roots and follow the power of money, which inevitably leads their country to destruction through division and quarrels over who will cheat, allowing for the most vulgar interests to appear shamelessly, in the “blessed” name of social good, and vote deceptively for unfair ordinances so as to satisfy private interests.

¹⁴ T. O’Hagan, *Rousseau* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 109.

Neither Fate nor Decline: The Crisis of Modern Greek Society in Kostas Axelos and Panagiotis Kondylis

KONSTANTINOS RANTIS

In these days, we are experiencing an unprecedented crisis of modern Greek society, which is primarily received as a debt crisis rather than a total one (*Gesamtkrise*).¹ It concerns the social system itself, as well as the everyday life of the citizens. To begin with, it must be pointed out that the categories used in this text are only in part adequate in the analysis of modern Greek society, as they relate more to the implications of an ongoing process of the disenchantment of the world (*Entzauberung der Welt*), described by Max Weber as “the intellectual rationalization through science and scientifically-oriented technique”² or the possibility of the domination of all things, principally through calculation.³ However, what is needed is, first, to explain the distorted process of disenchantment in modern Greek society and, second, to answer the question why distinctive features of Western European societies, held as models by the founders of the new Greek state in 1830, were not adopted.

At the same time, the present crisis reflects a crisis of the very social theory that interprets the total crisis of Greek society. In recent decades, historiography revealed a decisive gap in the historic development of modern Hellenism, given by the fact that the Greek people did not experience the age of Renaissance with its rediscovery of the world and man. Instead, it was directly confronted with Enlightenment and, hence, lacked the reformation of the ideas of late antiquity and the Middle Ages.⁴ Not only does this gap continue to negatively inform the mentality and manifestations of Greek society, but it also has its effects on the social theory that explores and assesses the gap. It has become a negative theory that, from all its aspects, presents modern Greek society as a capitalist society. That theory readily employs categories “which describe and conceive the relations and the social realities of other societies.”⁵ It thereby reveals the retardment of Greek society in relation to its Western models. Although it appears to be descriptive, it is implicitly norma-

¹ Cf. J. Habermas, *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1973), p. 13 ff.

² M. Weber, “Wissenschaft als Beruf,” in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), p. 593.

³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 594

⁴ K.T. Dimaras, “The Pattern of Enlightenment,” in K.T. Dimaras, *Modern Greek Enlightenment* (Athens: Hermes, 1989⁵), 21-119, p. 26.

⁵ Cf. M.N. Antonopoulou, “Report,” in M.N. Antonopoulou, I. Lampiri-Dimaki, G. Kavvadias (eds.), *The Structure of the Greek Society*, ed. Centre for Marxist Studies (Athens: Kentauros, 1986), 13-21, p. 19.

tive, as it predetermining the way in which the world is to be conceived, and thus determining the possibilities of action.⁶

Occasioned by the violent outbreak of the hitherto latent economic crisis in Greece, older essays by Greek thinkers on the problems of modern Greek society were re-published. Directly or indirectly, they give answers to the question why the process of rationalization in Greece has failed. These essays are still relevant today, as for instance the ones by Kostas Axelos, *The Fate of Modern Greece*,⁷ and Panagiotis Kondylis, *The Causes of the Decline of Modern Greece. The Cachexia of the Bourgeois Element in Modern Greek Society and Ideology*.⁸ Neither of the two authors follows the imperialist tendency to giving an exhaustive interpretation of the crisis, based on recorded facts and causalities (neo-positivism). Instead of submitting themselves to the Cartesian rules, the fourth rule in particular (*Discours de la méthode*),⁹ they are inspired by the free spirit of philosophical critique, which implies the idea of non-identity and the negation of fixed origins. Their concept of unity is a fragmented whole, without negating the idea of wholeness.¹⁰ Moreover, based on inter-disciplinary cooperation, these essays represent a theory which in the 1920s was called ‘cultural criticism’ (*Kulturkritik*)¹¹ in face of the cultural crisis (*Kulturkrise*),¹² which had outlined itself already in the late 19th century.

I. *The Fate of Modern Greece in Kostas Axelos*

The new translation of Axelos’s essay, *The Fate of Modern Greece*, appeared in 2010. The author, in seeking a philosophical answer to the problem, precludes the solutions given by the individual sciences sociology, psychology, ethnology and economics, their view being reduced and fragmented by their focus on a particular field. They lack “the unity of discourse which fertilizes becoming” (A, 23). Modern Greece is characterized by its ambivalent relationship to both ancient Greece and Judaic-Christian Byzantium, especially the Christian part. From this relationship emanate the contrasts that constitute its modern identity (cf. A, 13). Modernity, according to Axelos, means self-consciousness derived from practising subjectivity. Impelled by the Nietzschean ‘Will to Power’ (Wille zur Macht) (A, 16), it exerts domination over the world through the physical-mathematical science and technique (cf. A, 16

⁶ Cf. G. Schweppenhäuser, *Kritische Theorie* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2010), p. 10.

⁷ K. Axelos, *The Fate of Modern Greece*, Greek trans. K. Daskalaki (Athens: Nefeli, 2010) (Abbreviation A).

⁸ P. Kondylis, *The Causes of the Decline of Modern Greece. The Cachexia of the Bourgeois Element in Modern Greek Society and Ideology* (Athens: Themelio, 2010) (Abbreviation K).

⁹ Cf. R. Descartes, *Von der Methode des richtigen Vernunftgebrauchs und der wissenschaftlichen Forschung* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1990), p. 32-33.

¹⁰ Cf. T.W. Adorno, “Essay als Form,” in *Theodor W. Adorno: Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 11 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 9-33, p. 17.

¹¹ Cf. H. Schnädelbach, “Plädoyer für eine kritische Kulturphilosophie,” in R. Konersmann (ed.), *Kulturphilosophie* (Leipzig: Reclam, 2004³), 307-326, p. 307ff.

¹² Cf. R. Konersmann, *Kulturphilosophie zur Einführung* (Hamburg: Junius, 2003), p. 28ff.

ff.). The Cartesian reversion from objective to subjective reason is irreversible and the emergence of self-consciousness is held to be the fundament of modernity.

Therefore, in order to answer the question whether present Greece is truly modern, Axelos thinks it necessary to find out, whether and to what extent, self-consciousness and the sciences aimed to control nature, are existent in Greece. For Axelos, the self-consciousness is weak (cf. A, 17) and the ties of modern to ancient Greek thought are unproductive compared to the influence of ancient Greece on European thought. (cf. A, 18). Modern Greece may “feed on Western thought,” but “there exist neither the trunk of knowledge nor the branches of the disciplines.” Also, “the twin sister of science, technique, is utterly missing’ so that ‘great works –of thought or science or technique or art– do not see the light of day” (A, 19). In politics, despite its reference to ancient Greece, “political (un)-consciousness” emerges; it is not any more “a strong technical thought that gives a particular form to the fate of the totality through an intelligent strategy, but rather adventure” (A, 21). Therefore, the “non-Greeks” (*ibid.*) apply an inadequate scheme to the reality of modern Greek society, and are given to self-delusion.

The first and most serious self-delusion of modern Greeks is Hellenocentrism, the Great Idea, “the only ‘idea’ which Greece could project” (A, 22 ff.). Modern Greek society has not been able to open up any new perspectives to the world, nor can it boast of any extraordinary attributes in the world; it merely offers “to others the theme of its past” (A, 24). “Greek myth” was not realized, neither politically, nor culturally, nor aesthetically (A, 26), because modern Greece has confused the real possibility of utopia with wishful thinking (cf. A, 26). According to Spengler, modern Greece belongs to the magical world. It succeeded the Greco-Roman world and preceeded modernity; its psyche is magical, its symbol the Christian crypt (cf. A, 27). Nevertheless, Axelos distances himself from Spengler by saying that present Greece does not live “exclusively on magical and oriental Christianity” (A, 24), that it is rather something different and at the same time something that reflects a foreign light. In quest for its *ousia*, it must move towards the luminous light of the modern West.

The second delusion of Greeks, as to their national self-assessment, lies in the adoption of a radical westernism (cf. A, 29). Westerners are taken as models, yet those ‘Westerners,’ who came into the historical limelight at the the end of the Middle Ages and, not having a model themselves, offered themselves as a role model for others. If modern Greeks should try to assimilate to their model, they should “realize” the achievements of the Western Europeans, “anew and for their own account” (*ibid.*). If Greece is to become truly modern, “there must exist a movement originating from its own essence, which will urge it not towards ‘modernism’ but towards ‘modernity’” (A, 31).

Axelos, in schematizing the historical process and circumventing the historical gap, wonders “if the hellenocentric self-delusion was identified and the stance towards the West expelled its mimetic trend, could this country of ruins in which it is so difficult for factories to pop up become genuinely modern

on?" (*ibid.*). To be able to answer this question in the affirmative, the half national, half psychological currents in modern Greece, leading to dialectic pseudo-syntheses, must be overcome. As an example for such a pseudo-synthesis, Axelos mentions the current opinion that Greece is "an odd totality of contradictory particularities," Eastern as well as Western (*ibid.*). According to this concept, modern Greece would be oriental and simultaneously more Western than the West; "its being would inhere in its unique particularity which forgives everything; which forgives primarily the fact that the effort is not supported and is never driven to its fulfilment" (A, 33). A serious problem is created, if insufficiently supported efforts lead to failure; then suppression replaces consciousness, instead of the common awareness of failure, "everyone remembers" merely that "Greece is the country which developed dialectics"; "they speak for the allure of composure": "the narcissism of idle particularity" (*ibid.*). Although Greeks living in the diaspora offered motives for the realization of Greek ideas, particularly those of the Greek Revolution in 1821, Greece remained incapacitated by its lack of an overall vision. The suggestions were not integrated into a whole (cf. A, 38).

And yet, there is also the positive aspect that Greece is "a country seeking its self with great passion" (A, 39), it has a beauty, "it teaches its inhabitants not to avoid death when it is coming," it has "unheard-of potentialities," it is a "hospitable land," "its nature is revealed rich to the creatures of the World" and, last, it has a "very true and very beautiful poetry" (A, 40). It is the "Greece of the fire and not the one of the ashes" (*ibid.*). On the basis of this reasoning, and making use of the scheme of decay (cf. A, 41), modern Greece seems definitely degenerated and exhausted, a country of the Balkans. A truth that is partial and one-sided (cf. A, 42). For modern Greece to manage to face up to the risks which it encounters, it has to regard them as an internal threat and to remain "loyal to its own essence, it must *be* Greece and *acquire* a substantial importance" (A, 43). Greece cannot avoid the modern world nor invoke that others hold its fortune in their hands, it is itself that "is responsible for its fate" (A, 44). In order to be integrated in the play of the World, it has to abandon its small particularity "to the benefit of *concrete universalism*" (A, 45).

Modern Greeks did not achieve the harmonisation of their hypertrophic personal element with their atrophic public one. They are literally drowning themselves by their personal and interpersonal element, which they are unable to incorporate "in a transpersonal framework" (A, 48), their malaise does not transform to an anxiety which aims at the universal element and to transcendence. The psychological element prevails over the social element also, as the state "did not become a form with a content, which would formulate individuals which it contains" (*ibid.*). The most significant of all is that "reflection is lacking" (A, 49). Modern Greeks "may reason but they do not think. The absence of thought constitutes an absence of the shaping and the form, and thus neither the psychological nor the social can be transcended" (*ibid.*).

Also, they do not have any examples for their guidance and the formation of self-identity. Only the voice of the poets is still "worth being heard" (A, 51). From the lack of examples, derives a lack of synthesis, a form which

would express her various faces even of a fragmented modern Greece. Hence, many Greeces (cf. A, 52) exist next to each other, and among them all arises the issue of a true synthesis. Modern Greece “is deprived of tradition” (A, 53) and the adolescent modern Greek has a “fiery” soul and a “fiery” heart, but “his thought does not have direction,” “it does not manage to see the horizon,” “believes that he is dialectic as he abuses the logical principle of non-contradiction” (A, 54). Axelos closes the series of questions he raised with the query: whether the children of modern Greece might “stay behind mid-way, without there being someone there to educate them” (A, 55).

II. *The Causes of the Decline of Modern Greece in Panagiotis Kondylis*

Central to Kondylis’s essay is the historico-social and ideological process, characterized “as the decline of the bourgeois civilization” (K, 11), not the specific theme of “national crisis,” or the causes of the decline of contemporary Greece (cf. “Editor’s note”: K, 7). Only indirectly and conditionally does the author respond to the problem of the overall crisis of contemporary Greek society. He also fails to give exact documentations. A critical analysis of this study is impeded, “reading between the lines”¹³ is required, and neither the sources of the sharp criticism, nor its addressees become obvious. The essay abounds with aphoristic generalizations due to the atemporal use, in categorical sentences, of non-defining expressions (*never, from all aspects, all the levels, everywhere*), so that the intended meaning is obscured.¹⁴ Moreover, Kondylis has chosen a fragmentary form of discourse in the manner of Novalis, who preferred a non-systemizing system.¹⁵ Simultaneously, Kondylis maintains his intention to precisely determine “the character of the Greek ‘bourgeois’ class” (K, 17), in order to explain the decline of the bourgeois culture and to indirectly offer answers to questions regarding the total crisis of modern Greek society.

Kondylis is based more on social sciences than on philosophy, his socio-theoretical analysis combines the Marxian and the Weberian approach. In the interpretation of the emergence of modern capitalism with which the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois civilization are inextricably associated, the Marxian conception is focused on *primitive accumulation (ursprüngliche Akkumulation)* “which is not the outcome of the capitalist mode of production but also its point of departure. This primitive accumulation plays, in political economy, the same role as original sin in theology.”¹⁶ In contrast to this, the We-

¹³ Cf. F. Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse, Kritische Studienausgabe*, Vol. 5 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1999), p. 17.

¹⁴ Cf. W. van Orman Quine, *Grundzüge der Logik* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1974), p. 102.

¹⁵ Cf. H. Krüger, *Über den Aphorismus als philosophische Form* (München: Text+Kritik, 1988), p. 62.

¹⁶ Cf. K. Marx, *Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, Vol. 23 (Berlin: Dietz, 1998), p. 741.

berian analysis investigated the role of “ascetic rationalism”¹⁷ or of “ascetic Protestantism”¹⁸ as a factor between others which ignored modern industrial capitalism.¹⁹ Recent research has concluded that Max Weber’s “work programme,” which was developed in a series of articles from 1904 until 1920 is more accurately expressed by the title *The Puritan Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Capitalism* and not by the title *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.²⁰ As will be shown, both concepts, that of *primitive accumulation* and of orthodoxy with its *economic ethic* (*Wirtschaftsethik*), are of equal importance in Kondylis’s analysis, while they are absent in Axelos. Kondylis’s argumentation is on a more concrete basis; it implies history, as well as socio-philosophical and politico-philosophical ideas.

In that he is focused on the conflicting currents within modern Greek society, Kondylis adopts Axelos’s frame of reference: on the one hand there are “the left-wing or even liberal modernisers” (K, 17) and on the other the “Hellenocentrists” (*ibid.*). As Kondylis verifies, the so-called decline of bourgeois civilization is integrally connected with the concept of the “bourgeoisie,” accusing it of “more or less left-wing modern Greek sociology” (K, 14), which it interpreted one-sidedly. The concept of the “bourgeoisie” was formed during the 18th and the 19th centuries in other-type societies and was imported in Greece, when its content had already changed; hence, it could not fully correspond to Greek reality. On these grounds, it was connected with apperceptions and representations which “only elusively and secondarily” correspond to its substantive content, and was merely regarded as “the great rival of the rising working class,” while, historically, it was also “the main social opponent of aristocracy and clericalism, the carrier of a new positive perception on the organization of life and of a robust new world-view” (K, 14). However, this served “a compelling epistemological necessity” (*ibid.*), and there was no other alternative available for the analysis of the modern Greek social formation. As is also denoted by the usage of the category “development” (K, 15), the sociologists and historians of the European periphery take the Western European societies as a model and regard as imperative their countries’ assimilation to them.

“The left-wing or even liberal modernizers” (K, 17) were oriented towards an “evolutionary philosophy of history” (*ibid.*), without “attempting a particular determination of the character of the Greek ‘bourgeoisie’” (*ibid.*; emphasis by K.R.), which requires comprehensive knowledge of the data, as well as the comparison between themselves and the data of the model coun-

¹⁷ Cf. M. Weber, *Die protestantische Ethik und der ‘Geist’ des Kapitalismus* (Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum, 2000), p. 155.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁰ Cf. M. Weber, *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), pp. 17-206. Cf. K. Lichtblau, “Max Webers ‘Protestantische Ethik’ in werkgeschichtlicher Betrachtung. Eine Erwiderung auf die ‘Steinert-These’,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften*, 23 (2012/3), 33-49, p. 34.

tries (cf. K, 18), in an effort to establish the existence of the bourgeoisie in Greece rather than elucidating “its composition and its texture,” to present “differentially its labour organization and the relevant labour relations, its mentality, ideology, and culture etc.” (*ibid.*). The activities of ship-owners and small manufacturers, e.g., in the diversified pre-capitalist Greek society, can only ex post facto be characterized as bourgeois, “if they constitute focal points of primitive accumulation which subsequently in an unbroken continuity fuel machination and industrialization” (*ibid.*). On their own, they cannot break the nexus of the patriarchal relations and the corresponding mentalities, which militate the weighting and instrumental reasoning, the impersonal formation of labour relations and capitalist accumulation (cf. K., 18 ff.). Thus, in the 18th century in the Helladic region, the pre-capitalist forms of the economy were transformed and the Greek economy was integrated into the expanding global capitalist market, but it did not constitute “the trigger and the core of a self-motivated capitalist economy” (K, 19) nor were the corresponding qualitative changes realized, corresponding to capitalism, nor were “a national capitalism” and “a national bourgeoisie” (*ibid.*) created, but, on the contrary, patriarchal structures survived. The investigation of “the lifestyle, mentality and worldview of the agents of this economic activity” (K, 20) suggest that these agents continued to move “in the context of the Balkan clan” without developing something analogous to the bourgeois civilization. Patterns of the bourgeois culture are encountered only among Diaspora Greeks, but their “transfilling in the interior” was impossible (*ibid.*). Even the emerging “(partial) modernization of ideology,” at the end of the 19th century, was not “the linear continuation of the meager modern Greek Enlightenment” (*ibid.*).

For Kondylis, “Western-type feudalism was the necessary negative condition for the development of an also Western-type bourgeoisie” (K, 21). Its lack, however, in the Helladic region during the 18th century does not render the oppositional schema “feudalist-bourgeois” usable for its analysis. On the contrary, there prevails the concrete description of the peculiar patriarchal social organization of the Helladic regional area and of the particular small social groups (merchants and ship-operators), who were detached from it and were integrated “directly into the international capitalist circuit”. (K, 22) Subsequently, these exerted pressures “on the reformation of their area of origin” (*ibid.*), without yet repudiating “their key patriarchal features,” they did not become bourgeois-capitalistic and, on this ground, politically and socially co-existed with social groups, which played more traditional patriarchal roles (land-holders, captains [kapetanaioi]), and were not interested in the “economic orientation and social structure of the country” (K, 23), but were devoted to the redistribution of the political power and the national wealth. The ruptures between them, if any, are due to the influence of conflicting European interests in the Near and Middle East from 1850 onwards. Thus, they limited themselves to “brokerage and transit operations” (*ibid.*), even when they transplanted their activities on the lands of the modern Greek state and transferred elements of the bourgeois civilization which they cultivated “in the

cosmopolitan environment of the diaspora" (K, 24). Nevertheless, no cohesive world-view arose to inspire a stable behavior with bourgeois features, as there were lacking the "form of the innovative industrialist as a bearer and the practical transubstantiator of the spirit of modern science and technique, of the spirit of progress and of the rupture with the barren traditionalism of the rural patriarchalism" (*ibid.*). This lack and the absence of the elements of bourgeois civilization, which emerged in the pre-industrial era, account for the reason why the elements of the bourgeois civilization, even when they penetrated into the Helladic area, did not constitute the pole of attraction and the framework of integration of heterogeneous elements, but were assimilated by the patriarchal ideologies and attitudes (cf. K, 25).

The integration of Greece into the international capitalist system is paralleled by the integration into the international political system, in the era when the so-called "Oriental Question" was accentuated (cf. K, 25 ff.). Simultaneously, crowned parliamentarism is being introduced on the basis of "universal suffrage," due to the strategy of the Western forces, who played a catalytic role for "the peculiar physiognomy of the modern Greek state" (K, 25), as these were political institutions too advanced for a society where the patriarchal relations, attitudes, and mentalities and values prevailed, (cf. K, 26). Nevertheless, an "intense social mobility" was observed both for the higher social strata and for the broad masses, as the state offered opportunities for a political and social career to the former and cleared the path to the latter for the relocation to the cities. Hence, the state was augmented and its guiding role was strengthened (cf. *ibid.*), but it did not represent the general interest, and the separation of the state and society did not take place as in Western Europe. The malaise of the economy led the parties to offer, on the part of the state, positions for the attraction or retention of their voters (cf. K, 27), and the transfer of the patriarchal relations into politics created the so-called "clientelist relation." Kondylis ends up with a catalytic, topical conclusion: "the patriarchal or clientelist character of parliamentarism and simultaneously the scarcity of the positions in the free market resulted in the implication that the government apparatus in Greece plays a role analogous to the one played by the industrial urban centres in the West" (*ibid.*). This development was neither incited by the domestic bourgeoisie nor did it benefit it, but on the contrary constituted an obstacle "of a purely capitalist development" (K, 28). Instead of having a state of the bourgeoisie, the political "high-born families" ["tzakia"] with the pre-bourgeois patriarchal mentality and their methods, inaugurated and cultivated "the divestiture of the state" (K, 29). This was not based on linear relations between classes and parties, it does not have to do with ideological positions or positions of principles, insofar, as more or less, all the political parties were statist (cf. K, 30).

As a parallel, the gradual decomposition of the patriarchal structures created a mass of petit-bourgeois people and small owners, who moved without hesitation from one political party to the other (cf. K, 30 ff.). The same behavior was also observed of the bourgeoisie which satisfied its interests with the same "clientelist methods" and was based on an ever-greater "state interven-

tion.” Thus, “the Greek ‘bourgeoisie’ was never adequately constituted, homogeneous and strong, to indisputably identify with the political governance of the country” (K, 31). The government apparatus was even less suitable to exercise a clear bourgeois policy, both due to the influence of the political competition and the clientelist relations, and due to the quality of the civil servants who staffed it, and there could not emerge an attitude and conduct that was rational, which befits a modern bureaucracy,²¹ “the back door” and “cronyism” being the instruments of overcoming the rigidity and the ineffectiveness of the state (cf. K, 33).

The strengthening of the state played a catalytic role in the imperfect separation of state and society. Instead of the state imposing itself as the “body of economic development and institutional modernization” (*ibid.*), it served an inactive society which “drained the government apparatus to perpetuate itself” (*ibid.*). The state did not manage to “cover the lack of a class that is dominant, cohesive and simultaneously dynamic from a productive and from an ideological aspect” (K, 35), it did not manage to play the role of “enlightened despotism” (*ibid.*), but, parliamentarily, the state was, on the one hand, “an organ of imperialist influence,” and, on the other hand, a good conductor of the patriarchal mentalities which impeded radical modernization. And yet, also, the relation between the nation and the state in modern Greek society proved to be equally problematic. For the contemporary nation-state, the coincidence of nation and state constituted the requirement for the actualization of bourgeois nationalism and the political sovereignty of the bourgeoisie. In modern Greek society, the nation remained more important, to some degree, than the state. It was mentally detached from the state, and with its patriarchal character it was based on actual or fictional racial and political factors (language, religion), while the significance of its economic basis, its social texture, and its institutional organization were sidelined (cf. K, 38). Pre-bourgeois, patriarchal social forces adopted this concept of a nation and generally prevented the modernizing link between the nation and the state. These forces also include the Church. A supranational institution under Ottoman rule, it now turned national and ex post facto established its role as the central authority, in which the conflicting currents within the nation were united. In this way, the Church did “not allow for any gaps, which might be of advantage to the social forces with their secular, if not anti-religious tendencies” (K, 40). The Church presented an insurmountable obstacle to a reasonable relation between society and state (cf. *ibid.*). This “pre-bourgeois patriarchalism” (K, 41) also spread to the “left,” which no longer dares to openly plead for the separation between state and church.

“Hellenocentrism” (K, 41) originates from the asymmetry between nation and state. It performed the “function of modern Greek ideology par excellence” (K, 42) and set up the arena for the contention between the social, political, or ideological currents for domination in modern Greek society, despite

²¹ On the relation of legitimate sovereignty with the bureaucratic administrative mechanism cf. M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1980), p. 124ff.

the resistance of the left-wing minorities with their “internationalist ideologemes,” while they themselves espoused, “explicitly or implicitly Hellenocentrist positions.” Thus “any ideological polemics regarding the issues of the chosen people and of the three-thousand-year-old history” (K, 43) was terminated. The continued existence of Hellenocentrism bridged the gap between the differing conceptions of the nation; it legitimated and morally justified Greek international contentions, and psychologically counterbalanced the humiliations of a weak nation (cf. *ibid.*). In contrast to Axelos, Kondylis concretizes the forms of Hellenocentrism. The “classicist-humanist Hellenocentrism” (K, 44) was cultivated in the pre-revolutionary community centres of Western Europe and was opposed to the “unworldly Byzantinism of the church” (*ibid.*). This was not an original idea; it reflected the basic construction of the bourgeois, popular and secular forces of the West which in modern times employed archaeolatry and Hellenolatry against traditional Christianity. The discovery of the ancient Greek civilization by “civilized humanity” made it possible for modern Greeks to refer to these secular forces, as their own scientific contributions to the exploration of the ancient civilization were inconsiderable, and no overall view and interpretation was provided by modern Greece (cf. K, 46).

Yet, this “archaeolatric Hellenocentrism” was subjected to patriarchal “post-interpretation” (*ibid.*), which means it was associated with the values and the ideals of Christianity so as to satisfy the Church. From such after-interpretation arose the “historical construction of an uninterrupted three-thousand-year-old history of the Greeks” (K, 47). Integrated in it this was Byzantium, which in pre-revolutionary modern Greek Enlightenment was regarded as “a manifestation and figment of obscurism and superstition” (*ibid.*). Thus, the Church was historically and ideologically rehabilitated. Here, too, the association of ancient Greek and Christian ideals was modelled after the ideas of European Enlightenment with Christianity being interpreted “modernistically and in a world-worshipping manner” (*ibid.*), while the approximation of Christianity and Hellenism was given an utterly different content by the fusion of the “three-thousand-year-old ethical and spiritual continuity with the Greek nation” (K, 48). The reasons for the legitimations of the now contradictory socio-political elements and world-views within this union are emphasized and explained. Furthermore, forms of Christian-Orthodox Hellenocentrism appeared, which are not in line with the official Church, but are variations or repetitions of patterns by Slavophiles or Pan-Slavists, who, already since the beginning of the 19th century, have contrasted the “spiritual” Orient with the “materialistic” West, respectively love (*agape*) with the intellectualism of the Western philosophical-religious doctrines.²²

Kondylis underlines the basic positions of Hellenocentrism and points out that the morphology, history and sociology of Modern Greek ideology could have been written, if researchers had not fully accepted the self-images of the

²² Cf. F.M. Dostoyevsky, *A Writer's Diary: 1st Part - 2nd Part 1873-1876* (Athens: Armos, 2006), pp. 179ff, 333, 228, 250.

competing blocs. The language question, e.g. “the vindication katharevousa (the purist language form) did not everywhere and always lead to a ‘reactionary’ attitude” (K, 52), it related, in part, to practical needs or it was inspired by classical ideals. Also demoticism was connected with blocs that differed from, or even were hostile to each other. Modern Hellenist poetry, that has produced some outstanding works, shows the reflection par excellence of Hellenocentrism in modern Greek ideology. Even in modernist poetry, “the idea of Greece” appears as “the condensation of the supreme moral and aesthetic values,” which covered the ‘bourgeois ideas and values’” (K, 54). The latter did not constitute the decisive element of the mentality and behavior of the people, otherwise they would have been expressed in the bourgeois novel, which never emerged. The modern Greek novel describes the fate of middle-class individuals who live in miserable conditions and whose hopes remain unfulfilled. Even if their dreams are realized, their role is not that of a main character; the bourgeois element only appears marginally. The “bourgeois values of the work ethic” (K, 55) which were opposed to Hellenocentrism and Greek tradition, namely “orthodoxy (the contempt of worldly goods and the preference of commonly shared property) and antiquity (the destestation of brutality and the priority of ideational life)” (*ibid.*) did not enter into modern Greek literature, with the exception of the pre-revolutionary texts of modern Greek Enlightenment. Yet, people from “high-born families” developed morals, in their social and secular lives, inspired by sentimental fiction dealing with bandits or revolutionary fighters; they set up a code “of the social life of the higher strata” (K, 56), which was valid until World War II. This code concerned certain rules of etiquette, unwritten rules of social contacts, as well as the desired acquisition of a “European-style” education. All this did not affect “the domestic bourgeois cultural needs” (*ibid.*) that were satisfied in opera houses or art galleries, the interested public still being held in a patriarchal frame of mind with pre-bourgeois views.

According to Kondylis, the era following the dictatorship is one of transition “from the regime of patriarchalism and spurious, artificial urbanism to equally spurious mass democracy” (K, 57). It was characterized by greater social permeability and clientelism, but it also strengthened the inner structure of the system. The occupation and the upheavals after the civil war significantly changed the bourgeois stratum of the society and added to it the nouveaux riches, contractors and retailers. The latter –with their dealings on the black market that had been in full swing during the occupation– made excellent business in “reconstruction,” the “major public works” and massive import (cf. K, 58). With insignificant exceptions, the same educational level is shared by the rest of the trading class. As Kondylis concludes, “there became distinct even the prior spurious urbanism” (*ibid.*). Furthermore, through the expansion of the service sector in the 1950s and 1960s (tourism and emigration), a populist stratum emerged, characterized by “mimetic consumerism,” “by the arrogance of newly-acquired prosperity” and by “sciologism” (K, 59). The values of “fast enrichment and expedited consumerism” rendered Greek society “more homogeneous” (*ibid.*). The greatest influence on the “cultural

homogenization” came from “the ennoblement of the popular song” (*ibid.*) that now found acceptance in all social strata, overcoming the distinction between bourgeois, scholarly, and popular culture as it was the great aim of the postmodernists.

The consolidation of Greece, during recent decades, “as a country of petty land-owners and petit-bourgeois people” (*ibid.*), brought about new consumer habits. By the transformation “of the former ‘undeserved sufferers’ into demanding and often insolent consumers” (K, 60), the type of patriarchal dependency gave way to another form of dependence, namely that of the political parties on voters, the main objective of the parties being the execution of power, holding secure positions in the administration, and the relentless hunt for privileges (cf. K, 61). Now the appointments, the grants of loans and all sorts of benefits were not enough, but there also emerged a pseudo-ideological demagoguery, which via the novel mass media, promoted a populism, which catered both to the needs of the clients of the clientelist system and also to the ones of the very same political system (cf. K, 62). The political system was “the basic impediment in the national economic and social development” (*ibid.*), which, in order to satisfy, on the one hand, the increased consumer needs of its clients and, on the other hand, its perpetuation, “became the conductor of the divestiture of the country” (*ibid.*). In contrast to this, “the road of development, is the path of accumulation, of intensive labour and the temporary, at least (partial), deprivation” (*ibid.*). However, this truth was not accepted, neither by the Large masses nor by the political parties (cf. K, 63). Even “the position of the ‘left’” (*ibid.*) became ambiguous, as it vindicated any consumer claim which is vested the garment of the “people,” regardless of whether the “people” deeply requests the divestiture of the country. Under “the influence of Hellenocentric babbles,” the Greek people “considers itself to be as a chosen race and as the salt of the earth” and it does not even pass through its mind that “it may be selling its land off to consume even more” (*ibid.*). This psychological stance is compared, by Kondylis, with “collective schizophrenia” (*ibid.*), which is characterized, on the one hand, by the fastest possible and most appropriate adaptation to “parasitic consumption” (*ibid.*), and, on the other hand, by the ideological attachment to “a prickly nationalism” (K, 64). This has deeply imbued up to their bones the parties “which bid high in the nationalist rhetoric which at the same time they alienate the government apparatus and the state” (*ibid.*).

Kondylis characterizes his view as “a description of the historical, social and psychological closure of the processes” (*ibid.*), which were motivated by parliamentarianism and the clientelist politics “within the concrete conditions of the modern Greek state and nation” (*ibid.*). He is certain that there is a “self-evident crisis,” which entered into “the stage of the constant alienation of the country” and “overcame even the limits of social toleration, [...] the clientelist politics advanced to its self-destruction,” and in order to have a future it must “itself set limits to itself” (*ibid.*). The crisis affects “the fundamental ideologemes” of the nation and, in particular, the one of “Hellenocentrism,” which was disempowered by the advent of a new generation with the

new consumer, hedonistic and emancipatory ideologemes, but there emerged new versions of Hellenocentrism. Thus, despite its mitigation “Hellenocentrism survived and will survive for much longer” (K, 66) “insofar as psychologically it constitutes a fundamental defensive and overcompensation mechanism of a nation,” which both in its intellectual and material production has displayed “very few things of its own” (*ibid.*). However, without theoretical armour, it will be either an attitude of “national stoutness” and “pride” or “folklore spice of the touristic sell-off of the land” (*ibid.*).

Closing his essay, Kondylis examines the influence of the key ideas and values of the cultural revolution not only on mass democracy, but also on daily morals. Along with the moderation of the domestic ideologemes and the simultaneous fluidization of the cold-war ideologemes, an indifference was caused on Greek ideology, as well as a chaotic involvement of the intellectual products. “The combination of all with all” (K, 67) and the “hedonistic values of impulsiveness and self-actualisation” merged in contemporary Greece with the “habits of intellectual idleness, wisecracking and sciolism” (*ibid.*). This was the natural outcome of the arrival of postmodernism in a land where “the bourgeois work ethic is in essence unknown” (*ibid.*), and “where scientific traditions with cohesion and with long-lived carriers were not formed and in which the mimes and jesters are represented at rates especially high among the circles of intellectuals, at universities and in the mass media” (*ibid.*). The arrival of postmodernism signals the “integration, and in part the culmination of the crisis of all the fundamental facets of the Greek national life” (*ibid.*). Kondylis forecasts that the “sale of the nation” will be accompanied by “its complete intellectual barrenness,” if the postmodern fusion ends up in the “shrinkage or instrumentalisation of language” (K, 68), so that high-quality Greek poetry cannot be produced any more. In any case “modern Greek history, as we have known it in the past two hundred years, closes its circle. [...] The unity of its problematic is lost as also its differential character. Greece is integrated at a very low rank in the system of the international division of material and intellectual labour” (*ibid.*). And, indeed, today’s overall crisis of modern Greek society confirms Kondylis’ socio-theoretical analysis.

III. *Critical Assessment*

In the essay by Axelos, the Heideggerian mode of thinking and the Heideggerian categories are prevalent. These are applied abstractly to concrete socio-historical material. The high degree of abstraction of the work also shows its distance from the empirical material, and equally the competence of the the social sciences for the analysis of this kind of material. This is the stance of Heidegger, who characterized sociology as a cat-burglar (*Fassadenkletterer*).²³ To the high degree of abstraction and not to the “intuitive regard of

²³ Cf. M. Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt–Endlichkeit–Einsamkeit* (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1983), p. 379. Cf. T.W. Adorno, “Die Aktualität der Phi-

the thinker,”²⁴ is also the relevance of the essay to be attributed, which refers to an atemporality, its par excellence problematic element. The problem of the “imaginary history of being,”²⁵ and not of the history of the concrete human being, was also the central problem in the Philosophy of Origin (*Ursprungphilosophie*) of Heidegger. It was the abstract historicity of *Dasein*, which, however, “does not stand as a preserved essence outside of the historical movement which is performed in it but the same is involved therein.”²⁶ This problem is reproduced identically in the essay by Axelos.

In his analysis, the poetic language, the beautiful images, the metaphors prevail. Axelos imitates the Heideggerian and eventually the Pre-Socratic language, in which the philosophical categories are not purely distinct from the natural categories, as he imagines that, in that way, he “can abolish the objectified thought and its history.”²⁷ A central category, “a primordial word” (*Urwort*) of the essay, is fate (*Moirai*), destiny (*Schicksal*). Fate is a key category of Heideggerian thought in the interpretation of the Pre-Socratic philosophy and, in particular, of Parmenides, and the primordial words are not but “the praise of historic concepts, which are taken from within historical languages.”²⁸ However, fate, in Axelos, does not have the irrational nuance it has in Spengler, as “the power of intuitive viewing” or as “depth”²⁹ – “fate, the fixation to the nature of myths, originated from the total social lack of emancipation,”³⁰ – but he seeks the emancipation of modern Greece, it alone (Greece) “is responsible for her fate” (A, 44).

Nevertheless, his theory remains descriptive, even when it attempts to elucidate the causes of decline. He contrasts to reality an abstract ‘ought’ from above, which cannot be deduced from the possibilities of reality. Finally, concrete history is lacking, which has its roots in the specific economy or in the specific mode of production and which could correspond to the a priori constructions which are applied in the specific social-historical material. Therefore, while he describes the patron-client system, he cannot interpret how it came into being. For an answer to be given to questions of such a type, there is needed a deepening in the concrete history, e.g. in the conflict of enlightenment/anti-enlightenment or in the primary accumulation and constitution of the industrial capital, and a specific analysis is needed of the economic ethic

losophie,” in *Theodor W. Adorno: Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 1 (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1990), 325-344, p. 340.

²⁴ K. Daskalaki, “Explanation,” in K. Axelos, *The Fate of Modern Greece* (Athens: Nefeli Publishing, 2010), p. 8.

²⁵ K. Jaspers, *Notizen zu Martin Heidegger* (München: Piper, 2013), p. 170.

²⁶ H. Marcuse, “Beiträge zu einer Phänomenologie des Historischen Materialismus,” in *Herbert Marcuse: Schriften*, Vol. 1 (Springer: zu Klampen, 2004²), 347-384, p. 365.

²⁷ Adorno, “Essay als Form,” p. 13.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28 f.

²⁹ O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte* (München: C.H. Beck, 1998), pp. 153, 177.

³⁰ T.W. Adorno, “Zu Subjekt und Objekt,” in *Theodor W. Adorno: Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 10.2 (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1977), 741-758, p. 743.

(*Wirtschaftsethik*) of orthodoxy, not a general reference to the Christianity,³¹ blocking the development of modern Greece. Today, we are in a position to create such a conceptual constellation which will have as its basis also the individual knowledge of the social sciences.

Kondylis, accepting the frame of reference which Axelos laid down, extends it temporally and complements it. He does not remain in philosophy but makes a turn to the social sciences, and, hence, his socio-theoretical analysis becomes more concrete, as in the ideologeme of Hellenocentrism. This concerns the relation between economy and politics as determinant for the crisis of the modern Greek social formation.³² In Kondylis, we encounter, on the one hand, an interpretation of the genesis of the clientelist state in the modern Greek social formation through the introduction of crowned parliamentarianism on the basis of universal suffrage (cf. K, 25) and, on the other hand, via the concrete determination of the character of the bourgeoisie (cf. K, 17), an interpretation of the lack “of a purely capitalistic development” (K, 28). Also, it makes direct reference to the role of orthodoxy and its relation to the work ethic (cf. K, 55). Nevertheless, it provocatively ignores the relevant discussions and research which were made earlier, whether and to what extent the categories of sociological criticism introduced –“underdevelopment,” “‘dependence’ on ‘Western imperialism,’” “‘periphery’ of the ‘capitalist centre,’” “‘a function of the different modes of production,’” “‘class-fluid’” and ‘petit-bourgeois’ society”³³ – correspond to the empirical reality of the modern Greek social formation or on the peculiar features of the Greek bourgeoisie and the consequences of the spurious urbanization.³⁴

Kondylis is right by saying that the sociological categories have a temporal core and cannot be applied on any historico-social subject matter.³⁵ To determine the modern Greek bourgeoisie and to correlate it with the crisis of the modern Greek social formation, he introduces Marxian and Weberian categories in his analysis. However, we have to do with the outlining of a work program and not with a comprehensive social theory. The general reference to the capitalism of the modern Greek social formation remains an abstraction; there is no concrete determination of the relation of the individual instances of the capitalist mode of production-wages, employment, class competitions, utilization and accumulation process, crises and the corresponding reproduction modes, which constitute its peculiarity, and there is not delimited the capitalist mode of production in relation to the other production modes, which coexist in the modern Greek social formation, and furthermore its relevance

³¹ Cf. K. Axelos, *Toward Planetary Thinking* (Athens: Hestia, 1985), p. 78 f.

³² Cf. K. Rantis, “Racket Theory and Corruption,” in K. Koutsoukis and P. Sklias (eds.), *Corruption and Scandals in Public Administration and Politics* (Athens: Sideris Publications, 2005), 193-212, p. 207 f.

³³ Cf. Antonopoulou, “Report,” p. 15.

³⁴ Cf. V.I. Filias, *Society and Power in Greece. I. The Spurious Urbanization 1800-1864* (Athens: Gutenberg, 1985), p. 95 f.

³⁵ Cf. M. Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung. Philosophische Fragmente* (Frankfurt a.M.: S. Fischer 1969), p. IX.

with extra-economic reproduction modes is not determined.³⁶ Unfortunately, this analysis has not yet been completed and the use of individual categories of the Marxian critique of political economy is schematic, as is the case, e.g., with the concept of primary accumulation (cf. K, 18).

Kondylis also raised the issue of the relation of the work ethic and orthodoxy, which is characterized by the “contempt of the worldly goods” (K, 55). The relation of orthodoxy and work ethic is in need of further analysis through the concept of the economic ethic of orthodoxy. Weber’s religious-sociological studies gave weight to the life of the believer in “how the religious orientation of the professional ethic (*Berufsethik*) had a practical effect.”³⁷ Thus, Protestantism as a religion of salvation was on the one hand world-denying (*welt-ablehnend*) and on the other hand was not world-escaping (*nicht weltflüchtig*). This relation of asceticism (*Askese*) and mysticism (*Mystik*) led to a worldly ascetic, to an active domination of the world.³⁸ In contrast, orthodoxy is, as a denomination of salvation, on the one hand world-denying and on the other world-escaping. This relation of asceticism and mysticism led to the passive domination of the world.³⁹ However, the specific analysis of the economic ethic of orthodoxy has not been completed, there are only some sporadic thoughts on it and, thus, Kondylis does not elucidate the causes of the decline of modern Greece, but bequeaths upon us a work program.

In conclusion, we must highlight the risks which are involved by a transposition of theories with no judgement, which were drafted in certain historical conditions to interpret concrete historico-social phenomena, in societies of a different type at a specific historical instance. On the contrary, a critical theory is a theory of the object,⁴⁰ the latter having the priority and determining the theoretical schema, which does not fully reconstruct reality, but wishes to change it. Currently, for the Greek social formation, we cannot expose any systematic comprehensive theory. If there is such a theory, this will be mandatorily piecemeal for numerous and diverse reasons and the product of an interdisciplinary approach. However, via the various fragments, which concern different matters and levels of the Greek social formation, there arises a totality in the form of a constellation: philosophical critique. And yet, this totality is not a complete system in which nothing is missing, but a totality that is open, with gaps, dark sides and peculiarities. Hence, no ready-made, closed

³⁶ Cf. W.F. Haug, “Kapitalistische Produktionsweise,” in W.F. Haug (ed.), *Historisch-Kritisches Wörterbuch des Marxismus*, Vol. 7/I: *Kaderpartei bis Klonen* (Hamburg: Argument-Verlag, 2007), 292-316, Col. 293, Col. 297, Col. 314.

³⁷ Cf. Weber, *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*, p. 176 f., note 3.

³⁸ Cf. M. Weber, *Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), p. 263. Cf. W. Schluchter, “Die Paradoxie der Rationalisierung. Zum Verhältnis von ‘Ethik’ und ‘Welt’ bei Max Weber,” *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 3 (1976), 256-284, p. 268 ff.

³⁹ Cf. “Unworldliness of the love of the mystic.” U. Bielefeld, “Wie weiter mit Max Weber?” [Gesamttitle: Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (ed.), “Wie weiter mit...?”] (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2008), p. 21.

⁴⁰ Adorno, “Zu Subjekt und Objekt,” p. 746 ff.

schema from the top can faithfully render reality accurately. The theoretical reconstruction of reality must remain open, must arise via its constant encounter with the concepts, until, at some point, the possibility is actualized for the generalization and the crystallization of a more general interpretive schema. In this schema, the occasionally appearing trends will have been clarified and will have been transformed into facts, that is, the possibility of a general, coherent and yet open theory will have been actualized.

The Greek Crisis and the Hellenic Proposal of Christos Yannaras

CONSTANTIN V. BOUNDAS

Christos Yannaras is a prominent Greek theologian and philosopher, the author of sixty books and collections of his weekly newspaper columns, and a leading member of a small group of intellectuals who, starting in the 1960s, infused the Orthodox Christian theology with a new spirit, denounced the disastrous transformation of Eucharistic Christianity to a religion with its own ecclesiastical normativity and dogmatic structure, and argued vigorously for the diachronic identity of Hellenism, an identity that Yannaras was eager to ground on his own brand of personological ontology and on his *sui generis* verificationist epistemology.

On the Greek fiscal crisis, what Yannaras has to say, is not, for the most part, confined to him. He shares with a lot of others the view that the crisis, which shakes the foundations of Greece today, is the supreme danger that also has the ability to usher in a new and bright day – provided, he would add, that we will not make the mistake of separating the economy from other societal structures and then elevating it to the status of an infrastructure (AA,¹ 57). It is true that the economic collapse of the Greek state robs its citizens of a prosperity that, only yesterday, was taken for granted; but the collapse is neither self-generated nor self-sustained. *The essence of the crisis is not economic because, after all, the essence of the economy is not economic.* The crisis is an epiphenomenon of the devaluation of all values, with the exception of the value of consumption that has been trumpeted by the historical materialism of capitalism and socialism alike.² It is the product of the black holes of modernity, namely, of relativism, pluralism, atomocentrism, the cult of individual rights, of moralities based on values and valuers, religions promising salvation to the individual, and of the so-called “representative democracies” that smack of the paradox of square circles. But it is also the product of distortions proper to the Greek nation-state – a state governed by those who do not deserve to rule (ἀναξιοκρατία) (KE,³ 38, 44), a state of clients (πελατειακό κράτος), a state of boulimic and amoral syndicates (ΕΠ,⁴ 112), a state with a wretched educational system (ΕΠ, 130), suffering from the loss of its language (ΕΠ, 129-30), and subject to a modernization that mimics everything Western (ΕΠ, 22).

¹ C. Yannaras, *Αντιστάσεις στην αλλοτρίωση* (Αθήνα: Ίκαρος, 1977) (referred to as AA).

² To identify Marx’s claim that the material conditions of people’s life determine their thoughts and actions with the capitalist greed is an ideological concession to the Christian Right of Yannaras’s youth. Unfortunately, it is also the leitmotiv of his book *Τὸ πραγματικὸ καὶ τὸ φαντασιώδες στὴν Πολιτικὴ Οἰκονομία* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 2006).

³ C. Yannaras, *Ἡ καταστροφή ὡς εὐκαιρία* (Αθήνα: Ίανός, 2012) (referred to as KE).

⁴ C. Yannaras, *Ἑλληνότροπος πολιτική* (Αθήνα: Ίκαρος, 1996) (referred to as ΕΠ).

What is his own is his view that, without the discovery of its real causes, the present day crisis will remain a mere unintelligible accident, the product of bad economic strategies and decisions of the sort that a better equilibrated instrumental rationality would be capable to prevent in the future. What is his own is the bold declaration that the real cause of the crisis is the loss of the meaning-bestowing proposal –the *Sinngebung* (the *πρόταση νοήματος*)– that constitutes the *differentia specifica* of the Hellenic civilization. This loss is a veritable repudiation and forgetting, caused by the fatal mimetic Greek appropriation of the Western paradigm, with its premises which are alien to the Hellenic civilization. The forgotten sense, the lost νόημα of the Hellenic civilization is *bios* in accordance with *aletheia*, (*κατ' ἀλήθειαν βίος*), life in accordance with truth.

Now, civilization, for Yannaras, is the evaluation and the ordering of the needs of a group of people in accordance with a mutually agreed upon proposal, which is consciously and explicitly accepted by the few, and habitually, but only latently, present in the everydayness of the many. Such a proposal of cultural difference was created by the Greek *polis*, transformed later on by the Byzantine Church, and was able to survive the long captivity of the Ottoman occupation, but faded away after the construction of the modern Greek state according to Western models. “Hellenism is finished historically. It has survived only in the slow agony of its death that started in 1833 and still goes on, heaven knows for how much longer” (KKK,⁵ 54).

I will summarize here the narrative by means of which Yannaras supports these bold claims, because it is a prerequisite for the understanding of how he views the current Greek crisis. The Greek *polis*, he maintains, transcended the status of traditional settlements the moment that it determined itself as a *koinonia* of men and women with the shared ambition to reproduce, inside its borders, the harmony and the splendor of the entire *cosmos*. From this moment on, the *polis* “settles for the freedom, the honor and the dignity of the citizen, not as the quest for an atomocentric fulfillment, nor as the defence of the individual in an ongoing confrontation with the power of a central authority, but rather as the organic result of his and her participation in the collective *agon* inside a community of relations” (AA,⁶ 69).

The political life of the city, Yannaras goes on to claim, is conceived as a collective aiming at the creation of structures of life capable of reflecting and representing what is eternal and unchanging. And, when the Greek *polis* was forced to yield its place to the Eastern Roman Empire, it became the task of the Orthodox Catholic Church to carry on the struggle for the realization of life in accordance with truth –except that this now meant something altogether different: it meant the search for an answer to the most challenging of all existential questions, the question of where we come from and where we are going. The parish of the Orthodox Church, gathered around its bishop, gives

⁵ C. Yannaras, *Κατὰ κεφαλὴν καλλιέργεια* (Αθήνα: Ίανός, 2011) (referred to as KKK).

⁶ C. Yannaras, *Ἡ ἀπανθρωπία τοῦ δικαίουματος* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 2006, 1998¹) (referred to as AA).

sense to the community of the faithful by transforming it to a body of persons in love with one another, rooted in their participation in the manic *eros* of God the Father.

In his argument for the diachronic continuity of the Hellenic cultural proposal, Yannaras distinguishes carefully between its underlying ontology and its epistemology. The ontology of the Orthodox Church, he acknowledges, differs from the ontology of the Greek *polis*, whereas the epistemology of the one prolongs, strengthens and grounds the epistemology of the other. The ancient Greeks accepted as really real the harmony that exists in the relations of the macrocosm. Let it be done on earth as it is in heaven! Later on, the man and the woman of faith of the Orthodox East is going to accept as really real the uncreated and eternal divine hypostases, their erotic interpenetration and their invitation to human beings to share in their *erotic feast*, with the creation of a loving community of persons, in other words, with the creation of a Eucharistic Church. The difference is big, and yet, the ancient Greek and the Byzantine cultural proposals share the same substantial element –the concept of relation between persons. Neither the Greek citizen nor the Byzantine faithful stand alone and isolated, as individuals facing other individuals. They are both persons (*πρόσωπα, ὡς πρὸς*), creatures, and, at the same time, creators of communities of persons. “Every assertion of subjective otherness is,” Yiannaras claims, “the result of relations” (ΠΚΟ,⁷ 80).

The fact is that the diachronic identity of Hellenism is the affair of its epistemology. The ancient Greek and the Byzantine cultural proposals for a *modus vivendi* in accordance with truth express the same commitment to a *critical attitude*. This attitude rests neither with the prevalent authority, nor with dogma –not even with an unshakable subjective certainty. For the verification of epistemic claims, it makes the presence of the social dimension necessary. True is only what is communicated; false, whatever insists in its particularity. The *agora*, the marketplace, is where the discussion of political options and the agonistic occupation of a public space are made possible by the *scholē* of free citizens, and the *ecclesia* of the faithful only entitled to confirm the decisions of the Church Synods –the *agora* and the *ecclesia* are necessary conditions for the validation of truth. (Whether or not Yannaras also holds these conditions to be sufficient is something that we must examine later). At any rate, despite the difference in ontology, the sameness in epistemology and the unchanging continuity of what Yannaras calls “critical attitude” ground the diachronic identity of Hellenism.

Before I go on to discuss the meaning that Yannaras attributes to “critical attitude,” I must register here his conviction that the present Greek state no longer is the bearer of the truth of the Hellenic culture. Cultural and national identities no longer coincide. The divergence began with the creation of the nation-state, following the revolution of 1821, and was sealed with the catas-

⁷ C. Yannaras, *Προτάσεις Κριτικής Οντολογίας* (Αθήνα: Ίκαρος, 2006, 1995¹) (referred to as ΠΚΟ).

trophe of the Hellenic communities of Asia Minor in 1923. The disappearance of the lands which, for centuries, had been the vital centers of Greek culture; the confinement of the Hellenic cultural proposal within the national borders of the *ethnos* of the “Greek mainland”; the passage from the logic, the politics and the multidimensionality of the (Byzantine) empire to the master-client model for the relations between State and civil society; the dramatic weakening of the Patriarchate; and the transformation of the parish, from a small number of faithful round the table of the Eucharist to a center of transients, seeking the satisfaction of their “religious needs”—all of these factors spell the end of Hellenic exceptionality. And Yannaras is not yet done. He will go on to claim that the decisive factor responsible for these phenomena must be sought elsewhere.

This “elsewhere” takes us back to his characterization of civilization as the evaluation and ordering of our needs, and to the two basic ways according to which this ordering is accomplished. One of them, based on need, confronts individuals as social particles of an assemblage and strives to balance their competing desires; the other orders and hierarchizes people’s desires according to their “per capita cultivation,” in view of life in accordance with truth. Once created, the Greek state, under the influence, indeed with the violent imposition, of paradigms of a Western provenance, grew accustomed to the mimetic appropriation of a utility-imbibed positivism, to a natural law-inspired legalism and to the ideology of individual rights. It turned its back, therefore, on the society of relations and persons—the crown jewel of Hellenism—and was transformed to a tiny Balkan state, with no substantial past and no promising future. “The axis of truth and life is now transposed from the community to the individual and from the erstwhile dynamic participation and *koinonia* to the individual possession and use of truth and life” (ΣΕΦ,⁸ 131). Reading Panayiotis Kondylis with his own socio-political interests in mind, Yannaras holds Greeks who had accepted the ideals of the Western Enlightenment (like Koraïs and Psycharis) responsible for the importation and the diffusion in Greece of a poorly digested Enlightenment, for the derailment of the efforts of the Fanariot Mavrokordatos to revive the communitarian spirit, and for the deconstruction of the prophetic word of Makrygiannis (ΟΛ,⁹ 21, 23, 25 and 28).

It is time now to ask whether or not Yannaras’s narrative is true to the rise and fall of the Hellenic cultural proposal, and how exactly, in case it is true, it could help us understand the causes of the current economic and social disaster. To the extent that Yannaras maintains that the essence of the Hellenic proposal and the connecting thread of its diachronic modulations lie in its epistemology, it seems to me wise to check the veracity and the usefulness of his narrative by focusing, first of all, on this presumed essence. To make

⁸ C. Yannaras, *Σχεδιάσμα εισαγωγής στη φιλοσοφία* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 2002) (referred to as ΣΕΦ).

⁹ C. Yannaras, *Ὁρθὸς λόγος καὶ κοινωνικὴ πρακτικὴ* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 2000, 1999¹) (referred to as ΟΛ).

things simpler, we could say, here, that his distinction of civilizations according to either utility or truth is another way of distinguishing them according to whether they order and evaluate needs on the basis of instrumental rationality alone, or whether they do it by prioritizing the dictates of substantive rationality. For him, the Hellenic proposal belongs to the second category. It is this that makes up, *to a great extent*, its identity. I am saying “to a great extent” because, in the Hellenic proposal, truth takes a complement-communication. The essence of the Hellenic way is in its epistemology which proposes the critical attitude, which, in turn, is nothing other than the conceptual and praxiological linkage of truth and communication. *Ἀληθεύειν καὶ Κοινωνεῖν*. Truthing and communicating. True, Yannaras claims, is whatever is (can be?) communicated. Let us put aside, for the time being, the huge difference between the “is” and the “can be.” “The danger for the *polis* lies in particularism (το ιδιάζον), whereas particularism means to insist in one’s own relation-less, atomic uniqueness” (ΣΕΦ, 64, 65). Yannaras uses the Greek verb *κοινωνεῖται* at this point, which cannot, in this context, mean being offered for discussion, because, in this case, every single nonsense offered to discussion would ipso facto be true. Nor can it be understood in the context of a Habermas-inspired theory of communication. Yannaras’s fondness for Habermas is very limited. From his point of view, truth cannot be a proposal that has been accepted by all those who, with the requisite understanding and knowledge of the rules of ordinary language-communication, embark upon a long discussion, with consensus in mind. Validation and verification, for Yannaras, are not questions of numerical majorities or even of unison.

But what then? Let us keep in mind that Yannaras has rejected the old account of truth in terms of an *adequatio* of thought and object; he has rejected it as a construct of Western metaphysics, the normative presuppositions of which strangle, with their inflexible rationalism, the kind of freedom and creativity that even science cannot do without. We may think that we have come nearer to the intentions of Yannaras’s meanings as soon as we notice him subscribing to the Heracliteian statements: “καθ’ ὅτι ἂν κοινωνήσωμεν ἀληθεύομεν, ἃ δὲ ἂν ιδιάσωμεν ψευδόμεθα.” We are in the space of truth to the extent that we hold something in common, but we are in the space of falsehood whenever we favour particularisms.” Or again: “Ὅταν πάντες ὁμοδοξοῦσι καὶ ἕκαστος ἐπιμαρτυρεῖ.” “[There is truth] when everyone is of the same opinion and each one offers his or her own testimony as a proof” (ΟΣ,¹⁰ 25). And why? Because “the social validation of knowledge connects the *modus cognoscendi* with our *modus vivendi*. It connects truth with democracy and the *ecclesia*” (ΟΣ, 25).

The demand that we all share the same belief is also present whenever Yannaras refers to the conditions for the validity of the decisions made by Church Synods. Contrary to the centralism of the Roman Church, he claims, the Churches of the East accept, not the homophony of the Bishops, but rather the consent of the people as the decisive factor for the acceptability of the

¹⁰ C. Yannaras, *Ὀντολογία τῆς σχέσης* (Ἀθήνα: Ἴκαρος, 2009, 2004¹) (referred to as ΟΣ).

synodic decrees. Oecumenical Synods, the decisions of which were overturned because they lacked the confirmatory consent of the people, are known to exist. And even Synods, of which the truth prevailed long after they had taken place and the ascent of the people was obtained, are known to exist.

The problem is that these considerations will be of interest to the historian of the Church, but they do not settle the epistemic conundrum. They name the bearers of the decision concerning the true and the false, but they do not reveal the criteria on the basis of which decisions are made or that they are supposed to be made. Nor are we better off with Yannaras's attempt to fall back upon persons of recognized spiritual stature and elevate them onto the seat of arbitration. His saints, no more than the Aristotelian *φρόνιμοι* and John Stuart Mill's experts, may be able to settle the question as to who is entitled to name the true, but they cannot settle the question of what it is that they so name. And if neither numerical criteria nor even criteria of empirical trustworthiness can name it, the question of the meaning of the biconditional, *αληθεύειν* and *κοινωνεῖν* is left open.

Perhaps, a closer look at Yannaras's critical ontology may be helpful at this point. Let us first notice his rejection of all metaphysical systems (usually of Western provenance) that ground themselves on the notion of man as individual. Let us also notice Yannaras's fondness for Heidegger, without overlooking the distances he keeps from the latter. In Heidegger's case, the distracted individual assumes his authentic self when and only when, having faced her finitude, she decides to want to be called to conscience. In Yannaras's case, the person that abhors the nihilism of philosophies which refuse to face the most tantalizing of all existential questions –where we come from and where we are going– chooses to intensify the relationships with other human beings that are constitutive of personhood. To the existential question, the Orthodox Church responds with the elevation of human beings to the status of persons. Being neither a bare individual nor an individual donning a *persona*, each human being hypostatizes in a unique difference the common nature of men. This difference presupposes the *ὡς πρὸς*, the “towards,” that is, a differential relationship with other persons. Paraphrasing Sartre, whose philosophy Yannaras salutes as the most powerful and consequential theology of the fallen nature, we could say that I see the other and the other sees me, *ergo* I exist. I do not first exist as a person and then I see and I am seen. I exist for as long as I see and I am seen. A *koinonia* of persons is a *koinonia* of relationships.

In other words, to the nihilist consequences of the fundamental ontology, Yannaras's narrative juxtaposes the critical ontology of the Orthodox Church. The intensification is achieved through *eros* and has a horizontal as well as a vertical axis. Why *eros*? you may ask. And the answer hinges on the fact that the persons who inhabit Yannaras's critical ontology are the free, unrepeatable differences, the creators and also the creatures of a *koinonia* of relations. Before being a search of recognition in freedom, the *eros* of Yannaras is freedom –freedom from necessity. To the extent that necessity and death belong to the nature of human beings, freedom from them requires the transformation

of this nature. *Eros* casts existence like a dice to the table of relations. It is the journey's start, the blind crossing of uncharted seas, without regulations and prescriptions, with faith –the confidence to the beloved– as the only possession. *Eros* here is reminiscent of Levinas's caress before it decides where it wants to go –an aim-less errance, an unintended gift, without obligation, *eros*, is the free response to the beauty of the beloved. *Eros* is freedom –the freedom to be different– and freedom is *the raison d'être* of personal relations, the logos of their being and their intelligibility. This is the horizontal axis.

But the superiority of the Orthodox Hellenic proposal lies in its conviction that the freedom promised to persons, in order to be complete, requires a vertical ascent of an *eros* that has the ability to transform human nature and, through this metamorphosis, to replace the threatening nothing with the reality of the victory over death.¹¹ For Yannaras, freedom from the captivity of necessity and freedom from the necessity of death are one and the same. The place that God occupies inside the Hellenic proposal is neither the conclusion of a syllogism nor the principle and the cause of being. God is the response to the burning existential problem. He is the one who calls man to love, because He himself exists only as love. He does not exist first and then, in a second time, He comes to love man. He loves as a loving love. *Ὡς ἔρωσ ἐρώμενος ἐρᾶται*. The God of the Church, being a relation, relating and related, calls man to live in loving relations as He himself does.¹²

To the existential question, therefore, Yannaras, rising above nihilism, responds as follows: for the human person, *to be* means to emerge in a circle of other persons and other things and events, and naturally this emergence is capable of succeeding or failing. Success means the creation of loving relations casting out the fear of necessity and death; whereas failure means the inability of the individual to build and to sustain such relations that would help it escape necessity and death.

¹¹ For Heidegger, the answer to the “what is it to be?” question: someone or something emerges out of forgetting (*λήθη*), someone or something gets to be unconcealed (*ἀληθεύει*), comes to presence (*parousia*), that they emerge out of the nothing of their previous absence. However, this “nothing,” according to Yannaras, is not without problems. It makes the consequences of fundamental ontology nihilistic because to be comes to mean that someone and something presentify themselves in their Dasein and temporalize the distance between the nothing from which they come and the nothing towards which they go.

¹² A fuller understanding of the Greek Orthodox proposal would require the distinction that Yannaras draws between Christian faith and religion. Christian faith is not a religion, he often repeats, it was made to be one. Religion is “the natural, instinctual need of man to postulate agents that can account for existence [...] for the presence of evil [...] and to discover practical ways to handle the supernatural factors” (EΘ, 14). C. Yannaras, *Ἐνάντια στη θρησκεία* (Αθήνα: Ίκαρος, 2010) (referred to as EΘ). On the other hand, the Christian Church is a social event, the eucharistic meal, it is anticipation and not remembrance (EΘ, 45, 46), grounded in the “experience of feeling the historical person of Jesus and in the confidence to the eyewitnesses of yesteryear” (EΘ, 63), the ecclesiastical event casts out the individualistic and egocentric elements, in other words, the harbingers of death, and creates the space necessary for self-overcoming through love.

Notice what is at stake here. Yannaras locates in the successful emergence to being, the achievement of freedom, the “*logos* of the relationship,” and raises this *logos* onto the criterion for the distinction between the true and the false. A relationship, *no matter which*, is successful if the goal for the sake of which it has been undertaken has been reached. In Yannaras’s own words, “real is the relationship that conserves the integrity of the factors which constitute it as well as the teleology of its constitution” (ΠΙΚΟ, 28). The *logos*, therefore, it is now clear, has a critical function; it is the arbitrator of truth, “it judges the truth or the untruth of knowledge” (ΣΕΦ, 92, 93). The successful transformation represents the validation and the criterion allowing us to pronounce the relationship true.

Let us now take stock. We were tempted, by Yannaras himself, to think that quantitative criteria would be determining relationships as either true or false, but we are now confronting an a priori teleological claim that seems to structure and to govern our experience, instead of being inductively derived from it. The a priori claim is not in Yannaras’s belief that answering the call and living the *κατ’ ἀλήθειαν βίον* is necessary –he, in fact, emphasizes our freedom and the possibility to fail. The a priori lies in the fact that verification of the Greek proposal, as he understands it, presupposes not only that it should be chosen, but also our adherence to it.

Yannaras’s *κοινωνεῖν* was never meant to be *επικοινωνεῖν*.... His “to communicate” is “to commune.” It is the “*ἐν κοινωνίᾳ ὑπάρχειν*,” to be in relationship with the other as a result of our being in relationship with the manic lover. We started with the “*ἅπαντες ὁμοδοξοῦσι*,” we took it for the criterion of truth, but we have now reached *logos*, which, in the context of Yannaras’s critical ontology, towers over everything else as the criterion, or rather the line of demarcation, between truth and falsehood. Were we to think of Wittgenstein and of relations as language games and, therefore, as ways of life, we could evoke the distinction between constitutive and regulative rules. In the game of football, the successful goal, the penetration of the goalpost by the ball, is a constitutive rule. Which concrete infraction makes a foul and which a penalty is a regulative one. Our conclusion is that the *logos*/criterion of truth as Yannaras understands it, is a rule constitutive of the relationship and, consequently, the a priori element in his thought. As such, it is not validated by our experience, it is not verified or falsified by it. On the contrary, it is imposed on experience, painting it with its own brush.

And there is more. The a priori in Yannaras’s characterization of the Hellenic proposal turns out to be shrouded in an apophatic non-knowledge. Frequent are Yannaras’s references to the apophatic current in Eastern Orthodox theology, especially to the writings of Dionysius Areopagites, Maximos the Confessor and Gregory Palamas. In one of his books, Dionysius and Heidegger are brought together, with respect to their quest for a non-objectifying language, which, in the case of the former, is vigorously apophatic, and in the case of the latter, is cautiously so. The Hellenic proposal, embedded in an epistemology which asks for empirical validation without confining experience to the five senses, and nurtured by a relational ontology which seeks to

“touch and taste” the other, needs, according to Yannaras, the polysemic and a-signifying devices of poetry and apophatism. Ethical imperatives, ideological stereotypes, and sentimental ejaculations that represent the language of the instinctual religiosity are brushed aside for the sake of poetry –the language of ecclesiastical experience.

Apophatism, from the word *apophansis*, is the effort to prevent the identification of signifier and signified. Even more simply, it is the effort not to confuse language with the entities to which language refers. The effort takes the form of consecutive and co-ordinated rejections of the attribution to a subject of positive or negative qualifications. God neither is, nor is not, a father. The goal is the transcendence of assertions and negations alike through the liberation of knowledge from every conceptual determination (ΟΛ, 185, 186, ΣΕΦ, 98; ΧΑ,¹³ 92). Not the exorcism of *logos* and the advent of aphasia, but rather the circumscription of things that can be said and of things that cannot be said, in order that *de-monstration* comes to the rescue of the latter. Things that cannot be said can be shown, Wittgenstein used to remind us. The semantics of apophatism is placed in the service of non-knowledge that sets us up to the road of *de-monstration*.

The narrative of the apophatic is at its strongest in two of Yannaras’s books: *The Enigma of Evil*¹⁴ and *Post-Modern Metaphysics*.¹⁵ The latter finds in post-Newtonian physics our emancipation from the shackles of positivist rationalism and the possibility of a postmodern metaphysics which creates an opportunity for the semantics of the Hellenic proposal. “Modern physics,” writes Yannaras, “gives us a picture of matter and, as a result, of the world as a set of energetic relations characterized by a dynamic indeterminacy” (MM, 135). In it, we encounter the indeterminacy of small scale natural phenomena, the indeterminacy of reciprocal influences, the indeterminacy of the course of events, the reconsideration of the one-directionality of time, and the relativity imposed due to the interference of the observer (MM, 150ff, 141ff). “We call post-Newtonian the physics which was led by the demands of research to the use of an apophatic language in order to express scientific results and to methods for the accumulation of these results that fall outside the established normalcy” (MM,132). “The new language of post-Newtonian science seems to bring us closer to [...] the language of art and love” (MM, 218).

The trouble with this appropriation of “post-modern physics” by the narrative of Yannaras is that the claims it makes belong to the ideology of science, and have little to do with the epistemology that empowers post-Newtonian science or with the ontology that this science may make possible. Yannaras is not acknowledging the argument of those who hold that the new paradigm finds its application in one region of being only, and that the causality of the Newtonian science is still alive and well in the comportment of the traditional

¹³ C. Yannaras, *Χάντηγγερ και Αρεοπαγίτης ή Περὶ ἀπουσίας και ἀγνωσίας τοῦ Θεοῦ* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 2006, 1998¹) (referred to as ΧΑ).

¹⁴ C. Yannaras, *Το αἶνιγμα τοῦ κακοῦ* (Αθήνα: Ἴκαρος, 2008) (referred to as ΑΚ).

¹⁵ C. Yannaras, *Μετανεωτερική Μεταφυσική* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 2005) (referred to as ΜΜ).

billiard balls; that the indeterminacy and the constitutive presence of the observer, which characterizes the behavior of quanta, do not play an important role in the physics and the mechanics of bodies whose size is bigger than the size of the quanta. He disregards the fact that the observer here is not the traditional subject whose inner world must be taken into consideration in our observations, but rather one more factor the position of which must be considered in our measurements and in the relationships of quantity. As he invokes indeterminacy after the erosion of causality, he seems to overlook again that, in postmodern physics, prediction has been replaced by vice-diction, without this substitution causing facts to lose their solidity. The indeterminacy of the before has been replaced by the necessity of the after. It is a real stretch to call the language of postmodern science “apophatic.” Indeterminacy with respect to causality does not mean failure to identify signified and signifier. We must not forget that, by being strictly neutral vis a vis the languages of epistemology and theology, postmodern physics proved capable of being invoked with the same ease, by the ontology of Gilles Deleuze, the philosopher of immanence, and by the critical ontology of our champion of transcendence, Yannaras.

Now, the risk of the slide of apophatism towards aphasia is most visible in a recent book of Yannaras, the *Enigma of Evil*. It is here that the usual beauty and plasticity of his expression toys perilously with a silence that goes beyond the apophatic, towards the kind of non-knowledge that may no longer leave any space for showing. In this book, harbouring no intention to conceal the horror of evil, Yannaras moves from demythologisation to demythicisation (AK, 208), asking faith to fend off the scandal of evil and to spring up in the place of the dilemmatic conundrum: psychological self-suggestion or a logical search for sense? (AK, 24). In the last analysis, the grandeur of the Hellenic proposal lies, for him, in daring “to measure itself up to the black reaper and in saving the hope for life.” What is unbearable is the scandal of death: “Acceptance of the nowhere and the nothing is not only an unbearable dogmatism that precludes all questions. It is also the final consent to the absolute irrationality of being and existence, the definite resignation from all critical thought, all creative curiosity, and from every effort to retrieve the humanity of man.” (KKK, 241; ΠΕ¹⁶, 202). If, Yannaras argues, the hope of emerging victorious over death can reasonably be maintained, everything makes sense. If it cannot then the existential event is sheer counter-sense, a farce macabre and an inexplicable puzzle (ΟΣ, 229).

One can naturally have reservations as to the reasonableness of Yannaras’s wager, using the ammunition that he himself provides. The expectations of the survival of our bodies or souls past the moment of death are, he states, in vain. I quote him: “In death, our physical individuality, our reality of body and soul, disappears. All the energies and the possibilities of our nature disappear” (PA,¹⁷ 180). And again: “Man’s freedom from nature means freedom

¹⁶ C. Yannaras, *Τὸ πρόσωπο καὶ ὁ ἔρωσ* (Αθήνα: Δόμος, 1992) (referred to as ΠΕ).

¹⁷ C. Yannaras, *Τὸ ρητὸ καὶ τὸ ἄρητο. Τὰ γλωσσικὰ ὄρια ρεαλισμοῦ τῆς μεταφυσικῆς* (Αθήνα: Ἴκαρος, 2008, 1999¹) (referred to as PA).

from the mortality of his nature [...]. However, if thought, judgment, and will are natural functions that are extinguished with death, which self-consciousness and voluntary choice hypostatize then an existence free from nature?" (PA, 98). What Yannaras's Hellenic proposal is left with is with God's love that cannot want our eternal disappearance. "Faith, in a God, giver of good, is always an adventure of personal validation without any a priori certainty" (PA, 233).

But faith in what? What is left to have faith in? What is left, says he, is the expectation that the subject, which, in the Hellenic proposal and in Yannaras's critical ontology pre-exists its own hypostasis, will be, as spirit, vanquishing death, retaining its personality, and living on in the relationship of the Church. If, as he maintains, the logical subject is born in the *topos* of the Other (intended echoes of Lacan at this point) then it makes sense to believe that the logical subject dies only when his or her existential reference to the Other has been dissolved (ΟΣ, 199). And it is at this point that I locate the precipitous fall of the Hellenic apophatism into non-knowledge and aphasia. It is at this point that I also find the formulation of a wager, which very much resembles Pascal's own.¹⁸

I claim that opting for this wager is not open to Yannaras. It is evident that Pascal's wager is for those who live their faith with the religiosity that Yannaras condemns as an instinctual need. As for the true lovers, the fools for Christ of the proposal, if the existential proposal turns out to be a mere paralogism and a farce, they have everything to lose. If the suspicion that the Hellenic proposal rests on aphasia and non-knowledge gets to circulate widely, desertions from their ranks are bound to look very reasonable indeed. My suspicion is that Yannaras's apophatism, in its attempt to shake the omnipotence of epistemological rationalism and to release showing from its long captivity, has fortified itself with an a priori that has made it unresponsive to the legitimate concerns of the hermeneutics of suspicion.

If we now return to Yannaras's celebration of the Hellenic proposal and to his lament at its loss, we see clearly that his reason for both is its communitarian structure and its will to truth –better still, its communitarian structure, to the extent that this structure is mobilized for the sake of truth. Harmony of relations is the truth that the will of the *polis* strives for, and transformation of the human nature is the truth that the will of the Eastern Empire aspires to achieve, with the search for these truths entrusted to the community of persons, and not to individuals looking, and not finding, grounds for a social contract. His aversion to human rights –the kind of rights he sees as a contributing factor to the present crisis– rests here. A longer discussion of his reasons for this aversion will go a long way towards showing the weaknesses of his brand of communitarianism, but space does not allow it. A few reflections on the subject are all I can do.

¹⁸ If you believe and God does not exist you have nothing to lose. You lived a decent and just life in accordance with the imperatives of right reason. However, if you do not believe and God exists, with your refusal to partake of the table of Eucharist, you have lost everything. It is therefore reasonable that you believe.

Individual rights presuppose and strengthen an atomocentric conception of man –a conception which eliminates differences and equalizes human monads. The Greek *polis*, he argues in his book *The Inhumanity of Individual Rights*, and the Eucharistic Church, ignored individual rights because they ignored the individual. With the Enlightenment of the West, when the ax of Leviathan no longer was trenchant enough to impose law and order, the fictional authority of individual rights got the upper hand (AA, 45). If the present state of affairs was reversed, argues Yannaras, and rights were made to protect, primarily, relations instead of individual actions and decisions, a society of related singularities would again be able to thrive, without individual differences being levelled and without the production of inmates for administered protectorates. Actions, in such a case, would not be wrong in themselves, but only as factors affecting relationships and injuring their *raison d'être*. The frame will exist for the sake of the relations that encourage the creation and the vigor of free people. Failures will be inevitable –in fact, they will be more than the successes– but the frame would anticipate them and grant them the right to exist, provided that they do not threaten the survival of the relationship (AA, 204).

Whether or not the Greek proposal was successful in rendering the demands for individual rights unnecessary will depend on our assessment of Yannaras's claim that the *nomos* of the city and the empire existed in order to set down boundaries, instead of its compelling them, and that justice did (should?) prevent relationships from turning alienated, protecting, therefore, the differences of the persons involved. Indeed, Yannaras insists, the leading intellectuals of the Greek *polis*, the spokesmen of the Hellenic proposal, interpreted the law without recourse to legalistic rigor. In the case of Plato, for example, *nomos* is an enabling possibility. "Certainly, the truth of life is given, but it is given as existential reality in the transcendent place of the Ideas, not in ideological decrees or as axiomatic necessities" (OA, 205). As for the synodic canon laws, until the 7th century, the bishops had refrained from legislating the individual comportment of the faithful. Canons are meaningful only when they express the ontology of the Church (EH,¹⁹ 2.68-9), they do not express a system of ethics or Right.

I am, I confess, sceptical about all this. The fact that, according to his own admission, from the *penthekti* synod onwards, the ecclesiastic canons multiply and that they chastise consciousnesses with unprecedented severity (EH, 250, 260-4), leaves room for doubt. Although, it is true, canon law was not part of the civil law of the Eastern Empire, the influence of the former on the latter was continuous and indisputable. The creeping severity of the canon law, it is reasonable to assume, was occurring within a frame of generalized interference and imposition. I am made to wonder whether Yannaras ever took seriously the fact that the consideration for individual rights has been strengthened by the desire to protect those who refuse the available frame of relationships and the legitimacy of the confessional. And this makes me think

¹⁹ C. Yannaras, *Ἡ ἐλευθερία τοῦ ἡθους* (Athina: Ἴκαρος, 2011, 2002¹) (referred to as EH).

that our research ought to focus on whatever archives of disciplinary and punitive principles and practices have survived the passage of time, instead of clustering around the whitewashed ideological statements made by those in power. A Foucauldian archaeological and genealogical investigation would offer us a clearer picture of who the habitual recipients of the severity of the law were, and who were the frame's outcasts and scapegoats.

Finally, Yannaras's view that the *nomos* of the Hellenic proposal was not compelling, and that compulsion is the poisonous gift of the legalistic spirit filling the gap, created by the frittering away of this proposal, would do well to confront the deconstructive meditations of Jacques Derrida.²⁰ For, if *Justice=singularity, absence of alienation, lack of imposition, freedom, etc., etc.*, and if *Nomos=generality, alienation, imposition, limitation, necessity, unfreedom, etc., etc.*, then were we to assume, as we must, that justice must prevail and that the law must be just, justice will necessarily enter the juridical frame of thought, will be legalized, whereas at the same time *nomos* will be contaminated by the singularity of justice and by the rest of justice's predicates. *Justice= generality, alienation, imposition, limitation, necessity, absence of freedom, etc., etc.*

Nomos=singularity, dealienation, absence of imposition, freedom, etc., etc.

The mutual contamination of the two terms is imposed from the inside, from the shadow that each one of them casts upon the other, and is not, as Yannaras wants us to assume, the result of the loss of the Hellenic proposal.

I will not dispute for a moment Yannaras's firm belief that the essence of the Greek crisis is not economic. And I will retain a great deal from his characterization of what he takes to be "the Greek proposal." But ultimately my distance from him is motivated by the total absence from this proposal and from his critical ontology of all those who did not participate, those who dissented from it, and those who kept their distance; in other words, of the outcasts, the marginals and the minoritarians (in Deleuze's sense). Only as deviants, fallen souls and *bas fonds*, they are permitted to make their entrance in his newspaper columns and the essays that leave the bad taste of jeremiads. To present their *hamartia*, not as an effraction of the law, but as missing the mark and failure to reach the target (the coming to personhood), hardly does justice to their multidimensional geopolitical presence and role. I skip over, without any comments, his claim that the proposal for the ordering of the needs of a group of people is, to a great extent, the result of the initiative of the intellectuals and the artists of this group, and that the many end up consenting and becoming habituated to what is being proposed to them. I suppose that Yannaras does not find it worthy of his time to come to terms with the myth or the reality of mass culture; he has better things to do in order to sustain the imperatives of meritocracy. At any rate, my critique resembles the critique that Paul Ricoeur made of Heidegger in his essay "The Task of Her-

²⁰ J. Derrida, "The Mystical Foundations of Authority," *Cardozo Law Review*, 2 (1990), 919-1046.

meneutics.”²¹ Ricoeur pointed out that Heidegger’s fundamental ontology does not connect with the regional epistemologies at work in the natural and social sciences. I am tempted to say the same thing and to raise the same question of Yannaras. Is his critical ontology useful to the constitution of regional objects of knowledge? Is the falsifiability that he opts for and the decision to ground truth on the *logos* of relationships, the right tools for the sciences of the ontic? Can his way of thinking the apophatic language prevent a slide towards *aphasia* and *agnosia* (non-knowledge), for which, of course, the sciences of the ontic have no use? More to the point: Can his critical ontology account for the present Greek crisis and offer ways out of it that take into consideration the specificity of this crisis? Can it be less moralistic and more pragmatic, less total and apocalyptic and more specific and immanent? Can the ascent to the heights of the Idea permit a descent to the cave, not only for the sake of the education and the salvation of the simulacrum, but also for the sake of letting it speak with its own voice?

The questions that I bring to Yannaras’s texts are motivated by the suspicion that his search for real democracy, communitarian ethos and axiocracy (the only way out of the present crisis), together with his endorsement of Aristotle’s dictum that “the endless search for the useful is hardly worthy of free [and *megalopsychoi*] men,” purchases the leisure of those in the marketplace of the discursive *agon* with the sweat and tears of the slave, the segregation of women or even, in George Kontogiorgis’s more up-to-date suggestion, with the labor of the *metoikos*.²² For the sake of brevity, I explain in point form.

1. The society of relations which favours the constitution of the kind of person that the Hellenic proposal envisages is a small-size *polis* and a small-size parish (ΟΛ, 286). The absorption of all initiatives by a big, dominant state or a church dedicated to the satisfaction of the religious needs of individuals transient and unknown to each other, do not coincide with the interests of the agonistic marketplace of free citizens or of the table of the Eucharist. Direct democracy and self-management are unintelligible in such conditions, unless the jurisdiction and the sphere of activity of small communities and of the central authority are very carefully differentiated and spelled out.

2. Be that as it may, and, even if we concede that the small communities with the agendas that Yannaras favors, were today again possible, how long do we suppose that they are going to survive their recreation? The self-management of such a group of men and women has as its necessary condition the constant mobilization of all with respect to everything. How long were the first Christian communities able to survive –the very communities to which *the Acts of the Apostles* attribute “a single heart”? How many years were the Soviets able to remain faithful to the vision of self-management? What was the itinerary of the Italian *Autonomia* movement in the 1970s? It will be in bad faith to reply that the two last examples are irrelevant because

²¹ P. Ricoeur, “The Task of Hermeneutics,” *Philosophy Today*, 17 (1973), 112-128.

²² G. Kontogiorgis, *Η Δημοκρατία ως ελευθερία: Δημοκρατία και αντιπροσώπηση* (Αθήνα: Πατάκης, 2007).

they do not involve loving relations. It will be in bad faith, because the reason for the brevity of their life span lies elsewhere. It lies in the inevitable fatigue of the persons that enter the relationship for the realization of the dream. It lies in the inevitable extension and stretching out of the initial intensity. Supplies of energy are never inexhaustible, and inexhaustible should they be for the implementation of the kind of direct democracy about which Yannaras is talking. Sartre's analyses in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* have a lot to tell us about the cyclical itinerary of social constructs, from series to groups in fusion, and then to groups under oath, and back again to the status of series.²³

3. Finally, my suspicion that Yannaras is not a friend of the simulacrum makes me think, as I read him, of critical theorists of the caliber of the late Iris Marion Young. It is she, who in her work, and without knowing him, has offered a pertinent criticism of his communitarianism. Indeed, in her essay, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference,"²⁴ Young brings to the attention of her readers the oppressive and assimilatory tendencies to which those living in small communities are being exposed. The imperative to belong, to participate in the warmth of being-near, and to be suspicious of otherness, in being endemic to small communities, raise obstacles to creativity, inventiveness and experimentation. This is because all efforts to determine the identity of a subject necessarily exclude certain elements, rendering them unsubstantial –mere accidents– and imposes distinctions between the genuine and the fake, the endogenous and the exogenous. In other words, differences are downgraded and suppressed. Young goes on, then, to show that the ideal of the *koinonia* of persons carries political risks. Racism, chauvinism and class distinctions are strengthened by the desire for communion. The lessons of history, including the history of the Hellenic proposal, stand as proofs of this claim.

Young's alternative to communitarianism is patterned according to the life in a big city, that is, on the basis of the coexistence of persons who are unknown to each other. The fact is that these individuals do meet inside the city, whether face to face or in the context of mass information and transportation. Despite the fact that they remain strangers to one another, they never cease to recognize their overlapping spaces and the fact that each one and all together contribute to the life of all. Young hopes that the citizens of these cities will be able to present in common, and to push forward their demands and aspirations without any previous balancing preparations, on the condition that they all want a being together where each one has the right to have a voice and to be heard. Here, Young seems to revisit Jean-François Lyotard's²⁵ idea of societies, grounded on the myth of justice and no longer on the myth of truth –the opposite, therefore, of what Yannaras designates as the core of the Hellenic proposal. From this point of view, as Kostas Douzinas puts it, the

²³ J.-P. Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (London: NB, 1976).

²⁴ I.M. Young, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," *Social Theory and Practice*, 12 (1986), 1-26.

²⁵ J.-F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

community is not the belonging in common of communitarianism, a common substance offered by history, tradition or the spirit of the nation. “The world is our co-existence, ourself as an(other).” Cosmopolis is the assemblage of multiple and singular worlds, with each one getting exposed to the others as they all share the world. “What ties me with an Iraqi or a Palestinian woman is not that we are members of humanity, citizens of the world or of a community, but a protest against the property of citizen, nationality and compact community.”²⁶

To be sure, Yannaras is not a friend of pluralism. In his view, pluralism does not permit the principle of falsification to adjudicate the true and the false. From the moment that every point of view is equivalent to every other, and *ισηγορία* is confused with truth, the result is a cacophony that neither the Greek *polis* nor the Christian parish are able to tolerate. In fact, pluralism, he argues, disarms the social body from its ability to protect its own cohesion (ΑΔ, 195). But unlike him, I believe that the real strength of pluralism shows the moment that the “what is to be done?” question gets to be formulated. My suspicion is that Yannaras fights with the shadow of the kind of pluralism that lodges inside student amphitheaters. To each one, his or her taste is not an element of any pluralism that expects to be taken seriously. Pluralism with the expectation to be accepted is expressed in the context of the market place of ideas, where its seductiveness is not easily put down. It is worth keeping alive the faith of the libertarian John Stuart Mill who argued in favour of the free circulation of ideas, not only because any attempt at censorship would give the censor the power that we should not be willing to surrender, but also because their free circulation permits the strengthening of true ideas.

²⁶ C. Douzinas, *Ριζοσπαστική πολιτική και νομική Φιλοσοφία: Δικαιώματα, αυτοκρατορία, κοσμοπολιτισμός* (Αθήνα: Νήσος, 2012).

PART XIII

**Philosophy and Crisis:
Young Scholars' Contributions**

The Pathogenesis of the City-State According to Plato in View of the Contemporary Crisis*

KONSTANTINOS D. KOSKERIDIS

The purpose of this paper is to examine the pathogenesis that leads the city-state (*polis*) into crisis according to Plato. The term pathogenesis derives from the medical terminology and means the mechanism that causes the creation (*genesis*) of a pathological situation. In his own distinct way, Plato has described the unhealthy situation of his contemporary political society¹ and explicitly states that all the city-states (*poleis*) of his time “are badly governed.”² Since Plato was cognizant of the critical situation of his era,³ and moreover had pointed out the causes of this situation and tried to offer remedies to heal the ills of his contemporary *polis*, I will try to present some of his views on these matters, which could shed light even on the manifold crisis⁴ of our days. The contemporary crisis, that appears, at first sight, as an economic one, reflects a broader political crisis, which in turn shows a deeper moral crisis, and it is also extended into many other areas.⁵ Plato’s philosophical thoughts have

* I would like to thank Professor Emeritus Christos A. Tezas and Assistant Professor Vasiliki Solomou-Papanikolaou (Ret.) for their helpful comments and suggestions.

¹ This description becomes evident especially in the Books VIII and IX of the *Republic*, where Plato depicts the faulty constitutions, which are aberrations from the right way of government and correspond to the historical constitutions of the Greek city-states. Cf. R.K. Balot, *Greek Political Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), p. 202.

² *Letter VII* 326 a. This *Letter*, which is widely accepted as genuine, constitutes Plato’s philosophical autobiography. See on this R.S. Bluck, “Plato’s Biography: The *Seventh Letter*,” *The Philosophical Review*, 58 (1949), 503-509.

³ On the general crisis of the Greek world during the fourth century B.C., see C. Mossé, *Histoire des doctrines politiques en Grèce*, ‘Que sais-je? No 1340’ (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), pp. 45-50; S. Hornblower, *The Greek World 479-323 BC* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002³), pp. 184-209.

⁴ On the different meanings of the term “crisis” from the ancient Greek use of the word to its present usage, see R. Koselleck, “Crisis,” trans. M.W. Richter, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400.

⁵ For the global spread of the crisis, especially after the 2008 financial crisis burst, see, for example, M. Spence and D. Leipziger (eds.), *Globalization and Growth: Implications for a Post-Crisis World* (Washington, D.C.: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank and Commission on Growth and Development, 2010); I.T. Berend, *Europe in Crisis: Bolt from the Blue?* (London/New York: Routledge, 2013); C. Douzinas, *Philosophy and Resistance in the Crisis: Greece and the Future of Europe* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013). However, it should be said that this crisis is the outcome of a general ideological, moral and political crisis of the previous decades. See, for example, H. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964); N. Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, New Intro. A. Postman (New York: Penguin Books, 2006; 1985¹); C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979).

a diachronic value; especially his political and moral theories are always of high interest. I will focus on certain aspects of Platonic political philosophy, which in my opinion are essential, and could be enlightening in our efforts to better understand and confront today's crisis.

In his *Seventh Letter*,⁶ Plato confesses that, when he was young, due to his own preferences and because of his family background, he had an intense desire to follow a political career, and this desire never ceased. However, reasons beyond his will prevented Plato from an active political career, such as his disappointment equally from the regime of the Thirty Tyrants, because of their criminal activities, and the democratic regime which, after its restoration in 403 B.C., sentenced his comrade Socrates to death.⁷ However, he never stopped longing for an opportunity to act, which unfortunately never arose. With the impression of an almost incurable political situation, he decided to dedicate himself to philosophy, because he had the opinion that only by the right philosophy "one is enabled to discern all forms of justice both political and individual" (*Letter VII*, 326 a), and thus to organize the life of the *polis* and the citizens in the best way possible.

Plato started writing his dialogues, where he masterfully expounded the philosophical views of his teacher, Socrates, effectively and productively in his own image, but he also developed his own distinct theories. In parallel with his writing activity, he founded the Academy, where, apart from the cultivation of philosophy, mathematics and other fields of knowledge, political theory had a central position as a branch of knowledge. Plato intended to offer his students the proper political education so that they could become good politicians in the future.⁸ Plato kept his mind constantly occupied with the thought on how some betterment could be brought in political life. So, he conceived an idea which determined his life and activity, an idea which he fully develops in the *Republic* and repeats in other works, that "unless [...] either philosophers become kings in our states or those whom we now call our kings and rulers take to the pursuit of philosophy seriously and adequately, and there is a conjunction of these two things, political power and philosophic intelligence [...] there can be no cessation of troubles [...] for our states, nor [...] for the human race either" (*Republic* 473 c-d).⁹ This Platonic view explicitly shows the demand for a philosophical foundation of politics, so that the best government in the *polis* can be achieved.

⁶ See *Letter VII* 324 b - 326 b.

⁷ As it is well known, the law-courts of Athens condemned and slew Socrates in 399 B.C., something which was especially disappointing for Plato as for the function of democracy and its institutions.

⁸ For the practical orientation of Plato's Academy, see, among others, G.C. Field, *Plato and His Contemporaries: A Study in Fourth-Century Life and Thought* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1967³; 1930¹), pp. 43-45; W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, Vols. I-VI (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962-1981), Vol. IV: *Plato. The Man and His Dialogues: Earlier Period* (1975), pp. 22-24; Β.Π. Σολωμού-Παπανικολάου, *Ανθρώπινος βίος και ηδονή κατά τον Πλάτωνα*, unpubl. PhD Diss. (Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, 2003), pp. 99-104, where there is also an extensive bibliography on this issue.

⁹ Cf. *Republic* 487 e, 501 e, 540 d-e; *Statesman* 294 a; *Laws* 712 a.

Thus, Plato had to search for the conditions under which the best constitution could be established. His views on this matter are formulated, as it is well known, in the *Republic*,¹⁰ the first great work in the field of political philosophy and one of the top works in the history of political thought. After presenting in detail his propositions on the ideal regime, Plato exposes in Book VIII of the *Republic* the pathology of the *faulty constitutions* that deviate from the ideal regime. However, in order to attain safe conclusions, it is necessary to briefly sketch some basic principles of Plato's political philosophy, through the prism of which the reasons that lead the *polis* into crisis will become more intelligible.

One of the basic principles of Plato's political philosophy, especially in the *Republic*, is the city-soul analogy.¹¹ Plato explicitly states that constitutions do not "spring from the proverbial oak or rock," but "from the characters of the citizens" and that there must be as many forms of government as "the patterns of individual souls" (*Republic* 544 d-e). Certainly, it goes the other way round; each constitution, and the *polis* in general as a social, institutional and cultural milieu, mold the souls and the morals of citizens.¹² It is worth mentioning that, according to Plato, the three classes that constitute the ideal political society (*philosopher-rulers, guardians, producers*) correspond to the three parts of the soul (*rational, spirited, appetitive*).¹³

Another basic characteristic of Plato's political thought is the claim for unity in the bosom of the *polis*.¹⁴ In his conception, the lawgiver ought to aim, with his legislation, for the realization of the greatest good for the state, which is tantamount to "that which binds it [the *polis*] together and makes it one."¹⁵

¹⁰ For excellent introductions to the content of the *Republic*, see, for instance, J. Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981); C.D.C. Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); N. Pappas, *Plato and the Republic* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995); G. Santas, *Understanding Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010). For thorough commentaries on the *Republic*, see J. Adam, *The Republic of Plato. Edited with Critical Notes, Commentary and Appendices*, intro. D.A. Rees, 2 Vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962²; 1902¹); R.C. Cross and A.D. Woodley, *Plato's Republic: A Philosophical Commentary* (London: MacMillan, 1964).

¹¹ On this, see, for example, T.J. Andersson, *Polis and Psyche: A Motif in Plato's Republic* (Göteborg: Elanders Boktryckeri Aktiebolag, 1971); N.D. Smith, "Plato's Analogy of Soul and State," *The Journal of Ethics*, 3 (1999), 31-49; G.R.F. Ferrari, *City and Soul in Plato's Republic* (2003; rpt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). For a severe criticism of this analogy, see B. Williams, "The Analogy of City and Soul in Plato's Republic," in E.N. Lee, A.P.D. Mourelatos, R.M. Rorty (eds.), *Exegesis and Argument: Studies in Greek Philosophy Presented to Gregory Vlastos* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1973), 196-206; rpt. in B. Williams, *The Sense of the Past*, ed. and intro. M. Burnyeat (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 108-117.

¹² *Republic* 338 e - 339 a, 435 e, but also 434 e - 435 a. See also 489 d - 493 a, 549 c - 550 b, 553 a - 555 a, 559 d - 562 a, 572 b - 576 b.

¹³ See *Republic* 442 c, 416 d-e, 429 a-b, 431 e - 432 a, 434 a, 581 a etc.

¹⁴ See *Republic* 428 c-d, 462 a-b.

¹⁵ *Republic* 462 b-e. On the notion of unity and the idea that Plato's city must be one city and not a plurality of cities, see, for example, N.P. White, *A Companion to Plato's Republic* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 110-111.

Plato sees the *polis* as a living organism that forms a whole, whose parts, namely its citizens, in the name of unity, must even rejoice and grieve alike at the same time, because the community of pleasure and pain ties the binds between all the citizens.¹⁶ For Plato, the *polis* that fits “into the footprints of the good” (*Republic* 462 a 6) must achieve unity, and deter decomposition and privatization¹⁷ by all means.

One more important feature of Plato’s political philosophy is that *eudaimonia* (happiness), which “is desired by all human beings as the ultimate end of all their rational acts”¹⁸ and constitutes the highest human good, should not be confined to some of the citizens only, but it should concern all of them without exception.¹⁹ Moreover, in Plato’s view, individual happiness depends on the *eudaimonia* of the *polis* as a whole, but, at the same time “the *polis* is an organization devised with the paramount aim of promoting individual *eudaimonia*,”²⁰ which presupposes the exercise of virtue.

Another fundamental principle of Plato’s thought is that political leaders, for the best performance of their work, must not possess any private property, movable or immovable (*Republic* 417 d). As he believes, the accumulation of wealth corrupts the leaders and the rest of the guardians, because “whenever they shall acquire for themselves land of their own and houses and coin, they [...] will be transformed from the helpers of their fellow-citizens to their enemies and masters” (*Republic* 417 a-b). Moreover, keeping excessive wealth as well as poverty away from the *polis* must be one of the rulers’ main concerns (*Republic* 421 e).

The corner stone of Plato’s ideal state, and the condition *sine qua non* for acquiring happiness, is justice.²¹ Justice is tantamount to the rule of reason, either in the soul or in the *polis*. “Under reason’s wise rule, the three [parts of the human soul] together can form a just unity, a psychological commonwealth in which each part receives its just due. Their concerted action leads to

¹⁶ *Republic* 462 b-e.

¹⁷ Privatization (*Republic* 462 b 8: *ιδίωσις*) undermines the unity of the *polis*. The chief cause of privatization is “when the citizens do not utter in unison such words as ‘mine’ and ‘not mine,’ and similarly with regard to the word ‘alien’” (462 c).

¹⁸ G. Vlastos, *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 203. Cf. X.A. Τέζας, *Βιβλιοκρισία στο Γρηγόρη Βλαστός, Σωκράτης: Είρωνευτής και ήθικός φιλόσοφος, Δωδώνη, Μέρος Τρίτο, Τόμ. 22* (1993), 321-342, p. 332.

¹⁹ *Republic* 420 b: “the object on which we fixed our eyes in the establishment of our state was not the exceptional happiness of any one class but the greatest possible happiness of a city as a whole.”

²⁰ C.C.W. Taylor, “Plato’s Totalitarianism,” in R. Kraut (ed.), *Plato’s Republic: Critical Essays* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), 31-48, p. 40.

²¹ For further discussion of the relationship between these two core notions in the ethics of Plato, i.e. justice and happiness (*eudaimonia*), see, for example, G. Vlastos, “Justice and Happiness in the *Republic*,” in G. Vlastos, *Platonic Studies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981²; 1973¹), 111-139; T. Irwin, *Plato’s Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 192-193, 244-261; A.W. Price, *Virtue and Reason in Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), esp. pp. 9-32.

treating others justly as well,”²² and paves the way for the establishment of both psychic and political harmony.

Justice, according to Plato, is the principal virtue that unifies and harmonizes all the other cardinal virtues,²³ namely prudence,²⁴ courage²⁵ and temperance,²⁶ which are the same both in the soul of the individual and in the classes of the *polis*.²⁷ The investigation on the nature of justice leads Plato to the conclusion that justice consists in each citizen doing his own business,²⁸ and in focusing his attempts on fulfilling the role accorded to him by nature and proper education. Through this prism, the governance of the *polis* should be appointed to those who are suitable by nature and have been properly educated.

At the top of Plato’s political structure stands the *philosopher-king*,²⁹ who is the best politician and the bearer of all virtues, because he has contemplated the Ideas, especially the Idea of the Good. The knowledge of the Good makes the *philosopher-king* capable of ruling the *polis* in the best way possible. In his person, the ideal of the unity of theory and practice is realized.

All of the above mentioned principles are, in brief, the basic principles of Plato’s political philosophy, on the basis of which the just constitution must be founded. Any aberration from these principles is pathogenesis, and Plato tries to point out the imperfections of his contemporary constitutions, so as to find the possible transformations that would improve the situation. According to his criteria, the historical constitutions are “bad and mistaken” (*Republic*

²² R. Parry, “Morality and Happiness: Book IV of Plato’s *Republic*,” *The Journal of Education*, 178 (1996), 31-47, p. 31.

²³ On the cardinal virtues in Plato, see D. Carr, “The Cardinal Virtues and Plato’s Moral Psychology,” *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 38 (1988), 186-200.

²⁴ Prudence is assigned to the rulers and to reason.

²⁵ Courage is assigned to the warrior class and to the spirited element in man. For a recent analysis on Plato’s view of courage, see L.R. Rabieh, *Plato and the Virtue of Courage* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

²⁶ Temperance is common to all classes (*Republic* 430 e, 431 d - 432 a) and to all parts of the soul (442 c-d), but primarily it is associated with the producing classes, the farmers and craftsmen (389 d-e), and consequently with the desiring part of the soul (430 d - 431 a).

²⁷ See, for instance, *Republic* 435 b: “a just man [...] will not differ at all from a just city in respect of the very form of justice, but will be like it.” The rightly founded *polis* is good in the full sense of the word (427 e): “Clearly, then, it will be wise, brave, sober, and just.”

²⁸ See *Republic* 433 a-b, 433 d, 433 e - 434 a, 434 c, 435 b, 441 d-e, 443 b. For interesting discussions on the platonic concept of justice, see, among many others, M.B. Foster, “On Plato’s Conception of Justice in the *Republic*,” *Philosophical Quarterly*, 1 (1951), 206-217; P. Fireman, *Justice in Plato’s Republic* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957); Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic*, pp. 118-125, 153-169; F.C. White, “Justice and the Good of Others in Plato’s *Republic*,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 5 (1988), 395-410; Pappas, *Plato and the Republic*, pp. 81-98; J. Butler, “Justice and the Fundamental Question of Plato’s *Republic*,” *Apeiron*, 35 (2002), 1-17; S. Rosen, *Plato’s Republic: A Study* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 139-170.

²⁹ On Plato’s figure of the philosopher-king, see, among others, Reeve, *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato’s Republic*, pp. 191-195; Y.N. Maniatis, “Plato’s Political Theory of the ‘Philosopher-King’: Soteriological Meditations on the Future of Humanity,” *Skepsis*, 12 (2001), 50-64.

449 a 3), as well as maladies of the state.³⁰ These constitutions have many defects, but they are especially characterized by a lack of respect for justice, thus reflecting injustice in different forms and degrees.

The order of the faulty constitutions, from the least evil to the most evil, is, according to Plato, the following: timocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny (*Republic* 544 c).³¹ This order reveals decay and aberration from the ideal platonic state, not only from a chronological but also from an axiological point of view. In these constitutions, injustice prevails both within the *polis* and inside the soul, since, for Plato, each constitution correlates to a specific type of soul (*Republic* 445 c).

Specifically, in the timocratic regime, reason, instead of being the ruling element, is subordinated to the spirited part of the soul. Thus the most characteristic features of the timocratic man are “contentiousness” and “covetousness of honour” (*Republic* 548 c). In the oligarchic regime, reason serves the passion for the pursuit of wealth. In Plato’s words, “when wealth honoured in a state, and the wealthy, virtue and the good are less honoured,” and the citizens finally become “lovers of gain-getting and of money” (*Republic* 551 a). In the democratic regime, reason submits to the desire for absolute liberty (*Republic* 557 b). The democratic man cannot distinguish the necessary from the unnecessary desires, and surrenders himself both to the necessary and the unnecessary and harmful desires and pleasures indiscriminately.³² In tyranny, “the fourth and final malady of a state” (*Republic* 544 c), reason is totally subjected to the desiring part of the soul, and the tyrannical man is dominated by desires of every kind, especially by those that are unnecessary and, in addition, are “terrible, fierce and lawless” (*Republic* 572 b). From the afore-said, it becomes clear that, in the faulty constitutions, the lower parts of the soul undertake the leading role within the souls of their corresponding citizens and determine the quality of each constitution.³³ The Books VIII-IX of the *Republic*, as R.K. Balot³⁴ points out, “advance Plato’s critique of contemporary Greek politics,” but furthermore “they deepen that critique by illustrating the pathologies of soul that characterize ordinary citizens of each constitution.”

In conclusion, it could be said that Plato’s fierce criticism of the historical constitutions of his time is a part of his broader argument that aims, not only

³⁰ Plato notably characterizes tyranny as “the fourth and final malady of the state” (*Republic* 544 c 7). Aristotle as well considers tyranny as the worst constitution (*Politics* 1289 a 40 - b 2).

³¹ For interesting discussions on the faulty constitutions in Plato’s *Republic*, see, for example, M.E. Spencer, “Plato and the Anatomy of the Constitutions,” *Social Theory and Practice*, 5 (1978), 95-130; Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic*, pp. 294-305; P. Coby, “Socrates on the Decline and Fall of Regimes: Books 8 and 9 of the *Republic*,” *Interpretation*, 21 (1993), 15-39. Aristotle calls the faulty constitutions “deviations” from the right constitutions (see esp. *Nicomachean Ethics* 1160 a 31 - 1161 b 10; *Eudemian Ethics* 1241 b 28; *Politics* 1279 a 22 - 1280 a 6, 1289 a 26 - b 26, 1290 a 25 etc).

³² See *Republic* 561 a-b.

³³ For further analysis see Σολωμού-Παπανικολάου, *Ανθρώπινος βίος και ηδονή κατά τον Πλάτωνα*, pp. 180-182.

³⁴ *Greek Political Thought*, p. 202.

to formulate the definition of just man, but also to determine the political conditions under which justice can rule. Plato attempts to show why justice is unattainable when the lower and irrational parts of the soul dominate political life. Plato is undoubtedly an austere critic of his contemporary regimes, believing that all of them are in a critical situation.³⁵ Particularly, his criticism of democracy³⁶ surprises us nowadays, since we are accustomed to seeing democracy as the best form of government. However, we could claim that, as for democracy, using John Anton's words, Plato "will remain one of its most constructive critics, implacable, yet the greatest of friends,"³⁷ as well as a constructive critic of political life in general.

Plato is concerned with political issues in dialogues written after the *Republic*, too, but especially in his last and most voluminous work, the *Laws*, in which he envisages a constitution closer to human standards³⁸ than the ideal one forwarded in the *Republic*. His theories about the right way of government, which are closely related to other aspects of his philosophy and mainly to his ethics, must be viewed through the prism of his social and political optimism, since Plato never stopped believing that the political society can recover. Despite of all the adversities he met, he never ceased offering proposals for the betterment of the human situation until the end of his life.

For Plato, every crisis is caused by many and various reasons, which sometimes are possible to be foreseen or even obviated, but at any rate their consequences need to be successfully confronted. Plato's proposals for overcoming crisis could be useful nowadays, since our age, in spite of the progress achieved, undergoes, as mentioned above, a deep crisis on many levels. Like in Plato's age, people today, not only in Greece but all over the world, encounter, *mutatis mutandis*, similar problems that have to be solved.

In addition, if we take a closer look at the contemporary world, we could detect almost the same pathologies of the soul to be prevalent in human life as those described by Plato. People nowadays, regardless of the regime in which they live, are motivated by similar drives, desires and passions as Plato's contemporaries. To be more specific, greed of honor, excessive love of profit and money, and a pursuit of unrestricted freedom predominate over the life and action of modern man. More importantly, people tend to surrender to desires and pleasures of every kind, no matter if they are necessary, unnecessary and harmful, or even lawless.

³⁵ See *Letter VII*, especially 324 b - 326 b.

³⁶ On Plato's criticism of democracy, see, for instance, D. Scott, "Plato's Critique of the Democratic Character," *Phronesis*, 45 (2000), 19-37; G. Santas, "Plato's Criticism of the 'Democratic Man' in the *Republic*," *The Journal of Ethics*, 5 (2001), 57-71. Plato's comments on democracy (*Republic* 555 c - 562 a etc.) are of great importance not because he considers democracy as the worst form of government (since the worst is tyranny), but because democracy concerns us more today, since the other faulty constitutions –more or less– are rejected.

³⁷ J.P. Anton, "Plato as Critic of Democracy: Ancient and Contemporary," in K.J. Boudouris (ed.), *Plato's Political Philosophy and Contemporary Democratic Theory*, Vols. I-II (Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, 1997), Vol. I, 11-20, p. 17.

³⁸ See *Laws*, esp. Books II-VIII, but also passages from Books I, IX-XII.

All of these things give a widespread sense of decadence. The all-powerful global economic establishment is able to affect the way of life and thinking of the vast majority of the population. It also exerts power on politicians and leaders, and, as a result, coercion-free debate and deliberation for promoting the common good can hardly exist. In the present situation, politics is unable to proceed to self-contained political action, since it is dominated by the socio-economic realm. How is it possible for the public domain to be restored, when our “liberal and industrial culture” tends to “treat it as a purely instrumental sphere, valuable only for its contribution to private ends?”³⁹

In my opinion, this could be achieved if, as Plato suggests, all citizens and mostly their political leaders devote their efforts to the realization of the common weal, and try to reunite ethics with politics, which, as it is well known, cannot be separated in the Platonic thought.

³⁹ N. O’Sullivan, “The Concepts of the Public, the Private and the Political in Contemporary Western Political Theory,” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 12 (2009), 145-165, p. 162.

^{**} Translations used: Plato, *The Republic*, with an English Translation by Paul Shorey, in Two Vols., “Loeb Classical Library” [Vol. I (1930), Vol. II (1935); rev. and rpt. Cambridge, Mass./London: Harvard University Press, 1937]; Plato, *Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*, with an English Translation by R.G. Bury, “Loeb Classical Library,” (Cambridge, Mass./London: Harvard University Press, 1929).

The Myth of Theuth: Of Remembrance and κρίνειν in Crisis

MARIE-ODILE HOBEIKA

The *Phaedrus* has attracted attention in the last three decades as being Plato's most lyrically refined and philosophically mature treatment of *psyche*, *logos*, and *phoné*. Hans Krämer, according to whom Plato's actual position on *logos* is reflected in the *Phaedrus*, argues that the dialogue is the key stone of the corpus.¹ As such, the *Phaedrus* ends with Plato's, and not only the fictional Socrates', position on philosophy that, without *phoné*, *logos* insufficiently develops the philosophical *psyche*.²

Related to its theme of *logos* and *phoné*, the dialogue has also attracted scholarly attention for its reconciliation of philosophy and rhetoric. Indeed, the *Phaedrus* seems to imply that philosophical training considers rhetorical virtues, a position which Plato does not seem to take in the *Republic*.³ Despite their various interpretations, philosophers and rhetoricians alike focus on the *Phaedrus* as a medial enigma—a written text that insists on oral dialogue, whose characters, in turn, discuss logographic methods of oratory, in contrast to psychagogic methods of Socratic *elenchus*.

Those questions of media, in turn, had for a while made the *Phaedrus* and its closing myth notorious among poststructuralist circles. In the *Myth of Theuth*, the origins of oral and literary modes of communication are set in strife by their dissemination. Jacques Derrida famously reads the figure of Theuth—sun-god-father-disseminator of truth—as an origin which Platonic philosophy bars by authorizing a false distinction between *logos* and *phoné*.⁴ In effect, this distinction overrides both spoken, and written onomatopoeic truths by treating writing as an extension of speaking. Treating writing as a

¹ H. Krämer, *Plato and the Foundation of Metaphysics: A Work on the Theory of the Principles and Unwritten Doctrines of Plato with a Collection of the Fundamental Documents*, ed. and trans. J.R. Catan (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 67. His reading follows Schlegel and Schleiermacher in granting the *Phaedrus* a central position in Plato's canon. However unlike his German predecessors, Krämer argues that Plato falls on the side of orality, not of literacy.

² *Ibid.*, p. 67

³ Z. Giannopoulou, "Enacting the Other, Being Oneself: The Drama of Rhetoric and Philosophy in Plato's *Phaedrus*," *Classical Philology*, 105 (2010), 146-161; D. Werner, "Rhetoric and Philosophy in Plato's *Phaedrus*," *Greece and Rome*, 57 (2010), 21-46; T.S. Frentz, "Memory, Myth, and Rhetoric in Plato's *Phaedrus*," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 36 (2006), 243-62; B. McAdon, "Plato's Denunciation of Rhetoric in the *Phaedrus*," *Rhetoric Review*, 23 (2004), 21-39; R.A. Harris, "Bakhtin, *Phaedrus*, and the Geometry of Rhetoric," *Rhetoric Review*, 6 (1988), 168-176; J. Neel, *Plato, Derrida, and Writing* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988); R.J. Connors, "Greek Rhetoric and the Transition from Orality," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 19 (1986), 38-65.

⁴ J. Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," in *Dissemination*, trans. B. Johnson (London: The Athlone Press, 1981), 61-171, pp. 167-168.

supplement to speaking presumes that the two activities are ontologically similar. *Au contraire*, Derrida shows that neither speaking nor writing is analogous to one another, and that writing does not present an actual world outside of itself. Moreover, he elaborates that, in a literate world, speaking no longer operates as it did mythically, i.e., it no longer calls things into being by name (*nomos*). On Derrida's account, then, Plato establishes philosophy on account of cutting ties with the naming of the father.

In contrast to these accounts of the *Phaedrus*, I do not seek to contribute to ongoing debates about the weight of certain dialogues within Plato's corpus, nor to those that read the *Phaedrus* against, or in favor of, a philosophical rhetoric. And, deviating from Derrida's textual approach, I will argue that the *Myth of Theuth* is important, not to its mythical reference to origins, but as a historically supple story that hints at our current *intellectual* –not just economic or political– crisis. What I am calling an intellectual crisis can be defined as relapses on the part of intellects who root themselves in one or more of the following ways of arguing:

- a. that arguments against technological change prove that the past is ontologically continuous with the present.
- b. that arguments in defense of technological change prove that the past is wholly inaccessible for our current moment.
- c. that the role of the intellectual critic today is analogous to the role of the kingly judge: to argue for or against change that technological inventions currently offer.

By projecting the *Myth of Theuth* onto our "technological age," I am suggesting that it is paradigmatic for intellects trying to make meaning of change. Specifically, the myth shows that crisis ensues when we take for granted that intellectual wisdom coincides with that of King Ammon.

Accordingly, this paper contributes to recent treatments from literary theory and composition studies, which follow Eric Havelock and Walter Ong in reading the *Myth of Theuth* as a paradigm of technological transformation.⁵ Ong himself establishes that the shift from orality to literacy indicates that critics *as judges* of cultural operations cannot stand outside of their times:

"Writing and print and the computer are all ways of technologizing the word. Once the word is technologized, there is no effective way to criticize what technology has done [...] without the aid of the highest technology available. Moreover, the new technology is not merely used to convey the critique: in fact, it brought the critique into existence. Plato's philosophically analytic thought, as has been

⁵ E.A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963); W. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, Series: New Accents (New York: Routledge, 2002²); J. Hayes, "Phaedrus, Composition, and Walter Ong: The Enduring Buzz," retrieved from the blog "Teaching Writing in a Digital Age" (<https://twinada.wordpress.com/tag/plato-phaedrus/>); A. Liu, "Imagining the New Media Encounter," in S. Schreibman and R. Siemens (eds.), *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 3-25; K.E. Welch, *Electric Rhetoric: Classical Rhetoric, Oralism, and a New Literacy* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999).

seen (Havelock 1963), including his critique of writing, was possible only because of the effects that writing was beginning to have on mental processes.”⁶

Whereas Socrates criticizes the hyped shift from orality to literacy, Ong offers what some call a “progressive-optimistic” reading of typographic-digital shifts.⁷ However, we can read the reverse of optimism in this passage. Ong’s statement may be taken fatalistically, to mean that technology projects the intellectual into moments of κρίνειν (judgment) that bar simple acceptances or rejections of technological media. The intellect must now develop her capacity to articulate judgments that never quite announce a “yes” or “no,” “this will do” or “not,” because she is already effected by the technologies she critiques. Instead, she must develop a vocabulary of the “maybe.” Is technology bad? “Maybe, and maybe not.” What, then, is the form of reasonable criticism in a technological age? The contingent.

Having explained my aim and contribution to scholarly readings of the *Phaedrus*, I continue now in four sections that demonstrate my claim that the contingent is the primary form for judgment in a technological age. In the first section of my presentation, I summarize the *Myth of Theuth* in the *Phaedrus*. In the second, I use the voice of Ammon, or the intellectual critic that says “no” to technological change, insisting falsely on continuity. In the third, I use my voice as an intellect who wants to articulate contingencies to allow for a more expansive perspective on κρίνειν in times of technological change. And in the fourth, I speculate on the significance of myth at a time when intellectual discernment (κρίνειν) is at an impasse. The ordering of these sections, as you might already be able to tell, will aim to turn our present subject in many ways.

I. *Opsis*

Over the course of his dialogue with Socrates, Phaedrus displays a gaga admiration for two interconnected phenomena: sophistry and logography. Eric Havelock argues that the sophistical, as well as the philosophical traditions, were made possible by the technology of writing that eclipsed the age of oral poetry.⁸ Writing developed linguistic devices and abstract thinking. It also put sophistical eloquence on sale: Sophists wrote handbooks to disseminate some tricks of their signature trade, in effect advertizing their respective schools to a reading-listening audience. Socrates nudges Phaedrus to cultivate a critical disposition toward the Sophists and their professed *techné*. One of those nudges comes by way of mythical story-telling.

In recounting the Myth of Theuth, Socrates tells the story of the Egyptian messenger god who invents arts and games from symbols.⁹ Having invented many arts and games, Theuth comes to reveal them to Ammon, the king of

⁶ Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 79.

⁷ Hayes’ phrasing in weblog title.

⁸ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, p. 46.

⁹ Plato, *Phaedrus* 274c-75e, trans. W.C. Helmbold and W.G. Rabinowitz (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1956).

men. Proud of his inventions, Theuth offers them as gifts to the king's people. As they confer, Theuth tells Ammon about the arts of numbers and measurement, about the games of dicing and drafts, and so on. The king listens to Theuth, and judges the harms and profits of these inventions for his people. Last but not least among those arts, Theuth presents writing, his prized invention. Theuth says, "This discipline, my king, will make the Egyptians wiser and will improve their memories...." Perhaps like a zealous parent, Theuth sees only the merits of his creation. In response, the king puts Theuth's invention in its place among men: "O man full of arts, to *one* it is given to create the things of art, and to another [*one*] to judge (*κρίναι*) what measure of harm and of profit they have for those who shall employ them"¹⁰ [emphasis added]. Then, the king articulates the danger of writing. It does not produce wisdom, but its semblance; not memory, but remembrance. It will cause his people to forget by relying on external marks, "calling things to mind no longer from within themselves by their own unaided powers."¹¹

It is important to note the emphasis on "one" in King Ammon's response to Theuth. First, it implies that only the king judges on behalf of and for his people. It also implies a divine monopoly on invention as well as judgment. In this social structure, the judgment of a king sanctions or deflects change. King Ammon's "no" to Theuth's offering of writing is, thus, meaningful because it has the power or capacity to enforce its rejection. Yet, the *κρίναι* that King Ammon can exercise is not analogous to that which an intellect today exercises in a moment of judgment. Though some might wish it, intellects do not rule with the scepter. Instead, they rule by what their discernments can show in a new light, and the "no" of King Ammon seems to be an ineffective response to either invention or judgment wielded by individuals or assemblies. However, the kingly "no" is not yet impotent: it provokes us into considering a wider frame.

Having summarized the *Myth of Theuth*, I now channel the voice of a kingly judge. This voice expresses what I had presented during the conference. Yet, I had walked away from Ioannina thinking the presentation must issue itself in two ways. Without a rebuttal, echoing King Ammon's judgment, albeit for an age of portable digital devices, amounted to presuming that ontological continuity can be maintained between the intellect and the kingly judge, at the risk of denying the profound changes technology has had on the unfolding of consciousness. So, just as Plato presents more than one perspective in dialogic form, I also preserve my initial judgment in the next section to show how it makes space for its own rejoinder.

II. *Monoptics by Ammon*

Plato's philosophy claims that it is perennial, relevant to 2,500 years of any and all situations, by its recognition of the permanence of ideas. The stability

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 274e.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 275.

of ideas is all we have left to respond to changes in technology. As Ammon tried to warn us in the *Myth of Theuth*, technology threatens to undo how we have remembered and formed judgments.

To Plato's provocation, we can add that technology has obscured many concepts, including that of crisis. When the solution to technological breakdown is more technology, then ideas amount to innovations, rather than categories aimed to clarify the confusion of a world born of its past. This is especially true in an age of hybridized digital-portable devices. Seemingly, we are missing out if our purses don't carry iPads, and our ears don't carry Bluetooth. And, as Bill Gates once said: a phone without smarts is a dumb phone, just as a lap without a laptop is no lap at all. Even our classroom blackboards can upload the teacher's scribbles into typed letters on a website in live time. From any of these portals, a well-trained person can instantaneously reach and be reached by millions of people. Even more astonishing, an expert coder can control millions of machines, hack the infrastructure of a city, or direct a drone attack on some territory. In effect, our present times have erased borders, broken down distance to bits, time to bytes, and persons to users.

If Ammon viewed writing skeptically, we can only imagine what he would say about digital marks. So inundated are we with texts and tweets that Ammon's warnings about forgetfulness, memory, and judgment have become more salient than ever. Just as Theuth, who thought writing was an extension of the psyche, proponents of the Internet, likewise, think that digital technology is an external drive for the operations of the human mind. Computational biologists have even argued that the Internet is a memory drive that frees up brain space. Presumably then, the digital technology is not only a metaphor for the computations of human memory; it is literally the extension of a collective archival mind. This mind, in turn, supposedly frees up human attention for important things, like spending time with family and friends.

But technology is not a neutral extension of a brain. In his thorough account of what digital communication is doing to our brains, James Carr writes that, "the brain that does the remembering is not the brain that formed the initial memory. In order for the old memory to make sense in the current brain, the memory has to be updated. Biological memory is in a perpetual state of renewal."¹² If we believe that the Internet is an extension of our brain, then we are allowing it to interrupt that perpetual state of renewal, impoverishing the connections within our minds, and eroding our capacity to remember. Online information, he goes further, "are nothing like the synapses in our brain."¹³ Among other reasons, a typical online user, inundated with the limitless possibilities-turned-distractions, cannot remember what he or she read two minutes ago, but can actually retain how to get to that piece of information years later. In other words, digital communication does not free up brain space to process knowledge or information. Instead, it shapes the brain

¹² N. Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011²), p. 191.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

to be more amenable to remembering how it moves across websites: we begin to think like the Internet, in networked logical schemes, which in turn are webbed, not linear, scattered, not focused. As a corollary, the generation that has grown using such technology will find attention unsustainable, and categories of knowledge indistinct.

As Ammon tells Theuth, the intellectual ethic of technology is rarely recognized by its inventors and users. For users or inventors, addressing practical concerns or solving technical problems eclipse assessing the effects of media on its users. Users, in turn, have celebrated new technologies for aestheticizing the very things that evoke the good old days: everyday moments and do-it-yourself projects. Combined with portable devices, the Internet helps users to record and store every moment of everyday life on their own, a project that the human mind cannot do on its own. Sprint, for example, advertizes its new video phone by saying that every moment in a human's life is a miracle that *needs* to be recorded.¹⁴ The problem? We might miss recording a special moment. The solution? A Sprint iPhone, of course. In an aesthetically ravishing advertizement that celebrates the miracle of human life, the commercial ends with its punchline: "I have the right to be unlimited." As Theuth said to Ammon, "forget forgetting." If Sprint and many other proponents had their way, the Internet would be a storage bin of infinite dimensions for archiving the entirety of our lives' moments. Such a bottomless pit would do away with the need to judge the things worth remembering; we can assume that pivotal moments have been captured, waiting to be opened. But if we forget forgetting, then we forego *aletheia*, the truth that requires non-forgetfulness. And, as the Internet convinces, the entire globe of its necessity, evaluating significance, which is the most important judgment call of all, seems further off.

III. *Synoptics by Intellect*

But, the voice that invokes the spirit of Ammon in the previous section omits that technological developments also affect us as subjects, whether we would like them to do so or not. If this is true, then the value of judging whether the Internet is good or bad is provocative maybe, but largely ineffective. Provocative judgments spur us into thinking further about what we take for granted; effective judgments, on the other hand, are those that show us how to discern where agency resides in a situation. In fact, if intellectuals are committed to concepts, as placeholders of ideas, then the Internet, which holds the most ideas asks us to reconsider discernment (κρίνειν). Judgment that disavows its historical place not only dismisses the advantages of technology, but it also refuses to compose possibilities.

To be sure, κρίνειν and crisis have historically been obscure concepts, even before digital technology emerged. Packed underneath our feet, we walk on layers of geological sediment, each of them marking another age that con-

¹⁴ M. Boychuk, "I Am Unlimited Picture Perfect," in S. Credle (ed.), *Sprint iPhone 5* (Vimeo, 2013).

sidered itself, as we do today, to be in crisis. Even though one crisis succeeds another, each one claims to be unprecedented. And each one also insists that there is no turning back to the way things were. Of course, massive technological developments have brought about seismic economic shifts, and tectonic environmental quakes. Although each of these crises claims to be apocalyptic, we are finding out that there is a modernist repetitiveness in their urgency. As Koselleck puts it:

“The concept of crisis, which once had the power to pose unavoidable, harsh and non-negotiable alternatives, has been transformed to fit the uncertainties of whatever might be favored at a given moment. Such a tendency towards imprecision and vagueness, however, may itself be viewed as the symptom of a historical crisis that cannot as yet be fully gauged. This makes it all the more important for scholars to weigh the concept carefully before adopting it in their own terminology.”¹⁵

In other words, the hallmark of modernity may be that every moment stresses itself as a crisis, which overwhelms our capacities to discern the importance of particular moments. In this section, then, an intellectual critic emerges that considers Theuth’s argument: technology will aid the Egyptians. Such a position can only be defended if we reconsider intellectual mechanisms for dealing with information overload.

Walter J. Ong writes that Plato’s *Phaedrus* is prescient because “technologies are not merely exterior aids but also interior transformations of consciousness, and never more than when they affect the word.”¹⁶ To Ong’s statement, we can add that the accessibility of the Internet transforms consciousness more profoundly than previous technological revolutions. Its profundity stems from its capaciousness and responsiveness to users. For example, Google answers questions more efficiently than human dialogue, even though inefficiency allows space for discovery. Moreover, the Internet allows us to satisfy a questionable human craving: to gravitate to the things that tickle our fancies. The Internet archives our online activity, and stores our background information, so that it can list our search results in the order of those most likely to accord with our individual perspectives.

But, how exactly does digital technology goad us into thinking that we need it, that we have a right to it? Surely, it does not do so by announcing that it robs us of our capacity to judge. Instead, it announces the opposite: that we are all kings sitting in Ammon’s throne. But, if we are all kings, then there are no subjects, which is another way of saying that the Internet replaces the moment of judgment by one with many moments by many adjudicators. Indeed, inventors of technology call upon users to participate in appraising, rating, and judging their soft and hard wares. Consider that on YouTube, we involun-

¹⁵ R. Koselleck, “Crisis” [Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexicon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland], *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400, pp. 399-400.

¹⁶ Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 81.

tarily exercise approval by just viewing a video. This radical democratization of judgment bases itself on measuring attention, so that we can direct money making markets. Increasingly, online users feel entitled to provide feedback to Internet content, even though, ironically, it would seem that, more and more, people feel that their judgments don't matter. A glance at comments, tweets, and e-mails suggests that most users neither craft their judgments thoughtfully, nor consider their public comments to be serious judgments.

But online comments show us something other than the obvious fact that users do not take their online commentary seriously. They show us that, by radically democratizing judgments, the Internet alters what an effective judgment is. Perhaps users do not care to do their it's and cross their it's online, because they know that the role of *krinein* has changed, from affirming or negating some issue or another, to sculpting and arranging information. Sculpting information is a good metaphor because it emphasizes information as a pre-given material that sets new limits and possibilities on virtues for our times. The Internet holds more informative than a human interlocutor, no matter how encyclopedic they may be. Thus, the role of the intellect has, likewise, changed from the aggregator or gatekeeper of information and knowledge, to the sculptor who gives information animate shape. This means that the intellect does not *as intellect* record or disseminate information; she perhaps does so as an interpolated subject of the Internet. Instead, the intellect, strictly speaking, takes a stance on interpreting information. For those of us who do not appreciate that digital communication reverts us to becoming "mere decoders of information," we may find that the swathes of information aestheticizes judgment.¹⁷ To judge effectively means to find the most expansive or pragmatic gloss on a series of presented ideas.

IV. *Opsis by Myth*

As I have briefly mentioned, the *Myth of Theuth* speaks to an intellectual crisis, paralyzed by nostalgia for a time before change. This disposition presumes that the role of intellectual critic coincides with that of a kingly judge, who decides on behalf of his people whether or not to accept technological gifts from the gods.

As the previous section shows, I am not articulating a Luddite position. At the same time, I am freeing up the space to go beyond "this will do!" or "no, not that!" judgments about digital technology. These judgments, I am suggesting, may be provocative, but are ineffective to prevent the circulation of technology, especially in an age when judgment seems to be outsourced to users of technology. I am also suggesting that the Internet has put the intellect's power in the domain of interpretation, not information. In effect, myths such as the *Myth of Theuth* are more helpful than ever. Perhaps they are not as prophetic about what where human memory and judgment are headed, nor are

¹⁷ Carr, *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*, p. 122.

they pre-historical. However, they are prophetic in the sense that they show us how to discern new possibilities in untimely ways.

Plato's myth circumvents the kind of judgment that digital communication has made obsolete. In regard to Plato's myths generally, professor of Greek Philosophy Harold Tarrant offers a valuable insight into why they change the way that we render judgment. He writes that the myths are not to be read for their

“literal details nor any scientific interpretation [...] [the myths] may readily be accepted as something meaningful and to be trusted, but they cannot communicate to us any propositions. [...] It is in no way strange, then, if Plato's myths [...] simple and unsophisticated [...] retain the ability to become relevant to us by our *rediscovering* meaning within us.”¹⁸

Not only can we learn from Plato's myth as a story supple for our times, but we can also strive toward a supple style of communication.

For our present purposes, we could say that myth is an animate discourse because it does not allow us to resort, as we do online, to decoding information. There is no adequate pre-Internet metaphor for what digital communication is trying to do, or doing to us. But, by reference to the myth, and moving analogically from Ammon Theuth and Socrates Phaedrus, to you and me, we can ask: “In adopting x, what are we letting go?” By stepping out of the terms on which crises circulate, we can judge from without rather than from within. This is not to say that we can judge, from outside of history, of some pre-Internet age. Indeed when we change the terms of criticism, we plant our feet not in the shaky criteria of a past, but on steady mythical ground.

Perhaps asking projective questions is totally unnecessary. Perhaps the time when a philosopher could prophesize, like Socrates had done, is a dusk long settled upon Minerva's owl. But, if projections do matter, myth, at the very least, is a salient reminder of how judgments were formed absent information. From what we have seen of digital resources, perhaps we are entering an age where philosophy is going to benefit more than ever, or perhaps in this digital age philosophy is no longer a sub-set of the good life. To repeat my opening question, how can the stability of ideas respond to changes in technology, when technology determines how we remember and form ideas? The response might be that, like water of this world, the Internet provides us with ample material on which to surf, but myth gives us ways to stabilize information into sets that allow us to tell a story. Even more, it shows us that permanence is not archaic, it is a way of telling an enduring story about change, even if and precisely because it is fictional. What Plato's Myth allows us to do, then, is to approach the overabundant raw material that we call information. Like Ariadne, Plato hands us a way to exit the labyrinth of bytes and bits unbiten. The Myth of Theuth is a ball of twine directing us to consider what digital communication is doing to our way of life, without having to rely on more information.

¹⁸ H. Tarrant, “Literal and Deeper Meanings in Platonic Myths,” in C. Collobert, P. Destrée & F.J. Gonzalez (eds.), *Plato and Myth* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2008), 47-65, p. 65.

How to Discern the Genuine Politician in a Period of Crisis: The Case of Plato's *Statesman*

MARIA SOZOPOULOU

Plato's *Statesman* was written probably between 360 and 355 B.C.¹ This period was characterized by a number of upheavals and conflicts. The Greek *poleis* continued to be in a state of crisis, which was initiated during the Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.). This war, according to Thucydides,² stirred the life of the ancient Greek world, and partially of the "Barbaric one," and also created a deep ethical and political crisis, from which the Greek *poleis* never managed to recover. Especially after the Battle of Mantinea in 362 B.C., the crisis escalated and prevailed in Greece, as Xenophon tells us in his *Hellenica*.³

Plato reached manhood in the shadow of the Peloponnesian war and its dramatic events. He also witnessed the unsettled social and political situation that followed the war in Athens, and in other *poleis* as well. As a philosopher with a solid political background,⁴ Plato had a strong interest in his contempo-

* Full bibliographic elements are given only in the first reference in a book or article. For the translation of the Platonic texts I use mainly the translations from: J.M. Cooper, D.S. Hutchinson (eds.), *Plato Complete Works* (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997) and sometimes I attempt some modifications in the translation.

¹ H. Thesleff [*Studies in Platonic Chronology* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1982), p. 198] assumes that the *Statesman* was written between 360-355 B.C. On the contrary, J.B. Skemp [*Plato's Statesman: A Translation of the Politicus of Plato with Introductory Essays and Footnotes* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 17] assumes that the *Statesman* was written between "the years 366-361 and probably 366-362" B.C.

² See Thucydides, I. 1. 7-9 [*Thucydidis Historiae*, Tomi I-II, iterum recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit H.S. Jones. Apparatum criticum correxerit et auxit J.E. Powell (Oxonii: E. Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1900-1901)].

³ In the seven books of *Hellenica* Xenophon narrates the Greek History from the year 411 to 362 B.C. He ends his narration referring to the Battle of Mantinea (362 B.C.) with these words: "but there was even more confusion and disorder in Greece after the battle than before" (VII. 5. 27) [*Xenophon, Hellenica*, Vol I-II, with an English translation by C. L. Brownson, 'The Loeb Classical Library' (Cambridge, Mass./London: Harvard University Press/W. Heinemann, 1918)]. Indeed, the Greek History of the decade 360-350 B.C. is characterized by a number of disturbances and conflicts. For more details on this subject see Ί.Σ. Παπασταύρος, *Ιστορία τής Αρχαίας Ελλάδος* (Εν Αθήναις: Έκδ. Ί. Χιωτέλη, 1969), pp. 319-322; *Ιστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ ἔθνους*, Vol. Γ1 and Γ2 [Αθήναι: Έκδοτική Αθηνῶν, 2000 (1971¹)], pp. 447-461 and pp. 38-61 respectively; K.-W. Welwei, "The Peloponnesian War and Its Aftermath," in: K.H. Kinzl (ed.), *A Companion to the Classical Greek World* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 527-543.

⁴ Plato came from an aristocratic family with a large political tradition. According to Diogenes Laertius (III, 1), Plato's father, Ariston, was descended from Codrus. Plato's mother, Perictione, was descended from Solon, and her brother, Charmides, as well as her cousin, Critias, were active and vigorous politicians [Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, in Two Vols, With an English Translation by R.D. Hicks, 'The Loeb Classi-

rary political reality. This interest is revealed in the Platonic dialogues, as well as the *Seventh Letter*.⁵ Obviously, through his writings and his educational activity at the Academy, Plato wished to contribute to the overcoming of the multidimensional crisis of his era.

Plato never stopped pursuing the way to a philosophical foundation of politics. Throughout his research he reached the conclusion that none of the *poleis* of his era had a sound and well-ordered constitution.⁶ For this reason Plato criticized sharply all his contemporary forms of government and politicians. More specifically, in the *Gorgias* (515d-520c) Plato denounces the former politicians, such as Pericles, Cimon, Miltiades, and Themistocles, for their lack of “justice and self-control” that led to their failure to moralize the citizens.⁷ Hence, Plato proposes that “a man active in politics should” devote himself to make the *polis* and its citizens “as good as possible.” Obviously, one basic element of the genuine politician, which Plato suggests in the *Gorgias*, is the educational character of his political activity that contributes to the moral improvement of the citizens. The true politician is “skilled and good” (*τεχνικός τε καὶ ἀγαθός*, 504d) and always acts with prudence and justice, aiming “at what’s best” for the citizens, and not “at” their “gratification” and “at what’s most pleasant” for them (521d-e).

In Plato’s conception, the term “skilled” (*τεχνικός*) denotes a form of knowledge which the true politician should possess. Knowledge is a fundamental element of the true politician, and especially philosophical knowledge. For this reason, Plato supported the idea that justice and good can be seen in the life of the *polis* only by means of true philosophy. As a result, he was led to the fundamental proposal, according to which the social and political life of Greek *poleis* would be improved only if “philosophers rule as kings or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize.”⁸ In the *Republic*, Plato pictures the ideal archetype of the philosopher-king, which personifies the combination of political power and philosophy. This combination is, in Plato’s conception, the most efficient means to overcoming the persistent crisis of his time. The philosopher-king embodies the

cal Library’ (Cambridge, Mass./London: Harvard University Press/W. Heinemann, 1925)]. For more information regarding Plato’s life see for instance U. Von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Platon*, Band I-II (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1920), Vol. I, pp. 13-123; A.E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work* (London: Methuen, 1960), pp. 1-9; G. Boas, “Fact and Legend in the Biography of Plato,” *The Philosophical Review*, 57 (1948), 439-457.

⁵ See 327a, where Plato says that he was teaching Dion not only “what was best for men” but also “urged him to put them into practice.” For the practical direction of Platonic thought see B.Π. Σολωμού–Παπανικολάου, *Ανθρώπινος βίος και ηδονή κατά τον Πλάτωνα*, unpubl. PhD. Diss. (Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, 2003), pp. 96-118, where there is also an extensive bibliography on this subject.

⁶ *Ep. VII* 326a.

⁷ For instance, Plato denounces Pericles for making “the Athenians idle and cowardly, chatters and money-grabbers” (515e) as well as “wilder than they were when he took them over” (516c).

⁸ *R.* 473d-e. See also *Ep. VII* 326 c-d.

ideal figure of the genuine politician, and represents the utmost standard of the perfection of human nature. Plato attempted to implement his political theory in Sicily. There, he tried to transform the tyrant of Syracuse, Dionysius the Younger, into a philosopher-king. However, Dionysius' behavior disappointed Plato and made him lose every hope for the fulfilment of his political proposal.⁹

It is true that many scholars¹⁰ consider Plato's experience in Magna Graecia as a significant influence upon the evolution of his political theory. Plato, taking into account his rich experience in Syracuse as well as his experience at the Academy, reconsidered his basic political views and proceeded to a less radical and more realistic formulation of his political theory. Specifically in the *Statesman*, Plato, considering the political situation which prevailed in Athens after 365 B.C., invests his trust anew in politics, and he decides to confront the political problem of his era in a more realistic way. Moreover, as Cornelius Castoriadis maintains, Plato wishes both to "prepare the definition of the" *polis* and to "picture the role of the" ruler in it.¹¹

Plato's main purpose in the *Statesman* is to find the right definition of the genuine politician, so that, being aware of the elements that define his nature, one is able to distinguish him from his imitators, or otherwise deceitful politicians. Plato states in 291c that making the distinction between the true and the false politician is a necessity in order to have a clear view of the true politician's nature. Yet this distinction is the "most difficult" (*παρχόλεπον*, 291c) thing to do because of the odd and confusing nature of the false politicians, who are characterized in 291a-b as a "troop of lions, Centaurs, Satyrs,"¹² and other "weak and cunning beasts" that have the ability to "make quick exchanges of forms and qualities with one another." This odd image of mythological creatures denotes the pseudo-politicians' lack of ethics, their weakness to control their desires, and their skill in deception. Although they do "not possess scientific knowledge" (*ἀνεπιστήμονες*, 300d), they are skilled orators and great "cheats" (*γότηες*) something that makes them "the greatest sophists among all sophists" and "protectors" of false images (291c; 303c). The "greatest imitators" (303c) of the true politician that Plato pictures in the *Statesman* correspond to a certain kind of politician that is the demagogue, in the pejorative meaning of the term. Even though Plato never uses the term *demagogue* to characterize the bad political leader,¹³ it is clear that he makes

⁹ See *Ep. VII* 331 d - 333 d.

¹⁰ See for instance G. Klosko, *The Development of Plato's Political Theory* (New York and London: Methuen, 1986), pp. 185-188; T.A. Sinclair, *A History of Greek Political Thought* [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1967 (1951¹)], pp. 180-184.

¹¹ *Ο Πολιτικός του Πλάτωνα. Έπτά σεμινάρια στην EHESS*, μτφρ. Ζ. Καστοριάδη, preface Π. Βιντάλ-Νακέ (Αθήνα: Πόλις, 2001 [1st ed. in French 1999]), p. 178.

¹² See also *Plt.* 303 c-d.

¹³ For the ways that Plato conceives the derogatory meaning of the term *demagogue*, see for example M. Lane, "The Origins of the Statesman-Demagogue Distinction in and after Ancient Athens," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 73 (2012), 179-200, and particularly pp. 189-190. Melissa Lane also argues that the "distinction between terms signifying the good statesman and the bad demagogue" was not a "fundamental" one "in Athenian Politics" (p.

an effort to condemn such a negative type of politician, who is a false image (*εἰδωλον*, 303c) that imitates “badly” (*παγκάκως*, 300e) the true politician.

The demagogue was a “new type of a” political leader, which, according to T. Buckley, appeared in Athens “in the 430s and especially after Pericles’ death” and “gradually acquired its derogatory meaning as a leader of the democratic faction.”¹⁴ The pejorative meaning of the term *demagogue*¹⁵ characterizes an ambitious man, who, as M.I. Finley points out, “is driven by self-interest” and “by the desire” of political “power” and “wealth.” To his advantage, “he surrenders all principles, all genuine leadership, and he panders to the people in every way.”¹⁶ S. Dusanić¹⁷ asserts that Plato perhaps was opposed to a certain political person of his era, whom he considered as a dangerous false politician. More specifically, S. Dusanić argues that, in the *Statesman* as well as in the *Sophist*, Plato attempts “the condemnation of Callistratus,”¹⁸ who was a “demagogue” and skilled orator with anti-Panhellenic, “pro-Per-sian” and anti-Laonophile attitudes. Callistratus was also a “notorious rival of Timotheus,”¹⁹ who, as S. Dusanić points out, “must have been for several years the most influential of the Athenian statesmen,”²⁰ and his policy must have “enjoyed the constant support of Plato and Plato’s Academy.”²¹ Timo-

179) and that “none of the historians, playwrights, and orators of classical Athens” made use of a “pejorative term for demagogue in developing their analyses of bad political leadership” (p. 180). Pejorative terms for demagogue is found only “in the philosophers” (p. 187), such as Plato, Aristotle and Plutarch.

¹⁴ *Aspects of Greek History, 750-323 BC: A Source-Based Approach* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 346-347.

¹⁵ See *LSJ*, s.v. *δημαγωγός* [H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon (= LSJ)*, A New Edition Revised and Augmented throughout by H.S. Jones with the Assistance of R. McKenzie and with the Co-operation of Many Scholars (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940⁹ (1843¹)].

¹⁶ “Athenian Demagogues,” *Past and Present*, 21 (1962), 3-24, [rpt. in: M.I. Finley (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 1-25], quoted from the revised version, which was published in M.I. Finley, *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (London: Hogarth Press, 1985), 38-75, and particularly p. 41. [The revised version was also published in: P.J. Rhodes (ed.), *Athenian Democracy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 163-184].

¹⁷ “Plato and the Two Maritime Confederacies of Athens,” in: L. Aigner Foresti, A. Barzanò, C. Bearzot, L. Prandi, G. Zecchini (eds.), *Federazioni e federalism nell’ Europa antica* (Milano, 1994), 87-106, and particularly pp. 97-99, [rpt.; S. Dusanić, *Plato’s Dialogues and Athenian Politics: A Historians View* (Belgrade: Studia Serbica, 2011), 11-35, and particularly pp. 24-27]. See also S. Dusanić, “The True Statesman of the *Statesman* and the Young Tyrant of the *Laws*,” in: C.J. Rowe (ed.), *Reading the Statesman. Proceedings of the III Symposium Platonicum* (Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 1995), 337-346, and mainly p. 340, (rpt. in Dusanić, *Plato’s Dialogues and Athenian Politics*, 425-442, and mainly p. 430).

¹⁸ S. Dusanić, “Plato’s Academy and Timotheus’ Policy, 365-359 B.C.,” *Chiron*, 10 (1980), 111-144, and mainly p. 139, [rpt. in Dusanić, *Plato’s Dialogues and Athenian Politics*, 295-339, and more specifically p. 332].

¹⁹ Dusanić, “Plato’s Academy and Timotheus’ Policy, 365-359 B.C.,” p. 126 (316).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111 (295).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 117 (303).

thus, as well as Chabrias and Leosthenes, “must have belonged to the narrow circle, mainly” composed of “the Academics themselves, to which the messages of the dialogues were addressed as a guide in the meanders of *Realpolitik*.”²² Taking the above into consideration, it could be presumed that the text of Plato’s *Statesman*, which condemned Callistratus’ demagogy, was also a useful manual for Timotheus and his political activity.

It could be said that the basic elements that define the nature of the pseudo-politicians, and discerns them from the genuine politician, are their ignorance of political science, their immorality and lack of self-knowledge, and the strong desire for power that guides their political activity.²³ Through their rhetorical skill and impressive speech, they manage to present themselves as protectors of the poor and lower social classes in order to win the confidence of the citizens and to increase their popularity. All of these elements render them unable to govern the *polis*. Also, the pseudo-politicians focus on the abolition of concord (*ὁμόνοια*) by dividing the *polis* into two hostile parties. For this reason Plato characterizes them as “experts in faction” or “seditious” (*στασιαστικοί*, 303 c), who intensify by every means and enlarge the *stasis* (*στάσις*),²⁴ aiming at the weakening and easy manipulation of the citizens.

The term *stasis*, among other meanings, was used in ancient Greek to denote the civil war,²⁵ as the result of the conflict of two rival parties in the *polis*.²⁶ M. H. Hansen²⁷ has pointed out that the “evidence” from “the sources for the Archaic and Classical periods” show that there were “279 outbreaks of civil war in 122 different *poleis*” and “that many or all of the *poleis* in a re-

²² Dusanić, “The True Statesman of the *Statesman* and the Young Tyrant of the *Laws*,” p. 342 (433). For the same matter see S. Dusanić, “Athenian Politics in Plato’s *PHAEDRUS*,” in Dusanić, *Plato’s Dialogues and Athenian Politics*, 246-274, and mainly p. 247. Also from the passage 259a-b of the *Statesman*, we can presume that Plato wishes to present himself as the most appropriate counselor in Timotheus’ political activity, since he proposes that if someone possesses political science, but he is not a ruler, then he should have the right to bear the title of the genuine politician and thus is capable of being a counselor of the active politician.

²³ See *Plt.* 301c-d; 302a-b. For interesting comments on this issue see for example R. Weiss, “Statesman as Ἐπιστήμων: Caretaker, Physician, and Weaver,” in Rowe (ed.), *Reading the Statesman*, 213-222, and mainly pp. 220-221.

²⁴ For more information about the concept of *stasis* in ancient Greek *poleis*, see, for instance, H.-J. Gehrke, *Stasis: Untersuchungen zur den Inneren Kriegen in der Griechischen Staaten des 5. und 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* (München: Beck, 1985); M. Berent, “Stasis, or the Greek Invention of Politics,” *History of Political Thought*, 19 (1998), 331-362; M.H. Hansen, “Stasis as an Essential Aspect of the *Polis*,” in M.H. Hansen-T.H. Nielsen (eds.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 124-129.

²⁵ See *LSJ*, s.v. *στάσις*.

²⁶ M.H. Hansen refers that the two rival parties in the *polis* could be the party “of the rich, who supported oligarchy, and” the “one of the poor, who preferred democracy.” Furthermore, “the rival parties could also be different ethnic groups living side by side in the same *polis*” or in another case “the community could be polarised around two rival groups of rich contending for power.” [See *Polis. An Introduction to the Ancient Greek City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 125-126, and particularly p. 125].

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 125-126.

gion were plagued by *stasis*.” Considering this, he presumes that “most of the *poleis* in the Greek world were afflicted by civil war at least once in their history.” In addition, M.H. Hansen²⁸ argues that the source of *stasis* was “the lack of *homonoia*” (concord) among the citizens, which “endangered the prosperity and well-being of a *polis*.”

The word *stasis* appears twice in the *Statesman*, in 306 b and in 307 c, and specifically at the point where there is the description of the contradiction between the two characters, namely the *courageous* and the *moderate* ones. It is likely, as it will be mentioned later, that Plato refers here to the two opposite political parties, the *courageous* democrats and the *moderate* oligarchs, whose purpose was for each one to take over the control of the political power, leading, in many cases, to an outbreak of civil war in the *polis*. In 301b-d, Plato stresses the danger that lurks when a *seditionous* false politician takes the control of political power. In this case, he will act against both written and unwritten laws, and, since his political activity is guided by his ignorance and his desires, he will harm the citizens and will cause severe disorder in a society which has already been stirred up by crisis, leading, in this way to the complete devastation of the *polis* (302 a-b).

It is obvious that Plato continues, in the *Statesman*, as he did in both the *Gorgias* and the *Republic*, to consider the possession of scientific knowledge as one of the most basic elements a ruler-scientist should have. For this reason he pictures the ideal archetype of the ruler-scientist “who really possesses expert knowledge” (301 b; 293 c; 258 b), an archetype which is in contrast to the negative model of the ignorant pseudo-politician. More specifically, the “kingly man” (*ἀνὴρ βασιλικός*, 294 a), as Plato calls the ruler-scientist, must be a possessor of both theoretical and practical knowledge,²⁹ that is, of the political science (*πολιτικὴ ἐπιστήμη*, 300e) and the art of *measurement* (*μετρητική*, 283 d). Even though Plato considers scientific knowledge to be a basic element that determines the nature of the genuine politician, he makes no reference, however, to the content of the education that the politician should receive in order to obtain this knowledge. We might presume that Plato, in the *Statesman*, continues to support the educational system which he suggested in the *Republic* for the philosopher-king. It is likely that he decided that it is not necessary to talk once again about the true politician’s education in the *Statesman*, since the philosopher-king and the ruler-scientist share a common feature, mainly, the possessing of theoretical and practical knowledge. Considering this, it is possible that the science that must be possessed by the ruler-scientist includes philosophical knowledge, and especially the knowledge of the method of division or *diairesis* (*διαίρεσις*), which aims at the formulation of right definitions, and helps the real politician to make the right use of the art of *measurement*.

²⁸ Hansen, “*Stasis* as an Essential Aspect of the *Polis*,” p. 126.

²⁹ Plato supports that practical knowledge is very important for the performance of the political art (see *Plt.* 305c). For more information about the relationship between theory and practice in Plato’s *Statesman* see for example X. Márquez, “Theory and Practice in Plato’s *Statesman*,” *Ancient Philosophy*, 27 (2007), 31-53.

Undoubtedly, the real politician, as a genuine possessor of scientific knowledge, could never be a facsimile of an authoritarian ruler or tyrant. According to Plato, the true politician governs along with the will and acceptance of the citizens and not with violence as the tyrant does (276 e). In order to support this position, Plato uses the method of division,³⁰ and initially gives a false definition of the politician, which characterizes him as “herdsman and rearer of the human herd” (268c), and afterwards attempts its correction with the introduction of the myth of the Reversed Cosmos (268 d - 274 d).³¹ This particular myth narrates two opposite cosmic periods, the age of Kronos and the age of Zeus, where the first gives way to the second. The first cosmic period is characterized by perfection, order and harmony, since the Demiurge holds the helm of cosmos and controls the motion of the universe. During this period, humans are under the absolute hegemony of the “greatest divinity” (272e), that is Kronos. The second cosmic period is characterized by gradual decay and decomposition, since the Demiurge has abandoned the cosmos, and humans are absolutely free of every kind of despotism.

The inference of the myth is that despotism can be exercised only by a god, that means by a being superior to humans, which rules the human herd and nurtures it. We could say that despotism in the age of Zeus, in which we are now living, is not acceptable, since there is no supreme being within the human herd to monitor it. The politicians of the age of Zeus are mortals, and for this reason it is not possible for them to behave like divine shepherds, because every attempt by them to perform a despotic rule will lead to a complete failure. Plato is convinced that, if someone believes that he can rule according to the Kronos model, then he will definitely become a tyrant.³²

³⁰ For the method of *diaeresis* in Plato's *Statesman*, see, for instance, S. Benardete, “Eidos and Diaeresis in Plato's *Statesman*,” *Philologus*, 107 (1963), 193-226; S. Rosen, *Plato's Statesman: The Web of Politics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), pp.14-36, 67-80 and 98-105; D. de Chiara-Quenzer, “The Purpose of the Philosophical Method in Plato's *Statesman*,” *Apeiron*, 31 (1998), 91-126; M.S. Lane, *Method and Politics in Plato's Statesman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 13-97.

³¹ For an extensive analysis of the myth of the Reversed Cosmos, see, for instance, R.L. Campbell, *The Sophistes and Politicus of Plato*, with a Revised Text and English Notes (1867; rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1973), pp. xxviii-xli; Skemp, *Plato's Statesman*, pp. 82-111; P. Vidal-Naquet, “Plato's Myth of the *Statesman*, the Ambiguities of The Golden Age and of History,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 98 (1978), 132-141; S. Rosen, “Plato's Myth of the Reversed Cosmos,” *The Review of Metaphysics*, 33 (1979), 59-85; same author, *Plato's Statesman*, pp. 37-66; H.R. Scodel, *Diaeresis and Myth in Plato's Statesman*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), pp. 74-89; Lane, *Method and Politics in Plato's Statesman*, pp. 99-136; Καστοριάδης, *Ὁ Πολιτικός τοῦ Πλάτωνα*, pp. 183-202 and 205-222; M. Miller, *The Philosopher in Plato's Statesman* (Hague, Boston, London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1980), pp. 130-170; D.A. White, *Myth, Metaphysics and Dialectic in Plato's Statesman* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 37-59; C.H. Kahn, “The Myth of the *Statesman*,” in: C. Partenie (ed.), *Plato's Myths* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 148-165; X. Márquez, *A Stranger's Knowledge. Statesmanship, Philosophy & Law in Plato's Statesman* (Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2012), pp. 119-176.

³² C.L. Griswold Jr. [“*Politikē Epistēmē* in Plato's *Statesman*,” in J. Anton and A. Preus (eds.), *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy III Plato* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of

It is said that Plato, in the *Statesman*, expresses his opposition to the tendency of his era which tries to legalize the despotic performance of power as a privilege that has been given by a god to some people. Among the scholars who adopt the above view is M. Miller, who claims that “the initial diaeresis,” which is attempted in the dialogue, as well as “the myth, as position and refutation, comprise a clear rejection of the re-emergence of despotism in Greek politics.”³³ It is upon despotism that intellectuals of this era, such as Xenophon, Antisthenes and Isocrates, posed their hopes for the overcoming of the crisis that plagued the Greek *poleis*.³⁴ E. Barker³⁵ also supports the idea that Plato, with the Myth, aims at the demystification and reversal of the traditional notion, according to which the royal or tyrannical power becomes legal as divine virtue or divine donation.

In order to distinguish the real politician from the tyrant, Plato proceeds (276 c-d) to the correction of the word *rearing* or *nurture* (*τροφήν*) that is included in the first false definition of the politician, and concerns the way through which the king-shepherd governs. He suggests the replacement of the word *rearing* with the word *caring* or *care* (*ἐπιμέλειαν*).³⁶ The real politician does not rear the citizens, something that only the divine shepherd does, but cares for “the whole human community together” (276 b) by creating and securing the proper terms and conditions for the activities and lives of the citizens. A. E. Taylor also asserts that the correction of the word *rearing* attempts “to eliminate the ‘superman’ from serious political theory” as well as to “strike at the root of the worship of the ‘man who can,’ the autocrat or dictator paternally managing the rest mankind without the need of direction or control by law.”³⁷ X. Márquez supports another point of view, according to which “the substitution of care for nurture” puts aside “the idea that the” genuine politician “is primarily concerned with the physical ‘feeding’ of human beings.” In particular, this substitution shows that “the care of human beings,” which is enabled by “political knowledge,” transcends “such physical preservation by helping to educate human beings as far as possible into virtue.”³⁸

Considering X. Márquez’s opinion, it could be said that, the term *care* implies also the educational character of the true politician’s political activity. This means that Plato continues to support, in the *Statesman*, as he did in the *Gorgias* and the *Republic*, the view that the true politician is, above all, an educator, and, more specifically, a moralizer who devotes himself and his

New York Press, 1989), 141-167, and particularly p. 147] aptly observes that “a person in our cycle of the cosmos who thinks that he possesses Cronos’ *epistēmē*, that he is different in kind from the ruled, and that the ruled are animals comparable to sheep, is nothing other than a tyrant.”

³³ *The Philosopher in Plato’s Statesman*, p. 54.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-50.

³⁵ See *Greek Political Theory; Plato and His Predecessors* [London: Methuen, 1918 (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1960)], p. 318.

³⁶ For interesting comments about the word *ἐπιμέλεια*, see S. Rosen, *Plato’s Statesman*, pp. 64-69.

³⁷ See *Plato*, p. 397.

³⁸ *A Stranger’s Knowledge*, p. 109.

work to the moralization of the citizens. Furthermore, we could say that the term *nurture* or *rearing* could possibly characterize the political activity of a pseudo-politician, which leads to the misdirection of the citizens in order to earn their trust and their support. S. Dusaníć adopts this point of view and suggests that “Plato’s insistence upon the thesis that the ‘shepherd of the human folk’ should not be ‘charged with the bodily nurture of his herd’” possibly “reveals Plato’s attitude toward one of the supports of Callistratus’ demagoguery, his care for the Athenian food supply.”³⁹

As has been said above, the scientific knowledge, which the true politician possesses, includes the art of *measurement* and political science. Plato considers the art of *measurement* as an important means for the genuine politician, which is a vital element for the performance of political activity. Plato, here, introduces the concept of the *mean* (μέτριον)⁴⁰ in his political theory, something which proves that he remains faithful to the ethical tradition of his *polis* that demanded the observance of *metron ariston* (μέτρον ἄριστον). Therefore, with the art of *measurement*, the genuine politician is able to achieve the middle way and to avoid the two extremes of excess and deficiency both to himself and to his political performance. The art of *measurement* relates itself with the “due measure” (μέτριον), with “what is fitting” (πρέπον), with “the right moment” or the “due time” (καιρόν), with “what is as it ought to be” (δέον), and with “everything that removes itself from the extremes to the middle” (284 e). Particularly, the genuine politician’s ability to conceive the concept of *kairos*⁴¹ is one of his most significant features. *Kairos* means the knowledge of the exact moment for the right and proper action in the *polis*.

It is true that the politicians are responsible for the moment they choose to act and they are subjected to criticism by the citizens for the results of these choices. Therefore, the genuine politician can be recognized by his timely political choices and their good results. The knowledge of *kairos* makes the ruler-scientist, as Melissa Lane aptly comments, “a master timer, a master of timing,”⁴² able to know whenever it is the right time or not for the completion

³⁹ “Plato’s Academy and Timotheus’ Policy, 365-359 B.C.,” p. 139 (pp. 332-333).

⁴⁰ *Pt.* 258 b and 283 d. For more information about the concept of the *mean* and the art of *measurement* in Plato’s *Statesman*, see, for example, L.M. Hammond, “Plato on Scientific Measurement and the Social Sciences,” *The Philosophical Review*, 44 (1935), 435-447; Δ. Κούτρας, «Ἡ μετρητική τέχνη καί ἡ πολιτική φρόνησις,» in: Κ. Βουδοῦρης (ἐπιμ.), *Ἡ Πολιτική καί ὁ Πολιτικός* (Ἀθήνα: Διεθνής Ἑταιρεία Ἑλληνικῆς Φιλοσοφίας, 1990), 94-106; Rosen, *Plato’s Statesman*, pp.119-138; Miller, *The Philosopher in Plato’s Statesman*, pp. 64-72; K. Sayre, “Excess and Deficiency at *Statesman* 283 C - 285 C,” *Plato: The Internet Journal of the International Plato Society*, 5 (2005), 1-25; X. Márquez, “Measure and the Arts in Plato’s *Statesman*,” *Plato: The Internet Journal of the International Plato Society*, 6 (2006), 1-12.

⁴¹ For the very important concept of *kairos* in Plato’s *Statesman* see for instance M. Lane, “A New Angle on Utopia: The Political Theory of the *Statesman*,” in Rowe (ed.), *Reading the Statesman*, 276-291; same author, *Method and Politics in Plato’s Statesman*, pp. 139-146 and 171-179; Márquez, *A Stranger’s Knowledge*, pp. 313-318 and 322-324.

⁴² *Method and Politics in Plato’s Statesman*, p. 142. Also, Melissa Lane notes that the “mastery of the *kairos*” is something that “belongs, according to the Stranger, to the

of the greatest actions in the *polis* (305d), ensuring in this way the success of his political intentions and acts. Also X. Márquez points out that the knowledge of *kairos* could be “simply the right time for changing or establishing the fundamental laws of the”⁴³ *polis*. This timely political activity will ensure the preservation and the improvement of the *polis*. In addition, the concept of *kairos* will attribute to the genuine politician’s control of the “contributory causes” (281 d; 289 c), that means the control of the sciences which assist him, such as rhetoric, generalship, and the art of judging (303 e - 304 a). *Kairos* will also contribute to the achievement of his ultimate work, which is the termination of the *stasis* in the *polis*, by reconciling the two conflicting groups of citizens.

The political science, or art,⁴⁴ emerges in the *Statesman* as the art of harmonization of the oppositions in the political community, as well as the *sine qua non* requirement for the achievement of happiness (*εὐδαιμονία*), the paramount human good. Plato, using the paradigm⁴⁵ of the weaving art and the weaver, intends to reveal the content of the political science which the genuine politician must possess. The possession of political science is an element that differentiates him from all those who pursue political power in the *polis* without deserving it, such as farmers, merchants and retailers, money-changers, heralds and bureaucrats, seers and priests, false politicians and sophists (289 d - 291 c). More specifically, the ultimate political work of the real politician is to provide concord⁴⁶ among the citizens, to secure their safety, and to put an end to the *stasis*. Plato proposes (311 b-c) that concord and

statesman and not (*inter alia*) to the rhetor.” This particular claim of Plato should be “polemical in a fourth-century Athenian culture in which *kairos* was a term closely associated with rhetoric” (p. 144). For information about the concept of *kairos* in ancient Greece and its association with rhetoric, see, for instance, M. Carter, “Stasis and Kairos: Principles of Social Construction in Classical Rhetoric,” *Rhetoric Review*, 7 (1988), 97-112; P. Sipiōra, “The Ancient Concept of *Kairos*,” in P. Sipiōra - J.S. Baumlin (eds.), *Rhetoric and Kairos. Essays in History, Theory, and Praxis* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2002), 1-22.

⁴³ *A Stranger’s Knowledge*, p. 316.

⁴⁴ In the *Statesman*, Plato uses the terms *politikē epistēmē* (πολιτικὴ ἐπιστήμη) and *politikē technē* (πολιτικὴ τέχνη) to characterize statesmanship. X. Márquez (*A Stranger’s Knowledge*, pp. 178-192) comments about this issue that there is nowhere in the *Statesman* any apparent “distinction between these terms,” *technē* and *epistēmē*. Yet, “the terms *technē* and *epistēmē*,” which characterize statesmanship, “are not entirely interchangeable in either the *Sophist* or the *Statesman*.” X. Márquez maintains that “the term *epistēmē*” regards the “forms of knowledge,” which is related to “wisdom,” and that the “term *technē*” indicates “a capacity” that means “a form of knowledge that can make judgments about particular actions and objects.”

⁴⁵ For the structure and the role of the paradigm in the *Statesman*, see, for instance, S. Kato, “The Role of *Paradeigma* in the *Statesman*,” in Rowe (ed.), *Reading the Statesman*, 162-172; Rosen, *Plato’s Statesman*, pp. 81-97; Lane, *Method and Politics in Plato’s Statesman*, pp. 61-75.

⁴⁶ For information about Plato’s positive evaluation of the concept of concord, see, for example, R. Kamtekar, “What’s the Good of Agreeing? *Homonoia* in Platonic Politics,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 26 (2004), 131-170.

friendship can be provided by the interweaving of the two opposite human characters, the “courageous” (*ἀνδρείων*) and the “moderate” (*σωφρόνων*), in a political fabric. This interweaving will contribute to the end of the contradiction between excess and deficiency in the community, as well as to the end of the hostility of the “opposite sorts” (306 e). This hostility and its result, *stasis*, according to Plato, is characterized as a “disease which is the most hateful of all” (*νόσος ἐχθίστη*, 307 d) for the *polis*.⁴⁷

Probably, Plato’s theory about the interweaving of the two virtues implies another theory through which he suggests for the first time the formation of a “mixed constitution”⁴⁸ that consists of democratic and oligarchic elements. Concerning this matter, G. Klosko argues that “the Statesman’s” work “is to intermingle the different personality types throughout the constitutional structure,” something that leads to “a new kind of mixed constitution.”⁴⁹ So, according to this conception, we could say that the virtue of “courage” (*ἀνδρεία*) corresponds to the democratic constitution, while the virtue of “moderation” (*σωφροσύνη*) to the oligarchic one. The politician-weaver has the ability to smooth the excess and the deficiency; to combine, through the “kingly weaving-process” (*βασιλική συμπλοκή*, 306 a), the “vigorous,” warlike, courageous and democratic characters with the “quiet,” peacemakers, moderate and oligarchic ones,⁵⁰ and to weave in this way a proper and stable constitution, restoring the *measure* and the balance in the political community.

Perhaps Plato makes, here, a political proposal which is characterized by the *due measure*, since it is in the middle between two political extremes, the democratic and oligarchic ones, and, obviously, he rejects the one-sided policy that has detrimental consequences for the *polis*. At the end of the *Statesman* (311 a-c), Plato proposes that the *polis*, which needs only one ruler, should elect the one who possesses both virtues, something which means that

⁴⁷ *Stasis* is characterized as a disease also in the *Sophist* 228a, in the *Republic* 470d and 556 e, and in the *Laws* 744d.

⁴⁸ Plato makes an indirect reference to the “mixed constitution” in the passage 310 e - 311 b, and he thoroughly analyzes this theory in his last work, the *Laws*. Several scholars admit that Plato is one of the first introducers of the theory of the “mixed constitution”. See, for example, E. Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, pp. 395-396; G.R. Morrow, *Plato’s Cretan City: A Historical Interpretation of the Laws* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993 (1960¹)], p. 521; Klosko, *The Development of Plato’s Political Theory*, p. 220; D.E. Hahm, “The Mixed Constitution in Greek Thought,” in R.K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought* (United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 178-198, and particularly p. 180. In addition, G.R. Morrow argues that “the term *-πολιτεία μεικτή* or *μειγμένη-* occurs nowhere in” Plato’s work and that “the theory of the mixed constitution depends” on “the concept” of “the mean –the *μέτριον* or *μετριότης*” (*Plato’s Cretan City*, p. 521. See also Klosko, *The Development of Plato’s Political Theory*, p. 220).

⁴⁹ *The Development of Plato’s Political Theory*, p. 193. See also Barker, *Greek Political Theory*, p. 314; Márquez, *A Stranger’s Knowledge*, p. 337.

⁵⁰ The features of the two virtues are given in the passage 306c-308a. For more information about the two virtues of ordinary citizens, as well as their interweaving as the ultimate work of the real politician, see, for example, C. Bobonich, “The Virtues of Ordinary People in Plato’s *Statesman*,” in Rowe (ed.), *Reading the Statesman*, 313-329; T. Mishima, “Courage and Moderation in the *Statesman*,” in Rowe (ed.), *Reading the Statesman*, 306-312.

this ruler should combine democratic and oligarchic attitudes. Also, if the *polis* requires more than one ruler, then it should equally combine men from both democratic and oligarchic parties, so as to lead to the restriction of *stasis*, to secure the union through “concord and friendship” (*ὁμονοία καὶ φιλία*) and to provide safety and happiness for the society.

The success of the political interweaving is based on true politician’s educational activity, which is enabled by his scientific knowledge and aims at the formation of balanced and harmonious human characters. As was previously mentioned, the genuine politician is able to achieve the middle way, both to himself and to his political work, with the help of the art of *measurement*. This means that he bears inside him the two diverse virtues of *courage* and *moderation* in complete balance, that he is in the possession of *medium* political beliefs, and that he moves neither towards excess nor deficiency in his political actions. The true politician emerges, in the *Statesman*, as the moral prototype *par excellence* that all citizens should follow and imitate. His solid moral background enables him to become the ideal educator for the citizens, who will focus on their moralization with the help of a catholic education.

Plato outlines the educational activity of the politician-weaver in 308d-310 e. He states that the politician should absolutely control the educational system of the *polis* and determine the moral and socio-political models, on which the pedagogues are reliant in order to create proper characters for the political interweaving. Then, as a skilled moralizer, he will make use of the “divine bond,” which constitutes the combination of *courage* and *moderation* in the human spirit and soul, and he will instill into the souls of those who are by nature born “noble,” the “true opinion” (*ἀληθῆ δόξαν*), in relation to what is just and unjust, good and evil. According to Plato, the *divine bond*, which renders the *true opinion* common to the “rightly” educated citizens, is a “medicine” (*φάρμακον*) that can heal the *polis* from the hateful disease of hostility, disagreements and *stasis*. Lastly, the politician-weaver will complete the political interweaving with the “human bonds,” which include the intermarriages and the exchanges of children between the two opposite characters. With the *human bonds*, he will educate the citizens to avoid those marriages, which are based on the pursuit of wealth and political power as well as on the attraction to the same kind. Thus, the true politician will secure the birth of children with a harmonious and structured character and a balanced soul, and will prevent the future degeneration of the citizens.⁵¹

It is worth mentioning that Plato, for the benefit of the *polis*, permits the real politician to show a violent and cruel attitude (293d) by punishing, killing or banishing all those who are unable to participate in the political interweaving because of their “evil nature,” and thus they are dangerous and capable of

⁵¹ For interesting comments on true politician’s educational activity as well as on the two bonds, the *divine* and the *human* one, see, for example, Márquez, *A Stranger’s Knowledge*, pp. 324-339. For the two bonds see also Mishima, “Courage and Moderation in the *Statesman*,” 306-312, and mainly pp. 308-309; Lane, *Method and Politics in Plato’s Statesman*, pp. 174-182; White, *Myth, Metaphysics and Dialectic in Plato’s Statesman*, pp. 125-127.

harming the citizens (308 e - 309 a). Concerning this matter, G. Klosko⁵² points out that “Plato’s willingness to countenance” the real politician’s right to use “violence is one aspect of the *Statesman* that is similar to the *Republic*,” since “the philosopher-kings are able to use drastic means in order to bring the ideal state into existence.” However, it must be noted that the real politician will only use violence as a result of critical thinking and substantial knowledge of the circumstances, since he is guided by the political science and the art of *measurement*, and not by blind lust and ignorance like false politicians and tyrants.

Lastly, for the benefit of the citizens, the real politician will manage to preserve a standard size of the *polis* (293d). This can be accomplished in two ways: a) with colonization in case of overpopulation, and b) with the incorporation and assimilation of foreign people, in order to increase the small number of citizens.

Plato supports that, in order for the politician to materialize all of the above, he needs the help of the rhetorical art.⁵³ More specifically, the real politician will make use of a certain part of the rhetorical art, which, as Plato points out in 304 a, is the one that, “in partnership with kingship,” works for the benefit of the *polis* by persuading “people of what is just and so helps in steering though the business of cities.” Furthermore, he will use the rhetorical art as a means of disseminating mythological stories for the common benefit, because he believes that the only way to persuade the “mass and crowd” is “through the telling of stories, and not through teaching” (304 c-d).

It is possible, here, that Plato, by making this specific suggestion, continues to support his thesis in the *Republic*, according to which the philosopher-king has the right to make use of the “noble lie” (*γενναῖον ψεῦδος*)⁵⁴ as “a useful drug” (*φάρμακον χρήσιμον*, 382 c) for the benefit of the *polis*. It is worth noting that, in the *Statesman*, the rhetorical art is being introduced for the first time as a *contributory cause* of political science.⁵⁵ Plato’s turn towards a more positive conception of the rhetorical art has been made already in the dialogue *Phaedrus*, in which, from 262 a and onwards, Plato suggests that rhetorical art can be possibly improved by philosophy, and especially by dialectic.⁵⁶

⁵² *The Development of Plato’s Political Theory*, p. 191.

⁵³ *Plt.* 281 d; 289 c.

⁵⁴ See *R.* 414 b-c and 459 c-d. Interesting interpretations in the *noble lie* of the *Republic*, see, for instance, R.B. Levinson, *In Defense of Plato* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 424-437; J. Ferguson, “The Ethics of the *γενναῖον ψεῦδος*,” *Liverpool Classical Monthly*, 6 (1981), 259-267; D. Dombrowski, “Plato’s ‘Noble’ Lie,” *History of Political Thought*, 18 (1997), 566-578.

⁵⁵ For information and comments on this matter, see, for example, J. Poulakos, “Rhetoric and Political Leadership in Plato’s *Statesman*,” in K.J. Boudouris (ed.), *Plato’s Political Philosophy and Contemporary Democratic Theory*, Vol. I (Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture & K.B., 1997), 154-161.

⁵⁶ For interesting comments on this matter see I. Θεοδωρακόπουλος, *Πλάτωνος Φαῖδρος. Εἰσαγωγή, ἀρχαίο και νέο κείμενο με σχόλια* [Αθήνα: Βιβλιοπωλείον τῆς «Ἐστίας», 2005 (1948¹), p. 290]. For Plato’s positive conception of the rhetorical art in the *Phaedrus*, see,

Finally, it is important to mention that Plato attributes to the real politician's superiority to the laws,⁵⁷ allowing him to use them only in a supplementary way in his political activity. The real politician, as a "wise and good man" (296 e), has the ability to modify and reconsider the laws, following his own criteria for the benefit of the citizens, since his prudence exceeds against the law. Plato, in 294 c, characterizes the law as "a self-willed and ignorant person, who allows no one to do anything contrary to what he orders." With this characterization, Plato wants to emphasize the element of rigidity which the law bears, and which constitutes it unable to correspond to the particularities and the diversities of the people in a society (294 a-b). However, Plato suggests, in 301 d-e, that the ideal archetype of the real politician, which he has already pictured in the *Statesman*, cannot possibly exist in his contemporary *poleis*. This ideal archetype will be the prototype model that all his contemporary politicians should try to follow and imitate. Of course, since these politicians are not "superior in body and mind" as the real politician is, and since they are driven by their human nature to serve their own interests and not the public good, they should not be by any chance above the laws. For this reason, Plato stresses the necessity of making laws, as well as the necessity of their domination in political life as a "second-best method" (*δεύτερος πλοῦς*, 300 c).

From the preceding analysis, it becomes clear that Plato considers the presence of a genuine politician in the *polis* as a necessity, especially in a period of crisis. The genuine politician is the ruler-scientist who will focus on the achievement of what is best for the political community, which is happiness. He is the one who, "under the guidance of intelligence and the art of government," (*μετὰ νοῦ καὶ τέχνης*), will give justice to the citizens, will save them, and as a good and skilled moralizer, with moral background, will make many efforts so as to improve them as much as possible (297a-b). The genuine politician appears also as the personification of Reason (*ὀρθοῦ λόγου*, 310c), since the art of *measurement*, which is strictly rational, constitutes the cornerstone of his political science. As a wise legislator, he has the ability to offer such laws in the community as will secure the general benefit, and not a partial one. Lastly, as a politician-weaver, he will manage to smooth over the hostility and the conflicts that are considered as a *hateful disease* for the *polis* (307d), and to prevent the state of *stasis*. With the interweaving of the ethics,

for example, D. Werner, "Rhetoric and Philosophy in Plato's *Phaedrus*," *Greece and Rome*, 57 (2010), 21-46. For a different point of view, see B. McAdon, "Plato's Denunciation of Rhetoric in the *Phaedrus*," *Rhetoric Review*, 23 (2004), 21-39, in which the writer argues that Plato "denounces" rhetoric "completely," since his "view of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* is consistent with the view expressed in the *Gorgias*" (p. 22).

⁵⁷ See *Plt.* 294a; cf. *Plt.* 297a. For interesting interpretations in Plato's view of superiority of the true politician to the laws, see, for instance, Rosen, *Plato's Statesman*, pp. 156-168; P. Stern, "The Rule of Wisdom and the Rule of Law in Plato's *Statesman*," *The American Political Science Review*, 91 (1997), 264-276; Lane, *Method and Politics in Plato's Statesman*, pp. 147-163; Márquez, *A Stranger's Knowledge*, pp. 233-302.

of the *courageous* and the *moderate*, which is his ultimate political action, he will manage to secure the unity of the *polis* and its salvation.

In conclusion, it can be said that Plato's ideal archetype of the ruler-scientist could be timely in our contemporary era, which is an era of crisis, too. Today, there is an urgent need for the presence of genuine politicians with vision and selfless devotion to their political work and the benefit of the people. As in Plato's time, we also need today's politicians to have knowledge, skill, and good moral background, to be capable of conceiving the concept of *kairos*, to be just, in order to perform their political activity effectively, and to focus on the general improvement of the human condition. Thus, they will manage to secure concord and prosperity in society, and to contribute, in the best possible way, to the overcoming of the crisis which plagues our global era.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ I owe special thanks to Dr. Vasiliki Solomou-Papanikolaou for taking the time to review the final draft and offer helpful comments and suggestions.

Crisis and the Role of Intellectuals in the Work of Karl Mannheim*

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The purpose of this paper is to illuminate the aspects of a theoretical project which was formed during the interwar crisis, and aspired to become a proposal able to help overcome it. This project was formulated by Hungarian thinker Karl Mannheim in an era where the intensity and duration of the economic crisis led to a significant impact on the social, as well as the theoretical and ideological, fields. Without any intentions of identifying the current crisis with the interwar crisis, we think that, in some aspects, they are related, and, in this sense, certain data and questions that applied then could do so today, and could even contribute to modern thought concerning the crisis.

The historical timeframe of Mannheim's writing is characterized by the crisis of the interwar period, which, in his interpretation, is manifested as antagonism between conflicting, individual ideologies, resulting in "complete misunderstanding."¹ Attempting to formulate a proposal capable of exceeding this situation, Mannheim is directed to the perspective of a new political "synthesis" through the findings of the sociology of knowledge, which will exceed all individual political and social interests. The basis of this conception of sociology is a "wishful thinking" to reconcile the competing political views and interests in a free and unfettered debate; but that prospect moved outside the historical circumstances of the period in which they were delivered.²

The interpretation of the crisis leads Mannheim to the elaboration and adoption of a series of positions concerning the issue of ideology and the associated problem of truth. Moreover, the prospect of political synthesis that he sets is directly related to the role of intellectuals, and the question of the relationship between theory and practice. As we will show below, the intellectuals are entrusted with the task of relativisation (he writes relationisation) of individual perspectives and ideologies. The relativisation of individual ideologies, which emerges from social analysis, combats the destructive power of ideologies, which is responsible for so many historical and political ills. Intellectuals, after indicating the particularity and relativity of opposing ideologies, will synthesize them, constructing a more comprehensive and more complete theory of social being. This is what Mannheim considers as the political contri-

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¹ K. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 252.

² I. Mavridis, "Beyond the Sociology of Knowledge: Marxist Readings of Karl Mannheim," in *Proceedings of the 1st National Conference of Hellenic Sociological Society* (Athens: Protagoras, 2011), 427-444.

bution of the sociology of knowledge, to help overcome the crisis in the context of a liberal bourgeois democracy.

From the above, it is clear that the examination of epistemological positions of the sociology of knowledge, particularly those which are relating to the issue of ideology and the issue of the relationship between theory and practice, will help us to evaluate the contributions and shortcomings of the Mannheim proposal in relation to possible ways of interpreting and overcoming the crisis. This statement, therefore, will be structured in two parts. The first part concerns the examination of basic epistemological positions of Mannheim's theoretical project, which concluded with his interpretation of the crisis and the role of intellectuals within it. The second part deals with a critical review of his positions from the perspective of critical social theory. In particular, in the latter part, we will try to point out the deficiencies and internal contradictions that permeate his venture. At the same time, we will point out some interesting ideas and questions posed by the sociology of knowledge, which, under certain conditions, could be considered compatible with the perspective of critical social theory.

As we already mentioned, the objective of Mannheim's theoretical project is to create a comprehensive theory, which describes the social being more fully, and will indicate the possibilities that exist within it to overcome the crisis. The tools and conditions of such a theory are found in the theoretical program of Mannheim, namely the sociology of knowledge. The scope and objectives of the sociology of knowledge are systematized in Karl Mannheim's well known work *Ideology and Utopia*. However, epistemological presupposition of this newly established scientific field are found in works preceding *Ideology and Utopia*, and concern Mannheim's views on the formation of the social being, the correlation between thought and social reality, and finally the historicity of knowledge.³

The main features of Mannheim's sociology of knowledge were formed having as a point of reference the basic epistemological principles of Marxist theory, namely the social (class) identification of ideas, and the distinction between ideological (socially determined) thinking and thought that reflects reality.⁴ In particular, Mannheim defended the possibility and necessity of formulating rational crisis in science, and politics. However, he considered that those methods of thought by means of which we arrive at our most crucial decisions, and through which we seek to diagnose and guide our political and social destiny, have remained unrecognized, and therefore "inaccessible to intellectual control and self-criticism."⁵ In this context, he attempts to work out a suitable method for the description and critical understanding of this type of

³ K. Mannheim, *Essays on Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. P. Kecskemeti (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952).

⁴ E. Lewalter, "The Sociology of Knowledge and Marxism," in V. Meja, N. Stehr (eds.) *Knowledge and Politics: The Sociology of Knowledge Dispute* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), p. 159.

⁵ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, p. 1.

thought and its changes.⁶ The method indicated is the sociology of knowledge.

The position that “there are modes of thought which cannot be adequately understood as long as their social origins are obscured”⁷ constituted a basic component of the sociology of knowledge. According to Mannheim, the social group is defined as the “substratum”⁸ of all modes of thought. Moreover, the social group is considered as a bearer of a visual, and is understood in the context of a dynamic social totality or a historical era.⁹ In this light, the sociology of knowledge “does not start with the single individual and his thinking in order then to proceed directly in the manner of philosopher to the abstract heights of thought as such.”¹⁰ Mannheim epistemologically opposed to individualistic psychology and philosophy, especially in the form of classical epistemology. The opposition arose from the fact that they denied the social and historical dimensions of forms of thought and knowledge. Through the sociology of knowledge, Mannheim attempted to understand the thought into the specific relevance of the social historic situation, to the extent that it is inherently and always a collective process. The visual of this orientation constituted the first feature of the sociology of knowledge.

The second feature relates to the unbroken connection between thought and practice. According to Mannheim,

“men do not confront the objects of the world from the abstract levels of a contemplating mind as such, nor do they do so exclusively as solitary beings. On the contrary they act with and against one another in diversely organized groups, and while doing so they think with and against one another. These persons, bound together into groups, strive in accordance with the character and position of groups to which they belong to change the surrounding world of nature and society or attempt to maintain it in a given condition.”¹¹

According to the above quotations, control and review both of the scientific findings, as well as of the political decisions and actions, require reference to the source of thought processes, which is nothing else than the social status of individuals within a particular historical context. In Mannheim’s words, again, “perhaps it is precisely when the hitherto concealed dependence of thought on group existence and its rootedness in action becomes visible that it really becomes possible for the first time, through becoming aware of them, to attain a new mode of control over previously uncontrolled factors in thought.”¹²

The strong focus on social determination of ideas leads to an attempt to discover it in all forms of thinking through the sociology of knowledge. In

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

⁹ K. Mannheim, “Conservative Thought,” in *Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology*, trans. P. Kecskemeti (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), 76-164.

¹⁰ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, p. 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

this context, the epistemological and sociological content of the concept of ideology is attempted to be shown, namely the relationship between thinking and situation of being in the direction of creating a new history of ideas. As regards the latter, Mannheim argued that “the task of the sociological history is to analyze without regard for party biases all the factors in the actually existing social situation which may influence thought. This sociologically oriented history of ideas is destined to provide modern men with a revised view of the whole historical process.”¹³

At this point, the general aspect of the total concept of ideology has emerged, and been distinguished from its particular version. The adoption of the general aspect of the total concept of ideology marks a substantial rupture between Mannheim and the Marxist critique of ideology. In order to understand the counterpoint between the general and particular aspect of the total concept of ideology, the distinction between total and partial concept of ideology is required. Ideology, in its partial significance, means that a special interest may be the cause of a given lie or an error. With its total concept, it reveals the correlation between the situation of a social group and a given perspective. According to Mannheim, the emergence of the total concept of ideology is due to Marx and the way in which he outlined the ideological component of the bourgeoisie. At the same time, Marx was wrong, since he acknowledged the ideological element only in the opposing view and did not criticize the ideas of the proletariat. So he remained within a particular perception of the total concept of ideology.¹⁴

The decisive question about the distinction between the general aspect of the total concept of ideology and its particular version consists in the following: the thought of whether all the groups (including our own), or only that of our opponents, are recognized as socially determined. Through the answer to this question, the general aspect of the total concept of ideology is formed, which is employed by the analyst when he has the courage to present his own perspective on ideological analysis. In this sense, the generalized use of the critique of ideology, as opposed to the particular, aims to uncover the ideological element of the whole thought. Characteristically, Mannheim points out:

“it is true, of course, that in such a case the total conception of ideology is being used, since one is interested in analyzing the structure of the mind of one’s opponent in its totality, and is not merely singling out a few isolated propositions. But since is, in such an instance, one is interested merely in a sociological analysis of the opponent’s ideas, one never gets beyond a highly restricted, or what I should like to call a special, formulation of the theory. In contrast to this special formulation, the general form of the total conception of

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁴ In the context of contemporary bibliography, the specific Mannheim’s central idea is developed emphatically by the famous thinker of ideology, M. Seliger. Seliger repeats the Mannheim’s argumentation with a remarkable sidedness in his critique against of Marxist conception of ideology; M. Seliger, *The Marxist Conception of Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University of Press, 1977), pp. 129-147.

ideology is being used by the analyst when he has the courage to subject not just the adversary's point of view but all points of view, including his own, to the ideological analysis."¹⁵

Mannheim's specific claim suggests that there is no perspective of thinking which does not change historically and to not be able to prove its social dependence. Consequently, none can claim universal validity for his worldview, not even Marxism, since "at the present stage of our understanding it is hardly possible to avoid this general formulation of the total conception of ideology, according to which the thought of all parties in all epochs is of an ideological character."¹⁶

The effort of Mannheim to build, through the composition of different ideologies, a new history of civilization (intellectual history), able to interpret the changes of ideas in response to social historical changes, led him to a transformation of the Marxist critique of ideology. This transformation is expressed by turning to the application of the general aspect of the total concept of ideology. So a Marxist tool, analysis and critique of ideology, was used by Mannheim against Marxism, since it, along with other ideologies appears inherently unilateral in its visual.

According to Mannheim, the social definition of an individual's ideas, represent the absolute commitment of the subject to the limits of its perspective. In this sense, all views, as socially defined, are ideological, as well as ours, and, therefore, unilateral, so they present a partial and inadequate view of the social situation. In such a context, how could Mannheim prove the epistemological value of his own proposal (sociology of knowledge), especially as he recognizes that even it does not escape from the social determination of the subject?

Recognizing the danger of relativism, Mannheim turned to support the method of relationism, which is the outline of the sociology of knowledge. According Mannheim, the method of relationism is a route to the excess of the relativistic and the idealistic theories, too. Mannheim insists in separating relationism from relativism, while he is acknowledging some of the principles of the latter. For example, he recognizes that thought and truth are related to the perspective of the social group of the individual, but also it is possible to think efficiently from any perspective. His differentiation lies in the emphasis on enabling comparison between the individual perspectives, in the sense that some are more accurate than others. Regarding this issue he observed that "since, however, all these points of view emerge out of the social historical current, and since their partiality exists in the matrix of an emerging whole, it is possible to see them in juxtaposition, and their synthesis becomes a problem which must continually be reformulated and resolved."¹⁷ Relationism does not signify that there are no criteria of rightness and wrongness in a dis-

¹⁵ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, pp. 68-69.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

cussion, “it does insist, however, that it lies in the nature of certain assertions that they cannot be formulated absolutely, but only in terms of the perspective of a given situation.”¹⁸

As far as the contrast of relationism to the idealistic theory, Mannheim argued “that in the ‘idealistic’ conception of knowledge knowing is regarded mostly as a purely ‘theoretical’ act in the sense of pure perception [...] in the background of this epistemology there lies the philosophical ideal of the ‘contemplative life.’”¹⁹ Mannheim’s disagreement arises from the idealistic hierarchy of theory over practice, and the demotion of the human and the practical, in place of the finite and the imperfect:

“the idealistic philosophy, which represents this tradition, insisted that knowledge was pure only when it was purely theoretical. Idealistic philosophy was not upset by the discovery that the type of knowledge represented by pure theory was only a small segment of human knowledge, that in addition there can be knowledge where men, while thinking, are also acting, and finally, that in certain fields of knowledge arises only when and in so far as it itself is action, i.e. when action is permeated by the intention of the mind, in the sense that the concepts and the total apparatus of thought are dominated by the reflect this activist orientation. Not purpose in addition to perception but purpose in perception itself reveals the qualitative richness of the world in certain.”²⁰

According to Mannheim, both the relativistic and the idealistic theories of knowledge are associated with a legacy theory of knowledge, which remained oriented towards a static model of thinking.²¹ On the one hand, relativism rejects all knowledge related to one standpoint as relevant, assuming, in this way, an eternal and absolute truth, which no one can ever conquer because of the given perspectives of knowledge.²² On the other hand, idealism is grounded in a transcendent “sphere of truth which is valid in itself,”²³ which treats every thought associated with the social being as finite and imperfect.

Through this confrontation with relativism and idealism Mannheim’s fixed positions emerged. Firstly, the social determination of ideas does not negate the truth of proposals and, secondly, through practice, man can acquire knowledge of reality. For Mannheim the problem is not

“how we might arrive at a non-perspectivistic picture but how, by juxtaposing the various points of view, each perspective may be recognized as such and thereby a new level of objectivity attained. Thus we come to the point where the false ideal of a detached, impersonal point of view must be replaced by the ideal of an essen-

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 265.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 265.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 270.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

tially human point of view which is within the limits of the human perspective, constantly striving to enlarge itself.”²⁴

According to Mannheim, the truth is based on the correspondence of consciousness with the social being. In this sense, the Hungarian thinker sets a new basis for the issue of objectivity and truth of knowledge. Since knowledge is identified by situation, Mannheim does not talk about objectivity, which is placed beyond this world and the limits of situational, identified views. In his thinking, objectivity does not have the characteristics of universality, but acquires an intersubjective character as its ability is exhausted in the limits of historical change and the historicity of the subjects.

Mannheim does not consider the individual aspects a priori false, as opposed to relativism and idealism. For him, there is no implied condition of an eternal truth, with which the individual aspects could be compared and found inadequate. Since there is no eternal truth, the truth is determined historically and socially, while the criterion of verification, or not of adjudication, is judged based on the degree of correlation to the context in which it is formed and expressed.

Insisting on the confrontation between relativism and the idealistic theory of knowledge, Mannheim analyzes the method of relationism with the help of a non-evaluative concept of ideology, meaning its general version. In relation to the evaluative neutral sense of ideology, Mannheim observes that

“the non-evaluative general total conception of ideology is to be found primarily in those historical investigations, where, provisionally and for the sake of the simplification of the problem, no judgments are pronounced as to correctness of the ideas to be treated.

This approach confines itself to discovering the relations between certain mental structures and life –situations in which they exist.”²⁵

Within this context, the social scientist seeks to understand his concepts and his tools as social-historical categories associated with specific theoretical-political positions. Mannheim considers that this possibility of reflection “rescues” the sociology of knowledge from dogmatism and from the unilateralism of attachment to individual social-class perspectives and ideologies.²⁶ However, the task of the sociology of knowledge is not limited to just pointing out the relationship between the situation of social being and the visual, but is extended in order to analyze this relationship gnosiologically, and focus in the problem of deciding upon the truth. Thus, he questions: what social view in history offers the best perspective for maximum truth?²⁷

At this point has occurred the transformation of the evaluative neutral concept of ideology to evaluative. So, unlike philosophical relativism, which keeps itself away from any evaluation, rejecting any knowledge that corresponds to a certain perspective as relative, relationism does not deny the eval-

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 266-267.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

²⁶ Mavridis, “Beyond the Sociology of Knowledge: Marxist Readings of Karl Mannheim.”

²⁷ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, p. 136.

uation of the truth or falsity of a perspective. However, because the different perspectives and worldviews, although true (as far as corresponding to a state of being), always present partial sightings of social reality, as each one brings to light a different side of totality, Mannheim is directed to the prospect of the composition.

The stratum of “free floating intelligentsia” is the vector of composition.²⁸ Commenting on this peculiar stratum of intelligentsia, which is the only one that has the potential crisis of truth or falsehood, Mannheim observes that

“there arises, then, in the midst of this society, which is being deeply divided by class cleavages, a stratum, which a sociology oriented solely in terms of class either can only slightly comprehend. Nevertheless, the specific social position of this stratum can be quite adequately characterized. Although situated between classes it does not form a middle class. Not of course, that it is suspended in a vacuum into which social interests do not penetrate on the contrary, it subsumes in itself all those interests with which social life is permeated. With the increase in the number and variety of the classes and strata from which the individual groups of intellectuals are recruited, there comes greater multiformity and contrast in the tendencies operating on the intellectual level which ties them to one another. The individual, then, more and less takes a part in the mass of mutually conflicting tendencies.”²⁹

The above reference to Mannheim’s perception of the stratum of intelligentsia makes clear that his questioning of the critique of ideology is developed with reference to the social act of a collective subject, which does not constitute a class. According to Mannheim, since those who are directly involved in the production process are established by the class and lifestyle of their class, their perspectives and their activities are directly and exclusively defined by it, and, therefore, are biased.³⁰ On the contrary, intellectuals “besides undoubtedly bearing the imprint of their specific class affinity, are also determined in their outlook by this intellectual medium which contains all those contradictory points of view.”³¹ In this sense, they keep a distance from their individual perspectives, and, yet, have full oversight of all worldviews and ideologies within that historic-social framework. Consequently, intellectuals, insofar as they have the possibility to distance themselves, are able to correlate to individual worldviews with the situations of being, and to determine the truth or falsity of a worldview, for example, which position is ideological and which is not.

This group is able, then, based on the heterogeneity of its class members, to understand the collective expression of an era, and, through the comparison, to assign the degree of truth in the various worldviews. Moreover, having

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 136-146.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

complete supervision of social realities and problems, intellectuals can indicate the most appropriate solution. Thanks to these features, intellectuals have the ability to gain a more complete and objective picture of their society, and, in particular, of the different interest groups of society, and so they act independently for the progress of more general interests.³²

The solution proposed by Mannheim provoked mixed reactions, as many thinkers coming from the ranks of Marxism have voiced sharp criticism. Among them stands out that of Lukacs, who notes that

“this intellect, according to Mannheim, is outside the social classes: It sets up a center, but not a center with class terms. Now, why the thinking of the floating intelligentsia was no longer situation-bound, and why relationism did not now apply its own tenet to itself as it was asking historical materialism to do, is known only the sociology of knowledge.”³³

The emergence of the basic principles and goals of Mannheim’s sociology of knowledge makes clear its contributions, and its contradictions. Concerning contributions, undoubtedly interesting is Mannheim’s attempt to refute the accusation of relativism, while recognizing the historicization of forms of thinking and the ability of their comparison. Also, the emergence of the relationship, of the dependency, and the correlation between forms of consciousness and socio-historical processes is a second remarkable point. Third, Mannheim raised serious questions about the redefinition of the concept of ideology, both in terms of the contemporary problems of its definition (what ideology is and what it does), as well as about its critical dimension, called critique of ideology. Furthermore, the fact that Mannheim believes that there cannot be a neutral evaluative social science as a pure description of social reality, as the social scientist understands social relations to the extent that he is subject and part of the social world, this is also one positive aspect of his theory.³⁴ Characteristically, he writes:

“it is clear, furthermore, that every social science diagnosis is closely connected with the evaluations and unconscious orientations of the observer that the critical self-clarification of the social sciences is intimately bound up with the critical clarification of our orientation in the everyday world.”³⁵

With this position, Mannheim avoids, to a degree, being described as a positivist.

On the other hand, the metaphysical expectations about the possibilities of the stratum of “free floating intelligentsia” sustains the belief that there can exist a distanced perspective on the prospect of a new composition. The above perspective is expurgated by social determinations and, hence, ideological

³² T. Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (London: Routledge, 1993).

³³ G. Lukaćs, *The Destruction of Reason*, trans. P.R. Palmer (London: The Merlin Press, 1980), p. 637.

³⁴ Mavridis, “Beyond the Sociology of Knowledge: Marxist Readings of Karl Mannheim,” p. 442.

³⁵ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, p. 41.

commitments. This reasoning is based on the hypothesis that a social stratum can judge the degree of truth of every worldview; ideology, in a better way. The privileged role of the intelligentsia as the fittest judge of truth lies in the fact that intellectuals are not directly involved in the social production process. At this point, there is an inherent contradiction when we consider the role that is attached to the “free floating intelligentsia.” Plus, the truth and the correct understanding of the social reality coincide with a non-prospect, absolute perspective, which is formed by a stratum, which is not directly part of the social process and practice. The adoption of such a view, and the simultaneous abandonment of his position on the practical and social character of knowledge, brings Mannheim very close to traditional epistemology, which sets the theoretical life above all.

The problem is exacerbated as long as the intellectuals are invited to think and decide on social and political issues, while they are simultaneously detached from social practice.³⁶ If we know reality through action-orientation, then the intellectuals are, in fact, at a disadvantageous position, as they do not participate in social practice. In this sense, they cannot provide the criteria for the truth of individual worldviews, as they are formed by a full and proper understanding of social reality. On the other hand, if the intellectuals get involved in the social process through acting, they can understand social issues, but according to Mannheim’s view about bias and partiality that characterizes the perspective of those directly involved in the social, productive process, they will be able to understand the totality of truth, and their perspective would be partial.

Persevering in the position that some kinds of thought escape from the social setting, Mannheim returns to the idea that there is “a sphere of valid truth in itself,” and therefore to the traditional epistemology which governs in relativism and the idealistic theory of knowledge. Mannheim’s most serious deficiency is that he can prove, in a satisfying way, the relational structure of the truth through relationism. Mannheim fails to do this, because, while he believes in the inseparability between knowledge and action, thought and situation of being, he studies the knowledge and ideology as *sui generis* entities, divorced from the objective world. He fails to indicate how knowledge and thought correspond to, and participate in, the specific situation of being. In this sense, the relationship between the perspective and the situation of being, thinking and acting, remains unmediated.

In the work of Mannheim, the historical antagonisms between social groups are related to rivalries between different worldviews, which, almost “accidentally,” each are attached to one or another social group. As Horkheimer rightly argues: “what is curious here is that each of the contending groups has laid claim to and persists in advocating one of these systems –but one knows not why.”³⁷ Moreover, to the extent that he considers that the crisis

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 265.

³⁷ M. Horkheimer, “A New Concept of Ideology,” in *Between Philosophy and Social Science: Selected Early Writings*, trans. G.F., Hunter, M.S. Kramer and J. Torpey (Cambridge Mass: The MIT Press, 1993), p. 145.

manifests itself as multiplicity of conflicting ideologies, he proposes the synthesis, considering that it might be a way to overcome the crisis, and, ultimately, he selects, as every liberal approach, pacification and reconciliation, instead of social change. Dealing with the symptoms and not the causes of the crisis,³⁸ Mannheim ignores the fact that the conflicting ideologies within the capitalist mode of production always lead to conflicting interests of conflicting classes. Any synthesis (if there ever could be one) depends on the resolution of historical antagonisms that characterize capitalistic societies, and therefore requires a different social structure, which will abolish classes and the concept of class interest; which, however, Mannheim does not set.³⁹

³⁸ T. Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. Samuel and Sherry Weber (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1983).

³⁹ Mavridis, "Beyond the Sociology of Knowledge: Marxist Readings of Karl Mannheim," p. 440.

Karl Popper's Optimism and Critical Rationalism as Antidotes to Today's Global Crisis

GEORGE I. PAPAGEORGAKIS

Introduction

Karl Popper, in his great book *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, analyzes, among other subjects, the characteristics which make up an open society. It is essential to talk about open society, because it is the best framework to which Popper's theories can be applied. In other words, without the concept of open society, critical rationalism and optimism cannot exist.

Popper's open society releases the critical thought capabilities of the individual, in contrast to closed societies that are trapped in doctrines, authorities or magic powers.¹ Closed societies are based on the theory of historicism,² so they claim the existence of historical laws that can be applied to foresee the future. The authorities, in some way, claim that they acknowledge these laws and that their implementation is an utter need for the closed society. These policies refer to the science of unchangeable historical trends.

Closed societies look forward to an ideal state and organize society as an entirety which requires strong centralized authority that could lead to dictatorship. In dictatorship, people do not have the right to criticize the authorities, something that discourages and weakens critical thought.³ This political scheme removes personal responsibility, degrading thus, and brutalizing humans,⁴ which entails a morbid and pessimistic situation.

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¹ K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. 1 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966⁵), p. 1.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9. Also see K.R. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), where Popper presents and analyzes the historicism's prejudices and dogmatism, criticizing the false methodological principles of this theory.

³ Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, pp. 159-160.

⁴ K.P. Πόππερ, *Η ζωή είναι επίλυση προβλημάτων*, μτφρ. Η. Κριπιάς (Αθήνα: Μελάι, 2011), [Edit. of the original 1996, *Alles Leben ist Problemlösen: Über Erkenntnis, Geschichte und Politik*], pp. 153-154 and p. 115. In our opinion, it is natural that the removal of personal responsibility leads the individual to a pessimistic and fatalistic condition. In other words, the removal of personal responsibility equals the changing of human into a passive subject, namely his degradation in a state of immobility and stagnation. Others decide on my behalf, a state I gradually integrate and therefore I transform into a guided being (weak-minded being). Of course these regimes have made sure to weaken the critical human thought and constructive rational conversation.

Popper's epistemology is based on critical rationalism, and it would not be an exaggeration to claim that his political philosophy is also an extension of his epistemological theory.⁵ The innovation in Popper's epistemological theory is that he does not accept that our knowledge can be founded in absolute certainty. Our scientific theories are conjectures which can be falsified at any moment. According to Popper's theory, in contrast to older epistemological theories, experience changes its role in the game of science. This means that experience does not function as a criterion for the foundation of knowledge, but instead becomes the tool for a critical review of a conjecture.⁶

Popper notices that the foundation of scientific knowledge in the traditional model of science has an immediate connection with induction and turns against it. He examines induction in terms of its logical validity,⁷ like Hume did, and, finally, concludes that induction cannot be fortified in a logical way. At the same time, the Austrian philosopher considers that deduction, in opposition to induction, has the advantage not to accept questioning and he decides to rebuild empirical science on the basis of the deductive process. It is significant to note that Popper saw science as a rational process which continually increases our knowledge about the world.⁸ Consequently, the need to avoid induction urges him to introduce the principle of falsification.

Falsification is nothing more than an application of the method of trial and error. In essence, this epistemological method includes the formulation of conjectural theories and empirical control with the purpose of refutation. This process requires⁹ the critical attitude¹⁰ of scientists, opposite any theory comparing it with other theories.¹¹ According to Popper, a scientific theory which

⁵ Despite the objections that Popper's political philosophy is "inconsistent" with his epistemology, "some of his most authoritative interpreters" distinguished the strong logic connection between them. Besides, Popper supported that science and philosophy should be understood as "united" in their common aim to promote knowledge for the improving of the society. For more details, see: J.N. Gray, "The Liberalism of Karl Popper," *Government and Opposition*, 11 (1976), 337-355, pp. 341-342; P. Parvin, "The Rationalist Tradition and the Problem of Induction: Karl Popper's Rejection of Epistemological Optimism," *History of European Ideas*, 37 (2011), 257-266, p. 260.

⁶ K.R. Popper, *Logik der Forschung* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1982⁷), p. 76. According to Popper, science comprises a conjecture system and not a system of truthful proposals. In other words, Popper replaces the idea of foundation with the form of critical control and uses as a criterion of rationality not the ensuring of absolute certainty that is unattainable, but the possibility of correcting knowledge.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸ K.R. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge* (New York: Basic Books, 1962), pp. 215-222.

⁹ K.R. Popper, *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 25.

¹⁰ Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, p. 316.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 223-227, in particular p. 226, where the Austrian philosopher points out that an important advantage of the theory of objective or absolute truth is that it allows us to talk about the pursuit of truth that is possible not to realize it has been approached. This happens due to the lack of a criterion for that purpose and because we are guided by the idea of truth as a regulator. Although there are no general criteria as to recognize the truth,

is very carefully, critically and experimentally tested without falsification is not totally accepted as certain knowledge, because there is always the possibility for falsification in the future. This type of theory is corroborated and may also have a high degree of corroboration,¹² but in Popper's epistemology there is no verification because a highly corroborated theory is not an asserted theory, but forces with high probability until it falsifies. Popper's rationalism is a Copernican converse in epistemology, as it searches for truth following the road of logical deduction and bases science on validity and criticism.

Optimism is a basic element in Popper's way of thinking. He claims that we have the moral duty to look at the future as something different from the past and present, and not as an extension of these, because the future holds uncountable and totally different capabilities. So, our Austrian philosopher suggests that we should not be concerned with fatalistic and pathetic questions about the future, such as, for instance, what is going to happen in the future. Instead we must try to answer questions about what we should do in order to improve our world. In other words, Popper is fully optimistic because he recognizes the uncountable capabilities which humans have and urges us into practical action.

Popper's political philosophy does not aim directly to an ideal world, but looks forward to a gradual improvement of our world and to decreasing the suffering of the human race.¹³ So, it is full of optimism and humanism. As science must aim at the gradual growth of knowledge, in the same way, politics has to be oriented to the piecemeal improvement of open society. It is not possible for society to be rebuilt when it is seen as an entirety, because that means great changes, the consequences of which we cannot estimate,¹⁴ because social life is very complicated. What he suggests is the rebuilding of society based on a piecemeal method, because, in this case, the blueprints are simple, as they have to deal with single institutions. So, if they go wrong, it is

there are criteria that deal with the progress achieved in relation to the truth. It is worth noting that Popper ascribes to Xenophanes of Colophon the vanguard regarding to the idea that knowledge is moving forward through a procedure of conjectures and refutations and the idea of gradual progress of knowledge (see in the same book, pp. 151-153), namely the ideas on which the Popperian epistemology was founded on. Also, see J. Agassi, *A Philosopher's Apprentice: In Karl Popper's Workshop Revised, Extended and Annotated Edition* (Series in the Philosophy of Karl R. Popper and Critical Rationalism, ed. K. Salamun. Vol. V) (Amsterdam-New York: Rodopi, 2008), pp. 345-348, where it is stated about Xenophanes' effect upon Popper's thought. In our opinion, Xenophanes has irrefutably a rather positive affect on Popper's thought which is easily noticeable through the excerpts of Stobaeus (DK 21 B 18) and Plutarch (DK 21 B 34), that refer to the procedure of progress of knowledge and the subjective nature of knowledge (γνώμη=opinion) while seeking the truth. Only through constant, persistent and rational effort the individuals are able to gradually improve the reality they are experiencing.

¹² Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, pp. 243-244. According to Popper, the progress of science, apart from the successful refutation of our scientific conjectures, demands positive achievements, because otherwise it would be deprived of its empirical nature and remain stagnant, if it failed to reach the verification of new predictions.

¹³ Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, p. 158.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162.

easier to adjust our tactics and the cost of failure is usually dealable.¹⁵ According to Popper, we have to be optimistic for a happier world only from within a society which promotes political freedom, namely the needed condition which makes us responsible and exalts our human nature.¹⁶

Critical Rationalism as an Antidote to Crisis

We act as units, competing against each other. In one way, it seems as if we are humans in a continuous war against everyone. We are educated to act as units, because competitiveness is encouraged and cultivated from the very first years of school.

In times of deep crisis,¹⁷ like the current period, it is not possible for individuals to deal effectively in improving this serious situation. So, it is of imperative need to support the cohesion of society. The need of the search for the objective truth is an element which strengthens the unity of the society. This helps to fight this serious crisis successfully. When I search for the objective truth, I put myself aside and become a member of a team; in other words, I put my arrogance aside, serving the team for the common purpose. We create an alliance which aims at the approach of the truth. Our purpose is to help each other so that we can all benefit from the joint research, which is a research oriented to approach objective truth, and this implies that we can enlighten the reality. In this morbid period, the search for objective truth is absolutely necessary because it will constitute a guide for our actions. The Popperian perception for approaching the truth is a research process which exalts the common purpose, simultaneously promoting teamwork and collectivity.¹⁸ In

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

¹⁶ Πόππερ, *Η ζωή είναι επίλυση προβλημάτων*, p. 156. Popper deals with the value of political freedom and its immediate connection with human responsibility. The Austrian philosopher believes that political freedom is a *conditio sine qua non* as for the people to gain responsibility and consequently move forward for the improvement of their world.

¹⁷ Popper, in his work *Conjectures and Refutations* (p. 365), lays down his opinion that the source of human problems is kindness and morality of people in combination with their irrationalism and not the blending of intelligence and human vice and corruption as the English philosopher Bertrand Russell claims. According to Popper, we are not mentally mature resulting our victimization of various theories that invoke our ethics. Examining Popper's stand, we could say that rationality helps to manipulate our good ethics in the best way or even better we are able to shape our own ethical system and also assess the existent ethical systems as to avoid becoming easily manageable subjects.

¹⁸ Κ.Ρ. Πόππερ, *Όλοι οι άνθρωποι είναι φιλόσοφοι*, μτφρ. Μ. Παπανικολάου (Αθήνα: Μελάρι, 2004), p. 223 [ed. of the original 2002: *Alle Menschen sind Philosophen*]. Popper clarifies that the term "rationalism" is nothing but the belief that through criticizing mistakes and misunderstandings we can learn and mostly through the sharp criticism of others in our opinions and finally also through the criticism we subject ourselves into. According to Popper, a rationalist is the one who is keener on learning than being right, the one who is willing to learn from others not by adopting a point of view, but gladly allows us to be criticized for his ideas. The true rationalist does not believe that he or anybody owns the truth and only through a critical dialogue we could be led to the truth. It is obvious thereby, that in our opinion, it is a collective procedure that aims at finding the truth.

this case, the human skills are oriented to help the team's progress. From the above, one could conclude that this process brings people together, which results as a necessary and useful antidote to crisis.

Critical rationalism means that I do not accept anything as true and certain without criticizing it. Knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and events must be submitted to critical review. Given facts which are said to be stable and certain have no place here.¹⁹ In addition, the target is the improvement of all of the conditions that are connected to human activity. Popper does not seek a utopia,²⁰ he looks for a situation which is better than the present one in which we are living. In other words, he suggests a gradual improvement of our world.

Epistemology and political philosophy both have developing orientations. Persistence and dogmatism should not be sustained, because they are factors that cause delay and suspend the procedure of the Popperian theory, which aims at gradual progress of human conditions.

Popper's theory has a dynamic character, as it deals with the approach to the truth and the gradual improvement of the society in which we are living.²¹ Critical rationalism breaks the stereotypes and the stable perceptions²² which immobilize society, offering, thus, the capability to exalt. In this case, people cannot be guided easily, and certainly humanism and solidarity are promoted. The consequence of this is the limited control of fascism, racism and intolerance,²³ which are morbid and dangerous, and take great dimensions in the societies shaken from the crisis.

¹⁹ J. Shearmur emphasizes the "anti-authoritarianism" aspect of Popper's epistemology supporting that any authority must be opened to criticism. For details, see J. Shearmur, *The Political Thought of Karl Popper* (London: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2000²), pp. 68-69.

²⁰ On Popper's concept of utopia, see R. Paden, "Popper's Anti-utopianism and the Concept of an Open Society," *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, 34 (2000), 409-426, mainly pp. 413, 417-418.

²¹ For the Popperian "rational attitude" about approaching the truth and the "revolutionary potential" in Popper's philosophy, see F. Eidlin, "Matching Popperian Theory to Practice," in I. Jarvic and S. Pralong (eds.), *Popper's Open Society after Fifty Years: The Continuing Relevance of Karl Popper* (London and New York: Routledge-Taylor and Francis, 2005²), 201-204, pp. 201-202.

²² Πόππερ, *Όλοι οι άνθρωποι είναι φιλόσοφοι*, p. 225, where Popper talks about the part the intellectuals of society should take. Specifically, he refers to their duty to help others be liberated mentally and realize their critical stance in their life. In an attempt to clarify the "duty" of intellectuals, he declares: "... knowledge is guesswork disciplined by rational criticism. This turns the struggle against dogmatic thinking into a duty. It also makes the utmost intellectual modesty a duty. And above all, it makes a duty of the cultivation of a simple and unpretentious language: the duty of every intellectual". See K.R. Popper, "On Knowledge and Ignorance," in K.R. Popper, *In Search of a Better World Lecture and Essays from Thirty Years*, trans. L.J. Bennett (London: Psychology Press, 1996), 30-43, p. 40. In our opinion, Popper considers intellectuals should create the foundations as to improve our world, namely the release from bias, stereotypes, consolidated views and doctrines, which is the basis for critical dialogue and critical thought, that is to say the presuppositions needed to improve our world. (Popper's thought has undeniably been strongly affected by Socrates.)

²³ Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, p. 366. Also see P. Parvin, *Karl Popper* (Series: Major Conservative and Libertarian Thinkers, ed. J. Meadowcroft., Vol. 14) (New York-

Critical thought decreases selfishness and helps the promotion of humanism. Critical rationalism talks about critical control of knowledge, but it additionally refers to knowledge and truth, which, itself, is not an object of science. This has to do with the attitude we all must have concerning knowledge. It also means, among others, critical discussion,²⁴ namely the dialogue which is carried out with the purpose of approaching the truth. This kind of discussion is based on ethical principles like equality, respect, honesty and justice promoting humanism, which is the challenge in these difficult days.

When a dialogue is full of a critical mood, it has many beneficial results which relate to Socrates *γνώθι σαυτὸν* (know yourself).²⁵ A critical dialogue contributes to self-criticism and self-improvement of people. Even if critical discussion reveals our wrong opinion, it is of great importance, because, in this case, we have the ability to think about our mistakes and omissions, which helps our improvement and progress.²⁶ This is a fruitful process, which also broadens our spiritual horizons and makes us more dialectic, as it reveals the idea that one problem can be viewed from many perspectives.²⁷

Moreover, it is important to emphasize that today's world crisis is multi-leveled, and, clearly, there is crisis in the field of ideas, namely spiritual crisis. Popper's rationalism brings out strongly the revolutionary element, the

London: Continuum, 2010), pp. 131-149; Parvin associates Popperian thought with the modern times. It is interesting to examine the writer's stand that despite of the difference of our times to Popper's, the open society still remains in danger. In other words, the social-political conditions have changed enormously, but the enemies of open society, such as authoritarianism, the religious fanaticism and fascism remain the same (mainly pp. 132-133). Therefore, the social and political philosophy of the Austrian philosopher is still, in our opinion, timely.

²⁴ Πόππερ, *Όλοι οι άνθρωποι είναι φιλόσοφοι*, p. 226. Popper associates rational conversation with the Socratic "all I know is that I know nothing" (*ἐν οἷδα ὅτι οὐδὲν οἶδα*) and argues for the side that this kind of conversation is based on moral principles, such as the principal of equality among humans or the principle of mutual respect among interlocutors-co researchers of truth. Also see Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, pp. 148-151, where the author analyses the grandeur and importance of critical discussion for the evolution of ancient Greek philosophy. According to the author, the premature Greek philosophy, focusing on the time between Thales and Plato, is a philosophical era full of originality and intelligence on ideas without being subjected to dogmatism on particular views. In other words, we could say that it is a time which is incredibly fertile and creative and it is characterized by a harmonious give and take of ideas, a time extremely dynamic as far as the ideas are concerned. Popper considers that this flow of ideas is mostly due to the critical dialogue among the philosophers, a dialogue which is extremely rationalistic and denies immobility as it sharply criticizes even authorities. The rupture against traditional dogmatism, via critical dialogue, was the element that led to the flourishing of philosophy. It is the critical stance of the Ionian Philosophers of the 6th century that established the critical dialogue.

²⁵ Popper believes that we differ from each other due to the limited knowledge we have and we are all equal because of our great ignorance, as he points out in his work *Conjectures and Refutations*, p. 29.

²⁶ Πόππερ, *Όλοι οι άνθρωποι είναι φιλόσοφοι*, p. 227. Cf. K. Popper, "Creative Self-Criticism in Science and in Art," *Diogenes*, 37 (1989), 36-45, mainly p. 43.

²⁷ Πόππερ, *Όλοι οι άνθρωποι είναι φιλόσοφοι*, p. 224.

change and the rift. The crisis recommends a situation which tends to consolidate and, in order to avoid something like that, there is urgent need for an outflow of new ideas and knowledge. The rebellion of critical rationalism denies a steady and unchangeable world, and urges us to develop the world gradually. This development can be achieved only by submitting the facts to critical control and through fertile dialectic of old and new ideas and knowledge.

Optimism as an Antidote to Crisis

Popper's denial of historicism clearly depicts his optimistic view for our world and, at the same time, puts aside pessimism and fatalism. Historicism seeks a world which is run by historical laws, leading humanity to foreseeable situations.²⁸ In other words, the course of human history is written. Popper stubbornly denies this theory and hands over the abilities to build the historical reality to human will, illustrating, thus, that history is a human creation.²⁹ Without doubt, this seems to be a rather optimistic view, because it considers energetic human beings as loaded with all of the abilities needed to create a better world. Popper exalts the human nature as he denies historicism's pathetic role for humans in the configuration of historical reality.

At the same level, Popper declares that he is an optimist of today and an activist of the future.³⁰ It is very substantial to point out that Popper's optimism for today is an optimism which is based on a comparison with the past. Unlike the intellectuals of his time who presented the world as a very bad and ugly place, without accepting the progress up until now, it is Popper's strong

²⁸ Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, p. 22; Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, pp. 364-365.

²⁹ Roberta Corvi comments Popper's theories about "deification of history" and the obviation of the historical determinism in her book *An Introduction to the Thought of Karl Popper*, trans. P. Cammiller (London-New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005²) [italian ed. 1993], pp. 51-56 (§. "Historicism as a Philosophy of History") and particularly pp. 53-55. See also, Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, p. 22; Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, pp. 364-365.

³⁰ Popper states that his optimism deals with the present (Πόππερ, *Η ζωή είναι επίλυση προβλημάτων*, p. 148). He claims that he is an activist for the future, because he believes that the human should face the future not as an extension of his past and present, but as something totally different with immense possibilities. According to Popper, the future is the expression of time that cannot be predicted, but constructed on the basis of human action. Commenting this thesis, we could say that it is an opinion full of optimism, since Popper denies that history follows historical laws and predestinate course and at the same time holds the human responsible to shape history. Therefore, it is obvious that activism may contain optimism for a better tomorrow. Also see A.J. Chmielewski and K.R. Popper, "The Future is Open: A Conversation with Sir Karl Popper," in I. Jarvie and S. Pralong (eds.), *Popper's Open Society after Fifty Years: The Continuing Relevance of Karl Popper*, 27-40, p. 40, where Popper presents his optimistic view that "... despite all this I remain an optimist toward the world. It is one's duty to be an optimist." and continues to support that only through acknowledging the beauty of our world, can the human act as to improve his life. Cf. K.R. Popper, "The History of Our Time: An Optimist's View," *World Affairs*, 149 (1986-87), 111-119, esp. p. 111.

opinion that, as long as the world has gradually improved relating to the past, we must be optimistic for the future. So, there is no doubt that there is an encouraging indication that the world will improve. Popper's optimism is not only based on indications, but on an objective view of current reality.³¹ The critical attitude against the current order of reality, the doubt of authorities and the redefinition of social components, in other words the substantial application of critical rationalism, is a condition of progress and helps the objective view of reality, which is the base where we plan our collective actions.

It is obvious that there is the need for rational planned actions in order to change difficult conditions and solve human problems,³² so as to move on to more pleasant situations. We do not foresee the future, but we build it with collective activity, because there are wide opened possibilities to shape the future. Therefore, optimism, which we dare to name rational optimism, is an antidote to crisis, because it is based on critical rationalism. It shows and encourages us, thereby, to collective research of objective truth, and also urges us to collective activity, aiming at the gradual improvement of our lives.

Facing reality with optimism, we take an important step so that we can improve our world. Acknowledging the progress which we have achieved, in one way, we put aside fatalism and complaints, and this is a basic condition for the ending of the crisis. Acknowledgement of progress means that, as long as we can manage to see progress, we have motivations and indications to be optimists for the future, and we can also face the current situation of our world with objectivity. Therefore, as long as we have a clear view of reality, we can plan all the actions needed to improve the way we live and also make our lives much happier.

Optimism is an element which is of primary importance in the work of the Austrian philosopher, and this becomes clear to anyone observing, in his writings, the frequency of the appearance of terms strongly connected with optimism, such as "hope," "faith," "courage," "duty," "humanitarianism," or even "love."³³ In our opinion, optimism is a primary component of the Popperian thought that is associated with his theory regarding the knowledge and the approach of truth (it stems from his epistemology and it fuels it at the same time). The game of knowledge is not a closed game, but, instead, it demands the participation of more and more players by nature, which provides us all

³¹ Popper points out that our world has many opportunities for improvement, which consists of an objective truth needed to be acknowledged by the intellectuals, so they can promote it to the people (Πόππερ, *Η ζωή είναι επίλυση προβλημάτων*, p. 128).

³² The philosophy of Popper, his epistemology as well as his social-political philosophy, is in immediate relation with the human problems and aims at their solution. It is about a philosophical approach to the perpetual act towards the gradual improvement of our world. It comprises therefore, a rather attractive theory that is guided by the human problems and simultaneously it applies on them. The Popperian thought is indissolubly connected with the taking of action. See J.L. Fernández-Solis, "An Application of Popper's Method of Conjectures and Refutations to the Critique of Emerging Construction Theories," *Lean Construction Journal* (2009), 37-60, mainly p. 56 and Eidlin, "Matching Popperian Theory to Practice," pp. 201-204.

³³ Eidlin, "Matching Popperian Theory to Practice," p. 201.

with the possibility of active participation in seeking the truth. In other words, the procedure of finding the truth requires cooperation, group spirit, solidarity and the common love for truth by everyone, meaning components that dissolve ignorance, bias, division and individualism, and are therefore the best guarantees for the creation of a better world.

Instead of Epilogue

Popper's philosophy appears particularly useful and timely in these financially and socially disturbed, turbulent times. But what is the characteristic that makes the work of this great philosopher timely and deserving of attention? Let us try to detect the most profound analogies of his work in relation to the turmoil of our times.

In the current tormented social reality, one goes through hardships on every field of activity. Income is reduced, poverty is increased and, consecutively, the individual barbarizes mentally and morally, evoking primitive instincts of self-preservation that disdain the deepest feelings of humanity and fraternization. Naturally, life is shaded in disappointment, while optimism seems like paradise lost for good. Frowning, silent faces are everywhere and, since survival comes first, the soul is liable to ugliness and moral corrosion. Any kind of freedom is perished, and the ruler becomes cruel and takes away any freshness and glow of life, any moral beauty and solid orientation.

When the human falls into a mental and moral disuse, it is natural for his critical ability to weaken as well. His conscious free will that makes the decisions is replaced, not by a self-moving consciousness, but by one that is led by extraneous factors. Controlling reality falls off, the delusive truth triumphs and keeps rehashing itself at a phenomenal speed. Doubt is considered weakness, and one's inner emptiness grows. When the man does not think and judge, one violates his own essence, and suspends the particular characteristic that provides him with primacy over the animal kingdom and uplifts him to a human being with a specific mission and part through his passage from life.

The antidotes for these unsound remains of our era are provided abundantly and clearly by the philosopher. His critical rationalism may act as a counterbalance and a protective shield of the free and responsible consciousness against the constant attacks; attacks that originate from sources which manipulate the mass suggestion of image, propaganda.

There is no better cure for the eradication of the crisis than the unification of all units that will strengthen the demands of the group and will carve new perspectives in the human desires. The collectivity, the philosopher suggests, inspires the fragmented person of today, it creates a vision, one completing the shortcomings of the other and eventually the inconceivable is succeeded: the synaeresis of variety with unification in a miraculous symmetry.

The unification of power increases the final force. We can all succeed together better than one can himself. Naturally, all of the above can be achieved within an open, pluralistic and democratic society that respects human creation, honours, and elevates everything human, driving off each morbid social

element. Though Popper is deeply associated with the essence of another era, he managed to express ours as well, as if a future prophet. He did not just bequeath a doctrine to us, but he pointed the way towards improving ourselves and the world. Having solid faith in the human strength, he promulgated the possibility of true changes, given that the way of thinking is altered. Yet, he acknowledged that the society is, gradually and not violently and revolutionarily, changing. Among others, that is his notable contribution and the reason why his timely philosophical perspective constitutes a valuable investment during our attempt to untangle the current crisis.

Dogmatism and Experimentalism in Crisis*

DIMITRIS ALEXAKIS

Dewey's work was surrounded in interest during the decade of '50s, under the pressure of analytic philosophy. However, after the decade of '90s, interest about his work notably increased. Alan Ryan considers that this fact is a cause of the public character of Dewey's philosophy. In the beginning of 20th century, the social and political crisis, with its tremendous consequences (homeless, unemployment, social conflicts), was obvious in USA, and "Dewey's writing on every subject –philosophy, religion, politics, education, art, or whatever else– breathe this air of crisis."¹

In our announcement, we will emphasize exactly this point of Dewey's work; the crisis. We will attempt to analyze Dewey's understanding of crisis as a kind of cultural lag, and his prospective of the breakthrough of crisis through the cultivation of collective and cooperative intelligence, and the experimentalism about the institutions. Our purpose is to point to the functional character of Dewey's social theory, and, through the marking of his contradictions, to indicate the significance of values for the construction of a critical social theory.

John Dewey attempts to understand the crisis through the examination of the process of the generation of his epoch and her contradictions. He certainly rejects the Hegelian and Marxist philosophy of history as dogmatic, because he rejects the inevitable movement of history toward a predefined end. More precisely, Dewey regards the consideration of history as a history of class conflict as an abstractive, aesthetic and non-reflective consideration, which does not help us to understand the present. In his perspective, the main forces of historical movement are the scientific method and technology: "The rise of scientific method and of technology based upon it is the genuinely active force in producing the vast complex the world is now undergoing."² In this point of view, the political democracy itself is generated from primarily non-political forces. The consideration on scientific method as the locomotive force of history refers to the collective and cooperative intelligence, which was developed by the scientific revolution of 17th century. This transmission from a speculative, aesthetic examination of the world, to an experimental approach or, in other words, the transmission from Logos to intelligence is already obvious in the physical sciences and technology.

However, the dominance of traditional habits and institutions, which belongs to a pre-scientific and pre-technological era, operates as an obstacle for

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¹ A. Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1995), p. 24.

² J. Dewey, "Liberalism and Social Action," in *The Later Works: 1925-1953*, ed. J.A. Boydston, Vol. 11 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), p. 53.

the development of experimental thinking in human affairs. Consequently, there is a gulf between the economical, industrial or technological conditions under which the modern man lives, and the traditional habits which he follows. Dewey describes this conflict either as a cultural lag or as a gulf between the modern conditions of life and the traditional habits.

“The beliefs and ideals that are uppermost in their consciousness are not relevant to the society in which they outwardly act and which constantly reacts upon them. Their conscious ideas and standards are inherited from an age that has passed away; their minds, as far as consciously entertained principles and methods of interpretation are concerned, are at odds with actual conditions. This profound split is the cause of distraction and bewilderment.”³

From this viewpoint, we are allowed to call Dewey’s perspective modernizing.

Dewey does not give us an analytic catalog of the traditional ideas, habits and institutions, which are not correspondant with the actual conditions and therefore we have to transform. However, we can find them in the works of his political philosophy, such as *The Public and Its Problems; Individualism, Old and New; Liberalism and Social Action*. The individualism, for example, which consider the individual as something totally independent and prior to society, as well as the corresponding economic system based upon the private profit, belong to the tradition, and they are irrelevant to the cooperative development of science and industry. Moreover, the earlier liberalism, which demands the abdication of the government from the regulation of social and financial activities, does not correspond to the domination of material insecurity produced from the industrial development. Contrarily, the social regulation of conditions is necessary. On a political level, the financial and technological development caused the demolition of the traditional communities with the local administrative institutions.

Shortly, we can localize the creation of the gulf into the incomplete development of experimental inquiry, or else of intelligence. The scientific revolution left behind the speculative examination of the word, and established the experimentalism in the field of science. In spite of the great scientific and technological achievements, experimentalism does not affect politics, morals, and the social sciences. The dogmatism of tradition remained dominant in human affairs: “Men have got used to an experimental method in physical and technical matters. They are still afraid of it in human concerns.”⁴ As a result, we do not have the ability to properly direct the people in the new conditions: “When the conclusions of inquiries that deal with man are left outside the program of social action, social policies are necessarily left without guidance that knowledge of man can provide, and that it must provide if social action is

³ J. Dewey, “Individualism, Old and New,” in *The Later Works: 1925-1953*, Vol. 5 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), p. 75.

⁴ J. Dewey, “Public and its Problem,” in *The Later Works: 1925-1953*, Vol. 2 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), p. 341.

not to be directed either by mere precedent and custom or else by the happy intuitions of individual minds.”⁵

Obviously, the gulf between the conditions and the ideas, and the corresponding absence of experimental thinking, concerns every aspect of culture, and with a multitude of consequences. First of all, it encloses intelligence in a restricted, merely technical field. The technical character of the physical sciences has, as a result, an external relation of their applications to human life. They do not assimilate to life. They are realized only when the profit is measured. So, human, as another apprentice wizard, has managed to control a huge account of natural energy, but he is not able to use it for human affairs. Moreover, the lack of experimental thinking leads to a non-reflective deal with the social conditions. Dewey mentions here, as examples, the holiness of the articles of the Constitution about the private property, or the ideological principles which cannot orient the citizens any more. As a result, the public and the institutions are in total confusion. They are unable to understand the causes and the consequences of the new conditions, and so to control them. We suffer them, but we cannot change them. Dewey observes:

“At present, many consequences are felt rather than perceived; they are suffered, but they cannot be said to be known, for they are not, by those whose who experience them, referred to their origins. It goes, then, without saying that agencies are not established which canalize the streams of social action and thereby regulate them.

Hence the publics are amorphous and unarticulated.”⁶

The aspects of this inability are obvious: material insecurity, apathy and political abstention, economic determinism, propaganda and uniformity and standardization of thought.

Dewey requests the extension of experimentalism, namely of cooperative intelligence, or else of scientific method in social inquiry, politics, and morals as the only way to overcome the gulf between the actual conditions and the ideas. Moreover, he identifies the method of cooperative intelligence with the democratic method.

“The crisis in democracy demands the substitution of the intelligence that is exemplified in scientific procedure for the kind of intelligence that is now accepted. The need for this change is not exhausted in the demand for greater honesty and impartiality.”⁷

It concerns the invention and the projection of long-term social plans by the cultivation of the habit of regarding the social realities in terms of cause and effect, and social policies in terms of means and consequences. Dewey connects the intelligence with a renascent liberalism, and supports that:

“In its large sense, this remaking of the old through union with the new is precisely what intelligence is. [...] The office of intelligence in every problem that either a person or a community meets is to

⁵ Dewey, “Liberalism and Social Action,” p. 34.

⁶ Dewey, “The Public and Its Problem,” p. 317.

⁷ Dewey, “Liberalism and Social Action,” p. 51.

effect a working connection between old habits, customs, institutions, beliefs, and new conditions. What I have called the mediating function of liberalism is all one with the work of intelligence.”⁸

An obstacle for the cultivation of intelligent action as the method of social direction is the individualistic consideration of intelligence. The traditional thought regards intelligence as a private property given before any kind of social association. However, the development of physical sciences proved that intelligence is collective and cooperative. Hence,

“Liberalism has to assume the responsibility for making it clear that intelligence is a social asset and is clothed with the function as public as is its origin, in the concrete, in social cooperation.”⁹

Here, Dewey uses the example of Henry George about the construction of modern ships, and the vast cooperation of different disciplines and humans which request to mark off the social character of intelligence. Moreover, he underlines the capacity of people to use the achievements of social intelligence, which have intergrated into the social medium. Even if, for example, very few invented a car, everybody knows in our days some of their mechanical elements and their operation.

Hence, he concludes that, “given a social medium in whose institutions the available knowledge, ideas and art of humanity were incarnate, and the average individual would rise to undreamed heights of social and political intelligence.”¹⁰ In the same perspective, Dewey puts the free experimental social inquiry, along with the publicity and the equal distribution of conclusions, as presuppositions for the formation of a democratic public which has the ability to realize, understand, and control the consequences of human interaction.

Certainly, the gulf between the physical sciences and the social sciences, relative to experimental method, is huge. The social inquiry is still at the dogmatic stage of ancient physical science. Despite their distance, the social inquiry shares the same pattern of inquiry with the physical inquiry. It is held that “inquiry, in spite of the diverse subjects to which it applies, and the consequent diversity of its special techniques has a common structure or pattern: that this common structure is applied both in common sense and science.”¹¹ So, we should turn to the method of physical sciences to examine the character of experimental social inquiry.

Traditional philosophy, according to Dewey, was speculative. Its goal was to discover the unchangeable substance of the world: “In the new experimental science, knowledge is obtained exactly the opposite way, namely, through deliberate institution of a definite and specified course of change.”¹² We do not only view the object, but we induct a change so as observe what other

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹¹ Dewey, “Logic: The Theory of Inquiry,” in *The Later Works: 1925-1953*, Vol. 12, p. 105.

¹² J. Dewey, “The Quest of Certainty,” in *The Later Works: 1925-1953*, Vol. 4 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), p. 68.

change will follow. Inquiry does not signify a research of reality in contrast of the experience of the non-real, or of the phenomenal. It signifies, rather, a research for those relations who are responsible for the appearance and the consequences of things, by which means we can regulate their appearance.

In experimentalism, ideas have an active, creative role. They are not mere memories of the sensory perception, as traditional empiricism supported. However, they are not given transcendently or by insight. They are connected with the experience: not with the sensory experience, but with the experience of activity. Hence, thinking is a way of providing direction for real action. Ideas are plans of action which initiate the reconstruction of previous existential conditions. So, we talk about an experimental and not an abstractive, rationalistic idealism. Conclusively, the experience and the concept do not exist independently, but they distinguish and connect themselves functionally during the project of inquiry, during the action. The action is considered as the solution of a problematic situation.

In experimentalism, the concept and the experience, as functionally distinct aspects of inquiry, operate as hypothesis. They do not request an absolute truth as the correspondence of the concept to the object. Their validity depends upon their function, upon the consequences which they produce: "They are good and sound if they do what is wanted of them: if they lead to an observable result which satisfies the conditions set by the nature of the problem in hand."¹³

Contrary to traditional philosophy, the functionalistic character of experimentalism promotes creative thinking, according to Dewey. Experimentalism has the ability to construct new objects of knowledge, or new sensor data, by the process of inquiry. For we know only the thing we have constructed, the thing we have done, doing it with purpose. Hence, it is the constructivist character of knowledge which allows us to overcome the given of the direct, non-reflective experience. Conclusively, the knowledge does not consist in attribution of real qualities to the object, but in the construction of the object. Science does not indicate to us the structure of the nature, but it regulates our relations with the things through a special way. So, we do not consider the man as a speculate subject, but as a participant. Experimentalism is also a realistic perspective, because it does not question the external world. The fact that knowledge is a construction does not lead us to the conclusion that everything is a construction, for the primary, non-reflective experience has no cognitive character.

The perspective of experimentalism is functionalistic, because all of the distinctions (subject-object, concept-sensory data) are mere functional distinctions in the context of the process of the inquiry. It is constructivist, because we know only the object which we construct. It is also realistic, because it accepted the reality of the external world. Finally, it is practical, because the action as observation, as construction and, as solving problems, is in the center of the knowledge and of the inquiry.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

Hence, the social inquiry should follow the experimentalism of physical sciences. It should learn from them to connect inquiry with action, with the solving of problematic situations, and the abandoning of the moralism, and the positivistic registration and classification of mere facts. It should theorize the indefinable, problematic situations that we experience. It should grasp them intellectually, render them to a problem and suggest plans of action for their solutions. Dewey marks this perspective as realistic, social thinking: “Realism does not mean apprehension of the existing situation in toto, but selective discrimination of conditions as obstructive and as recourses: i.e. as negative and positive,”¹⁴ with intent to form ways of interaction which will produce the desirable results. These plans of actions are of course hypothesis, suggestions, which are controlled by the produced consequences.

For the development of the experimental social inquiry, we should, according to Dewey, face every policy as an experiment:

“Every measure of policy put into operation is, logically, and should be actually, of the nature of an experiment. For 1) it represents the adoption of one out of a number of alternative conceptions as possible plans of action, and 2) its execution is followed by consequences which [...] are none the less observable within limits, so they may serve as tests of the validity of the conception acted upon.”¹⁵

Nevertheless, Dewey recognizes the peculiar traits of social sciences. In physical sciences, the facts are independent from the desires, the efforts and the interests of people. Contrarily, all these agencies are very important in social sciences and we cannot eliminate them. Indeed “in the degree which we ignore this difference, social science becomes pseudo-science.”¹⁶ Moreover, the social facts are essentially historical facts and we cannot ignore their historicity: “Every social phenomenon, however, is itself a sequential course of changes, and hence a fact isolated from the history of which it is a moving constituent loses the qualities that make it distinctively social.”¹⁷ Dewey does not mean that the historicity of social facts is connected with some sort of teleology, which considers that a dominated social fact exists, or that we march to a predefined end.

This peculiarity of social sciences brings us to the basic difference between the social and physical inquiry: the values and the ends which intervene in the social issues. Dewey refuses the positivistic impartiality, which tries to distinguish the social inquiry from any judgment about values or ends. For Dewey, the ends as ends-in-view, or else as consequences, are an integral part of inquiry. We choose ends according to the possibilities of the conditions and the consequences that we would like to produce. The positivistic position rests upon a preconception which “excludes ends (consequences) from the field of inquiry and reduces inquiry at its best to the truncated and distorted

¹⁴ Dewey, “Logic: The Theory of Inquiry,” p. 493.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 502.

¹⁶ Dewey, “Public and Its Problems,” p. 240.

¹⁷ Dewey, “Logic: The Theory of Inquiry,” p. 494.

business of finding out means for realizing objectives already settled upon.”¹⁸ On the contrary, the experimental social inquiry “institutes means –consequences (ends) in strict conjugate relation to each other. Ends have to be adjudged (evaluated) on the basis of the available means by which they can be attained just as much as existential materials have to adjudged (evaluated) with respect to their function as material means of effecting a resolved situation. For an end-in-view is itself a means, namely, a procedural means.”¹⁹

Hence, the experimental social inquiry should determine the ends during the process of resolving the problematic situation:

“Social inquiry [...] must judge certain objective consequences to be the end which is worth attaining under the given conditions. [...] It means that ends in their capacity of values can be validly determined only on the basis of the tensions, obstructions and positive potentialities that are found, by controlled observation, to exist in the actual situation.”²⁰

So, we can note that Dewey overcomes the impartiality about the values with a kind of retreat. He identifies the moral values with the ends, and the ends with the desirable consequences. He talks about an end-in-view, an end to be reached in contrast with the utopian ends. The ends, even if they are produced as hypothetical plans of action for the resolution of a problem by the imagination, are always related to the means for their achievement. The end is a hypothesis, and has a directive operation. It is formed and controlled in proportion with the existential conditions, while it directs the observation. Otherwise, ends are mere sentimental fantasies.

In spite of the request for a functional correlation of means and ends, the main problem of social inquiry remains thus: the existence of conflicted interests about the social issues. The agreement upon the scientific conclusions, as Dewey himself accepts, demands, first of all, an agreement upon the realized consequences. However, in the case of social inquiry, the agreement upon the consequences is more difficult, because they are always related with social conflicts. But this difficulty, according to Dewey, does not mean that an intrinsic logical or theoretical difference exists between the social and the physical inquiry. The conflicts point just to the defective development of social inquiry. He himself suggests that we put the different perspectives under the larger interest of the contribution to the interests of all; the method of cooperative intelligence, or, otherwise “the method of democracy [...] is to bring these conflicts out into the open where their special claims can be seen and appraised, where can be discussed and judged in the light of more inclusive interests than are represented by either of them separately.”²¹

Conclusively, it seems that experimentalism cannot offer us a tenacious concept of end or value, which will guide the social inquiry through the trou-

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 490.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 490.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 496-7.

²¹ Dewey, “Liberalism and Social Action,” p. 56.

bles of the opposite social interests. It offers us just the personal interest of the inquirer or the community that faces a problematic situation, and he hopes to resolve it. The interest is not considered as an agency which constitutes our concepts and our perspective. It refers, rather, to every particular case of conjunction of the self with an object and an end in the action. Experimentalism also asserts that it is possible to be raised above the conflicts and examine the social issues from a wider point of view and, thus, to shape common goals and direct the efforts for their arrangement.

I assert that the experimental social inquiry of Dewey is functionalist and, because of this, there is a great intention between his pattern of social inquiry and his beliefs regarding certain values, such as democracy, freedom and equality. I will insist on the theme of democracy, and point to the conflict between Dewey and Lippmann to demonstrate the intention of Dewey's thought.

Walter Lippmann, in his work *The Phantom Public*, asserts that the citizens are unable to judge, to follow the news and to self-govern. He supposes that their inability does not concern the quality of democracy and of education, but the very nature of the public. Hence, democracy, in her profound sense, is not possible in the modern, great and complicated society. Moreover, Lippmann distinguishes the citizens into insiders and outsiders of politics. The first are politicians and technocrats who can manage the governmental issues, while the latter are occupied exclusively with their personal affairs. Their participation should be restricted only to a critical intervention and to supporting a particular group. Obviously, Lippmann's position is aristocratic. He wants to replace the philosophers-kings of Plato with the technocrat's specialists.

Dewey accepts that Lippmann's critique about the deficiency of the public is correct. However, he considers that this is not an intrinsic weakness, but a deficient development of democracy. Hence, he demands the further extension of democracy. He supports that "the cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy."²² Moreover, he considers that, because of the development of nonpolitical conditions, "the current has set steadily in one direction: toward democratic forms."²³ But, immediately, questions arise. Where we can ground democracy as a stable end? Why, with respect to the deficiency of the public, can we not choose another end, one less democratic, like social efficacy? Experimental social inquiry does not seem capable of giving us answers, of giving us criteria to choose democracy when the dominant conditions do not tend to democratic direction.

Generally, experimental social inquiry is not capable of defending values and ends which are untimely, or which do not correspond to the existential conditions. Dewey himself seems to recognize this fact when he uses a religious, non-scientific vocabulary about democracy and he appeals to democratic faith, or when he tries to found the value of democracy in a naturalistic metaphysic, where democracy is identified with the true social life of humans.

²² Dewey, "The Public and its Problems," p. 325.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

Westbrook²⁴ suggests that even the most technical or philosophical works of Dewey during the '20s, such as *Experience and Nature*, are also answers to the current of democratic realists, like Lippmann. It seems to me that, via this conflict, Dewey himself recognizes the limits of experimentalism. He understands that pure experimentalism cannot found democracy, and so he attempts to set forth a philosophical anthropology or a metaphysic of democracy.

We can also criticize the experimental social inquiry for one more point. It presupposes a group of liberal values, such as freedom and tolerance, which are considered as given. It becomes obvious, then, that a functionalistic, experimental social inquiry needs supplemental values before and beyond any experiment. It should consent some fundamental values beyond any particular, historically defined, situation.

Conclusively, the experimental social theory of Dewey, despite his effort to be related with the action and the resolving of problematic situations, cannot overcome the formalism of a functionalistic perspective. It identifies the ends with the produced consequences of a social policy, and it supposes that it can be raised above the opposite interests and examine the social issues under the prism of general interests. But it ignores the values which it presupposes and it disregards the significance of the values, beyond whatever distance they have from the dominant conditions, for a critical social theory, which is oriented to the overcoming of crisis.

²⁴ R. Westbrook, *John Dewey and the American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

The Role of Language in Multi-Lingual Europe: The European Crisis and Its Therapy According to Gadamer

PASCHALIS SOUGIOULTZIS

I

After a long period of conflicts and wars, European nations had decided to move towards cooperation based on their common features, which have been formative of the European identity. This process of rapprochement was neither quick, nor easy; and still continues today. The European nations had to leave their differences aside and discuss what unites them. For Hans-Georg Gadamer, the main difference among the nations which make up the European community is the sum of the spoken languages in which the experiences of their peoples were reflected.¹ A language holds the entire history of the people who speak it, by bestowing meaning to it. For this reason, while speaking a certain language, we inevitably gain an interpretation of the world in which we live: “there is always a world already interpreted, already organized in its basic relations, into which experience steps as something new, upsetting what has led our expectations and reorganizes itself in the upheaval.”² The understanding of the self, of others, and of the world, begins and takes place within language. The latter serves to enrich our experience of the world: “Only the support of familiar and common understanding makes it possible to venture into the alien, to gain something out of the alien, thus broadening and enriching our own experience of the world.”³ Of course, what we all first experience in a linguistically constructed world is contact with others. This contact presupposes a common language, which can only exist in the form of a dialogue: the other, individual or collective, is not someone who has to be convinced about the rightness of my opinion. Throughout our communication with others, our goal is not to make ourselves look likeable, but to share our experiences with one another. Once we are open to this exchange, we have already realized that ourselves, as well the others, are “the other of their other”; the recognition of this basic fact is what constitutes the foundation for respecting the other and their existence: “in any case every person is another, from the moment which he as well is a human being.”⁴

¹ “This community begins initially from the fact that Europe is a multilingual whole, which is composed of various lingual national cultures.” H.-G. Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, trans. P. Ivernel (Paris: Bibliothèque Rivages, 1996), p. 27.

² H.-G. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. and ed. D.E. Ligne (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1976), p. 15.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 23.

According to Gadamer, what has formed Europe as a cultural entity, which also remains its unique feature, is science: “in our western culture philosophy is from the beginning connected with the appearance of science. This is the novelty which has led Europe to its union and which today, due to the scientific culture created, determines the dangerous situation of European civilization.”⁵ Using mathematics in order to explain the world, European science acknowledges that it cannot guarantee true knowledge if the latter is not verified through mathematical method. The aim of European science is to set itself apart from anything which could call into question its method and conclusions. The current European crisis is, thus, a consequence of the exacerbation of science and its transformation into a pure by-product of science, which is scientism, within European societies. Its sole purpose is even greater control. But scientism explains every aspect of reality according to the mathematical method, its direct impact upon European societies being the exclusive emphasis upon financial growth. Nevertheless, with regard to Europe’s effort for Europe to unite, Gadamer assigns philosophy with a new task, which is to encourage a reflective process. The latter would not be reduced to the restrictions of objectified scientific language, as philosophy’s task would be to maintain the unconstrained dialogue among cultures.⁶ In fact, the understanding of the self, and of the other, results from constant conversation –as authentic dialogue is to be distinguished from mere discussion– whose sole aim is to confirm our personal point of view. Speaking with another implies entering into an alien world while developing a community of language and experience, that is, a common world.⁷

A common language was, therefore, required in which European countries would converse openly with each other. So, any true dialogue between them should originate within linguistic exchanges, as it is language primarily in its dialogical function that makes communication possible amongst European nations. So, if nations are capable of reaching agreement with one another, this means that language and dialogue are not just playing a role in the configuration of political reality, but furthermore, they constitute the ground for everyone taking part. Hence, it is evident that language and dialogue are not present only in politics, but in every field of human activity: “All kinds of human communities are kinds of linguistic communities: even more, they form language. For language is by nature the language of conversation; it fully realizes itself only in the process of coming to an understanding.”⁸ In other words, language is the background of every social, cultural and religious activity; and in general, of every activity which requires the involvement of at least two people.⁹ In any case, Gadamer is aware of the fact that language

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁷ H.-G. Gadamer, *Langage et vérité*, trans. and foreword J.-C. Gens (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), p. 252.

⁸ H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, ed., trans. and rev. J. Weinsheimer and D.G. Marshall (London: Sheed and Ward, 1989²), p. 446.

⁹ Richard Palmer notes: “[The world] is the shared understanding between persons, and the medium of this understanding; and what makes it possible is language [...]. Since the

cannot change reality by itself. Every talk is a talk about something; every opinion and every prejudice which is brought into language is part of the talk's content. Therefore, it is within the context of a dialogical exchange that agreement, as well as disagreement take place.

For Gadamer, our language is our world because language is what establishes a world. Furthermore, it is thanks to language that we possess a world:

“Language is not just one of man's possession in the world; rather on it, depends the fact that man has a world at all. The world exists for man as for no other creature in the world. But the world is verbal in nature. [...] Not only is the world a world only as long as it comes to language, but language too has its real being only in the fact that the world is presented in it.”¹⁰

European nations have, so far, decided to look for common elements, keeping in mind that dialogue is the only way of reconciliation among them, thus realizing that the other is not an enemy they will have to dominate.¹¹ By abandoning the idea of domination, we find ourselves in the state of an ongoing dialogue, discovering our prejudices as well as those of our interlocutor.¹² Gadamer insists that, after an authentic dialogue, no one stays the same.¹³ When we accept the different existence of the other, we can accept him and realize that we, ourselves, are the other of the other.¹⁴ This is Europe's greatest advantage: European nations have learned to live with each other even though they are different.¹⁵ At the same time, European nations have to live close to one another and accept that difference is not something that has to cause fear amongst us. Living with each other is a human task and humans can survive only by accepting it. Nonetheless, we are moving towards a new direction in which our planet is becoming a “global village”; communication with the other is faster and easier. This approach cannot be based on anything else but confidence. It is confidence that renders the other my proximate and

open space in which man exists is the realm of shared understanding created by language as world, man clearly exists in language [...]. We may call this the linguisticity of human experience of the world.” *Hermeneutics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 206.

¹⁰ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 443.

¹¹ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 22.

¹² “The challenge is to be able to acknowledge the humanity of their way, while still being able to live ours.” C. Taylor, “Gadamer on the Human Sciences,” in R.J. Dostal (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gadamer* (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 126-142, p. 142.

¹³ See also Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 371. Cf. *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 57; H.-G. Gadamer, *Reason in the Age of Science*, trans. F.G. Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass.-London: The MIT Press, 1981), p. 110.

¹⁴ “Insofar as the other allows me to see myself differently, I become different to the other and in becoming different to the other, I can enable the other to become different to him- or herself. Gadamer rightly insists the effects of a profound conversation are mutual.” C.H. Zuckert, “On the Politics of Gadamerian Hermeneutics: A Response to Orozco and Waite,” in B. Krajewski (ed.), *Gadamer's Repercussions: Reconsidering Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 2004), 229-243, p. 241.

¹⁵ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 23.

allows our association despite all differences. To have a dialogue with my proximate is to have the possibility to rethink not only about the other, but about myself as well, thus also perceiving ourselves as the other of the other.¹⁶ It is in this sense that the other becomes a limit: either we use our power to try to enforce our own culture or we participate, through dialogue, in what is foreign to us.¹⁷ No authentic dialogue is possible without openness on all levels. It is impossible for individuals, but also for nations, to coexist without the will to understand one another. We have to accept the other as he is, without being forced to do so. It is a matter of our own choice to discuss things which we consider wrong or unjust, or things with which we do not agree: "it is there that finally resides the last root of human liberty that makes the human being a human being: the choice. It has to choose and it knows what it has to claim from there: to choose what is the best and him, who is the best, choose the good, the right and the just."¹⁸

Undoubtedly, dialogue is rendered impossible if one believes, in advance, in the single truth of one's opinion. That is why dialogue lies at the heart of understanding: there is no speaking without the other. Our common orientation presupposes common meanings, which, in any case, takes the form of a dialogue. The real openness to a dialogue presupposes that we are ready to accept that perhaps we may be wrong. Understanding means being in dialogue.¹⁹ While in dialogue, we do not listen passively but, on the contrary, we participate actively in what is happening. Without our active participation, there is no dialogue. An authentic dialogue does not mean a simple exchange of information aiming to inform someone, as it requires participation. In fact, it is through dialogue that we are allowed to share common meanings.

Our coexistence upon a dialogical basis has to do with the will of everyone to participate in the common ground of dialogue. What Europe has taught us is to respect the other within a determined space and, consequently, to acknowledge the existence of a set of common values. This coexistence is not easy and it is quite possible that we sometimes violate the terms in which it has been established. The approach of European nations on a cultural level is a process which is neither easy nor quick. Despite the fact that European nations have been engaged in dialogue to pave a common route, it's undeniable that each one of them has undergone a different historical development. Their place in the future will be determined by the experiences they have gained

¹⁶ "The other must be preserved as other in its discontinuous existence within the continuity of the hermeneutic experience as the understanding of the familiar, if it is to provide the alterity necessary for the subject's self-understanding." O. Bilen, *The Historicity of Understanding and the Problem of Relativism in Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2000), p. 83.

¹⁷ "We are also a dialogue in the sense that we live in a community in which we are exposed to a plurality of opinions. This plurality of views also lives within us, it constitutes us and it accounts for our all too human stammering and hesitations." J. Grondin, *Sources of Hermeneutics* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 121-122.

¹⁸ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 117.

¹⁹ Gadamer, *La philosophie herméneutique*, p. 117.

over time. Moreover, for some newly established countries, integration within the context of Europe constitutes a brand new reality.²⁰ This process of integration is a well-known situation for Europe, the latter is the largest unified formation which has been made up of a plurality of nations, religions, cultures and languages: "Europe seems to enter into a new reality. Europe possesses the richest historical experience, as it possesses the greatest variety of forms and a pluralism of linguistic, political, religious and ethnic traditions within the most limited space."²¹ It is exactly this diversity which has to be overcome. Undoubtedly, this does not mean that diversity has to be wiped out; the "task of Europe" is to encourage dialogue in order to find equilibrium among member states on the basis of common features, such as respect, in addition to the conservation and promotion of different lifestyles. Gadamer also refers to tolerance, but he notes that tolerance involves force. To tolerate the other does not mean that the other has been understood, nor does it imply the intention to do so. The intention is to enter into dialogue with the other. On the contrary, to tolerate the other means imposing oneself without disturbing the other. In any case, Gadamer accepts that tolerance allows for "good preparation" regarding the pressing problems of humanity and also that it is violent depression and the lack of tolerance that constitute the main elements of domination.²² This exchange of cultural elements through dialogue not only conserves but also promotes the traditions of every nation.²³ Having their minds set on partnerships instead of separation and isolation, nations have the possibility to communicate with each other on the basis of solidarity. According to Gadamer, the future of Europe lies within this process, and within a world where the ability to interfere in and determine global affairs would be reduced. This union would provide Europe with permanent self-consciousness and a particular identity with which it will face the challenges of tomorrow.²⁴

II

If Gadamer insists on the commonalities among European nations, it is because he firmly believes that what has formed Europe, that is science, is no more capable of providing the necessary means to achieve this objective.²⁵ It is science that lies behind European culture and continues to determine the future of Europe. It is in this sense that European culture is scientific in its essence. Without scientific achievement, the industrial revolution would not have existed. The standard of living would not have improved nor would so-

²⁰ "Many ancient countries begin to engage to new ways, while new countries follow ancient ways." Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, pp. 47-48.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

²³ Jean Grondin argues that "all we have is the experience of those who preceded us, the dialogue with others and our good judgment that cannot but be channeled by tradition and the ongoing conversation." *Sources of Hermeneutics*, p. 122.

²⁴ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, pp. 50-51.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

cial well-being as we know it today. Since science has formed modern European culture, scientific achievements already include social content. Besides, every discovery takes place with the prospect of being applied; scientists do research knowing that their discoveries will serve toward a specific application. They already have in mind the nature of their scientific application.

The use of the mathematical method has offered credibility and validity to European science. Scientific research takes place using the mathematical method of validity. The latter has proved to be a determining factor of the modern world, because it has imposed the opinion that something is not fact if the mathematical method does not verify it. Something that is not approved or verified with the mathematical method is rejected and considered as something that does not produce any valid knowledge. The aim of science has been, and still remains, to reject any element which cannot be scientifically verified. In other words, its aim is to objectify all experiences. It is that fact that has rendered science dominant in society. Resolving problems follows the precise scientific method of hard sciences which is transferred onto the social sciences. On the one hand, it is not possible to apply the mathematical method to the social sciences, while, on the other hand this impossibility seems to render the social sciences worthless: "science attempts to become certain about entities by methodically organizing its knowledge of the world. Consequently it condemns as heresy all knowledge that does not allow of this kind of certainty and that therefore cannot serve the growing domination of being."²⁶ Therefore, social sciences will not be credible if the results of social research have to sustain a process of constant verification. Such results would have to eventually be voided. For science, every experience is valid because it can be verified through the achievement of repeating the same results. The reliability of scientific discovery lies precisely in the fact that it has the capacity to repeat the same results. Thus, science has claimed that its practice is the only universal practice. Moreover, the only way to question or disregard a scientific discovery is through a practice which is nonetheless equally scientific. So, science may be disputed as such by somebody who equally practices the scientific method. Hence, the scientific method is a means to handle disputes.

Science makes use of a symbolic language, whereby it has become possible to develop and accomplish achievements because all scientists share the same language. In fact, science only exists through symbolic language –that is, the language of mathematics. It is this language which allows the use of a scientific method that is common in every science, and aims for the domination of nature and of society itself. Nevertheless, this symbolism refers to ordinary language and its functions; for instance, the letter "m" implies "mass," which belongs to a developed linguistic sum, i.e. the language and terms used in physics. For Gadamer, the key feature of language is not found in the strictness of meaning but in the fact that it always infers a meaning, which cannot be separated from the language concerned. In all cases our experience of the

²⁶ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 476.

world is precisely linguistic.²⁷ A thing is determined only by language. It is not possible for a thing to acquire a meaning outside language and, thus, it is not possible that it will be given a meaning in advance. The world is interpreted when we begin to learn our mother tongue. To have a language implies already having an interpretation of the world.²⁸ Even if science is the only thing that changes the world, it needs language to structure its concepts.²⁹ It may be true that a technical term finds its origin in science; however, it has to bear a meaning which can be manifested only with language. Even a technical term will have necessarily been incorporated within a linguistic whole that had already existed before it. The term exists through this incorporation: “every terminology is born from the existing possibilities of speaking and, consequently, cannot be separated. Every term and every terminological way of speaking must, at the very minimum, be able to integrate within natural language.”³⁰ This incorporation is not possible without the prior existence of language. Before scientific discovery takes place, what we look for is already present in language, even if we do not know the exact nature of what we are seeking. For instance, in physics, we make suggestions on a particle, the so-called Higgs boson, which completes a theory and empirically proves its existence. On the other hand, the multiplicity of meanings can be explained thanks to the ability of language to unite and present something in a coherent way: at the same time, a term offers the possibility for multiple meanings to exist. Today, a scientific discovery is not acceptable without having been a topic of discussion in the scientific community. Every discovery is demonstrated inside the scientific community, which, eventually would have to be convinced on the validity of the research results generated. Hence, if Gadamer speaks about science when referring to Europe, it is because he sees that Europe has the tendency to adopt the scientific method in order to resolve its problems, a fact that may close the door on dialogue between European nations.

So the fact that Europe tries once more to resolve its problems through science means that it sets aside dialogue, social sciences and, therefore, philosophy. The case of philosophy is certainly much different than that of science. In science, the meaning of a term has to always remain the same. On the contrary, in philosophy, even a term, like the term ‘idea,’ does not guarantee

²⁷ “Philosophical hermeneutics is not, however, opposed to the values of academic rigor, or to the virtues of methodical research. What it is implacably opposed to is the attempt to privilege or monopolize reductive approaches to truth and actuality. The ethical danger implicit in the quest for methodological invincibility is that it masks a failure (or a fear) to confront the risks of what it is to be merely human.” N. Davey, *Unquiet Understanding* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2006), p. 22.

²⁸ H.-G. Gadamer, *Herméneutique et philosophie* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1999), p. 43.

²⁹ “The weak point of scientism is the inference from the fact that a certain descriptive vocabulary enables to predict and utilize the casual powers of objects to claim that this vocabulary offers a better understanding of those objects than any other.” R. Rorty, “Being that Can Be Understood is Language,” in Krajewski (ed.), *Gadamer’s Repercussions: Reconsidering Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 21-29, p. 27.

³⁰ Gadamer, *Herméneutique et philosophie*, p. 10.

the context of its meaning. It is quite possible that a term will stay inactive and, after a long period of inertia, will be used again, incorporated in a new conceptual and linguistic content. The emergence and the meaning of a term is entrenched in the historical and cultural conditions of an epoch, and also within a context which is manifested in the work of every philosopher. If philosophy had no other function than to renew the meaning of already existing terms, this could lead to a reuse of the same concepts and, consequently, to return to previous significations. The need for new concepts corresponds to a new datum of reality which has to be dealt with. For example, in seeking an objective in human life, ancient philosophy introduced the term *εὐδαιμονία* ("happiness"). What is most likely to happen is that current reality will borrow a term from current language. Concepts like "power" or "essence" have been loaned from ordinary language, and thereafter have been given a new context. So, if philosophy maintained the same meanings on the terms it uses, it would be unable to interpret and explain current reality and would have to form a new one. This fact could turn philosophy into a sterile entity which cannot generate and reproduce anything new, and, as a consequence, will be eliminated like every organism which cannot reproduce itself. Philosophy lives through the renewal of its concepts and meanings. Its survival depends on this renewal and this is why philosophy relies upon language.

Nonetheless, does this diversity in the meanings of terms prove that philosophy cannot be credible or that, in order for it to be credible, it has to adopt the method of exact sciences? Apart from ascribing to the positivist ideal, can philosophy be a legitimate science? Philosophy is identified with hermeneutics, that is to the linguistic experience of the world. Since philosophy relies upon language, the other is needed. Therefore, it exists in the form of dialogue. Without the other, there would have been no need to communicate, and hence no need for language. That is why language always allows an exchange with the other and in addition to an exchange of opinions. For Gadamer, the highest level that language can reach is to search for the right word, so as to express in the most appropriate manner what everyone needs to express.³¹ If we are wondering whether the other has understood us or not, it is because we are not sure that the words we have used are the appropriate ones in order to express ourselves. But to be understood by the other is a prerequisite in order to see whether we agree or disagree with him. It is at this moment that we are about to take the next step, that is to find a common language through which we will participate in a topic of discussion and with which we will understand one another.³² It is in this diversity that we get to know the other and, through them, our self as well: "it's within the contact and the dissimilarity with the other that allows us to complete a kind of encounter with our self."³³ In this

³¹ Gadamer, *La philosophie herméneutique*, p. 182.

³² "Arriving at a common understanding on a common object is a linguistic process that requires achieving a common language." J.C. Weinsheimer, *Gadamer's Hermeneutics: A Reading of Truth and Method* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 219.

³³ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 109. Cf. "Philosophy is a truly human and humanistic enterprise, conducted in the hope of gaining a better understanding of ourselves and

way we are always aware of the fact that our point of view may be tested, thus avoiding a dogmatic attitude towards the other. Certainly, every encounter with the other signifies a reflection about our self, our interpretation and adjustment in the world. When we reach a new understanding, we understand our self as well.³⁴ It is within the framework of our language and within the familiar that we are enabled to become interested in what is foreign.³⁵ What is always present when we try to communicate with the other is the prior interpretation of our language, which forms our worldview. When involved in a dialogue, in asking and responding, we do not passively receive what we are told, but we actively participate in what is happening. Without our active participation, there is no dialogue. Genuine dialogue is experienced as the enrichment of our self and our culture, instead of its loss. On the contrary, the enforcement of one's own opinions can lead to the loss of our identity. Nevertheless, there is still a possibility to understand one another when we make the efforts to free ourselves from depression and are willing to express ourselves in another way, willing to express something different. When we yield to pressure, we stop looking for what is different, passively accepting what may be imposed upon us. After the experience of World War II and the atrocities of Nazism, Europe understood that it had to decline authoritarian ideas and engage in an active dialogue to resolve its problems.

It is within a reaction against enforcement that Gadamer sees the limits of an expanding global culture: "it seems to me that it is exactly in searching for the forces of conservation within the framework of cultural life of man that the expansion of a global civilization of today will find its inner limit."³⁶ This limit constitutes, for him, one of the fields which philosophy should explore. Just like dialogue, philosophy promotes a multicultural experience of the world. As the methods of communication evolve and distances are minimized, the world becomes smaller and smaller. Cultures and individuals can come in contact more easily and directly. People are more and more open to the unknown. According to Gadamer, philosophy finds a new task, that is to reconcile the self, individual and collective, with what is alien to it, and to conserve the experience of the world for everyone with language.³⁷

The cause of today's European crisis is the impulse to impose a unified, that is, a "monocultural' Europe based solely upon economic criteria. The cri-

the world through dialogue and by learning from tradition." Grondin, *Sources of Hermeneutics*, p. 122.

³⁴ Gadamer eventually reaches the conclusion that at the end every understanding constitutes a self-understanding: "All understanding is self-understanding, but not in the sense of a preliminary self-possession or of one finally and definitely achieved. For the self-understanding only realizes itself in the understanding of a subject of matter and does not have the character of a free self-realization. The self that we are does not possess itself; one could say that it 'happens'...." Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, p. 55.

³⁵ Gadamer, *Herméneutique et philosophie*, p. 43.

³⁶ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 50.

³⁷ "All understanding is dependent upon a prior acquisition of linguistic practices and horizons of meaning, which guide our initial conceptions of self and world." Davey, *Unquiet Understanding*, p. 9.

sis begins with an attempt to resolve the problems of society following a model of economic efficiency; within this perspective, individuals as well as nations are not considered as autonomous beings who have different experiences and origins, but are seen as logistical beings. Hence, a strong contrast occurs: on the one hand, there is the world of economy, which tries to unite every experience, considering that economic growth is the only way to find a solution to the current crisis. On the other hand, within Europe a multitude of cultures flourish which wish to preserve their diversity. It is this diversity of experiences that renders impossible a union based on any given economic model: "it would be an illusion to estimate that just one rational system of utilities, so to speak a sort of religion of global economy, can regulate the collective life of men in this planet."³⁸ Nevertheless, the need for a community of European nations, united beyond solely economic criteria is the much required change in order to come out of the crisis.

According to Gadamer, it is the type of economic criteria promoted by the European Union itself, which has caused the crisis: "the form of economy which expands over the whole humanity leads to a tension and to a disequilibrium, but also to a process of acceleration of the tendencies that we are fully aware that we are in the middle of an irreversible crisis."³⁹ Nevertheless, he points out that every crisis has a critical point from which a process of recovery may develop. A genuine crisis is a period of tension which will end with the improvement of the actual situation.⁴⁰ But how are we to understand our own life during a time of crisis? It is this question that serves as philosophy's driving force, and is the most popular and widespread within society. The task of answering this question becomes more demanding during periods of crisis and change. Philosophy has changed direction and is turning towards man, who is understood mostly as an ethical being, based on the Stoic and the Epicurean philosophy that took place after the conquests of Alexander the Great and transformed the ancient world. Philosophy offers us the path to understand ourselves and our place within a world. For Gadamer, knowledge in the social sciences will always include knowledge for the sake of knowledge.⁴¹ For this reason we can also argue that philosophy will exist as long as man exists.⁴² But to understand does not mean to dominate. In the course of a dia-

³⁸ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 109.

³⁹ H.-G. Gadamer, *Esquisses herméneutiques. Essais et conférences* (Paris: Vrin, 2004), p. 43.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43-44.

⁴¹ Gadamer, *La philosophie herméneutique*, p. 68.

⁴² "Concerning the inseparability of self-awareness from its hermeneutical dependence upon the other, the argument is part of the wider case that self-understanding is initially shaped by the formative powers of the linguistic and cultural horizons the self finds itself located within. This amounts to the claim that self's inner apprehension of itself is unthinkable other than in terms of the dialogical relations that shape both its past and future. Given the unpredictable nature of those relationships, a hermeneutic awareness of the self must entail an awareness of its ontological dependence upon language and its speakers." Zuckert, "On the Politics of Gadamerian Hermeneutics: A Response to Orozco and Waite," p. 230-231.

logue, what we need is common language, which helps us understand what we are being told. This understanding can only take place within a linguistically constructed world. Hence, after we reach an understanding, we have a new experience of the world. In fact, language is what forms every field of our experience. That is why every type of knowledge is linguistic in essence. Therefore, understanding cannot happen without dialogue. If we do not participate in dialogue within a world which is constantly expanding, alienation will lead to suspiciousness and, finally, to hostility against everything that is different. A community such as this one will be established based on the perspective that the other is my enemy. The last phase in this retreat is the stage where, feeling threatened, someone is led either to terminate all communication with the other or to attack. In fact, refusal to enter into a dialogue can be disastrous and lead to war.

Finally, we can ask along with Gadamer if the different experiences of European nations, since they speak different languages, will be extinguished and if their equalization will dominate in the name of a global society of science.⁴³ Societies were formed under the condition that they will exist in order to protect their members. In other words, where there is a society there is also the awareness that we have to understand one another within our co-existence.⁴⁴ Today, despite the efforts of scientism, which continues to sustain the European crisis, we are still able to valorize communication and dialogue with the other. Europe faces a unique openness, within which it is able to acknowledge the unfamiliar and to seek mutual understanding. More fundamentally, according to Gadamerian hermeneutics, in order to establish an authentic dialogue with the other, we first need to establish a dialogue with ourselves.

⁴³ Gadamer, *L'héritage de l'Europe*, p. 50.

⁴⁴ "Dialogue's status as a dominant but unexamined value irresistibly provokes critical examination from those who are suspicious of all received ideas, particularly those whose invocation lays automatic claim to good faith." D.G. Marshall, "On dialogue: To Its Culture Despisers," in Krajewski (ed.), *Gadamer's Repercussions: Reconsidering Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 123-142, p. 124.

Crisis of Responsibility in the Modern World: Its Ontological and Ethical Consequences According to the Concepts of Karol Wojtyła and Tadeusz Kotarbiński

ANNA HARCIAREK

Introduction

In this paper I would like to discuss the issue of responsibility with reference to the present economic crisis. This problem is not totally new to philosophy, however there still remain lot of points which would be worthwhile to raise and specify. It is also important due to the fact that responsibility, together with trust, is a foundation of social relations. Better understanding might confirm the importance of philosophy in contemporary public discourse, as well as providing the necessary background and addendum to sciences.

The keynote of this discussion would be the thesis that the crisis of responsibility is a component of the situation in which European countries found themselves at the end of first and the beginning of second decade of 21st century. What is problematic here, in the identification of and possible solution to this crisis, is the fact that it is not visible at first sight, it is not as conspicuous as it is with economic and political manifestations of crisis, and also its consequences may be greatly postponed, just as are the effects of actions which could be taken in order to solve this aspect of crisis. But still, those difficulties do not change the fact that it cannot be underestimated, because, as I will try to show, ethical and ontological aspects of responsibility are closely connected to the condition of our culture and civilization.

Dynamic Structure of Responsible Person

At the very beginning, I would like to approach responsibility from the perspective of anthropology, which I understand as a part of ontology, since the human being is a part of world, of reality, and, although is changeable (just as is reality), it also has irreducible and transcendent element.

The situation of responsibility is a complex one and involves such components as the: certain act, its agent, values or obligations which should be fulfilled in this act, its evaluation, and the person who evaluates it. At the forefront, we see, here, a subject who will or will not be held responsible. Responsibility indicates subjectivity, indicates the agent. It can only be a human being, responsibility can only be ascribed to humans. Subjectivity and agency are not synonymous, but they presuppose each other. Justifiably, one can be a subject, an agent, only in the case that the action was undertaken consciously, what is sometimes also called proceeding (following a certain intention). Only

man is able to predict the consequences of his actions, by which one can also express oneself, one's attitude towards values, the world and other people. Human beings are aware of this ability and use it. Action is not unrestricted, but, again, what distinguishes human beings from other creatures is the fact that they first realize this constraint. Human beings are also equipped with will, without which action would not be possible. The capacity for rational judgment of the situation, the reason, cooperates with will in deciding whether to take an action. Responsibility is a consequence of this unique ontological constitution of man.

An interesting, dual aspect anthropological concept which analyzes the issue of being a person and the issue of an act, and which finds subjectivity in the ability to act deliberately, was presented by Polish phenomenologist Karol Wojtyła in his book titled *Acting Person*. He introduces the dynamic structure of a person which consists of three relations: namely, self-determination, self-mastery and self-possession. According to him, self-determination is a relation between the will and the person. This relation refers to the fact, which will disclose itself as a quality of the acting person, and thanks to the will, action is at all possible. Not only does the will demonstrate itself through the person, but also the very person demonstrates itself through the will.¹ Self-determination is an ability that defines person, as "the person is who possesses himself and at the same time, it is what is possessed only by himself."² Wojtyła also states that self-determination is a will, which in turn is person's quality.³ While acting, thanks to self-determination, the person is not only the subject, but also becomes an object of its own action. Self-determination realizes subjectivity. When it comes to self-possession, it enables self-determination (self-determination assumes self-possession), and it is also a condition for self-mastery. At the forefront, self-possession emerges here, which is possible only in the case of the person, and is both active (the person possesses itself) as well as passive (the person is possessed by itself). Also, when it comes to self-mastery, we are dealing with active and passive aspects. Human beings constantly experience tensions between the will and the desires. These are also expressions of a dual aspect, which constitutes a person, and, when referred to acting, can manifest itself in the possibility of stating that "I am acting" (will), and "something is going on in me" (desire, action). A person who can act in a free way constitutes itself, constitutes what he/she is. One can take an action, which one does not have to do, but which one wants to do. Through this act, the person exceeds, transcends itself horizontally, to other objects, as it is a prime object for itself. At the same time, man can transcend himself vertically, towards realization of values. Acting, which results in a certain change that is taking place in reality, reveals the ontological constitution of man.

¹ K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn (Acting Person)* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2000), p. 151.

² *Ibid.*, p. 152.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

Ontology of Responsibility

Let us proceed, now, to consider what kind of ideal being responsible is. It is a problematic question, and I will confine the discussion here to a wider presentation of only one possibility.

A person can relate to responsibility in various ways. One can bear responsibility, can hold someone else liable or be held liable oneself, can take it, evade it or not. Despite the fact that such a figure of speech as “to be held liable” might evoke negative associations with enforcement of some kind of sanctions, responsibility itself, especially understood as a human principle of conduct, seems to be something positive and desired. But still, we do not know exactly what it is. We cannot agree on classifying it simply as a human quality, because this understanding of responsibility is only its special case. A person is described as responsible, or we ascribe responsibility as somebody’s quality, only on the basis of relations in which one is responsible, which, in turn, are the consequences of one’s actions.

Due to colloquial, positive evaluation it is conceivable to classify responsibility as one of the values. However many philosophers (like, for example, Polish philosophers Roman Ingarden and Jan Woleński) indicate values as one of the ontological foundations of responsibility. By accepting this claim, the possibility of responsibility’s existence as a value is logically excluded, as it cannot ontologically found itself (the same thing, in this case responsibility, cannot be at the same time the foundation and the being that is founded).

Is it, then, possible to include responsibility in the set of virtues? Let us analyze responsibility in the context, first, of coherent contemporary theory of virtues presented by Alasdair MacIntyre. He begins his considerations over the concept of virtue with a presentation of virtue theories that has emerged throughout history: that is, the conceptions of Homer, Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas as an example of a Christian theory of virtue, and modern theories, especially those utilitarian ones. They all understand virtue differently and present different sets of virtues. Obviously, some of them, like justice, appear in the majority of these discussions, but they hold different positions in the hierarchy. One virtue may be considered as central in a certain epoch, that is, as a condition of acquiring all the other virtues, but, in another epoch, it can be regarded as secondary. Presented theories also differ over the question of who exactly can acquire them. For Homer, possession of certain virtues is necessary for people performing some roles which are important to the whole community. Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas link virtues with achieving purpose in human life, though they understand it differently. Also in modern times, the purpose of life is conceptualized in a different way. In an attempt to find a common ground for these concepts, MacIntyre points out that, in all of them, adoption of a particular theory of social and moral life is a condition of the applicability of the concept of virtue. In the case of ancient considerations, special meaning was assigned to political activity, as one that enables the cultivation of virtues. Later in this paper, it will be mentioned that today’s political decision-makers often escape the responsibility for the choices they made.

In MacIntyre's approach, practice makes a context for virtue. He defines it as a coherent and complex form of socially established, cooperative human activity, through which goods which are internal to that activity are realized in the pursuit of models of excellence which are characteristic for this type of activity and partly define it.⁴ Whereas the virtue itself is an acquired human quality, the possession of and compliance with them enables us to achieve goods that are internal to the practices, and lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving those goods.⁵ In accordance with this definition, every virtue is a human quality. But this approach has already been questioned here by situating responsibility beyond man, which aspect enables him to create various relations toward it. It seems that responsibility should accompany every kind of practice based on what makes it similar to justice, bravery and honesty, which, according to MacIntyre, are constituent of every practice. Undoubtedly, analysis of links between responsibility and three mentioned virtues would be interesting and helpful in answering the question of responsibility's ontological status.

What is also inconclusive is a relation of responsibility to internal and external goods. The first ones may be identified and achieved only by participation in a given practice. In turn, such goods as money, power or prestige, which are among external goods, may be achieved in various ways, and also in practices. However, its participants, who concentrate only on achieving external goods will not necessarily manifest cooperative behavior (on the contrary, they may compete with each other since there is limited amount of external goods that may be obtained) and surely they will assume different attitudes toward their fellow participants. In the light of the above mentioned definition of virtue, responsibility cannot be one of the goods if we presuppose is a virtue, even only tentatively. This presupposition is supported by the fact that, although virtues are the condition of obtaining internal goods, they may prevent the achievement of external goods. I would argue that this is precisely why we have to deal with the crisis within the area of ethics, which is also a crisis of responsibility in the modern world, since it may prevent the achievement of external goods.

In the following part of his book titled *After Virtue*, MacIntyre presents another definition of virtue, which identifies virtue with good by stating that virtues are goods, by means of which we are able to define our relation with those people, with whom we share our aims and models that define the given practice.⁶ Then, maybe responsibility can be regarded as *meta-good/virtue* (good/virtue of higher level), which neither is internal, nor external? It is an acceptable solution, but it has to be kept in mind that being a *meta-virtue* does not place responsibility at the same level as justice or *phronesis* (prudence) in Aristotle's concept of virtues (which are above other virtues). In turn, it does

⁴ A. MacIntyre, *Dziedzictwo cnoty. Studium z teorii moralności (After Virtue)* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1996), p. 338.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.344.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

not mean that responsibility couldn't take the same place with justice in the contemporary hierarchy of virtues.

Trust and Responsibility

The above mentioned definition refers to the issue of social life. It would not be possible without the trust that members of the community have for each other. Also representative democracy, which is a dominating political system these days, is based on trust. It is a necessary condition for cooperation, but is also confirmed in it. We are more likely to trust others if we know that we have a common aim and that every person will do his or her best to achieve it. So we assume that people are good by their nature. It does not eliminate the risk of failure, but, thanks to practicing responsible behavior, we may expect some kind of compensation or improvement of the current state of affairs. Thus, responsibility enables trust, which in turn leads to cultural achievements and civilization's development, for which we also are responsible, since responsibility also concerns positive effects of actions, that is, merits.

Displacement of Responsibility in Europe's Financial Crisis

How do those considerations over anthropology and the ontological status of responsibility refer to the present situation in Europe? It seems that the present situation in European indebted countries is perceived by their citizens as an attempt to make a public debt out of the private debt, and surely is an attempt to authorize an unlawful debt. (Just for the sake of clarity: the three conditions of recognizing a debt as illegitimate, according to Alexander Sack, are: that debt was incurred without knowledge and consent of public, that borrowed money was spent on projects which have no chances for success or will not bring benefit, and that the person or institution which issued the loan knew that it was against the knowledge and will of people.) Moneys that were borrowed, were spent (among other ill-chosen purposes) on fulfilling wrong pre-election promises, that is, they were supposed to guarantee the obtaining and maintaining of the privilege of power (an external good) for a certain group of people. But that group, despite committing evident faults, still enjoys this privilege and is not held liable. Instead, it is the society that bears responsibility for actions taken up by someone else and in the interests of someone else. It is forced to pay for something that does not belong to it. This responsibility in the form of austerity, which measures are imposed in order to obtain new loans, has tragic consequences. The lack of identity between the subject, who took a certain action, and the one who is held responsible for it is evident here. Such a displacement of responsibility cannot be justified, since identity, beside values, is considered to be a basis for responsibility.

Identity of the Responsible Subject

Identity is a problem that is widely discussed in ethics. We can distinguish qualitative identity, when two beings are the same in all aspects, and the numerical identity, when two beings are in fact one and the same being.⁷ There is a physical criterion of personal identity when we are entitled to speak about the continuity of existence in space-time of the same body and the same brain, or in radical versions, of a sufficiently large part of a brain that can be considered as the brain of living person. On the other hand there is a psychological criterion, which can be found in works of John Locke, which ascribes the preservation of identity to the importance of memory. Both criteria are carefully analyzed, and thought experiments which adopt assumptions consistent with current and anticipated achievements in medicine are conducted, but still they do not give a clear answer where we can, if at all, place a clear boundary for identity. However, what is considered, in those experiments, are borderline cases, with which we do not deal when examining the question of personal identity between the individual who took the debt and the one who is to repay it. For our purposes, we can follow Ingarden in his understanding of the human being as a physical, psychological and spiritual creature, whose personal “self” is particularly committed to responsibility. If we want to talk about identity, there must be a continuity of existence, which means that, during the time of body’s being, there is not any gap in its existence as an entity, or if formulating the negative condition in the time between birth and death, there is not such a phase when none of the given body’s parts would not exist. Identity of body is necessary, but is not sufficient for identity of a person. Ingarden also talks about the necessity of maintaining the continuity of memory and character.⁸ None of those conditions are met between any person holding the post of a Member of Parliament in any given peripheral country of the European Union or by any member of society in this country, who opposed decisions of government by striking or demonstrating. Obviously, decisions about austerity required by the EU, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund were not made unanimously. And members of governments and parliaments remained members of their societies, so the austerities should also affect them. Nevertheless, it can be reasonably assumed that, if at all, they are not as painful for them as for the rest of the society. Moreover, if according to main idea of democracy, they are the representatives of the people, they should not act against the will of their electorate, which has, however, taken place. There are no grounds for authorities to assume that they know better what is good for their people. (This is an example of alienation, which can be solved by adequate anthropology and ethics, as Wojtyła would suggest, not by solving the conflict, as Marx would suggest). It does not mean, however, that

⁷ D. Parfit, *Racje i osoby (Reasons and Persons)* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2012), p. 244.

⁸ R. Ingarden, *Księżeczka o człowieku (The Booklet about the Man)* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1972), pp. 122-124.

they should fulfill every demand of the people, because again, in this case, one cannot be sure what will be good for the citizens and the state itself. Numerical superiority is not a criterion of legitimacy, which is a basic problem with democracy. It cannot, however, be elaborated here, because this issue goes beyond the topic that is presented here.

The Concept of the Dynamic Structure of a Person Applied to the Current Crisis

How do members of society feel in present situation? Rapid response towards it in the form of strikes, demonstrations and bottom-up initiatives can indicate both bad and good conditions in society. Its bad condition manifests itself in awareness of being used and cheated by the authorities. Society has been treated instrumentally and patronizingly. It has been evaluated as lacking of will and the ability to act and decide for themselves. In other words, it has been deprived of subjectivity. Attempts have been made to strip citizens of their qualities as persons, of their ability of self-mastery, to decide about themselves. They are not allowed to act, but they are forced to experience and accept someone else's actions, so the citizens know that something is going on, but it is not that they are acting and they have no influence what so ever on the direction of this activity. The complete misunderstanding of human nature is very clear here. In fact, what has been done is totally against it, and leads to de-subjectivity and to reducing human beings to the level of animals with which we share the ability to experience that "something is going on in (or around) us." But, in the long run, operating against human nature turns out to be impossible, because if the aim of politics is to effectively change social reality for the better, first, its structure should be examined just as it should be done also with the structure of a person who is a part of this reality.

European societies actively defy those who show such a lack of understanding of a person's essence. In this lays the good condition of societies, in their activity, unity and taking measures, contrary to what has been assumed by authorities, that they will not be able to act. Strikes, demonstrations and the bottom-up initiatives are the expression of and evidence for adequacy of the dual aspect of man presented here, which is highlighting activity and passivity in man's life.

Actions that will aim to overcome diverse forms of crisis, with which we are dealing today, must be adapted to the dynamic structure of a person, in order to prevent taking away its freedom or its subjectivity. By that, it will enable people's development, also in the realm of ideas, which will be followed by the development of whole societies. Sadly, history teaches us that neither capitalism nor socialism, as ideologies, have been taking into account the very essence of man, which, in the case of socialism, has led, and in case of capitalism is still leading right before our eyes, to their downfall. Therefore, the question about the future of each European country, and of the European Union as a whole, is not a question about the choice between socialism or capitalism, although individual economic solutions proposed by those

schools might be correct. The question that we are facing now is a question about anthropology and ethics, without which even the most brilliant economic proposals will prove to be wrong. Every social, political and economic solution that is not taking into consideration the essence of man is like an attempt to build sandcastles bereft of their foundations. It is a reversal of the obvious order that politics and the economy which should serve the people, not the people who serve politics and the economy.

The Role of Ethics in the Contemporary World and the Concept of Trustworthy Caregiver

It is also clear what the task of philosophy, anthropology and ethics is, and that they are indispensable nowadays. They enable both the interpretation of and change in reality that surrounds us, that is also, or maybe first of all, social reality, and enables better understanding of human beings. From an ethical point of view, it seems inevitable to drop out capitalistic beliefs that the purpose of people's existence is constant enrichment, even if it takes place at the expense of others. Such a change in attitude will allow for the overcoming of individualism, greed and vanity, replacing it with trust, participation and solidarity. It will not be a quick and easy process, because changes in awareness are never easy. It may take place by means of education and upbringing, of which ethics will be a vital part. But what kind of ethics? The great ethical disputes about life and death, justice and freedom, equality and independence remain unresolved, because arguments that are used in them are disproportionate and we do not have a tool to consider conflicting claims. There are only a little fewer ethical stances than people dealing with ethics and, in situation of such pluralism, no change of awareness has the chance of being successful, because the task which everyone will be focused on will be the battle between different strands and attempts to convince others. And, though it will be difficult, there must be an agreement on certain ethical minimums, which will be the base for education that will lead to the change in societies' awareness, which will, finally, allow some economic proposals to work and to flourish for the benefit of all.

It seems that a good suggestion of such ethical minimums is independent ethics suggested by Tadeusz Kotarbiński, who belonged to the Lvov-Warsaw analytical school of philosophy, and who is known for his praxeology and reism. He also dealt with ethical issues, and was looking for non-religious and non-ontological justification for the biblical precept of loving thy neighbor. This is why this ethics is called independent, because it is independent from any worldview. The main problem of ethics is a question of what to do and what not to do if one wants to earn respect from the people who are, themselves, worthy of respect. Again, we see here that what is ethically evaluated is action, which enables man to realize different values and not, for example, innate traits of character. Answers to this question showed that "people are respected for kindness, courage, integrity and self-discipline and are condemned for cruelty, cowardice, dishonesty and lack of will that would be re-

sistant to temptations.”⁹ Kotarbiński came to a conclusion that ethically significant behavior is consistent with the attitude of a trustworthy guardian or caregiver, who is a person that one can rely on in difficult circumstances. To defend this concept from a plea of socio-historical origins of ethical evaluations, Kotarbiński pointed out that situations in which people have to count on the care and protection of others are commonly repeated throughout history. Obviously, a trustworthy caregiver is not free from the necessity of choosing between possible actions, because it is impossible to care for and give assistance to everyone who needs that, in every situation. In those cases it is inevitable to appeal to conscience, understood as ethical motivation. The trustworthy caregiver is, rather, acting to reduce suffering and protect others than himself, and not to cause excessive suffering in the necessary defense. Of course, it is impossible to expect anyone to become everyone’s caregiver, so it is important that, in society, there are as many as possible people who show behavior consistent with behavior represented by the ideal type of trustworthy caregiver. That can happen only if this model will be widely promoted as exemplary, and by following it as giving individual more satisfaction than rivalry with others, which manifests in various fields. All of these qualities, for which the trustworthy caregiver is appreciated, are inevitable in the creation of society, in which members trust each other and cooperate with each other.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that the present crisis is analyzed by the majority in economical categories, this paper aimed to show that one of its elements, maybe a very important one, is the deficit in the area of ethics. There is a lack of ethical and anthropological reflection over today’s situation in Europe, and this is followed by a lack of ethics in practice, both at the individual and group level. It seems that the above mentioned concept of independent ethics, with its ideal of the trustworthy caregiver, is a good starting point for the reversal of this situation and for shifting the focus of conducted discussions from technical issues (that is from question of how to solve crisis in economic terms), to the more fundamental level of philosophical interpretation, which might lead to changes on the behavioral level. Its advantage is not only worldview independence, but also, in relation to the considerations presented here on responsibility and subjectivity, the fact that responsibility may be acknowledged as a respectable attitude, thus as the one that fits well with the image of the trustworthy caregiver and the one that may be promoted together with this ideal. Moreover, it is obvious that no one takes the role of the trustworthy caregiver once for all and in all kinds of situations, which allows to experience one’s subjectivity both in its active aspect (while being a caregiver) as well as in the passive one (when experiencing care provided by others).

⁹ T. Kotarbiński, “Dwa studia o etyce niezależnej” (“Two Studies on Independent Ethics”), *Studia z teorii poznania i filozofii wartości (Studies in Theory of Cognition and Philosophy of Values)* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1978), p. 151.

In Case of Emergency: The Obama Doctrine and the Ethics of Gloved Hands

JAMES ESTEVEZ

Introduction

In his *Response to a Serenade* (1864), Abraham Lincoln posed the question of "... whether any government, not too strong for the liberties of its people, can be strong enough to maintain its own existence, in great emergencies."¹ At the time of this speech, Lincoln had just been re-elected by a landslide, in what was the first ever presidential election to be held while a country was simultaneously engaged in a civil war. Notwithstanding the divide that existed within his country, Lincoln's point was that, if he had decided to cancel or postpone the election, then a very important part of the American way of life would have been compromised. Needless to say, the crowd of constituents that were gathered outside the White House to hear the great orator speak did not give a ready answer that evening. This was not a novel dilemma in Lincoln's day, or even in Washington's. Rather, the problem of 'dirty hands'² is one that dates back to the Renaissance. Niccolo Machiavelli, the founder of modern political science and ethics, was one of the first to offer us a solution to this moral challenge. Today, the question is still with us, causing trouble for anyone righteous or ambitious enough to take up the duties of public office. In his seminal article entitled "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands" (1973), political philosopher Michael Walzer coins the term and sets the groundwork for the theory. But it would be in his two later publications, *Just and Unjust Wars* (1977) and *Arguing about War* (2004), where he refines the idea, and makes his most compelling observations. In this paper, I follow the existing literature and offer a more optimistic solution than those that have previously been submitted. The paper opens with a survey of the three traditional approaches to the problems of 'dirty hands' and 'many hands,' (theoretical, atheoretical, and paradoxical), and then closes with my reading of the Obama Doctrine. As I conceive it, the problem of 'dirty hands' can be assuaged by practicing an *ethics of gloved hands*. The theory is fundamentally casuist in nature, drawing from current events and contemporary history to help explain a new and emerging approach towards these age-old problems.

The election of President Barack Obama in 2008 heralded the beginning of a new age in, not only American, but global politics as well. The millenarian circumstances under which the President took office brought to account

¹ President A. Lincoln, "Response to a Serenade" (Speech, November 10, 1864, The White House, Washington, D.C.) (<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/response-to-a-serenade>).

² M. Walzer, "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 2 (1973), 160-180.

the excesses of past hegemonic thinking. Furthermore, the election of 2008 marked a dramatic shift in the overall composition of the American electorate. Indeed, this last point has been thoroughly documented, and was undoubtedly confirmed by the re-election of the President in 2012.³ Yet for all the auspicious auguring, there still remains the sobering fact that the President has a job to do, and it is no less a “dirty” one. At the outset of the twenty-first century, the world is under constant threat from international terrorism, global climate change, economic recession, and depleting natural resources. As of this writing, the United States is the world’s only major super power. Hence, it has been imparted with an extraordinary burden of responsibility. Indian-American journalist and author Fareed Zakaria characterizes America’s role on the world stage quite veraciously when he writes: “In a world without a serious military rival, the U.S. becomes the world’s emergency call center. When trouble brews anywhere, it brings with it cries for the U.S. to get involved and solve the problem.”⁴ But, in contrast with his predecessor, President Obama has been notably cautious about over-relying on the option of military intervention as a means of resolving conflict –and rightfully so. The liability incurred from breaking the “Pottery Barn rule,” and the subsequent potential blowback discharging from the maintenance of regional stability and policing of rogue states around the globe, is a risky externality that specters over every potential military operation.

As Machiavelli, Weber, Camus, Walzer, and others have all previously submitted, political life is inextricably fraught with moral hazards. It is for this reason, therefore, that public officials ought not to be judged by the same measure as ordinary men. Luckily for them (and us), this condition is not without ameliorative remedy. I put forward the proposition that what we are encountering today in the Obama age is an expansion of our international obligations and domestic responsibilities as “the leader of the free world” to respond to ‘supreme emergencies,’ temporized by a more considerate and competent use of our technological and military capabilities, and publicly justified on humanitarian grounds. The debate between absolutists and relativists over the potency of the Executive feels anachronistically out of place in today’s society. The democratizing effects of electronic media upon the global village has empowered countless people around the world to reclaim political and moral authority –and by extension, moral responsibility– over their own individual lives and collective futures.⁵ Moreover, public officials are not always with their “backs-to-the-wall” when faced with the threat of imminent danger; there *are* openings. Likewise, public officials are not resigned to get their hands “dirty” every time they are faced with a crisis. The aftermath of

³ M. Scherer, “2012 Person of the Year: President Barack Obama,” *Time* (December 31, 2012), p. 51.

⁴ F. Zakaria, “On Foreign Policy, Why Barack is Like Ike,” *Time* (December 31, 2012), p. 46.

⁵ B. Ghosh, “Generation A,” in B. Ghosh and Editors of *Time Magazine* (eds.), *TIME. The New Middle East: After the Arab Spring, a Different World Unfolds*, Special Edition (New York: Time Inc., 2012), 10-19.

little or no response will certainly always come at some cost, but if there arises the appropriate degree of *necessity*, and if the public official acts with a reasonable and sufficient amount of *transparency*, *accountability*, *consensus*, and –perhaps most crucially– *confidence*, then they can hopefully avoid undue imputation. In other words, public officials should do what every other sensible person does when working in a hazardous field: they put on gloves. Besides being initially invented out of *necessity*, gloves have also fulfilled an important idiomatic and metaphoric function. For example, the idiom “hand in glove” denotes a person or organization that is working together with another person or organization, often to do something dishonest. There is a clear and direct correlation between this idiom and *certain* parts of President Obama’s overall counterterrorism strategy. In his new book *The Way of the Knife* (2013), journalist for the New York Times and Pulitzer-Prize winner Mark Mazzetti exposes one of the more controversial policies of the Obama Doctrine by employing another metaphor, that of a scalpel. Mazzetti’s choice of a scalpel to describe the Obama Administration’s controversial use of unmanned aerial vehicles (commonly referred to as drones) to target known enemy combatants abroad corresponds beautifully with my own, insofar as I know of no surgeon that has ever gone into the operating room without first putting on a pair of *gloves* for protection. In a 2010 policy speech given by CIA Director John O. Brennan at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington D.C., he suggested that, “... the United States could use a ‘scalpel’ rather than a ‘hammer’ to carry out war beyond war zones.”⁶ But, before going on any further, I think it prudent to reexamine some of the major tenets of the ‘dirty hands’ problem, if only to fully appreciate the evolution of the metaphor for which I am gratefully indebted to Walzer, as he was no doubt equally indebted to Sartre.

Traditional and Contemporary Approaches to the Problem of Dirty Hands

For Machiavelli, exigency is what will set the range of options available to public officials who attempt to avoid impending catastrophe. According to Machiavelli, the expediency of any political action can be determined by applying the following criteria: (1) conditions impose *necessitas*; (2) the state actor possesses *virtu*; and (3) the state actor is vigorous enough to subdue *fortuna*. These are ambiguous terms at best, but not entirely incomprehensible. Of the three criteria, *necessitas* is the most dubious, given the fact that “necessity” is an indeterminate feature of all political life. For the sake of argument, however, let us proceed by interpreting Machiavelli’s concept of *necessitas* as nothing more than mere political and pragmatic necessity. Politics according to Machiavellian logic, is an art that is practical and immediate, not theoretical and distant. Conceding that public officials are always confronted by a myriad of different threats and dangers at any given time, the mitigation of these preexisting set of evils should be what is at the heart of all

⁶ M. Mazzetti, *The Way of the Knife* (New York: Penguin Press, 2013), p. 220.

political action. *Virtu* is somewhat less contentious, but confoundingly inscrutable. Not to be confused with its cognate virtue, *virtu* can be thought of as a type of civic spirit, or a quality of mind and action that “creates, saves, or maintains cities.”⁷ Finally, *fortuna* (as understood through the metaphor of a woman) simply indicates the capricious and fickle nature of existence. Machiavelli tells us that, if a public official is prudent or audacious enough, he can potentially overcome the whims of fate and secure power by taking action (what kind of action, Machiavelli fails to specify. Thus, public officials, if endowed with such noble attributes, are in a much more tenable position to make the sort of tough decisions that will ultimately save the lives, and the way of life of a community, than those who are not as resourceful.

Most *theoretical* approaches follow Machiavelli’s train of thought that ‘dirty hands’ does not have to be a problem, since doing the right thing is always possible as long as one follows a normative theory of morals or justice. Thus, whenever an action complies with a unified vision of what is right, it should be considered “clean.” Furthermore, a public official would have no need to feel guilt, shame, or remorse since they will not have done anything wrong. Virtue theorists are among those who can be said to endorse this position most often. As Aristotle argues in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, the kind of person one ought to be consists of an account of the virtues, as well as of the practical reasoning, necessary for achieving well-being, or what he called *eudaimonia*. According to Aristotle, *eudaimonia* is the supreme good which contains and orders all other goods. This doctrine of “the unity of virtues,” therefore, ensures that every virtuous act always contributes to the well-being of both the individual *and* the community. In light of this, politicians can rest assured that, when they are faced with a dilemma, all they have to do is provide a sufficiently transparent account of the kind of political action that is under consideration in order for that action to be potentially considered as praiseworthy. Consequentialists, such as Utilitarians, also reject the problem of dirty hands on the basis of a unified theory. Although, in their view, all justification ultimately depends upon creating circumstances that are derived from the maximization of the happiness or utility of the greatest number. Thus, by affirming utility as a subsuming value, the unity of all ethics and politics becomes insulated from the “dirt” of politics. Yet, by contrast, deontological theorists, such as Kantians, demand respect for particular rules, regardless of the consequences. Kant believed this because he considered politics as subsumable under his moral theory. For contemporary Kantians like John Rawls, the integrity of the unity of theory is maintained, not because it involves affirming a supreme value or principle, but because all values and principles are serially ordered in a comprehensive and systematic way. For Rawls, all values and principles are assigned a specific position and status in relation to the rest, and remain in place without exception.

To better understand these exemptions that public officials enjoy, we need to move past Machiavelli and further towards More, Hobbes, and Weber. In

⁷ B. Crick (ed.), “Introduction,” in *The Discourses* (New York: Penguin, 2003), p. 60.

his book *Paradoxes of Political Ethics* (2007), John M. Parrish explains how “unlike Machiavelli, More urged that, because of the democratic origins of the “dirty hands” dilemma, *only* a democratic solution will ultimately serve to relieve political leaders of their moral burdens.”⁸ What is more,

“Hobbes implicitly appealed to the idea that, in some form at least, life in civil society remains precariously balanced at the edge of the state of nature, and that the rights appropriate to that state, with all their extravagant moral claims, remain somehow in force, by means of the sovereign’s authority, in all the business of the state.”⁹

Social contract theory dictates that, through the transfer-of-right that is initially exchanged between the people and the sovereign during the formation of the state, the sovereign retains that “perfect liberty” which only exists within the state of nature. In fact, because the sovereign retains this natural status, it is actually endowed with an additional liberty that is implicitly derived from its authority to exercise said liberty fully, freely, and without contest. Yet, this additional liberty should not be taken to mean that the sovereign cannot still be held accountable. Whenever the sovereign transgresses its mandate, whether due to corruption or hubris, the social contract is accordingly rescinded and the sovereign no longer finds itself in the privileged position it once enjoyed. Consequently, the sovereign must then defend itself against challenges to its legitimacy, and justify its actions. Thus, the only solution to the problem of “dirty hands” is one that is resolved through democratic means.

At the end of his essay *Politics as a Vocation* (1919), sociologist Max Weber maintains that the good man with ‘dirty hands’ should certainly still be regarded as a hero, but a tragic one. The tragedy lies in the fact that the vocation of politics is inherently contradictory by nature. On the one hand, the politician must accept that he lives in a necessarily violent world. On the other hand, the politician must also accept that his vocation has called upon him to distribute justice, even if this means employing violent means in the process. As Weber describes it, “... the genius or demon of politics lives in an inner tension with the god of love [...] [which] can at any time lead to an irreconcilable conflict.”¹⁰ This conflict arises when the politician attempts to reconcile the political realism of the world around him with the deontological obligations he has to his office, and ultimately, to his own conscience. For all intents and purposes, therefore, the politician is a solitary and suffering servant. Unfortunately, however, the problem of dirty hands cannot be resolved within the confines of the individual conscience; it can only be resolved by being socially expressed and limited.

Weber’s account corresponds with most *atheoretical* approaches, which assert that dirty hands is essentially unavoidable in ethics and politics because

⁸ *Ibid.* (emphasis added).

⁹ J.M. Parrish, *Paradoxes of Political Ethics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 263.

¹⁰ M. Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in *Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H.H. Garth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Macmillan, 1946), 77-128, pp. 125-126.

dealing with genuine conflicts of values can never be totally resolved by a unified theory. Given the plurality of values that exist, any such theory will fail to be faithful to all of them. As a result, members of the atheoretical camp contend that no single value or principle can ever be given an *a priori* designation that places it above or before any other value or principle. Value pluralists naturally take on an adversarial conception of practical reason, whereby the values or principles involved in a given conflict are weighed against each other, with the aim of striking the balance that is appropriate to the circumstances. All compromises, therefore, should always be considered more or less “dirty,” since they cannot endure without the reminder of the moral trade-offs that were made for the sake of the bargain in the first place. Considering that value pluralists conceive of values in such a separated way, values are therefore thought of as more or less independent from one another. As a consequence, moral compromises should only be made after more diplomatic approaches have failed, approaches which can possibly integrate the values or principles by bringing them together into relation with the ‘political condition’ in which they are actually found.

Finally, the *paradoxical* approach, which is endorsed by Walzer, views emergency derogations of rights, not as a threat to the rule of law, but as a guardian of it. This is why Walzer, writing of “the moral politician,” claims that “it is by his dirty hands that we know him. If he were a moral man and nothing else, his hands would not be dirty; if he were a politician and nothing else, he would pretend that they were clean.”¹¹ Walzer also contends that it is only through an appeal to ‘supreme emergency’ that a public official can legitimately claim that a particular instance of political action is a case of ‘dirty hands.’ As Walzer defines it: “A supreme emergency exists when our deepest values and our collective survival are in imminent danger.”¹² According to a leaked DOJ (Department of Justice) white paper outlining the legal basis for the targeting of American citizens who are also senior operational leaders of Al-Qaeda and other affiliated groups,

“the condition that an operational leader presents an ‘imminent’ threat of violent attack against the United States does not require the United States to have clear evidence that a specific attack on U.S persons and interests will take place in the imminent future [...]. This definition of imminence, which would require the United States to refrain from action until preparations for an attack are concluded, would not allow the United States sufficient time to defend itself [...]. [Thus] the United States is likely to have only a limited window of opportunity within which to defend Americans in a manner that has both a high likelihood of success and sufficiently reduces the probabilities of civilian casualties.”¹³

¹¹ Walzer, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands,” p. 168.

¹² M. Walzer, *Arguing About War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 33.

¹³ 020413 DOJ White Paper, “Lawfulness of a Lethal Operation Directed Against a U.S. Citizen Who Is a Senior Operational Leader of Al-Qa’ida or an Associated Force” (http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/020413_DOJ_White_Paper).

Walzer has no qualms about stating his inherent skepticism of such classifications. For him, a ‘supreme emergency’ is the exception, and not the rule. But he accepts that:

“There are moments when the rules can be and perhaps have to be overridden. They have to be overridden precisely because they have not been suspended. And overriding the rules leaves guilt behind, as a recognition of the enormity of what we have done and a commitment not to make our actions into easy precedent for the future.”¹⁴

Despite this, however, the doctrine of ‘supreme emergency’ does little to help the public official come to a right decision when faced with the actual choice itself. Walzer tries to make the choice easier by “negotiating the middle ground” between an absolutism of rights theory and a utilitarianism of extremity. The former position considers morality to be non-negotiable and innocence as inviolable. The latter is adaptive, and adjusts its calculations accordingly to fit and meet the demands of the situation. This ambivalent space is where the *ethics of gloved hands* operates. At first, Walzer believes he is stymied:

“The two together, it seems to me, capture the force of the opposed moral understandings and assign to each its proper place. I can’t reconcile the understandings; the opposition remains; it is a feature of our moral reality.”¹⁵

But, then, Walzer finally discovers the “touchstone” that he described decades earlier:

“Supreme emergency is a communitarian doctrine. But to say that is not to diminish the moral significance of the individual [...] what it requires of its leaders is that they impose risks and sometimes, in rare and terrible moments, take on the guilt of killing the innocent [...]. A morally strong leader is someone who understands why it is wrong to kill the innocent and refuses to do so, refuses again and again, until the heavens are about to fall. And then he becomes a moral criminal (like Albert Camus’ “just assassin”) who knows that he can’t do what he has to do –and finally does.”¹⁶

At this level of abstraction, the only check on Executive power seems to be the public official’s own good faith. Walzer goes on to say that the “supreme emergency” argument is “essentially negative in character” and that it is one that should be used to “reinforce professional ethics.” Up to this point, Walzer and I are in agreement, but in the final paragraphs of his chapter on *Emergency Ethics*, he leaves the reader with much to be desired:

“Supreme emergency is a condition from which we must seek an escape. Mostly, we will want to escape, for we will dread the dangers we face and abhor the immoral acts to which we are driven

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[...] its message to people like us: that it is (almost) the whole of our duty to uphold the rights of the innocent.”¹⁷

At this stage of development, the public official is *again* faced with two ineluctable exits: he can resign himself to the weight of his own moral conscience, or the public, as the beneficiaries of his actions, can determine what level of praise or punishment is appropriate.

Yet, this brings us to a bigger, and much more complex problem. In *Moral Responsibility of Public Officials: The Problem of Many Hands* (1980), D.F. Thompson maintains that:

“Many political outcomes are the product of the actions of many different people whose individual contributions may not be identifiable at all, and certainly cannot be distinguished significantly from other people’s contributions [...] no one individual therefore, can be morally blamed for these outcomes. [We] reach two seemingly contradictory conclusions: one stating that every individual associated with the collectivity should be charged with moral responsibility, the other holding that only the collectivity can be charged.”¹⁸

It appears, then, that the only viable solution to the problem of both ‘dirty’ and ‘many’ hands is to refocus scrutiny back onto ourselves. As citizens, we are equally responsible for the actions and outcomes of what we allow our public officials to do or not do on our behalf. If we do not attempt to put public officials in their place when they overreach their mandates, then our hands are no cleaner than theirs are. Moral responsibility is indeed diffuse, but not unmanageable; in *The Eyes of the People* (2010), Jeffrey Green argues for an ocular model of plebiscitary democracy that preempts the vocal and representative kind by emphasizing the former’s capacity for adequately addressing the phenomenon of political spectatorship. As Green contends: “Political spectatorship is not simply the normal correlate of political action, but a problem that indicates the distinctive challenges besetting democratic life at the dawn of the twenty-first century.”¹⁹ The novelty of an ocular model of democracy is that it engages the most immediate connection that we have to democratic events. Frankly, most of us who find ourselves living in representative democracies are typically not the same people who draft the legislation or make the decisions. Rather, we are witnesses to such events, and are left to abide by the reasoning, judgement, and action of others as they leverage and weigh the nation’s –and their own– interests. Green makes this point explicitly clear when he writes:

“And when something goes wrong –when a terrorist attack or natural disaster threatens the life of the polity– most can only stand by and hope that those with decision-making authority use their power

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 50.

¹⁸ D.F. Thompson, “Moral Responsibility of Public Officials: The Problem of Many Hands,” *The American Political Science Review*, 74 (1980), 905-916, p. 907.

¹⁹ J. Green, *The Eyes of the People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 104.

wisely and to the benefit of the broader populace consigned to watch the crisis unfold. That is to say, most citizens most of the time are not decision makers, relating to politics with their voices, but spectators who relate to politics with their eyes.”²⁰

Despite the inherent passivity associated with the condition of such a political status, however, Green assures us that the phenomenon of political spectatorship also possesses the potential to empower, as well as to disempower, everyday citizens. Green substantiates his claim by relying on the subtle imposition and transference of power and knowledge that is concealed within the gaze of the Other. By reinterpreting and shifting the object of popular power from the voice of representatives to the eyes of the citizen, citizens can reclaim political authority by usurping the public official’s right to publicity. Now, to be absolutely clear, Green’s conception of publicity should not be misinterpreted to exclusively mean the public official’s periodic necessity to promote themselves or their policies. Rather, what Green is trying to express is control over the frequency and circumstantiality of the officials’ public appearances. By literally dictating the terms of the what, where, when, why, and how by which a public official can account for and explain their policies and decisions, the everyday citizen is endowed with an extraordinary check on power simply by using one of their ordinary senses. This newly defined relationship, therefore, leaves public officials resigned to rely on candor as their only remaining method of meaningful persuasion. However, Green’s ideals of candor and publicity are highly unconventional, and require an especially critical stance on the part of the spectator. Notwithstanding these additional burdens, Green’s thesis ultimately offers ordinary citizens what they’ve historically lacked in the past: through their individual and collective ocular capacity to oversee political events, citizens now possess the power to make public officials truly accountable. This is the point where the development of theory has remained stagnant as of today. Below, I hope to provide a contemporary account of a few alternative approaches to the problem of ‘dirty hands’ that will dispel some of the negative implications that have traditionally plagued this very paradoxical phenomenon.

The Obama Doctrine and the Ethics of Gloved Hands

In order to accurately survey the risk environment to which public officials are exposed, we must first locate what areas of public policy are of the most concern. In *Risk and Culture* (1983), Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky contend that “The perception of risk is a social process. All society depends on combinations of confidence and fear.”²¹ As a result, their cultural theory of risk regards “the social environment, the selection principles, and the perceiv-

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²¹ M. Douglas and A. Wildavsky, *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technological and Environmental Dangers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 77.

ing subject as all one system.”²² Douglas and Wildavsky go on to outline four categories of risk that are prominent features of our contemporary political landscape: (1) foreign affairs: the risk of foreign attack or encroachment; war; loss of influence, prestige, and power; (2) crime: internal collapse; failure of law and order; violence versus white collar crime; (3) pollution: abuse of technology; fears for the environment; and (4) economic failure: loss of prosperity. These categories perfectly reflect the preoccupations that have absorbed President Obama ever since he first entered into office. Any action, however, is always exercised under some social and historical context, and therefore, cannot be accurately judged without first taking into consideration the pervasive *Zeitgeist* of the times. Political flexibility and malleability are paramount if a public official wishes to remain in power. Machiavelli clearly articulates the necessity of rulers to be in conformity with the times, lest they be deposed of by their own people, when he writes:

“A republic has a fuller life and enjoys good fortune [...] since it is better able to adapt itself to diverse circumstances owing to the diversity found among its citizens than a prince can do. For a man who is accustomed to act in one particular way, never changes, as we have said. Hence, when times change and no longer suit his ways, he is inevitably ruined.”²³

In his second inaugural address, the President explicitly marked the tenor of the times when he announced:

“This generation of Americans has been tested by crises that steeled our resolve and proved our resilience. A decade of war is now ending. An economic recovery has begun. America’s possibilities are limitless, for we possess all the qualities that this world without boundaries demands: youth and drive; diversity and openness; an endless capacity for risk and a gift for reinvention. My fellow Americans, we are made for this moment, and we will seize it –so long as we seize it together.”²⁴

The prodigious character of these events must certainly cause one to wonder whether there is something bigger looming over the horizon. As cultural theorists Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker have presciently observed: “History, it seems is moving beyond its all too hastily proclaimed end.”²⁵ In *Notes on Metamodernism* (2010), Vermeulen and Akker attempt to account for this phenomenon by introducing an interdisciplinary critical concept that is both original and innovative. They identify the advent of a new historical and cultural period of modernity that I believe is promising, given its potential for reconciling the differences between: the problems of ‘dirty’

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

²³ N. Machiavelli, *The Discourses* (New York: Penguin, 2003), p. 431.

²⁴ President B. Obama, “Second Inaugural Address” (Speech, United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., January 21, 2013), The White House (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/01/21/inaugural-address-president-barack-obama>).

²⁵ T. Vermeulen and R. van den Akker, “Notes on Metamodernism,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, 2 (2010), 1-13, p. 2.

and ‘many’ hands; absolutist and relativist ethical arguments; and the intellectual schools of both modern and postmodern thought. In the context of this study, the term is defined as *metamodern*: the constant oscillation between and beyond positions and mindsets that are evocative of the modern and of the postmodern, but are ultimately suggestive of another sensibility altogether; one that negotiates between a yearning for universal truths on the one hand and a political relativism on the other. Although diametrically opposed, the modern and postmodern mindsets represent very real attitudes that exist in the world. The naive idealism of the modern and the skeptical realism of the postmodern are both political dispositions that give meaning and momentum to political events and social movements. As communication, climate change, and the collapse of the center continue to accelerate and become more diffuse, spontaneous events of a wider scope and greater magnitude will certainly occur more frequently. As a result, the President and the generation of young American voters that helped elect him into office have reacted to this seemingly perpetual state of crisis with a kind of pragmatic idealism that “infuses doubt, inspires reflection, and incites a move forward out of the postmodern and into the metamodern.”²⁶ The contemporary ethos that exists today fits seamlessly into the concept of metamodernism, insofar as it has provided the backdrop for instances of gloved hands to take place.

In his classic text *Strong Democracy* (1984), Benjamin R. Barber points out the excesses of the liberal democratic tradition, which, in his view, has done more to harm liberal institutions than to protect them. According to Barber, liberal democracy has been in semantic and theoretical *crisis* for quite some time. Perhaps in response to the postmodern condition, the crisis has manifested itself in several areas as an overall malaise that has led to increased feelings of alienation, cynicism, pessimism, and apathy among the populace. What Barber argues for in *Strong Democracy* is

“a distinctively modern form of participatory democracy. It rests on the idea of a self-governing community of citizens who are united less by homogeneous interests than by civic education and who are made capable of common purpose and mutual action by virtue of their civic attitudes and participatory institutions rather than altruism or their good nature.”²⁷

Strong Democracy attempts to revitalize citizenship by redefining democracy as a form of government where the people actually govern themselves. Over the last several decades, the principle of public justification has gained much credence among liberal political philosophers. This is in no small part due to the self-evident appeal of the term’s major premise: the proposition that, for any form of government or law to be considered legitimate, it must first be sanctioned by the people who are to be subjected to it. It is by far not a new idea, the United States was founded upon this very notion over 230 years ago. However, it is the stability and equitability of such an arrangement that re-

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁷ B.R. Barber, *Strong Democracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 117.

mains in question today. In *Political Liberalism* (1993), Rawls attempts to address this problem by introducing the idea of an “overlapping consensus of reasonable doctrines.”²⁸ A mouthful to be sure, but a compelling argument nonetheless. In its most basic form, an “overlapping consensus” is achieved when the members of a reasonable plurality—each with their own set of individual beliefs, values, and commitments—endorse a form of government or law on some common or shared ground from their own point of view, and thus, overlap. There are numerous complications that spring out from this construction and which go beyond the scope of this paper. Two of the most confounding criticisms that are regularly raised deal with the level of information available and the capacity for rationality accessible to the public. Rawls’s version of the principle of public justification, however, does not require that the reasons why public officials act the way they do must be the same, only that their reasons must be reasonable. Or, in other words, that the reasons (excuses) provided be intelligible, accessible, and sharable. It is important to remember, however, that the “value,” or if you like, the “morality” of an outcome is not determined by the measure of individual or collective complicity, but, rather, in the outcome itself. This may sound utterly utilitarian, but utilitarian consequences should weigh in on public deliberations. It is only after the fact, when the public has had sufficient time to reflect on an outcome, free from emotive and exigent distraction, that any fair, and thus reasonable, judgement can be reached. Once this temporal and communicative allowance has been given, the public may then self-critically elect to either abandon, maintain, or continue particular patterns of behavior and policy in the future, or not.

Returning to the criticisms surrounding the public’s access to information and their own cognitive faculties, it is admittedly *reasonable* for the government to keep *some* information secret from the public. As CIA Director John O. Brennan revealed in a 2012 speech that he gave at the Wilson Center entitled “The Ethics and Efficacy of the President’s Counterterrorism Strategy”:

“A few months after taking office, the president travelled to the National Archives where he discussed how national security requires a delicate balance between secrecy and transparency. He pledged to share as much information as possible with the American people ‘so that they can make informed judgements and hold us accountable.’ He has consistently encouraged those of us on his national security team to be as open and candid as possible as well.”²⁹

In response to the second criticism regarding the public’s cognitive faculties, Nobel Laureate Herbert A. Simon offers us a response that satisfies:

“It is impossible for the behavior of a single, isolated individual to reach any high degree of rationality. The number of alternatives he must explore is so great, the information he would need to evaluate

²⁸ J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 133.

²⁹ J.O. Brennan, “The Ethics and Efficacy of the President’s Counterterrorism Strategy” (Speech, Wilson Center, Washington, D.C., April 30, 2012).

them so vast that even an approximation to objective rationality is hard to conceive. [...] One function that organization performs is to place the organization members in a psychological environment that will adapt their decisions to the organization objectives, and will provide them with the information needed to make these decisions correctly. [...] In the course of this discussion, it will begin to appear that organization permits the individual to approach reasonably near to objective rationality.”³⁰

To put it bluntly, as the late co-founder of Apple Steve Jobs once said, “A lot of times, people don’t know what they want until you show it to them.”³¹ This is not to say that the public is incapable of knowing what it wants, rather, that in order to appropriately understand how the public’s individual sets of beliefs, values, and commitments enter into the process of arriving at a public justification, what we must employ then is a heuristic of “moderate idealization.” What this means is that liberal political philosophers ought to honestly concede that there are some very good reasons why citizens should not have full, free, and open access to all classified information, and that it is impossible for human beings to function at any optimal level of objective rationality on their own. From this new stance, outside Rawls’s “veil of ignorance,” we can thereby reevaluate the public’s justificatory rationale by a more reasonable standard that takes these limitations into account and, thus, is more likely to be acceptable to everyone. Philosopher Gerald Gaus takes it one step further by suggesting that additional concessions are needed before the public can even begin to hope for actually reaching an “overlapping consensus.”³² According to Gaus, citizens must also accept that: (1) they can’t always get what they want; (2) discussion does not always lead to agreement; and (3) there is more than one way to organize society. This may sound like common sense, but one would be surprised at how much strife and discord is wrought because most people cannot come to terms with these simple facts of life. Supposing then, that the public can overcome these “obstacles,” Gaus argues that, in the end, it will be social evolutionary forces that will settle the matter as to what form of government or policy is to be deemed justified or not, and ultimately what forms of life we pass on. This determination is arrived at not—as Rawls has emphatically reminded us—from a *modus vivendi*, but from a mutual desire for peace and prosperity.

The kind of social evolutionary forces that Gaus has in mind are the same revolutionary forces that Marx identified. In Nikolas Kompridis’s thought provoking book *Critique and Disclosure* (2006), Kompridis attempts to reconcile the estranged German intellectual traditions of critical theory and existential phenomenology by conjoining the Habermasian process of “communicative rationality” with the Heideggerian phenomenon of “world disclosure.”

³⁰ J. Bendor, *Bounded Rationality and Politics* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 2010), p. 84.

³¹ “Back to the Future at Apple,” *Bloomberg Businessweek* (May 24, 1998).

³² G. Gaus, *The Order of Public Reason* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 32.

Kompridis argues that through the practice of *reflective disclosure* –which, in other terms, equates to what Kompridis labels as a kind of “crisis consciousness”– we can imagine and articulate meaningful alternatives to current social and political conditions by uncovering possibilities that were previously suppressed or untried, or by refocusing a problem in a way that makes something that was previously unintelligible, intelligible. This process, therefore, regenerates hope and confidence in the future, and offers new ways to “go on” differently. As one can imagine, this is easier said than done. For Kompridis,

“Romanticism is not just some superseded period of cultural history, it is the frequently unacknowledged position from which we engage in a critical, time-sensitive interpretation of the present [...]. It is no accident that utopian energies have become exhausted. Modernity as we have known it is an exhausting form of life: to live it is to invite exhaustion.”³³

Moreover, “Once we separate the extraordinary from the sacred, from what is inimical to the ordinary, we will be in a better position to see that we are dealing with interlocking processes, interpermeating phenomena.”³⁴ Professor Parrish seems to be in harmony with this assertion:

“The claim –or at least the hope– of philosophy and critical theory is that human beings can achieve just this sort of insight into our everyday values and practices: to see *through* the taken for granted, to see reality around us as if it was altogether new.”³⁵

Thus, only a romantic interpretation of democracy that is grounded in the human capacity to begin anew, one that relies on accountable practices of social and cultural change to strengthen our own agency, can make any difference.

In the *Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) Media theorist and philosopher Marshall McLuhan wrote: “any technology tends to create a new human environment [...]. Technological environments are not merely passive containers of people but are active processes that reshape people and other technologies alike.”³⁶ McLuhan and Postman’s theory of media ecology maintains that technology not only profoundly influences society, but can affect human perception and understanding as well. According to the theory, what defines the essence of a society is its media, or in other words, its dominant mode of communication. Any good student of history can draw the parallels: Lincoln had the telegraph; Roosevelt had the radio; Kennedy had the television, and Obama has social media. In the McLuhans’ *Laws of Media* (1988), he and his son Eric develop four laws of media:

“All innovations: (1) make some new things possible; (2) make some old things obsolete; (3) make some artifacts, processes, or at-

³³ N. Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 275-276.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

³⁵ Parrish, *Paradoxes of Political Ethics*, p. 232.

³⁶ M. McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), p. 23.

titudes from the past relevant to contemporary society in a fresh way; and (4) When pushed to an extreme, they cause the opposite of what they were intended to create.”³⁷

In the case of the President, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have allowed him to promote transparency, remain accountable, reach consensus, and demonstrate confidence; all qualities that were once not entirely open to unification in the analog world. Moreover, electronic media has helped strengthen our individual agency, render outdated modes of communication and fundraising obsolete, revive liberal notions of democracy, and have—at times—been abused by current and previous administrations. This pattern coincides categorically with every single one of the McLuhan’s description of technological innovation. In his remarks on the Arab Spring, the President bespoke the significance of social media and new technology in today’s globalized society:

“The events of the past six months show us that strategies of repression and strategies of diversion will not work anymore. Satellite television and the internet provide a window into the wider world—a world of astonishing progress in places like India and Indonesia and Brazil. Cell phones and social networks allow young people to connect and organize like never before. And so a new generation has emerged. And their voices tell us that change cannot be denied.”³⁸

Thus, the advent of new electronic media is essentially, in and of itself, morally neutral. It is the way we perceive of them and react to them that will determine what their physical and social consequences will be.

If this supposition is correct, I am confident that a significant paradigm shift will inevitably begin to manifest itself—if it has not already—and bring with it what evolutionary biologist Judith L. Hand calls, the “Egalitarian Revolution.” In her paper entitled, *To Abolish War* (2010), Hand suggests that,

“if we change key aspects of our current ‘dominator cultures,’ eliminating conditions that foster war and establishing conditions that foster peace, egalitarianism, and justice, it follows that we can alter the course of history. We can not only end war, but we will put into place a cultural paradigm which is more egalitarian, just, nonviolent, and ecologically sustainable, characteristics most of us consider desirable. More peaceful homes and communities would result as a consequence of what might be called The Egalitarian Revolution.”³⁹

Hand also adopts a feminist view when she states that “Female inclinations at all levels of social interaction generally favor behavior that is known to foster

³⁷ J.P. Duggan, *The Zuckerberg Galaxy* (Pennyless Editions, 2011), p. 75.

³⁸ President B. Obama, “Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa” (Speech: State Department, Washington, D.C., May 19, 2011), The White House (www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/19/remarks-president-middle-east-and-north-africa).

³⁹ J.L. Hand, “To Abolish War,” *The Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research*, 2 (2010), 44-56, p. 45.

social stability.” This insight indeed carries significant weight. The ascendancy of women throughout the world and within the public and private spheres over the last fifty years has had a significant cultural impact on the way human beings communicate and interact with one another. For example, the appointment of Susan Rice, and more recently, the confirmation of Samantha Power to the post of U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, indicates an Executive predilection towards female diplomats. Power’s nomination, especially, has been viewed by many in the international community as a very promising development. Considered to be one of the key advocates for the Obama Administration’s military intervention in Libya, she (along with Rice) argued that the U.S. had a moral responsibility to intervene on humanitarian grounds. In her Pulitzer Prize winning book *A Problem from Hell* (2002), Power exposes the characteristic reluctance on the part of the United States to intervene in genocidal conflict. She argues that “... the United States has consistently refused to take risks to suppress genocide.”⁴⁰ The basis of her argument is that because U.S. interests were not at stake, U.S. decision-makers comfortably relied on negotiation, diplomacy, and humanitarian aid as adequate responses to genocide. Nevertheless, Power assigns a moral imperative to the United States. Although the burden of responsibility, in her view, is a universal one, Power believes that if it is within reasonable means that the United States can halt the violence, or at least mitigate its propagation somehow, then the United States is morally obligated to act. Whether the form of political action employed is overt or covert is of little importance; some kind of action must be taken. Another compelling argument that Power makes to cajole public officials to action is one that is predicated upon the value of benevolent self-interest. By adopting a long-view approach that focuses on regional stability and the maintenance of humanitarian institutions, public officials can reveal national interests where none were thought to exist.

In essence, President Obama’s view of the confines of the War on Terror suggests a belief in the idea that attacking America is morally different than being attacked by America. In Professor Stephen L. Carter’s timely book *The Violence of Peace* (2011), Carter calls this belief the “American Proviso.”⁴¹ The “American Proviso” is basically a by-product of American exceptionalism. As with other nations, the United States will use force when it is under threat, but it will never acquiesce to the use of force against it by others. This sentiment is espoused by most Americans, and is, in itself, a kind of *consensus* about the moral nonequivalence between our forces and the enemies. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli writes, “There are two ways of doing battle: using the law and using force. Typically, humans use law and animals force. But since playing by the law often proves inadequate, it makes sense to resort to force as well. Hence, a ruler must be able to exploit both the man and the beast in himself to the full.”⁴² This zoomorphic dichotomy can be better un-

⁴⁰ S. Power, *A Problem From Hell* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), p. 503.

⁴¹ S.L. Carter, *The Violence of Peace* (New York: Perseus Books, 2011), p. 55.

⁴² N. Machiavelli, *The Prince* (New York: Penguin, 2009), p. 67.

derstood if we translate it into what I like to call the gloves on/gloves off distinction. The idiom “to handle someone with kid gloves,” denotes a careful and deliberate approach towards a touchy person; this is reminiscent of Machiavelli’s metaphorical fox. Just like the fox, the public official with his/her *gloves on* can better handle themselves and evade harm if they practice diplomacy and follow the rule of law. Conversely, the idiom “to take one’s gloves off,” denotes a ceasing of calm and civil relations and an intention of winning a dispute by any means necessary; this is reminiscent of Machiavelli’s metaphorical lion. And just like the lion, the public official with his/her *gloves off* is in a much stronger, but unguarded position if they are threatening the use of military force. Gloves—as I am sure everyone is well aware—can serve many different functions depending on how you use them. A genuine example of gloved hands therefore, will function in one or more of the following ways:

(1) *Protection*: defined as a means of covering from exposure, injury, damage, or destruction; to maintain the status and integrity of, especially through financial or legal guarantees (no-fly zones, economic sanctions, political amnesty);

(2) *Hygiene*: defined as the establishment and maintenance of health; conditions or practices, such as cleanliness, conducive to health (diplomatic *détente*, targeted strikes, humanitarian and economic aid);

(3) *Trace*: defined as a sign or evidence of some past thing; a minute and often undetectable amount or indication (Obama’s light-footprint strategy, proxy warfare, private security services).

Over the past decade, the United States has been involved in conducting targeted “kinetic” and “signature” strikes against high and mid-value Al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders. Since President Obama has been in office, the use of Predator and Reaper drones have become far more common than under his predecessor. Arguably, drone attacks result in far fewer civilian casualties than either conventional bombing or ground assault. The reason why the use of armed drones typically causes considerably less collateral damage than other weapons platforms is because of their advanced laser guidance system. It should be noted, however, that armed drones have been linked to the deaths of scores of innocent civilians. Addressing these allegations, the President, in a 2013 policy speech given at the National Defense University, responded:

“To say a military tactic is legal, or even effective, is not to say it is wise or moral in every instance. For the same human progress that gives us the technology to strike half a world away also demands the discipline to constrain that power—or risk abusing it. That’s why my Administration has worked vigorously to establish a framework that governs our use of force against terrorists—insisting upon clear guidelines, oversight and accountability that is now codified in Presidential Policy Guidance that I signed yesterday.”⁴³

⁴³ President B. Obama, “Remarks by the President at the National Defense University” (Speech: Fort McNair, May 23, 2013, The White House, Washington D.C.) (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/23/remarks-president-national-defense-university>).

The ability to fight a war without using troops removes a very human element traditionally associated with armed conflict. Therefore, a new and dangerous inequality now exists where there once was none. Existing practices carry two major risks for U.S. foreign policy objectives. The first arises from domestic and international pressure to restrict the operational capabilities of armed drones; the idea that the United States is involved in extra-judicial killings, or the deaths of innocent civilians, is clearly unacceptable. The second major risk arises from the threat of proliferation. Like nuclear weapons, armed drones are a potential nonstarter.

After the controversial raid that killed Osama bin-Laden in May of 2011, young Americans around the country relished at the news of the former al-Qaeda leader's demise. On May 1, the *New York Times* quoted a 22-year-old woman who was celebrating outside Lafayette Square in Washington D.C. as saying: "This is full circle for our generation, just look around at the average age here. We were all in middle school when the terrorists struck. We all vividly remember 9/11 and this is the close of that chapter."⁴⁴ Albeit popular, the raid raised two serious questions about the legality of the mission: (1) was the United States acting in accordance with international and domestic law when they unilaterally violated the sovereignty of Pakistan in order to reach bin-Laden?; and (2) was the United States acting in accordance with international and domestic law when they summarily executed bin-Laden instead of trying to capture him? Let us examine what the law and just war theory stipulate. Under the *Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF)*, the President is authorized "to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons."⁴⁵

Just war theory holds that, for any conflict to be just, it must satisfy three conditions: (1) *jus ad bellum* (the just cause for war); (2) *jus in bello* (how war is conducted justly); and (3) *jus ad pacem* (the establishment of a just peace). First, both parties cannot be morally just; either one side is and one side is not, or they are both in the wrong. In the broader Terror War of the twenty-first century, the United States did not initiate aggressions; it currently finds itself embroiled in an asymmetric war where one side follows the rules and the other does not. Second, war must be conducted justly, meaning that both parties must observe the principles of proportionality and discrimination. Unfortunately, the intentional failure on the part of our enemies to observe these principles, and the unintentional collateral damage resulting from our military operations, leaves the moral high ground disturbingly empty in this

⁴⁴ P. Baker, H. Cooper, M. Mazzetti, "Bin Laden Is Dead, Obama Says," *New York Times* (May 1, 2011).

⁴⁵ B. Wittes, "Authorization for the Use of Military Force 2001," *Lawfare*, Harvard Law School/Brookings Institute: Project on Law and Security (wordpress.com), January 1, 2013.

category. And thirdly, both parties should have a clear picture of the peace that is to follow. Considering that global jihad is a “perpetual holy struggle,” and acknowledging that entrenched authoritarian regimes seldom relinquish power peacefully, it is hard to imagine an amicable space where our enemies can coexist with us without a resultant armed conflict. Yet, this is not an unreasonable, or even an unprecedented position to take. America’s version of *just ad pacem* has not always aligned with the utilitarian position of achieving the interests of the many, but rather with the deontological position of achieving the interests of America itself. Thus, America’s cause for war may be just, but just barely.

Nevertheless, there remains another piece of legislation that we must take into account if we wish to ascertain the legality of the bin-Laden raid. *Executive Order 12036*, signed into law in 1978 by President Jimmy Carter, *unequivocally* bans U.S. involvement in assassinations. It reads: “No person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination.”⁴⁶ However, as early as 1998, this proscription against assassination was reinterpreted, and relaxed, for targets who are classified by the United States as connected to terrorism. With respect to the first criticism, the President justifiably acted within the confines of domestic, though not international, law. Sadly, there is simply no getting around it, the United States did, in fact, violate Pakistan’s sovereignty. Nevertheless, some game theorists do point out that violations of the rules can be rational, even necessary to victory. For example, according to the aforementioned leaked DOJ white paper,

“a lethal operation in a foreign nation would be consistent with international legal principles of sovereignty and neutrality if it were conducted, for example, with the consent of the host nation’s government or after a determination that the host nation is unable or unwilling to suppress the threat posed by the individual targeted.”⁴⁷

With respect to the second criticism, the President must also demonstrate how bin-Laden was a casualty of war, and not merely a name on the top of some list. The term “unlawful combatant” was coined by the Bush Administration in order to justify a whole range of abuses. Under international law, an unlawful combatant is denied belligerent rights, and thus, cannot wage lawful war. The best historical comparison with this classification of terrorists is the United States treatment of pirates. Pirates are not traditionally affiliated with any group of lawful enemies; they are treated as an enemy of the world. Because the United States is engaged in an armed conflict of legitimate self-defense, the President believes that he is not required to provide targets with due process before he may use lethal force. It is for this precise reason, the Obama Administration contends, that the targeting of specific high-profile leaders

⁴⁶ United States Foreign Intelligence Activities, “Executive Order 12036” (1978), *Federation of American Scientists* (<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/eo/eo-12036.htm>).

⁴⁷ 020413 DOJ White Paper, “Lawfulness of a Lethal Operation Directed Against a U.S. Citizen Who Is a Senior Operational Leader of Al-Qa’ida or An Associated Force” (http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/020413_DOJ_White_Paper).

does not constitute as assassination. Justified as a preventive tool of war against unjust aggression, assassination could even be morally appealing to some. Without a head, the body cannot survive; if taking out the leadership of terrorist groups means the winding down of war, or the saving of innocent civilian life, then perhaps assassination should be reserved as a measure of last resort. Unfortunately, however, the President has refused to treat targeted strikes in this fashion. Thus, the commander-in-chief apparently possesses a broad discretion over whom he can potentially assassinate. If we put the bin-Laden raid in the context of gloved hands, we could say that this was a moment when the President displayed confidence in the success and righteousness of the mission by taking his gloves off and giving the order to engage.

There are no starker examples of the ethics of gloved hands being put into practice than with the recent cases of Libya, Syria, and the campaign against ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant). From the beginning, the President explained the reasons why the missions were necessary, specified the scope of the operations and their objectives, and united a strong coalition of U.N. member states to support them. The American people and the rest of the world had no doubts as to what the level of United States involvement in these humanitarian interventions was going to be. The President was initially lauded for his swift and tactful response to the Libyan Revolution –albeit, the attack on the U.S. Embassy in Benghazi, and later, the influx of Islamic extremists to the region, *has* overshadowed most of the mission’s early accomplishments. Nevertheless, by initially keeping his gloves on, and offering Qaddafi the opportunity to take his “back-from-the-wall” and step down from power peacefully, the President could hardly be perceived as being the aggressor, or of having dictated terms to the head of state of a sovereign nation. But, after Qaddafi made it explicitly clear what he intended to do to his own people, the imminence of the threat had become menacingly real. As the President stated:

“Now, here is why this matters to us. Left unchecked, we have every reason to believe that Qaddafi would commit atrocities against his own people. Many thousands could die. A humanitarian crisis could ensue. The entire region could be destabilized, endangering many of our allies and partners. The calls of the Libyan people for help would go unanswered. The democratic values that we stand for would be overrun. Moreover, the words of the international community would be rendered hollow.”⁴⁸

As for the ongoing civil war in Syria, the President has been criticized for his dilatory and reluctant response to the Assad regime’s use of chemical weapons against its own people. Following the same course as in Libya, the President kept his gloves on by giving al-Assad the chance to reform policy and/or relinquish power peacefully. However, once suspicions arose that the al-

⁴⁸ President B. Obama, “Remarks by the President on the Situation in Libya” (Speech: East Room, 18-3-2011, The White House, Washington, D.C.), (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/18/remarks-president-situation-libya>).

Assad regime was fighting “dirty” against not only the rebel opposition, but also against innocent civilians, the President correctly proceeded to take his gloves off by drawing a “red-line,” that, in his words, if crossed, would “change [his] calculations significantly.”⁴⁹ Unfortunately, there is one crucial element that was missing with regards to the President’s approach towards Syria: confidence. The uncertain affiliation and composition of the rebel opposition, the threat of blowback from bad actors in the region, gridlock in the U.N. Security Council, and a war-weariness at home all contributed to the President’s lack of confidence to act more resolutely. Consequently, approximately 2.2 million Syrians have been displaced, the rebel opposition is scattered, and al-Assad is still in power. Regardless, the President’s actions did result in some major concessions. Instead of invoking the War Powers Resolution as he did with Libya, the President sought authorization for the use of military force from Congress. This was a clever gambit on the President’s part since one can make the argument that the move ultimately relieved the President of absolute ownership and responsibility over the making of the decision to use military force or not, by leaving the choice up to Congress and the American people. In his statement to the nation on Syria, the President shrewdly mused:

“I’m also mindful that I’m the President of the world’s oldest constitutional democracy. I’ve long believed that our power is rooted not just in our military might, but in our example as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. And that’s why I’ve made a second decision: I will seek authorization for the use of force from the American people’s representatives in Congress.”⁵⁰

In part because of the credible threat of U.S. military action, the most encouraging development came out of the extraordinary talks that President Obama had with President Putin of Russia. After the Russian government indicated a willingness to join with the international community, the Assad regime immediately admitted to having chemical weapons, and even said that they would join the Chemical Weapons Convention. The spontaneous emergence of these events suggests that there are, indeed, alternative solutions and unconventional openings for even the most intractable of political problems. Furthermore, the emerging threat from ISIL has helped to consolidate and standardize the procedures and legal framework that are currently in place with regards to the Obama Administration’s overall counterterrorism strategy. In his 2014 statement to the nation on ISIL, President Obama described many of the atrocities committed by the terrorist organization, and explained just how they pose a direct threat to our allies and our national security.

⁴⁹ President B. Obama, “Remarks by the President to the White House Press Corps” (Speech: James S. Brady Press Briefing Room, August 20, 2012, The White House, Washington D.C.) (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/08/20/remarks-president-white-house-press-corps>).

⁵⁰ President B. Obama, “Statement by the President on Syria” (Speech: Rose Garden, August 31, 2013, The White House, Washington D.C.) (<http://m.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/31/statement-president-syria>).

“In a region that has known so much bloodshed, these terrorists are unique in their brutality. They execute captured prisoners. They kill children. They enslave, rape, and force women into marriage. They threatened a religious minority with genocide. And in acts of barbarism, they took the lives of two American journalists –Jim Foley and Steven Sotloff. So ISIL poses a threat to the people of Iraq and Syria, and the broader Middle East– including American citizens, personnel and facilities. If left unchecked, these terrorists could pose a growing threat beyond that region, including to the United States. While we have not yet detected specific plotting against our homeland, ISIL leaders have threatened America and our allies. Our Intelligence Community believes that thousands of foreigners –including Europeans and some Americans– have joined them in Syria and Iraq. Trained and battle-hardened, these fighters could try to return to their home countries and carry out deadly attacks.”⁵¹

A little later on in his statement, the President, for the first time, enumerated the precise steps in his overall counterterrorism strategy, laying out the major tenets of his overarching Doctrine.

“Our objective is clear: We will degrade, and ultimately destroy, ISIL through a comprehensive and sustained counterterrorism strategy. First, we will conduct a systematic campaign of airstrikes against these terrorists. Working with the Iraqi government, we will expand our efforts beyond protecting our own people and humanitarian missions, so that we’re hitting ISIL targets as Iraqi forces go on offense. Moreover, I have made it clear that we will hunt down terrorists who threaten our country, wherever they are. That means I will not hesitate to take action against ISIL in Syria, as well as Iraq. This is a core principle of my presidency: If you threaten America, you will find no safe haven. Second, we will increase our support to forces fighting these terrorists on the ground. [...] As I have said before, these American forces will not have a combat mission –we will not get dragged into another ground war in Iraq. But they are needed to support Iraqi and Kurdish forces with training, intelligence and equipment. We’ll also support Iraq’s efforts to stand up National Guard Units to help Sunni communities secure their own freedom from ISIL’s control. Across the border, in Syria, we have ramped up our military assistance to the Syrian opposition. [...] Third, we will continue to draw on our substantial counterterrorism capabilities to prevent ISIL attacks. Working with our partners, we will redouble our efforts to cut off its funding; improve our intelligence; strengthen our defenses; counter its warped ideology; and stem the flow of foreign fighters into and out of the Mid-

⁵¹ President B. Obama, “Statement by the President on ISIL” (Speech: State Floor, September 10, 2014, The White House, Washington D.C.) (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/10/remarks-president-barack-obama-address-nation>).

dle East. And in two weeks, I will chair a meeting of the U.N. Security Council to further mobilize the international community around this effort. Fourth, we will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to innocent civilians who have been displaced by this terrorist organization. This includes Sunni and Shia Muslims who are at grave risk, as well as tens of thousands of Christians and other religious minorities. We cannot allow these communities to be driven from their ancient homelands.”⁵²

Thus, the political action of a public official may be deemed an instance of gloved hands, if and only if all of the following conditions are met: (1) a community, or its way of life is under threat of imminent danger (doctrine of supreme emergency); (2) the public official maintains transparency (U.N. monitoring, press conferences, congressional oversight, declassified versions of secret documents, and an institutional presence on social media); (3) the public official maintains accountability (U.N. resolutions, democratic elections, popular referendums, and congressional hearings); (4) the public official maintains consensus (U.N. coalitions, independent polling, public mandates, and grassroots initiatives); and (5) the public official maintains confidence (Executive audacity, charismatic leadership, and idealized candor). The Obama Doctrine, therefore, is founded not on an interest of what is legally required, but on an interest of what is morally ordained. This, I believe, accurately characterizes the strategic restraint that President Obama has demonstrated over the last five years with regard to his foreign policy.

Conclusion

As humanity continues to come to terms with its own moral frailty, the questions and criticisms surrounding the political actions of public officials will, no doubt, linger on. Needless to say, public officials will continue to choose to act the way they do for a variety of different reasons: some out of duty, some out of necessity, and still further, some out of pure and simple pride. Personal responsibility and accountability are paramount if the integrity of public officials and public institutions are to be maintained. What Kompridis proposes in *Critique and Disclosure* is less a plea for romantic revivalism, and more a call for semantic survivalism. To put it another way, given that meaning today is a quality that is in constant peril of being distorted, corrupted, and/or lost to youth and posterity, it is the preservation of semantic and cultural integrity, therefore, that becomes vital in moments of existential crisis. For example, the intrinsic appeal of the aphorism “catastrophe equals opportunity” is primarily derived from its application, which enables us to psychologically overcome the “present shock” that is encountered after a ‘supreme emergency’ has taken place, or is about to take place. To be sure, it is

⁵² President B. Obama, “Statement by the President on ISIL” (Speech: State Floor, September 10, 2014, The White House, Washington D.C.) (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/10/remarks-president-barack-obama-address-nation>).

the constant reevaluation and contextualization of our beliefs, values, and commitments that can potentially turn a crisis into a space for modernity to manifest itself as possibility, as opportunity. By adopting a Benjaminian conception of time, with its polarization of 'past experience' and 'future expectation,' we can better gauge the level of continuity and discontinuity that exists, and thereby act accordingly. This is what Kompridis, Vermeulen, and Akker are all trying to get at: a relativism that cherishes its independence on the one hand, but strives to be understood and accepted on the other. Yes, human beings must act according to the dictates of their own consciences, but they must also justify those actions to the rest of us as reasonable members of society. Through the mutual recognition and acknowledgement of our shared cognitive boundaries, all critical stimuli therefore, imposes our individual "past experience" upon our collective "expected future" as much as possible, in order to anticipate danger and mitigate damage as much as possible. In truth, what this "expected future" does is drown in a flood of past knowledge and experience that functions as a well-spring of epistemological and mnemonic resources for us to draw from in times of cognitive drought. Thus, the practice of instantaneous cultural consumption and production is partially instrumental, as it aids with the decision making process by facilitating dialogue, in the hopes of reaching a consensus about how to appropriately respond to a 'supreme emergency.' Recall who ultimately determines the rectitude of these kinds of decisions; by virtue of the fact that, in a democratic society, the general public is the very producer and consumer of culture, it is therefore the only group that can legitimately pass judgement on and take responsibility for what takes place in it.

But, how does the general public reach such a determination? Well, as one might imagine, through deliberation. Communication is the fundamental mode of all social and cultural practice. If all that we need are new and accountable social and cultural practices, which strengthen our own personal agency, to effectively produce change, then we should look no further than our contemporary and dominant mode of communication: social media. Electronic media has ostensibly resolved both of the aforementioned criticisms that many liberal political philosophers have traditionally leveled against the public justification argument. Namely, the low level of public access to full, free, and open information, and the burden of a less than optimal apprehension of objective rationality. Most importantly, however, is the fact that electronic media has enabled deliberation to be conducted instantaneously. By adopting the critical stance that is outlined above, and by utilizing the innovative technological capabilities that we currently possess, it is possible for citizens to immediately sanction a particular form of political action in time to avert a catastrophe. All that is still required are new and innovative civic institutions that can accommodate this level of democratic participation. Thus, the metaphorical gloves, which I describe in this paper, should primarily be thought of as a publicly sanctioned political precaution that public officials can use to simultaneously disclose (bare hands) and deceive (gloved hands). In this context, disclosure should be thought of as a reflection of *necessita*,

which compels public officials to overcome *fortuna* by any means necessary. Whereas, deception should be regarded as an act of cleverness, a demonstration of *virtu*, and not as a sign of malfeasance. In conclusion, all technological innovations can potentially be used for purposes contrary to the ones for which they were originally intended. Hence, it is the procurement of a public justification for the use of these new forces (always coercive forces) that is required, so that a public official can either insulate or expose themselves to the elements as needed.

Crisis as the Aesthetics of Politics: Towards a Rancièrian Interpretation¹

IOANNIS TELIOS

In this paper, I will mainly focus on the explication of the coinage of the term “aesthetics of politics” and allude to its relevance to the concept of crisis. In support of my case, I will, first, put forward Rancièrè’s concept of *aesthetics* and see how it relates to that of *politics*; then, I will explain on how it is that equality functions as a methodological presupposition of aesthetics and politics; and, finally, I will broach two points concerning the notion of crisis:

(1) a comparison of Rancièrè’s concept of politics to the various meanings the term acquired in ancient Greece,² and

(2) an illustration of a case of convergence between the Rancièrian concept of politics and the unravelling Greek crisis. However, it must be clear by now that my intention is not to investigate the Greek crisis *ad hoc*, but to elaborate on the conditions that allow for the emergence of a “crisis.” Needless to say, every argument includes technicalities that I have here omitted, and invites further contemplation which exceeds the scope of this paper.

First Issue: Aesthetics

When it comes to the definition of aesthetics, we are faced with two diverse but complementary accounts:

(1) “Aesthetics is not the philosophy or the science of art and the beautiful. Aesthetics is a re-configuration of sensible experience.”³

(2) “There is indeed something disturbing in his [this is a self-referential comment] use of the word ‘aesthetic.’ It gets two meanings in his writings. On the one hand, it names a specific regime of identification of art, historically determined.⁴ On the other hand, it names a dimension of human experience in general.”⁵ In this essay, the artistic dimension of aesthetics will be left aside.⁶

¹ This paper is an elliptic summary of my master thesis entitled *Aesthetics, Politics, Equality: A Critical Presentation of Rancièrè’s Theory. Towards a Review of the Concept of Crisis*.

² Drawing on R. Koselleck, “Crisis,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 67 (2006), 357-400.

³ J. Rancièrè, “The Aesthetic Heterotopia,” *Philosophy Today*, 54 (2010), 15-25, p. 15.

⁴ Note that this artistic assertion of aesthetics is not incompatible with the first definition. Rancièrè escapes the contradiction by determining the aesthetic regime of identification in art as historical and not philosophical or scientific. The difference is obvious: in the first case, aesthetics is a particular configuration of an artistic regime that occurs historically, and in the second, it is an ahistorical, as it were, determination of the conditions for art, beauty and pleasure in general.

⁵ J. Rancièrè, “A Few Remarks on the Method of Jacques Rancièrè,” *Parallax*, 15 (2009), 114-123, p. 121.

It becomes apparent that, in this account, Rancière weeds away the (exclusive) artistic meaning with which aesthetics was invested since the 18th century, and recovers its Greek meaning of sensory experience, the perceptive data, and the “feeling and understanding, which means the connection between a capacity of feeling and a capacity of understanding.”⁷ Now, if the cited definitions are not too far apart from each other, we should associate the “dimension of human experience in general” with the “re-configuration of sensible experience” –although we should not identify them. We should not think of every human experience as a reconfiguration of the sensible: aesthesis is not aesthetics, although Rancière employs the latter term for both.

What is innovative in this restoration is the particular role of *re-configuration* that is now ascribed to aesthetics. This new reconfiguring element is predicated on the relation aesthetics has been understood to have with politics. In his book *Politics of Aesthetics*, after defining aesthetics as “a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise,” Rancière claims that this delimitation “determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience”; and then circumscribes the specificity of the link between them by saying that “politics bears upon what is seen and what can be said about it, upon who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, upon the properties of spaces and the possibilities of time.”⁸ But what kind of relation does this ‘bear[ing] upon’ define, and how is it coupled with the reconfiguring function of the aesthetic? To these questions, Rancière responds by invoking⁹ the Kantian aesthetic judgment –the logic of which I will briefly spell out.

Rancière invokes the two basic Kantian a priori cognitive faculties: namely, the spatio-temporal aesthetic intuition (coupled with imagination), and its logical counterpart, that is, the understanding and the subsumptive rules operating under the unity of the logical categories. The synergy between the two was primarily identified, in the first *Critique*, with the method for the consti-

⁶ However, I wish to draw attention to the significance that, for Rancière, aesthetics, as a particular regime of art, confer(red) to the overall political orientation of his thought. I am crudely underlying the break that aesthetics as a particular regime of art achieved against the representational mode of art –a mode that established the hierarchy of high and low subjects and genres of art, and that opted for action over life. Therefore, artistic aesthetics stand on an equal footing with Rancière’s understanding of political emancipation as a reconfiguration of the sensible, and not as a factual representation of ideology. Cf. J. Rancière, “From Politics to Aesthetics,” *Paragraph*, 28 (2005), 13-25, pp. 13-15; D. Ferris, “Politics after Aesthetics: Disagreeing with Rancière,” *Parallax*, 15 (2009), 37-49, pp. 41-42.

⁷ Rancière, “A Few Remarks on the Method of Jacques Rancière,” p. 121.

⁸ J. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. G. Rockhill (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004), p. 13. In this passage, I follow Ferris (“Politics after Aesthetics: Disagreeing with Rancière,” p. 39), who translates *portesur* with *bears upon* and not with *revolves around* as Rockhill suggests in his own translation. (Note, however, that Ferris fails to keep with his phrasal verb and switches back to Rockhill’s translation in the rest of the sentence –a possible *lapsus* that I have not followed.)

⁹ Cf., J. Rancière, “The Aesthetic Dimension: Aesthetics, Politics, Knowledge,” *Critical Inquiry*, 36 (2009), 1-19.

tution of the (objectively valid) representation into the subject's consciousness. The products of this process were enriched, in the third *Critique*, by a supplementary (if not subversive) operation (i.e., the free-play of imagination and understanding¹⁰): judgment was now endowed with the power of creating a representation beyond cognition, or, rather, a representation susceptible only to the general form of cognition, and not to a proper cognitive category; the outcome was the aesthetic representation.

This is the concept that figures prominently in Rancièrè's analysis. The difference between the (pure) aesthetic judgment and other forms of judgment is that the former escapes the subsumption of the imaginatively collected manifold under a determinate category of the understanding; its political undertones become apparent when Rancièrè writes, "[it] escapes the hierarchical relationship between a high faculty and a low faculty, that is, escapes in the form of a *positive* neither/nor."¹¹ In other words, the aesthetic judgment reenacts the process of the cognitive subsumption, but does not bring the imaginary representation under one concrete category, but rather under *none*.¹² This is what Rancièrè calls "the neutralization of the opposition between the faculties," and, by analogy, between "the classes of the population..."¹³

Let me dwell on the meaning of the aesthetic neutralization. Rancièrè informs us that "the aesthetic dimension [...] is another kind of relation between sense and sense,¹⁴ a supplement that both reveals and neutralizes the division at the heart of the sensible." We are aware that the division invoked by Rancièrè is the division of the cognitive faculties. Now, that division is coupled with an opposition: the holding sway of the one faculty over the other – and is described by Rancièrè as conjunctive when it obeys a certain rule of subordination between faculties, and as disjunctive when there is an attempt to overturn this rule. Here, the neutralizing power of the aesthetic dimension comes forth. It rejects the hierarchical relation established by the synergistic diversion of the faculties. It is crucial to stress that it does not induce the inversion of the subject of power, but, instead, induces the subversion, that is, the creation of a dissensus: "not a conflict [but] a perturbation of the normal relation between sense and sense."¹⁵ The effect of the aesthetic dissensus is

¹⁰ Cf. I. Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J.C. Meredith, N. Walker (ed.), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), § 9, 218; §21, 238; §38, 290.

¹¹ Rancièrè, "The Aesthetic Dimension: Aesthetics, Politics, Knowledge," p. 2.

¹² Cf. Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, §12, 222.

¹³ Rancièrè, "The Aesthetic Dimension: Aesthetics, Politics, Knowledge," p. 3.

¹⁴ What Rancièrè refers to when he speaks of *sense* and *sense* is the relation of the logical to the sensory which has a broader application as it signifies the connection between one's bodily dispositions to the ideas that dictate this disposition. This is also what he means when he speaks of the distribution of the sensible: "a relation between what people do, what they see, what they hear, and what they know" (Rancièrè, "The Aesthetic Heterotopia," p. 17). This relation is a law "that defines the forms of partaking by first defining the modes of perception in which they are inscribed" [J. Rancièrè, "Ten Theses on Politics," in *Dissensus: on Politics and Aesthetics*, trans. and ed. S. Corcoran (New York: Continuum, 2010), 27-44, p. 36].

¹⁵ Rancièrè, "The Aesthetic Dimension: Aesthetics, Politics, Knowledge," p. 3.

spelled out in two concepts, which also describe the neutralization: the staging of an excess, and a supplement that radicalizes the way of seeing the conflict.

In describing the faculties' free play, which produces the aesthetic judgment, Kant speaks of the enlivening of the subject's cognitive powers.¹⁶ But this enlivening does not abide by the rule of subsumption. The cognitive powers are activated, but only towards an imperfect cognitive act. To my understanding, the Rancièrian *staging of a conflict* is synonymous with the Kantian *enlivening* of the cognitive powers. In Rancière's phrasing: "The aesthetic configuration replays the terms of the difference in such a way as to neutralize them and make that neutralization the staging of a conflict that is in excess of consensual distribution."¹⁷ When the aesthetic agent is at work, the striving faculties dispense with their cognitive character, and reappear as sheer sensibility, as a mere object of the *aesthesis*, as it were. But just as the Kantian enlivening does not entail a proper function of the aroused faculties (but preserves only the form of that function in the aesthetic judgment), in a similar fashion, the aesthetic staging reflects only the form of the conflict by disrupting the hierarchical relations, and by discarding the cognitive content therein.

With this insight at hand, I can now return to the question regarding the relation of politics to aesthetics. I will try to illustrate this relation by means of an analogy between aesthetics and politics. On the one hand, the hierarchical relations among sense and sense correspond to what Rancière names the distribution of the sensible or the police order, and, on the other, the aesthetic disruption of the relation between sense and sense corresponds to the subversive nature of politics.

Second Issue: Politics

According to Rancière,

"[...] there is no political life, but a political *stage*. Political action consists in showing as political what was viewed as 'social,' 'economic' or 'domestic.' It consists in blurring the boundaries. It is what happens whenever 'domestic' agents—workers or women, for instance—reconfigure their quarrel as a quarrel concerning the common, that is, concerning what place belongs or does not belong to it and who is able or unable to make enunciations and demonstrations about the common."¹⁸

The analogy between the functionality of the aesthetic and the political operators is apparent. Further explication is necessary with regard to the conditions upon which the political occurs. What is the social equivalent of the hierarchy of cognitive powers that we encountered in the Kantian argument? In Rancière's terminology, the answer points to a *prima facie* difference be-

¹⁶ Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, §12, 222; italics added.

¹⁷ Rancière, "The Aesthetic Dimension: Aesthetics, Politics, Knowledge," p. 5; italics added.

¹⁸ J. Rancière, "The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics," in P. Bowman and R. Stamp (eds.), *Reading Rancière* (London: Continuum, 2011), 1-17, p. 4.

tween politics and “what normally goes by the name of politics and for which I propose to reserve the term policing,”¹⁹ that is, “an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable.”²⁰ The rapport of the police order with the aesthetics of pure sensibility and perception²¹ is explicitly laid out in what Rancière calls the distribution of the sensible, which he defines as

“the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it. A distribution of the sensible therefore establishes at one and the same time something common that is shared and exclusive parts.”²²

Now, in order to see what is it that politics specifically plays out against, what is it that politics breaks away with, we have to locate the equivalent of the Kantian logical rule of subsumption in the social/police order. What is the analogue to the logical rule when it comes to the canon, the measure, according to which the sensible is distributed in the police order? How does the police order bind together the sensibility of the social hierarchies? How does the police order coagulate the relations between perceptions, visions, words, names, spaces and times. Rancière traces the answer back to the Platonic logic behind the distribution of labor and rule, in the devised city of the *Republic*.

The rule that governs the (first Socratic ‘sketch of the laborers’) city is that “more things are produced, and better and more easily, when one man performs *only one task* according to his *nature*, at the *right moment*, and is *excused from all other occupations*” (Plato, *Republic*, 370c; italics added).²³ The effect of the rule is not solely the proliferation of the production, but the *health* of the city as well (which is synonymous with *justice* in the first sketch). The stringency of the rule bears on the exclusiveness of the laborer’s occupation. No citizen should do more than what the talent, which nature has allegedly bestowed on him, allows. Consequently, the worker does not have time for any other occupation or leisure, nor is there time to leave the location where he practices his profession. And, hence, a balance in the city is guaran-

¹⁹ J. Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. J. Rose (Minneapolis-London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. xiii.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²¹ In this argument I am making use of the first definition of aesthetics as “feeling and understanding, which means the connection between a capacity of feeling and a capacity of understanding” (Rancière, “A Few Remarks on the Method of Jacques Rancière,” p. 121) – that is, as aesthesis. Occasionally, I will be using this meaning without the need to mark it off.

²² Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, p. 12. And it is exactly this affinity between the aesthetic determination of the police order (according to the first definition of aesthetics) and the aesthetic/political disagreement with the police/hierarchical order (according to the supplementary definition of aesthetics) that blurs the boundaries between politics and police. For aesthetics seems to underlie the determination of both, implying a common characteristic between the two.

²³ This translation is found in the English translation of J. Rancière, “The Order of the City,” *Critical Inquiry*, 30 (2004), 267-291, p. 269.

teed on the basis of a clear-cut and unsurpassable partition of places and times, and also of division of labor, according to what the purported nature of each man dictates.

Through a culminating argumentation, that I will here omit, Socrates refines the rule of the city by attuning it to new data:²⁴ the rule of the partitioning of the sensible comes, now, to hinge on “the philosopher [as] a specialist in nature and lie”;²⁵ to pivot, that is, on the *noble lie* (214c-215a). This lie (permitted to philosophers only) is nothing more but a fictional story, a Phoenician tale that, if pedagogically instilled, will breed the nature of the souls of the citizenry, and will establish a healthy societal hierarchy of powers. This is the prototype for what Rancière calls “the circle of the *arkhe*, the logic according to which the exercise of power is anticipated in the capacity to exercise it, and this capacity in turn is verified by its exercise.”²⁶ Rancière demonstrates the circularity of the logic by claiming that

“Plato does not demand that workers have the inner conviction that a deity truly mixed iron in their souls and gold in the souls of their rulers.²⁷ It is enough that they sense it, that is, that they use their arms, their eyes and their minds as if it were true. And they will do so to the extent that this lie about ‘fitting’ actually does fit the reality of their condition.”²⁸

The root of this organization, the rule that articulates the police order is the very belief in the appropriateness of everyone’s position, which is circularly evinced by the very exercise of the skills and powers attributed to this position. This bond is the *as if*: the circularity of the belief in one’s (aesthetic) position, to be predicated on a (fictional) argument, which is, in turn, corroborated by the very empirical reality of one’s position. According to Rancière, the belief in the noble lie (namely, the *as if*) is not equivalent to an “inner conviction”; it is not a degree of knowledge.

The story is not a lie in the traditional sense of its contrast to truth –if the latter understood as *adequatio*. On the contrary, it is a story in that it employs “the common language that abolishes the hierarchy of discourse and the hierarchies that this underwrites.”²⁹ Thus, reality and illusion conflate in the identification of the argument with the story: “The argument is a story, and the story an argument”;³⁰ illusion cannot be marked off against reality, because they are both grounded in the simplest form of linguistic utterance, and in “the same intelligence [that] makes poetic fictions, political inventions or historical explanations, the same intelligence [that] makes and understands sen-

²⁴ The new data ensue with Glaukon’s demand of the city to be something more than “a city of pigs” (372d-e).

²⁵ Rancière, “The Order of the City,” p. 281.

²⁶ Rancière, “The Aesthetic Dimension: Aesthetics, Politics, Knowledge,” p. 9.

²⁷ This is the content of the fiction, the tale mentioned before; see *Republic*, 415a-d.

²⁸ Rancière, “The Aesthetic Heterotopia,” p. 19; italics added.

²⁹ Rancière, “The Aesthetic Dimension: Aesthetics, Politics, Knowledge,” p. 18.

³⁰ J. Rancière, “Afterward,” in G. Rockhill and P. Watts (eds.), *Jacques Rancière: History, Politics, Aesthetics* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009), 273-288, p. 276.

tences.”³¹ The pure logico-syntactical validity of a proposition must hold as the ultimate criterion of the meaningfulness of the story. The old problem of Logical Positivism regarding the criteria of the meaningfulness of scientific discourse acquires a positive spin. Rancière endorses the equality between scientific propositions and fairy tales, not in a bid to show that true propositions cannot be distinguished from false ones, but in order to profess that there is no distinction between them in the first place. They are all stories coined by the same, in principle, intelligence.

Conclusively, we can assume that, so long as it is not the case that discourse corresponds to (and is respectively verified or falsified by) an ontological truth,³² it is, accordingly, not the case that the domain of sensibility, in being articulated by the philosophical story, represents any degree of truth within itself. This is tantamount to saying that the sensible is not the phenomenal surface of an inherent logic of things. The distribution of the sensible is autonomous and does not represent anything apart from itself.

However, we should not lose sight of the fact that, in spite of its reduction to the common property of language and its character “as the most egalitarian form of discourse,”³³ the story still establishes a social hierarchy of inequalities. This is exactly the paradox of the discourse that molds (and is itself part of) the distribution of the sensible: it is “a form of legitimization which delegitimizes it [i.e., the sensible] at the same time.” This is exactly what Rancière claims to be the “disjunctive junction of story and argument, legitimization and delegitimization, equality and inequality.”³⁴ In these series of pairs, *argument*, *legitimization*, and *inequality* are grouped together as the core that gravitates the particular distribution of the sensible, the police order, or the

³¹ Rancière, “The thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics,” p. 14.

³² Obviously, Rancière rejects the epistemological relation of reality to propositions. The former cannot function as the verification criterion for the truthfulness of the latter. However, I have not come across any attempt by Rancière to discuss the matter of a purely formal logico-syntactical criterion of truth. I presume that a rudimentary logical parataxis of words within sentences as the basis for meaningfulness goes without saying; and in that formality it is that Rancière gives a positive spin in contrast to the negative criticism Schlick had assaulted against it [and against the advocates of that particular variation of logical positivism – specifically O. Neurath, “Sociology and Physicalism,” in A.J. Ayer (ed.), *Logical Positivism* (New York: Free Press, 1959), 282-317, p. 291]: “Anyone who takes coherence seriously as the sole criterion of truth must consider any fabricated tale to be no less true than a historical report or the propositions in a chemistry text-book, so long as the tale is well enough fashioned to harbour no contradictions anywhere” [M. Schlick, “On the Foundation of Knowledge,” *Philosophical Papers*, Vol. II (1925-1936), ed. H. Mulder and B.F.B. van de Velde-Schlick (Dordrecht/Boston/London: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), 370-387, p. 376]. To the extent that reality’s role as the verification basis is eliminated as metaphysical, the road for the equality between scientific propositions and fairy-tales is open: “The equality of fairy tales underpins the whole hierarchy of discourses and positions. If there is a privilege of philosophy, it lies in the frankness with which it tells us that the truth about Truth is a fiction and undoes the hierarchy just as it builds it” (Rancière, “The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics,” p. 15).

³³ Rancière, “Afterward,” p. 276.

³⁴ Rancière, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

circle of the *arkhe*. But this core is transparent and unsubstantial, for it is at the same time a contingent story that delegitimizes the current police order by virtue of its equality with any other possible story –that is, by virtue of its equality with itself.

It is in this delegitimization of the order of the city that we find a similarity with the operation with which the aesthetic/political dimension was assigned. Indeed, Rancière argues explicitly for the affinity (if not identity) of the aesthetic with the political, by handing to the latter the power of reconfiguration, the power of establishing a new “as” through the power of conjuring up stories.

Having delineated the social rule of subordination, hierarchies, and order, we can determine better the disruptive operation of politics upon the rule of the *as if*. Politics (as aesthetics –or the “aesthetics of politics”) is not the locus where social hierarchies, conflicts and consensus play out; it is the topos that stages them deprived of their previous content and, thus, in a new form. The dismissal of the content refers to the exposure of the artificiality of that content –it exposes the artifice of the story that articulates the police order; the dismissal refers to the disconnection of a bodily disposition from the ideas that determine the ends that have to be met by this disposition; the dismissal refers to the disputation over the meaning of words; it refers to the disidentification of the divergent parts of the society; ultimately, it refers to the re-configuration of the sensible. The “new form,” which things acquire in an ephemeral moment of politics, does not *represent* a different content; it means that they stand as mere sensibility –a vantage point from which a new *as if*, a new police order may emerge.

This is the key to Rancière’s subversive stipulation: there is no need for any content-related preparations for a political subversion; subversion can accrue upon aesthetics. This is the meaning of the previous claim that politics bears upon the aesthetic (aesthetics here conceived in its double meaning as aesthesis and as the reconfiguration of the sensible). And, because there is no content (be that logical or ontological) to be represented, subversion cannot be programmed or organized; it is not teleologically necessitated; it is not a structural mark of history; it is, *au contraire*, contingent and precarious. This contingency of the political occurrence is conditioned by the equality of any *as if* with any other *as if*; the equality of any story coined by the same, in principle, intelligence. And that brings me to my next theme: equality.

Third Issue: Equality

What is the condition for a political disruption? How is it possible to diagnose the *as if* as a fictional story? How can we render the artifice of its power visible as such: as unfounded and arbitrary? Rancière deploys a very subtle and paradoxical concept of equality –of which I will put forward only a few aspects.

It is rather difficult to put into words a notion that “has no vocabulary or grammar of its own”;³⁵ a notion that is not “a structural principle,” nor a

³⁵ Rancière, “The thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics,” p. 6.

“structural operator,” that “it sometime happens, but there is no necessity that it does, at any time”;³⁶ a notion, ultimately, that becomes intelligible only through operations of verification,³⁷ only through “confirmation[s] [...] inscribed in the setting up of a dispute.”³⁸ But, here, we are presented with a knot: how are we to verify an elusive notion, which is deprived of any ontological substance, or any analytical definition?

Equality is, indeed, a negative operator, and, by this negativity, it blurs the particular allocations of sensibility, dis-identifies and dismantles names and bodies within the police order. Among other names, Rancière has also determined it as a “‘poetics of knowledge’: a poetics that extricates the fictional construction of the *as if*...”³⁹ The poetics of equality demonstrate that every *as if* is nothing more than a *mythos* (a story, a noble lie) that refers back to the same poetic invention, to the same intelligence, and the same linguistic repertoire. By showing, thus, that there is no ontological necessity that upholds the particular *as if*; the distribution of the sensible, upon which the *as if* bears, does not represent any (onto)logical necessity, and is, therefore, absolutely contingent. In other words, every distribution of the sensible is equally possible to any other possible arrangement of the sensible, any other *as if*, any other police order. The particular police order is equal to the *inexistent*, it is only a matter of contingency, of arbitrariness that the sensible is distributed as it is. It is exactly this equality (of any possible police with any possible order) that deprives of its necessity the one which so happens to be the case. This necessity is equal to the necessity of any other possible order. Therefore, when equality is at work within the police order, it denies its prevalence over the others, by *exhibiting* its unfounded nature. And this exhibition is the stage of politics.

It seems, thereof, that “equality is not an end to attain, but a point of departure, a supposition to maintain in every circumstance”⁴⁰ –and it has to be maintained, because any order exists only through its contingency, and, at the same time, this existence is at the verge of collapse, exactly because it is not founded, it is not necessary, and there is no reason to uphold its (precarious) differentiation from any other possibility. “This equality is simply the equality of anyone at all with anyone else: in other words, in the final analysis, the absence of *arkhe*, the sheer contingency of any social order.”⁴¹

It is exactly because of this contingency that equality is postulated as the presupposition of every police order. Social orders, however, do not present themselves as contingent, but claim to their historical, or logical, or ontological necessity. The relation between the contingent self of a police order and its appearance as necessity, can be construed as the dialectics of equality. Indeed,

³⁶ J. Rancière, “Comments and Responses,” *Theory and Event*, 6 (2003), §§14-15.

³⁷ Rancière, “Afterward,” p. 280.

³⁸ Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, p. 32; italics added.

³⁹ Rancière, “Afterward,” p. 280.

⁴⁰ J. Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, trans. K. Ross (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 138.

⁴¹ Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, p. 16.

Rancière underpins this logic by claiming that “equality turns into the opposite the moment it aspires to a place in the social or state organization.”⁴² The meaning is that equality appears as its opposite; in precise, it “turns into its opposite,” that is, into inequality: into an *as if*. The *as if* is “a form of legitimization which delegitimizes it [i.e., the sensible] at the same time.”

Thus, I deem equality to be dialectical insofar as its negativity eliminates the positivity that it establishes, to the effect of setting up itself as a new precarious positivity. But there is nothing metaphysical in this dialectics of equality whatsoever. Rancière is vehemently opposing this option. Equality dwells within the sensible in the form of an inherent and elusive excess of words and names, and is instituted by the political whenever it is verified by an emancipated subject. But I do not want to go further into that discussion. I only want to say that equality is not teleological, nor structural, nor substantiated. It is contingency *per se*.

Conclusively, the aesthetics of politics is a moment when the necessity of the existing police order is disputed on account of its arbitrariness and of its equality with any other possibility. The aesthetics of politics create a dissensus between what is visual/sensible and what is not. They interrupt the particular visibility of the existing distribution of the sensible by dismissing the alleged content that is represented in that visibility. Thus, visibility/aesthetics is becoming visible as such. And therefore what was not previously the case, may now acquire sensibility.

Fourth Issue: Crisis as the Aesthetics of Politics

Understanding “crisis” through Rancièrian terms lays out the possibility of reading it (1) in terms of the police order, when, for example, it indicates an opposition between classing interests or the deepening of inequalities (stark in cases of economic crisis); and (2) in terms of politics, when it portrays such a radical change in the course and configuration of things that the outcome of its effect is a new configuration altogether. This new configuration does not have to be of the greatest scale; it suffices to occur in confined spaces. It is their quality that matters.

Drawing on Koselleck’s⁴³ conceptual history of crisis, we see that the aforementioned opposing alternatives can occur with regard to the various characteristics that historically inform the concept of crisis: teleological, structural, ontological, cognitive, juridical, political and epistemological. However, I will not go into a thorough elaboration on the matter. I will only broach the relation of Rancièrian politics to crisis (1) in the meanings of the concept in ancient Greece/k, and (2) in an exemplification of the political dispute induced by (and determining) an instance of crisis.

1. Koselleck probes into the etymological meaning of the verbal mode *krinō*: “to ‘separate’ (part, divorce), to ‘choose,’ to ‘judge,’ to ‘decide’; as a

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁴³ Koselleck, “Crisis.”

means of ‘measuring oneself,’ to ‘quarrel,’ or to ‘fight.’”⁴⁴ What is implicit in this account is the logic of subordination. *Krinō* means to judge, to separate out according to a measure, according to a rule. Seen through the Kantian perspective, the meaning of the verb is much in line with the definition of cognitive/non-aesthetic judgment. And that is because, as I have brought to our attention, the aesthetic judgment is the kind that breaks away from the logic of subordination; it breaks away from the logic of internal separation between genres of sensory data, which are predicated on logical categories. Consequently, we should, at the outset, diagnose a discrepancy between what Rancièrè has in mind for politics, and what the primordial meaning of the verb declares.

But this is not necessarily the case. As we shall see, when crisis becomes a descriptive noun, it refers, among other things, to situations for which a judgment is impending. In such a case, crisis is catachrestically employed to denote a situation for which a course of action may be required according to a measure, a rule that is not currently at hand. In that sense, crisis can nominate a case very similar to what the Kantian aesthetic judgment is about: a judgment that remains indiscernible as to its content, but relies on the *form* of intelligibility alone. Correlatively, crisis as a noun reveals its relevance with Rancièrè’s aesthetic dimension in its double entente, as aesthetics of politics and politics of aesthetics. But let me be more specific.

Crudely speaking, the original Greek meaning of the notion was endowed with three imports, all of which were rudimentarily preserved in its historical development:

(a) The first one, Koselleck⁴⁵ informs us, meant “‘decision’ in the sense of reaching a crucial point that would tip the scales. It was in this sense that Thucydides used the word when he linked the rapid conclusion of the Persian Wars to four battles.”⁴⁶ This is clearly the usage I have portended in speaking of crisis as a descriptive noun.

(b-i) “But ‘crisis’ also meant ‘decision’ in the sense of reaching a verdict or judgment, what today is meant by criticism (*Kritik*)” –and this is exactly where its juridical and relatively political sense pivots (hinges, rests, depends...):

“As legal title and legal code *κρίσις* (*krisis*) defines the ordering of the civic community.⁴⁷ From this specific legal meaning, the term begins to acquire political significance. It is extended to electoral decisions, government resolutions, decisions of war and peace, death sentences and exile, the acceptance of official reports, and, above all, to government decisions as such. Consequently, *κρίσις* (*krisis*) is most necessary for the community, representing what is

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 358. Note that all subsequent footnotes included in Koselleck’s quotes are copied from his text –unless indicated otherwise.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 358-59.

⁴⁶ Thucydides, *History* 1, 23.

⁴⁷ Aristotle, *Politics* 1253a35.

at once just and salutary.⁴⁸ For this reason, only one who participated as judge could be a citizen (*ἀρχή κριτική/archē kritikē*). For the Greeks, therefore, ‘crisis’ was a central concept by which justice and the political order (*Herrschaftsordnung*) could be harmonized through appropriate legal decisions.⁴⁹

It is interesting for our discussion to collate this Aristotelian criterion of citizenship with the one Rancière invokes in (one of the variations in) support of his definition of politics. In the *Ten Theses*, he refers to Aristotle and “Book III [of *Politics*], when he [Aristotle] defines the citizen as ‘he who partakes in the fact of ruling and the fact of being ruled.’ Everything about politics is contained in this specific relationship, this partaking....”⁵⁰ In all probability, Rancière refers to this passage: “Another point is that we praise the ability to rule and to be ruled, and it is doubtless held that the goodness of a citizen consists in ability both to rule and to be ruled well” (1277a26-29).⁵¹ Now, for Rancière, the simultaneous attribution of two contradictory characteristics to the same subject is the scandal that renders this person a political subject.⁵²

On the other hand, Koselleck invokes a much stronger and clear Aristotelian criterion of who a *politēs* is (in all probability, he refers to this definition): “What constitutes a citizen is therefore clear from these considerations: we now declare that one who has the right to participate in deliberative or judicial office [*arkhē kritikē*] is a citizen of the state in which he has that right...” (1275b 18-21). According to this definition, the political subject does not only participate in (the contradictory division of) the principle of rule (*arkhē*), but also in *crisis* [judicial office = *arkhē kritikē*], that is, in making decisions by reaching verdicts; and this was, ultimately, a constitutional principle of binding together the citizen and the community.⁵³ It appears that this judicial codification of crisis undermines Rancière’s invocation of Aristotle, since it bears exactly on what Rancière defines aesthetics/politics against: the rule of judgment, the order of hierarchy.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 1275b, 1ff.; 1326b, 1ff.

⁴⁹ Koselleck, “Crisis,” p. 359.

⁵⁰ Rancière, “Ten Theses on Politics,” p. 27.

⁵¹ Aristotle, *Aristotle in 23 Volumes*, Vol. 21, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press/London, William Heinemann Ltd., 1944).

⁵² The argument is: “In the above-mentioned Aristotelian definition of the citizen, the subject (*politēs*) is given a name defined by a *partaking* (*methexis*) both in a form of action (*arkhēin*) and in the passibility corresponding to this action (*arkhēsthai*). If there is something ‘proper’ to politics, it consists entirely in this relationship, which is not a relationship between subjects, but between two contradictory terms that define a subject. Politics disappears the moment this knot between a subject and a relation is undone, which is exactly what occurs in all the speculative and empiricist fictions that seek the origin of the political relationship in the properties of its subjects and the conditions of their coming together” (Rancière, “Ten Theses on Politics,” pp. 28-29).

⁵³ Cf. Aristotle, *op. cit.*, 1253a35.

⁵⁴ In an attempt to massage the term into an agreement with Rancière’s dictum, we can claim that as it is the case with the division of the principle of *arkhē* in an active and a pas-

(b-ii) “The juridical meaning of κρίσις (*krisis*) is fully taken over in the Septuaginta (ancient Greek translation of the Old and New Testament).⁵⁵ But a new dimension is added to the concept. The court in this world is, in the Jewish tradition, linked to God, who is simultaneously both the ruler and judge of his people [...] Beyond that, the concept gains central significance in the wake of apocalyptic expectations: the κρίσις (*krisis*) at the end of the world will for the first time reveal true justice. Christians lived in the expectation of the Last Judgment (*κρίσις/krisis* = *judicium*), whose hour, time, and place remained unknown but whose inevitability is certain.”⁵⁶

On a first note, I should underlie the pertinence of this concept of crisis to Rancièrè’s concept of politics in that the apocalyptic event is a rupture with the order of things, and at the same time a reconfiguration of what is the case. However, a stark difference remains, obviously, from the predetermined nature of the apocalyptic event. Rancièrè is reportedly an enemy of this logic; even more so, if we consider the repercussions ensuing from the spectrum of possible exegeses of the apocalyptic event. As Koselleck remarks:

“St. John even goes beyond this certainty by announcing to the faithful that they, by obeying the word of God, have already achieved salvation.⁵⁷ While the coming crisis remains a cosmic event, its outcome is already anticipated by the certainty of that redemption which grants eternal life. [...] The Apocalypse, so to speak, has been anticipated in one’s faith and hence is experienced as already present. Even while crisis remains open as a cosmic event, it is already taking place within one’s conscience.”⁵⁸

This meaning is very much in line with Rancièrè’s fear of what consequences the establishment of an *Absolute Other* may elicit. The belief in an order ordained by an Absolute Other or a symbolic order,⁵⁹ creates the circle of the *arkhè*, according to which the believers (as is the case with the workers in the Platonic city) “sense it, that is, that they use their arms, their eyes and their minds as if it were true. And they will do so to the extent that this lie about ‘fitting’ actually does fit the reality of their condition.”⁶⁰ It would be redundant to stress one more time Rancièrè’s divorce with the metaphysical

sive mode, crisis (judicial function) can also be divided in respective modes, and thus acquire the same qualification of relativity as *arkhè*. Moreover, pushing the envelope, we can claim that the general form of the principle of judicial judgment is tantamount to the political excess in that it is an abstract principle that bears the possibility of rearranging the values according to which the social legal judgment are made. In this sense, crisis is a form of dispute, one that brings together alternatives on the import of values; and therefore it is a notion akin to that of Rancièrian politics.

⁵⁵ *Acts*, 23, 3.

⁵⁶ Matthew 10:15; 12:36; 25:31f.

⁵⁷ John 3:18f.; 5:24; 9:39.

⁵⁸ Koselleck, “Crisis,” p. 360; italics added.

⁵⁹ Cf. J. Rancièrè, “What does it mean to be Un,” *Continuum: Journal of Media Cultural Studies*, 21 (2007), 559-569, pp. 568-69.

⁶⁰ Rancièrè, “The Aesthetic Heterotopia,” p. 19; italics added.

logic of an absolute other, and, thus, conclude that his concept of politics is opposed to this particular eschatological thrust of the notion of crisis (*judicium*)—despite their congruence on the level of a re-formatting event.

(c) The third application of the term is partly associated with the Thucydidean employment, and partly innovative:

“This is the medical theory of crisis, which originated in the *Corpus Hippocraticum* and which Galen (129-99) firmly entrenched for about fifteen hundred years. In the case of illness, crisis refers both to the observable condition and to the judgment (*judicium*) about the course of the illness. At such a time, it will be determined whether the patient will live or die.”⁶¹

With this use, the analytical and heuristic employment of the term becomes possible, and its adoption into Latin fertilized the terminology of political and social language:

“Since then the concept of crisis assumed a double meaning that has been preserved in social and political language. On the one hand, the objective condition, about the origins of which there may be scientific disagreements, depends on the judgmental criteria used to diagnose that condition. On the other hand, the concept of illness itself presupposes a state of health—however conceived⁶²—that is either to be restored again or which will, at a specified time, result in death.”⁶³

2. For the scope of this paper, these should suffice. I do not wish to go further into how the usage of the term in Ancient Greek expanded the horizon of the meaning in the modern concept of crisis—and, thereby, collate those meanings with the Rancièrian concept of politics and aesthetics. I should only move to my second point, which illustrates a possible convergence of politics and crisis, and refers to the very public dispute over the meaning of crisis in contemporary Greece. To support my case, I will make an undetailed reference to the current economic crisis in Greece. My purpose is only to describe the form of the dispute and, therefore, I do not provide any factual corroborations. I would like to set my example against the backdrop of the economic crisis after 1856, and, in particular, against a report by a consular official from the U.S.A. to Berlin:

“Attempts to identify the origins of this crisis have resulted in finding them everywhere and nowhere.”⁶⁴ If we collate the official’s concession with Rancièrè’s concept of the contingency of politics, we can conclude that the uncertainty over the origins of a perturbation of the police order betokens the very contingency of that order. If the economic crisis had a specific founda-

⁶¹ Koselleck, “Crisis,” p. 360.

⁶² For example, it can be metaphorically expanded into the *body politic*.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 361.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 392. Consul Adae from the USA to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (March 3, 1856), cited in Kuczynski, *Die Geschichte der Lage der Arbeiterunter dem Kapitalismus*, Part 2, Vol. 31: *Die Geschichte der Lage der Arbeiter in England, in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika und in Frankreich* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968), p. 30.

tion, and crisis deployed against this foundation, then the origins of the crisis would have been identified with those reasons that oppose the ones upon which the police order is established. But this was not the case: the assertion that the reasons were to be found nowhere implies the lack of reasons that underpin the police order. Consequently, the counter-assertion that the origin of the crisis is to be found everywhere means that the whole police order is the reason for the crisis; it means that the rule of the distribution of the sensible does not rule anymore. That is, the *as if* does not tie up the sensible.

Hence, if crisis is a moment when the stability of the police order founders, and the recourse to its foundation is disputable, then the response to such a moment of crisis is (at least) twofold: one that understands crisis as a distortion and reasserts the necessity of the particular police order, and another that understands crisis as the exhibition of the police order's arbitrariness and artificiality. Thus, crisis becomes political to the extent that it implies a disputation over the foundations of the police order.

In Greece, the question revolves around the meaning of the economic crisis and its origins (and it produces multiple sub-(or hyper)-queries that carry multiple dichotomies and dilemmas). The responses to the economic aspect can be (vaguely enough) grouped into the ones claiming that the Greek crisis is a self-inflicted predicament, whose origins are to be found in the disconformity with the rules set by the capitalist/liberal economic principles. Those analyses understand and respond to the crisis from within the police order; they proclaim the order's reality is indisputable, and identify a necessity in the way things are presented and confronted: social, political economic, natural. On the opposite side, the adversaries claim that the predicament is not a result of disobedience to the rule of the police order, but that the police order, as such, is problematic. From that point, they propose a radical change of paradigm, a redistribution of the sensible.

To be sure, according to Rancièrè, this opposition could aptly fit in a conflict against opposing interests. However, I want to underscore the dispute that it creates with regard to the content of crisis. The only thing that is commonsensical, which is admitted by both parties, is the aesthetic appearance of the case: things appear differently than they used to. The *as if*, however, the story that upholds this distribution of the sensible, the story that has recoupled names with bodies⁶⁵ and ends with means, varies starkly: from being the necessary outcome of the only logic that constitutes things, to being the necessary outcome of a logic that runs against the natural logic of things, to being an outcome of a contingent logic that is on the verge of its substitution by any other equally possible logic.

The mutual understanding of the voices of the opposing sides is probably impossible, so long as they are voiced within different contexts. The latter

⁶⁵ Given that crisis is a process that makes use of the excess of names in order to redistribute the sensible in a more unequal way, it is possible to read it as a paragon of the police order. This duality in the functionality of crisis is also likened to the congruence of politics/aesthetics and police/ethics, and appears to reflect my interpretation of equality as the dialectical core of the aforementioned antitheses.

means nothing to the former, because its argument does not comply with the rules of understanding that the police order sets up; and, conversely, the former means nothing to the latter, so long as the contingency of its existence, and therefore the artificiality of its reasons, is revealed. But, at the same time, the dispute over the nature of the economic crisis justifies the moment as critical and (possibly) as political.

In my opinion, the matter invites further investigation. I hope that I have, on the whole, foregrounded the direction that a review of the concept of crisis may take.

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